How to be Viable in Any Economy Cycle

Presented by

Robert P. Kohler

RPKOHLER@MSN.COM

(631) 563-3322 Office
(631) 987-4150 Cell

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Introduction

Over the course of my career, in information technology, I have experienced good times, bad times and ever improving times.

During this period, I have experienced the thrill of being hired, thriving in my job, getting rapidly promoted and the turmoil that is brought about by the threat of relocation and the loss of a very good job due to restructuring.

Through out this time, there where several key aspects to keeping up to date and selling ones self in order to get re-employed, that I will be presenting to you now. My personal "lessons learned".

Personal Presentation Package

The Personal Presentation Package is the key to your success or failure in finding another position or encouraging others to take a chance on you.

The **PPP** is unique to each and every one of us.

> ➢ Your <u>voice</u> conveys what you want, how you are feeling ... Your attitude.
> ➢ Your <u>appearance</u> is the cover of the book named you. It is the first impression and it is the snapshot of who we are perceived to be.
> ➢ <u>Body language</u> is the subliminal communication link between you and the person who is about to meet you.

All together, your Personal Presentation Package (or PPP) will convey the true value of meeting you or tell the same person to avoid you. When you are sad or happy, it is transmitted throughout your very essence.

Although you think that you are okay and not depressed, the fact that you really are, is transmitted loud and clear through your PPP. The end result is to adversely affect your attempt to network or to denote an upbeat attitude towards others.

On the other hand a happy person is easily detected and they cause their happiness to create a positive and upbeat experience for whomever they meet. I know I found one on a business trip to the Midwest. One person shined above all others at a business meeting. Here was a person who stood out because they were radiating with happiness, while the rest seemed to all fall into the same attitude, a baseline normalcy that made this one person stand out. This person's attitude raised the bar and changed the mood of the meeting just by being them selves.

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Good or bad, you can not fake what your PPP is transmitting to others. So don't attempt to make new contacts or re-connect with others when you are feeling down. It will be detected. Wait until you are feeling better about yourself and watch what happens when armed with a positive attitude.

Preparing to Network

Networking despite all of its hype, is the way to uncover opportunities that you will not find anywhere else.

Networking is a time consuming effort that needs constant nurturing in order for it to bear fruit. Fruit, which may take a long time to come but it does come.

Several items are needed to gauge your marketability, your skills and to find those hidden opportunities.

First your resume needs to be up to date. This will prevent having the network contact wait while you update the resume and as a result watching the opportunity disappear.

Second, the business card is an essential tool for reminding your new friend who you are, how to contact you and it provides the contact with a place to jot down a few quick notes to remind them of how you met and when.

The business card, in this case, should contain your name, title, email address, and phone number(s) and at least the town that you live in (if you don't want to give out your address). Nothing fancy is required about the design just consider whether or not it will be obnoxious to the viewer.

Third, be prepared to verbally present who you are, what you do or did, why you are looking and what you are looking for in 2 minutes or less. Avoid negative language and misrepresentation in your presentation. This you may have heard, is known as "tell me about yourself' from the 5 o'clock club. <http://www.fiveoclockclub.com/articles/2005/2005-4-2.pitch.pdf>

Fourth, be positive ... an up beat PPP is essential.

Armed with these four elements, you are now ready to network.

Networking

Networking can be started by talking with everyone you know about what you are looking for or attending certain functions as a guest. Guest attendance will probably require a fee to be paid but it will be well worth it to get the opportunity to meet new people with similar backgrounds. Several different organizations allow for guest attendance, amongst them are the Association of Information Technology Professionals, Long Island Business Association and the Project Management Institute.

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Attending user group meetings is another way to keep your skills up to date and aligned with the market place. These groups or organizations meet regularly to discuss the latest industry trends, support each other by raising and addressing issues and building relationships. If, for instance, you are in information technology and you are working with SQL regularly then joining a SQL user group would be of benefit.

A side benefit of attending these groups is the chance to hear about changes before the public, finding out about upcoming seminars and other situations which will keep your skills aligned.

Joining your college Alumni association can be of benefit to network, possibly hear about industry changes or upcoming seminars.

Finding out about these groups or networking events can be obtained in several different ways. For instance joining LinkedIn, Meet-Up or search on-line.

Affiliations and Publications

Keeping up with industry trends, maintaining skills or seeing opportunities, indirectly, can be achieved by regularly reading free newspapers handed out daily in New York City, such as AM NY, buying the newspaper, subscribing to industry specific publications both on-line and in hard copy.

Free magazines are available in your local library but they might be out of date or the magazine that you are interested in may not be there. This is why the library may not be the first choice for getting up to date publications.

One of the key barometers for seeing changes in Long Island business and to possibly see a job opportunity on the horizon is to get the LIBN newsflash. The newsflash arrives 2 times a day and it contains stories about changes to the Long Island business climate.

Skill Monitoring and Assessment

Over the course of your career, there may be periods when you are between jobs. You will need to reassure yourself that you can still do the job you just had and verify your knowledge of various software packages needed to obtain your next position.

One site, Brainbench, is good for this. Once a year, they offer most of their tests for free for a limited time. This allows for you to take the tests several times without paying the fee that is in place for the remainder of the year.

