

# Career Coaching International

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## HITTING A BRICK WALL IN YOUR JOB SEARCH?

### CCI Guidelines: April 2006

*Hitting a brick wall with your job search? Do you have a monster boss? Hate your job? Want to make a career switch? Want to move on to real job satisfaction?*

The coaches at CCI understand the dilemma and difficulties associated with the job/career search. *Their job is to help you find a timely solution and their strength is in guiding you objectively towards a career direction that is a great “fit” for you. Following are their most important and effective guidelines they use to help people in one of the most important areas of their lives—looking for and finding the career or job that is right for them. CCI believes that a job should be a “thrill rather than a struggle.”*

### Job Satisfaction

Much of what we describe as job satisfaction is directly related to the type of relationship employees have with their immediate boss and the ‘culture’ or work environment that the boss creates. If the values of that work environment fit your own value system, you are in luck; if they do not, you are in trouble. Herein lies the source of the monster boss, of hating your career or of experiencing a job that is a struggle rather than a thrill. So, the critical first step in the search for a meaningful career starts with really understanding your own value system and who you are.

### Who Are You?

CCI starts by defining what you like in your job and your career and what you dislike. What do you love or dislike in other parts of your life? Then, CCI classifies this information into four personality groups: (1) P-Producers are action-oriented (very direct), (2) A-Analyzers are detail oriented (thorough), (3) V-Visionaries are ideas oriented (seek improvements) and (4) F-Friends are people oriented (empathetic).

We call these PAVF. (Hippocrates established these type of classifications in 350 BC.) Try this exercise: List at least 10 items you love and 10 that you hate to do. Put them into the above categories and be completely honest. Put a (-) beside the things you hate and a (+) beside the things you love. For example, if you hate dealing with people, you’ll put a minus beside that item in the “Friend” group. There are no right or wrong answers--you are only trying to discover who you are. Most people are strong in two categories and weak in two (exceptions are normal). This exercise will give you some important insights. However, CCI coaches undertake this exercise much more thoroughly.

### Fitting yourself to the Right Job

This next step *is the most important one in the development of your successful career*. You must match your career choice around your natural disposition, defined by P, A, V and F. When there is a match, people start to have fun and excel--their job is a thrill rather than a struggle. Sometimes it’s easier to find a “match” in your choice of hobbies and sports, so look for more clues in this area. Bob is an “AF”. His “A” part defines him as an IT programmer with a penchant for detail, thoroughness, precision, a need to organize, adverse to risk and dislikes show-offs; his “F” part indicates someone who is kind, helpful and caring.

Bob must imbed these characteristics at the very top of his resume under **Job Objective**: *“Seeking an IT programming position that demands thoroughness, careful organization with a need to interface with and assist users or clients of the system.”* Bob has clearly defined who he is with his “A” and “F”; and included only what is necessary.

### The Resume Format

After completing the **Job Objective**, you need to take the person reading your resume down an increasing interesting path. The Job Objective section offers a strong impression of who you are to the potential employer. If the employer doesn't want you dealing with people, your resume will be ignored (thank goodness), but if the company wants your attention to detail *and* ability to connect with clients, the employer will be anxious to learn more about you.

The second part of your resume, must, in bullet form, confirm and quantify that you can fulfill that objective, **but not a word more:**

- 10 years as a C++ developer in financial systems
- Organized 6 major systems for MN Widgets
- Trained and liaised with clients in 13 cities

### Make the Resume Come Alive

Bob must illustrate, in a few paragraphs, some of the tasks that he has accomplished and enjoyed that demonstrate his penchant for thoroughness, detail, organization and people skills. Instead of being a two-dimensional resume, it becomes three-dimensional, one that is alive and reflects the experiences and accomplishments of a "real" person and his personality.

At this point, the reader is sold on you if there is a match to the position. If you've been rejected based on not fitting their culture, it's just as well. The rest of the resume will briefly list your work experience, and is merely an addendum of who you are. **Notice that information about character precedes that related to skills.** People are hired for a good character match. Employers have many applicants with the right skills, and a pulse. **Successful candidates explain about and have the character that fits the work culture.**

### Networking Chaotically

Now that you know who you are and what you want and can capture this in a resume,

you are ready to get out and meet the right people. Where are they? They are in the same place as that friend you were so surprised to meet while traveling miles from home. Mathematically it doesn't seem to make sense (six billion people in the world vs. 500 friends). It makes perfect sense by the mathematics of chaos theory<sup>1</sup>. Chaos theory will lead you to 70% of the job opportunities that are hidden (vs. 30% that are advertised). Don't compete with the hordes--be welcomed with open arms. How is it done? Just go out and start meeting people. Don't organize, don't plan, just do it and let chaos take care of you. Your set goal of finding a job that fits your skills and character is all that matters. The more you go out and meet people, the more opportunities you create of finding a job, but it cannot be predicted with whom, where or when.

### Getting Around Gate Keepers

You must get away from the "middle-men," the admin. assistants, receptionists, HR staff, and to the person who actually needs a worker. You must demonstrate your character and make an emotional connection to the person who hires (remember we threw logic out the window long ago). If you can't make progress past the gatekeepers to the hiring person, be polite, but leave pronto. Never trust that they will pass on your message or your resume.

### Responding to the Ad

If you must respond to an ad, (this should be a **small** part of your job-search program) remember that every job is unique. Therefore, your response to every advertised job must be unique, by adjusting your resume to each. Respond to every single item described in the ad in your letter.

### Search Engines

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<sup>1</sup> Two weeks ago, I was in Vancouver and met three people I knew there purely by accident in three different places in the Chan Centre as I attended an opera.

Job search engines abound, leading you along with the rest of the mob to compete for a solo job. Be selective! There are sophisticated job search engines with web crawlers that go to companies' web sites and look for jobs posted there. In a recent comparison, CCI found 400 engineering jobs on a sophisticated job search engine vs. 27 engineering positions on one of the most popular job sites.

- [1] Job Satisfaction
- [2] Career Assessment form
- [3] Chaos theory
- [4] Einstein

## The Alternative: Get a Coach

If you keep hitting a brick wall, how about taking a different direction? (Einstein defined 'idiot' as someone who keeps doing the same thing and expects different results.) Doing something different is following some of the suggestions listed above. Or, how about getting a career coach?

A career coach knows how the system works and can get you to where you want to go, **faster**. Supported by success statistics<sup>2</sup>, CCI coaches, are objective about the talents and strengths that you might tend to minimize. They can also pick you up when you are down and motivate you to excel. Being unsuccessful at looking for a job is no fun. **The cost of a coach can be made up by finding you a job much faster than by you using your old approach.** Statistically, CCI finds jobs five months faster than individuals looking on their own.

Our job as CCI coaches gives us a "thrill" when the people we help, improve and excel.

## Conclusions

Try the CCI path to finding a job or career that is "a thrill rather than a struggle".

Bill Caswell, Principal  
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**Ask for any of these references to former newsletters:**

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<sup>2</sup> Ask for the coaching company's success statistics information and how the firm arrived at those statistics.