Ramping up for Job Loss or Change

The contents of your resume, what you state during job interviews, the information entered on job applications and the need to attract the employer to your resume in order to get the interview in the first place all come back to one thing ... the facts.

During the time spent at your employer, retain a copy of all performance reviews, corporate recognitions, training certificates and certifications no matter how long you are employed there.

Match this trail with a daily notebook containing day to day tasks and you will now have the source for your resume, a means to trigger memories of what you did on the job and a way to break out each component of what it took to do the job. The entire job, referred to as the "package" must be broken out into its components in order to see if you are qualified for positions other than your most recent. This is the essential tool for seeking another position, changing careers and seeing what your transferable skills are.

Armed with your daily notes, you will be able to see what has been done and what could be done. This tool becomes invaluable when one suffers from sudden job loss through restructuring, relocation or bankruptcy.

One other item that will prove invaluable when seeking another position is to know exactly what your former boss would offer as a recommendation to another employer or a recruiter. The way to obtain this is to request a written recommendation. By getting the recommendation in writing, you will know what is said, avoid not being able to reach the manager when a reference is needed and to see if this person's recommendation should or should not be used.

Now you are just about ready to start your campaign but there is one other key item to be attended too, translating internal job titles into the industry standard. This can be accomplished by checking salary.com for job titles, within your industry. Salary.com provides both job title descriptions and salary range information that can be used to find the industry equivalent of your company's internal titles.

How frequently should the resume be updated?

The resume should be updated whenever changes occur or periodically just to freshen it up. But you should change to a more frequent update cycle if the storm clouds of job loss are gathering. This way you will be ready on a moments' notice to send/pass your resume to a network contact, recruiter or another employer.

When the time comes to search for another position, the odds are you will be looking for some authoritative reference on how to format the resume, plan your campaign and to interview successfully. This will drive you to the internet, bookstores, libraries and possibly, the Department of Labor Workforce Centers.

WATCH out for the publications that you find. Many are no longer valid for the current market place but they are still on sale or viewable on the internet. Watch the copyright dates or publication dates and, generally, dismiss anything that is more then two years old. After all, the last thing you need to do is start your job search campaign based on out dated information.

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When starting your job search, level set your expectations from the very beginning. Your resume is but one of thousands posted on the internet & or received by recruiters everyday. As a result unless your resume stands out in someway, you are not likely to get a response in regard to your resume. Expect not to get a response, and the level of frustration connected with higher expectations will be reduced or eliminated.

By all means call the *recruiter*, when possible, to follow-up on the interview, job application or the submission of your resume to the recruiter but don't expect the recruiter to call you and don't wait for results before moving on.

The overworked, overwhelmed recruiter may have the intention of following up with you but they never get the chance to because of trying to sift through the resumes for a sellable candidate and there are a lot of candidates.

Just as in real estate, where the agent is working for the home seller and not the buyer. Recruiters are working for the companies not the job candidate.

The *internet* is a very convenient place; easy to access. No driving somewhere or dealing with weather. No need to take time off to talk to recruiters, just to see if there are jobs in your field. You don't even have to find the job, posting your resume on the boards should attract the recruiters and the jobs will come to you..... WRONG.

Thousands upon thousands of job candidates are looking at the job boards everyday and the same people are applying for some of the jobs that you are. So everyone ends up in a job pool with the employer only having to look at a handful, while rejecting the others.

How? *Data miners*.

Automated search bots that look for certain key words and then move these resumes to the next level. Don't have those key words? Then your resume just sits out there until it is removed.

These miners not only stop your resume from the jobs that you are interested in, they also send your resume to other jobs that are not always within your job search arena. Why? You have their key words.

With these obstacles in place, the odds that the internet will actually get you an interview are quite slim.

Job fairs are a dime a dozen, with only a very small percentage having jobs that fit your background. So every time that there is a fair, get the list of attending companies and check their website for the current list of job openings. If you can't find enough companies to justify getting to the job fair 2 - 3 hours before it starts to stand in line then don't go. Apply on-line.

Some job fairs look for you to hand your resume in at the door. Watch out for these fairs. Your resume might wind up on someone's mailing list and you will be getting calls from financial planners instead of job opportunities.

Contingency Planning: The Home Front

There are times during one's career when the corporate environment might be changing and the threat of job loss is introduced. Whenever it is realistically possible, contingency planning should take place. This plan might provide for being able to work from home or to practice your craft from home while you are looking. This can be achieved by mirroring your work environment at home.

Create a home office that mirrors your work environment that includes up to date computer, printing equipment and software that is the same as the work environment. Of course financial constraints may not allow for a 100% mirror of work, so prioritize.

When or if the dark clouds of layoff are coming your way, you should prepare by examining the current state of your finances, home, transportation, clothing (especially the condition of your job search clothes and make sure that you double check that the style is still in.) and replace or repair as needed before the layoff takes place.

The forgotten displacement survival tool

During the period of displacement there will be a need to separate and recharge, don't dismiss your hobbies or the ways that you normally get a sense of peace. For if walking along the beach works for you, do it as long as you can afford it.

The Keys to success

Networking takes time to bear fruit but it does and keeping your hand on the pulse of your industry requires getting involved.

If you remember nothing else, remember this: *There is a lot of conflicting information about job searching out there so don't take any of it as the absolute model for success, you must glean bits and pieces from many sources and then build your own customized campaign.*

With globalization, the work environment and our lives in general are in a constant state of flux; never tune out and never burn your bridges.

In Conclusion

In today's ever changing work and economic environment each of us must:
- Provide for that "rainy day".
- Perform our jobs to the best of our abilities.
- Keep current.

With all of these key items in place, we can sail through the vast sea of change from the shore of our youth to the shore of our freedom.

Sometimes turbulent and other times calm; none the less a challenge to successfully make it to the other shore; the shore of freedom. To the land where you can do what you want, free of the threat of relocation, restructuring or job loss due to other uncontrollable circumstance.

Key Tools for keeping Viable and Contingency Planning

Business cards

A key tool for reminding the person(s) who you are meeting with about where, when and how they met you is the Networking Card.

Business cards, aka Networking cards, are an essential tool of networking that you can create
1. Using Publishing software such as Microsoft Publisher, which is included in Microsoft Office.
2. Using an online service, such as Vista Prints http://www.vistaprint.com
    a. Advantage: Vista Prints can produce 250 free business cards using their designs and your information.
    b. Disadvantages: When you are handing out your business cards, the recipients may want to write down some reference notes that would allow them to remember where, when and how they met you but the back of the card is already filled in with their ad.

    c. Working around the free card design issues
        1. Pay an additional $9.99 for advanced editing (price as of this printing) of the free cards.
        2. Create your business cards using the Premium Business Cards option.
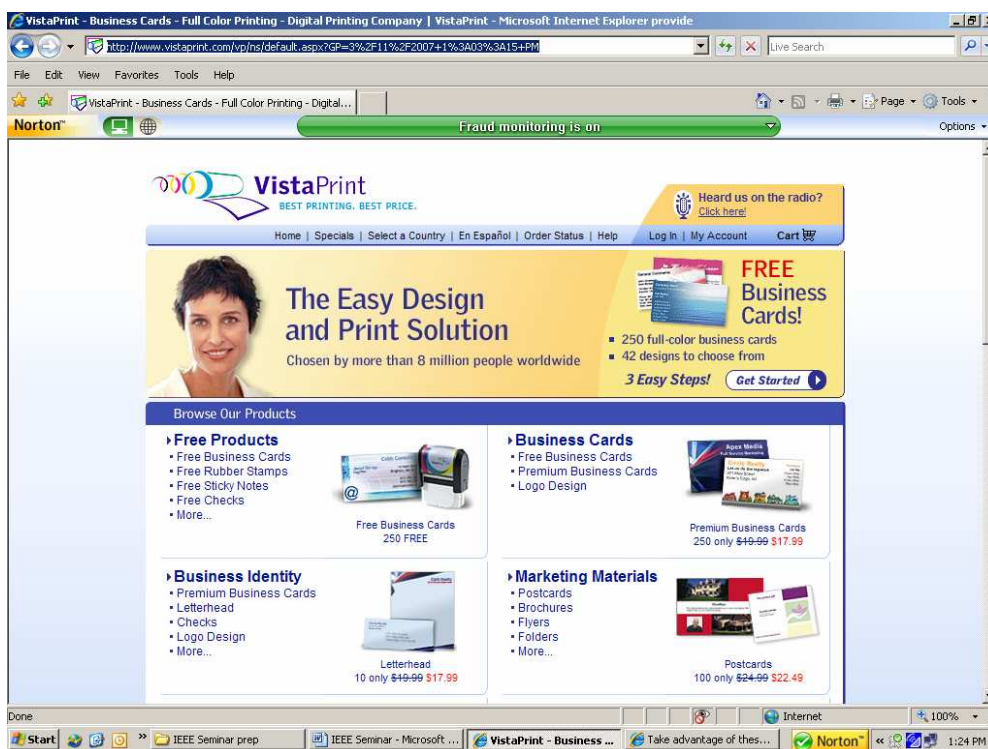
3. By having the cards printed online through the office stores:
    a. OfficeMax print services; business cards
        http://www.copymax.xpressmyself.com/xp5/index.asp?parentid=501&wizardid=5012&gallery=2

    b. Staples custom printing; custom business cards
        http://www.staples.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/CategoryDisplay?ts=1173630128921&storeId=10001&secondlevelCategoryId=46753&categoryId=27396&secondlevelCatName=Custom+Printing&cmArea=&catalogId=10051&langId=-1

    c. Office Depot print on demand
        http://www.officedepot.com/dps.do;jsessionid=0000HbxyhqSKHDzgS5WdVLOFR3y:10gghks9k

4. Printing business cards using a local "brick n'mortar" printer.

Guest attendance

Keeping up to date with industry trends or networking for the next opportunity can be achieved by attending meetings and functions conducted by key organizations within your industry or industries that you are interested in transferring into. These organizations do not always require joining them; instead you can attend their meetings and functions as a guest.

There are many organizations and user groups in the New York area and you should search the internet for them. Coming from Information Technology coupled with an avid interest in finding out about other industries, I have attended several different meetings and functions conducted by the following organizations:

1. **Long Island Software & Technology Network (LISTNET)** http://www.listnet.org/
    LISTNET has many events/ seminars are scheduled throughout the year and some are free, even to non-members.

2. **Long Island Forum for Technology (LIFT)** http://www.lift.org

3. **Association of Information Technology Professionals (AITP)** :
    Is a national organization of Information Technology Professionals with local chapters in Manhattan and on Long Island (http://www.aitp-li.org/).

    The AITP Long Island chapter is a very good place to network with other Information Technology professionals as well as Recruiters and keep up with current industry trends.

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Regularly scheduled meetings and events at the Milleridge Inn, Jericho, during lunch as well as other events that start at 5:30 pm.

Membership is $135.00 and the cost of guest attendance is listed with each event.

For the latest schedule of AITP-LI events go to http://www.aitp-li.org/eventcal.php

To locate a local chapter of the AITP, go to their main website at http://www.aitp.org/index.jsp

4. **Project Management Institute (PMI)**
   The Long Island (http://www.pmilic.org/home/index.asp) chapter of the Project Management Institute holds its' monthly meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at:

EVERYONE IS WELCOME! Monthly Chapter General Meetings are usually the SECOND Wednesday monthly

Location	Agenda	Pre-registration
We use 1 of 2 locations:	Networking and Dinner: 5:30-6:30 PM	$15 at the door or $10 if you pre-register at least 1 week prior to the meeting date by clicking here.
	Chapter Business: 6:30-6:45 PM	
Computer Associates	Presentation: 6:45-7:45 PM	
Islandia		
Telephonics	Check event details via Chapter Calendar for a particular meeting's location.	
Farmingdale	No meetings in July or August	

Both the NYC and Long Island chapters hold regularly scheduled meetings, events, seminars and seminars specifically geared for taking the PMI Certification examination. You should check their respective calendars for more information.

The New York (http://www.pminyc.org/) chapter holds its' regularly scheduled chapter meetings at the Microsoft offices in Manhattan on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Guests can attend for $20.00 and registration is required.

Microsoft Office, 1290 Sixth Ave between 51st and 52nd Streets, 6th Floor
5:30 PM to 6:15 PM - Registration, Networking and Buffet Dinner
5:45 PM to 6:10 PM - Chapter Overview for New Members
6:15 PM to 7:30 PM - Program

Also, the New York Chapter conducts seminars/ events requiring prior registration that contribute to maintaining your PMI certification, obtaining PMI Certification and other events that can be attended as a guest. For the latest events calendar go to the PMI NYC website, which lists the calendar on its' home page.

5. **User Groups**
   User Groups are a very good place to both network and to keep your skills up to date with the latest trends.

   While there are user groups for many different areas of discipline, my areas of concentration included information technology and professional inventors. Some of the group meetings that I have attended as a guest, have included:

   a. Information Technology
      ▪ Microsoft SQL http://nyc.sqlservercentral.com/
        SQL Developers and Managers meet at the Microsoft Offices on the 4th Thursday of the month starting at 6pm

        AXA Financial Center
        1290 6th Avenue
        6th Floor; Corner of 52nd Street
        New York, NY

   b. New Society of Professional Inventors http://www.geocities.com/nyspi2001/
       Besides learning about the invention process, the society is a good networking source.

      Meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm for $10.00 non-members with a temporary on campus parking permit requirement.

      Lupton Hall on the State University of New York at Farmingdale
      Room T101

   c. Software Process Improvement Network (SPIN): http://www.rlki.com/nycspin/
      Membership is free and so are their seminars.
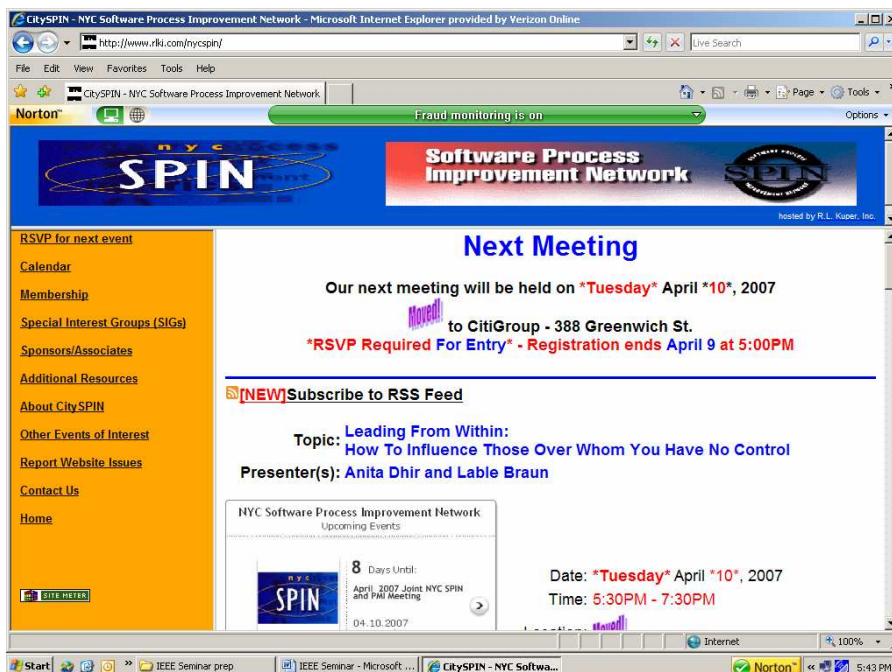
> SPIN does have meetings/seminars that take place in different locations that are of interest to technical professionals and to Project Managers alike. These meetings are conducted by SPIN or in conjunction with PMI-NYC, on occasion.

Tell Me About Yourself or the Elevator Speech

When you are introducing yourself for the first time to new people, whether it is to network or to quickly present yourself to an employer, the need arises for a way to present yourself in a nutshell.

During the period of time that I was seeking another position due to restructuring, I met the president of Career Transition Associates, Bob Simmons, and the one thing that was practiced until perfection was "tell me about yourself". As a result of the continued practicing and perfecting of this introduction, I became increasingly comfortable and eventually, I was able to change the introduction on the fly.

"Tell me about yourself" is not so much about being able to repeat a practiced introduction as it is a tool to make the individual comfortable and confident with themselves to the point that the concept can be applied in many different situations beyond business.

Tell Me About Yourself sources:

Career Transition Associates	Robert E. Simmons Suite 117 1670 Old Country Rd, Plainview	(516) 501-0717
The Five O'clock Club	http://www.fiveoclockclub.com	Look under Articles "for the Two Minute Pitch".

There are others but these are the two that I used.

Connecting and Building new relationships

There are many, many websites available today that enable the individual to contact other people in order to find another position, network, make new friends or to keep their skills up to date by conferring with others from their field of interest. Some of the sites that I either used or have looked into using are:
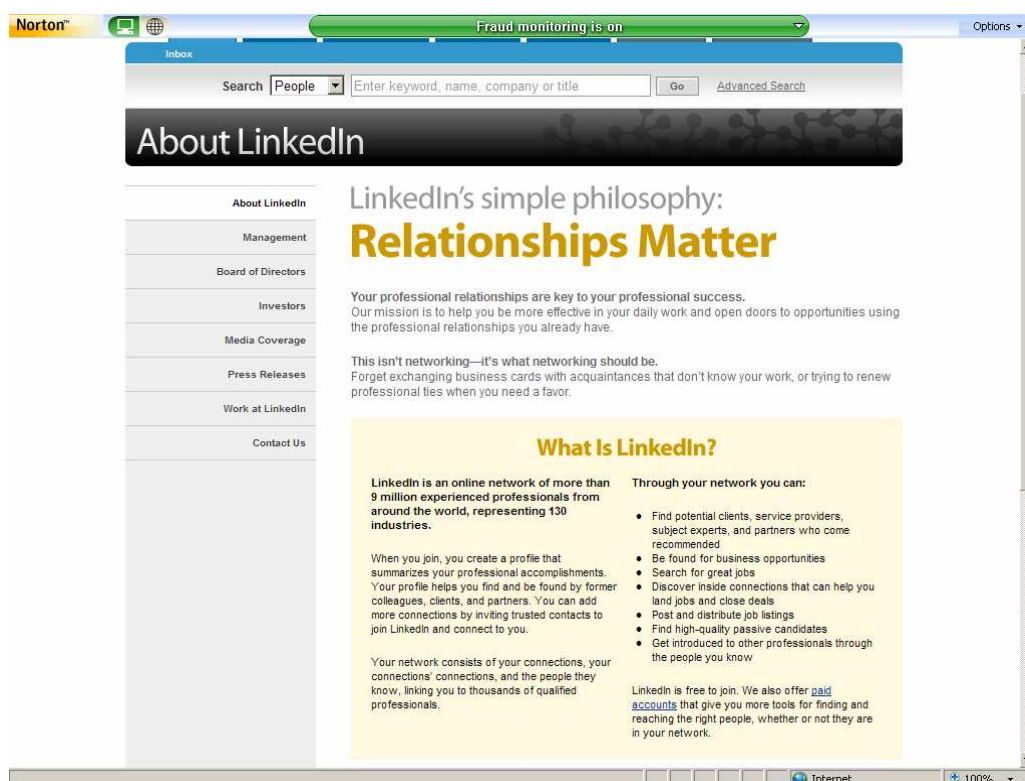
1. LinkedIn
2. Ryze
3. Meet-Up

LinkedIn <http://www.linkedin.com>

LinkedIn is a good site to reconnect with former colleagues, build your network or search for new opportunities. However it is by invitation only and there are two membership types (paid and unpaid).

Once you are invited to join, you will be required to register and setup your profile. After the initial setup, you can opt to add the LinkedIn tool bar into your browser which can be an advantage since every time you search the internet LinkedIn will tell you if there is someone within your network that is connected to the site being searched.

LinkedIn works by allowing you to connect to other people through the person who invited you and their connections, instead of directly. However once this hurdle is conquered, the chance to get to a hiring manager becomes LinkedIn's greatest benefit.

Another benefit is your ability to connect and re-connect with others, which in turn can help you to keep your finger on the pulse of your industry.

The disadvantage to LinkedIn comes when you see some one you would like to connect with but they aren't in your network. You can not reach out to others without being linked.
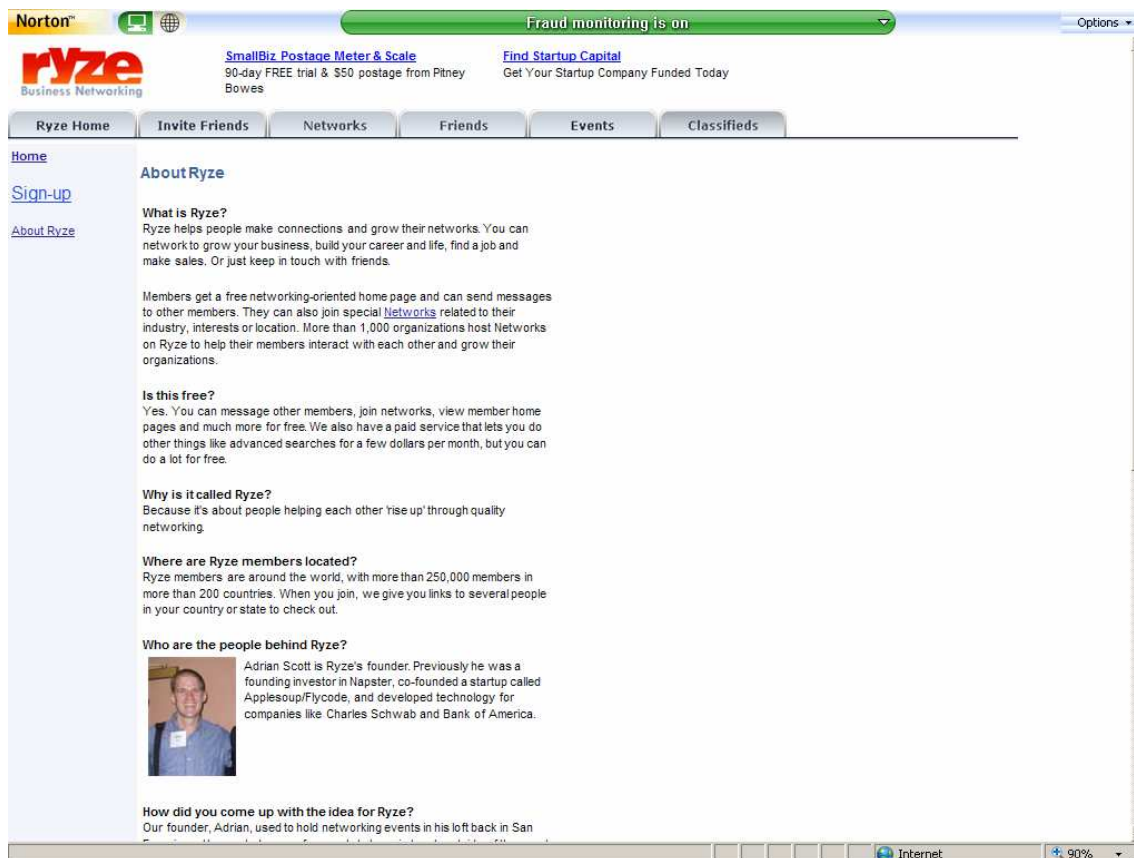
Ryze <http://www.ryze.com>

Ryze is the competition to LinkedIn. It is a networking site that contains special interest groups that you can join and there are monthly events/networking gatherings in various locations around your area.

Unlike LinkedIn, you are free to join without an invitation. It does require that you set up your profile with/without a picture of yourself. However, once this is done, you will be ready to build a network, create new friends, explore other occupations or join a group geared towards your industry. They even have jobs, although 90% are outside of this section of the country.

Ryze is FREE. All of the basic features are free, enough to keep you occupied for hours and hours! We also have some advanced features and search capabilities that are available for a few dollars per month. (Source: Ryze Site)

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Meet-up <http://www.meetup.com>

Meet-up, unlike Ryze and LinkedIn is geared towards non-professional special interest groups and its usefulness is at best, questionable. If you do venture into using this site, be aware that you may be connecting with groups that may include teenagers.

Publications

With the Internet readily available, it is much easier to read trade papers and industry newspapers whenever you want and the e-zines can be delivered directly to your email.

Printed magazines, newspapers, are another avenue but they can be a little less timely. The best bet is to rely on a combination of the two.

E-Zines (on line publications)

1. **Long Island Business News**

   When you are in the process of looking for another opportunity and you are in the Long Island marketplace, subscribing to the Long Island Business Newsflash (LIBN) <http://www.libn.com> can become very beneficial.

   Once you start subscribing (free of charge) to the LIBN newsflash, you will be able to keep your finger on the pulse of Long Island business two times a day, everyday, which can generate job leads or warn you off of trying to find an opportunity within a company that is about to downsize.

   To subscribe to the LIBN newsflash, go to <http://www.libn.com> and enter your email address into the flash report panel located on the upper left hand corner:

As a means to keep my skills up to date and to keep my finger on the pulse of information technology, I am a subscriber to the following e-zines:

2. **Infoworld**   http://www.infoworld.com
3. **Microsoft Software Developers Network** http://www.msdn.com
4. **Integration Developer News**   http://www.idevnews.com

Printed Publications

1. Magazines

   In addition to the e-zines, I do periodically read printed publications pertaining to my industry, such as PC Week and PC World.

   One thing to note about the published magazines and newspapers, you can get a copy of these publications in your local library for free but they aren't always the latest edition.

2. Free Newspapers

   Since the work world is in a constant state of flux, I never let my network go cold. Instead it is kept lukewarm as a part of my contingency plan. In conjunction with this approach, I at least once a week check for upcoming events of interest by reading the daily free publications handed out every weekday in Manhattan, AM New York http://www.amny.com and Metro http://ny.metro.us/. I have read both and AM New York is the better of the two, in my opinion.

A Barometer of your Skills

There are many testing and skills assessment sites on the Internet that will enable the individual to verify what they know and what they have to learn or brush up on in order to get that promotion, move into a new position or find and get another position.

Two test sites that I have used, to assess the state of my skills are Brainbench and Expert Ratings. Each has proven useful in different ways and both have enabled me to brush off the cob webs that come with not taking a timed test in many years.

Today, some recruiters and employers either conduct tests to certify the skills stated in your resume or they prefer certification over someone without it. This, based upon a conversation from a person from a training company, is the direct result of misrepresentation on the part of the applicant and this disparity occurring frequently enough for there to be a push to prove it.

Now the first time that I took a timed test after many years, did take some getting used to and so I purposely took a test or two that didn't have a bearing on the jobs that I was vying for. This took care of

the warm up and then I moved onto periodically testing my skills throughout the period that I was seeking another opportunity after being restructured. Although I did not need the certifications that I obtained to do the job that I did get, it proved beneficial because coding Microsoft Office applications was needed in order to create a "at a glance" status report.

1. **Brainbench** http://www.brainbench.com

   Brainbench requires setting up an account under the individual certification tab. Once done, you will be able to take tests, get certification (downloadable certificate or a printed certificate is available) and you will have the option of making your transcript public so that it can be emailed as proof of your skills. The good part is that the certifications are good for 3 years.

   At least once a year they have a contest to see which country/area can get the greatest number of certifications. During this period, a lot of tests are free that are not otherwise. In years past, this contest has taken place during the first quarter of the year.

   Some of the tests that are available from Brainbench include:

2. **Expert Rating** http://www.expertrating.com

   Expert Rating is another skill set evaluation and certification site that I used to validate my Microsoft Office skills.

Contingency Planning

In this ever changing environment, one never knows when things will go south so there is a continuing need to implement a contingency plan ASAP.

During the period that you may be out of work, the need to keep your skills up to date will require that your home office should mirror work as closely as possible. Yes this can be expensive; but at what price are you willing to forfeit your ability to make as much money as you are now and to continue to live in the manner that you have become accustomed too?

1. Home Office

    Generally speaking computer equipment can "push it" and last five years at which time technology will have passed it by about 2 years. This will mean your machine will slow down as it keeps writing to the hard drive in order to compensate for not having enough memory or the latest operating system will not work on your machine (hardware changes may not be possible, for instance the hardware requirements of Windows Vista has made many machines obsolete.)

    LaserJet printers can last just about for ever (as long as parallel connections are still on the desktop/laptop). At least one of your printers should be a LaserJet in order to print sharp looking resumes. Inkjets don't print as clearly and this can be detected.

    Inkjets and/or photo printers may/may not be rendered obsolete because of the latest software being more sophisticated and a number of the newer features not being supported by the older printer.

    FIOS/DSL/CABLE internet connections will become more and more the standard as more information is placed onto websites. If you still have dial up, you should replace it but check the hardware requirements first because you might be forced to replace your computer.

    Once you move away from Dialup, each of the connection methods has its drawbacks:

    FIOS is the replacement for DSL. FIOS requires a battery backup in order to keep the phone powered for up to 8 hours during a blackout. The days when the phone was always working are coming to an end.

    CABLE connections means that you loose your internet access whenever Cable goes out. Also if you package the phone, internet and cable together then all three will disappear during an outage.

    You might want to consider getting a combination Scanner/Fax/Copier in order to fax your resume or to scan your receipts for tax purposes.

Build up your <u>office supplies</u> ahead of time, especially toner, printer ink, everyday paper and resume quality paper, envelopes and other key supplies.

For your <u>software</u> needs make sure that your Antivirus software subscription is paid up and that your virus software is updated regularly. After all you never want to see your machine trashed but this becomes even more critical when you are depending on it as a key job search tool.

Depending on the work that you do, there are certain essential software tools that you use day in and day out at work. These same products must be available to you when you are displaced. This can be achieved either by buying all of the needed software or downloading the trial versions and continually practicing your art. Most Microsoft products are available for download from the Microsoft site. Some are trial versions and others are for students and hobbyists as restricted versions but no time limit.

2. Determining the bottom line

- <u>Salary: How low can I go?</u>

  Most of us are in some kind of debt, these days, as a result of pursuing the "American Dream" and this is not a detriment while the money is rolling in but it does limit how low a salary you can take when looking for another position.

  As I progressed through my outage, the need to determine the bare minimum salary was essential to determining the breath and width of job/career choices that could be entertained. After all, K-Mart is not going to pay the bills when the bills were incurred while having a six figure income.

- <u>Where are you going to look for work?</u>

  It may at first sound ideal to live and work close to home but the income that you can get may be substantially lower. Manhattan money is not what is paid on Long Island.

  Once you have determined the area that you are willing to commute too, then you should put every effort into frequenting that market regularly. If you worked in Manhattan and still want to work in Manhattan, being on Long Island is not going to help your networking efforts. Especially since your former colleagues are all in Manhattan.

  Manhattan is being used in this case because I did find myself stranded on Long Island and wanting to go back to Manhattan.

How to be Viable in Any Economy Cycle

- ## What is a reasonable commute?

  Determining your commuting area requires taking into account train schedules and connections with a margin for lateness or traffic patterns when driving. In either case the worst case scenario should be factored in, in order to avoid committing to a starting time and not being able to arrive on time consistently. Lateness in any job does not go over well but this holds especially true with a new job.

  The following spreadsheets were developed during my outage and it did help to define my maximum search area:

  Commuter Rail Analysis

  1. Sayville – Hunterspoint Avenue

Commuter Schedules					
Sayville/Hunterspoint Ave					
5/24/2004					
Direction	Depart	Arrive	Transfer	Leaves	Rate
Inbound	Sayville	Hunterspoint Avenue			
	6:08 AM	7:26 AM			Peak
	6:56 AM	8:36 AM	Jamaica	8:19 AM	Peak
	7:07 AM	8:43 AM	Babylon	7:33 AM	
			Jamaica	8:25 AM	Peak
	7:24 AM	8:36 AM			Peak
	7:47 AM	9:11 AM			Peak
	Hunterspoint Avenue	Sayville			
Outbound	4:30 PM	5:47 PM			Peak
	4:44 PM	6:07 PM			Peak
	5:47 PM	7:14 PM	Jamaica	6:17 PM	Peak
	6:30 PM	7:50 PM	Jamaica	6:49 PM	
			Babylon	7:27 PM	Peak

  2. Penn Station – Sayville

Commuter Schedules					
Sayville/Penn					
5/24/2004					
Direction	Depart	Arrive	Transfer	Leaves	Rate
Inbound	Sayville	Penn Station			
	5:14 AM	6:44 AM	Babylon	5:41 AM	Peak
	5:40 AM	6:58 AM	Babylon	6:07 AM	Peak
	6:08 AM	7:28 AM	Jamaica	7:09 AM	Peak
	6:56 AM	8:23 AM			Peak
			Babylon	7:33 AM	
	7:07 AM	8:42 AM	Jamaica	8:22 AM	Peak
Outbound	Penn Station	Sayville			
	5:36 PM	7:07 PM	Babylon	6:44 PM	Peak
	5:51 PM	7:14 PM	Jamaica	6:17 PM	Peak
	6:27 PM	7:50 PM	Babylon	7:27 PM	Peak
	7:30 PM	8:51 PM	Babylon	8:28 PM	Peak
	8:30 PM	9:49 PM	Jamaica	8:53 PM	Off Peak

3. Sayville - Flatbush Avenue

Commuter Schedules					
Sayville/Flatbush					
5/24/2004					
Direction	Depart	Arrive	Transfer	Leaves	Rate
Inbound	Sayville	Flatbush Avenue			
		6:46 AM	Babylon	5:41 AM	Peak
	5:14 AM		Jamaica	6:28 AM	
	6:08 AM	7:36 AM	Jamaica	7:18 AM	Peak
	6:56 AM	8:25 AM	Jamaica	8:03 AM	Peak
	7:07 AM	8:43 AM	Babylon	7:33 AM	Peak
	7:24 AM	8:43 AM	Jamaica	8:22 AM	Peak
Outbound	Flatbush Avenue	Sayville			
	4:20 PM	5:47 PM	Jamaica	4:49 PM	Peak
	4:41 PM	6:07 PM	Jamaica	5:03 PM	Peak
	5:23 PM	**7:07 PM**	**Babylon**	**6:44 PM**	Peak
	5:49 PM	7:14 PM	Jamaica	6:17 PM	Peak
		7:50 PM	Jamaica	6:49 PM	Peak
	6:27 PM		Babylon	7:27 PM	

4. Ronkonkoma - Penn Station

Commuter Schedules					
Ronkonkoma/Penn					
5/24/2004					
Direction	Depart	Arrive	Transfer	Leaves	Rate
Inbound	Ronkonkoma	Penn Station			
	5:29 AM	6:38 AM			Peak
	5:42 AM	7:02 AM			Peak
	6:08 AM	7:27 AM			Peak
	6:24 AM	7:30 AM			Peak
	6:39 AM	8:00 AM			Peak
	6:56 AM	8:20 AM	Jamaica	7:59 AM	Peak
	7:04 AM	8:19 AM			Peak
	7:19 AM	8:28 AM			Peak
	7:32 AM	8:47 AM			Peak
Outbound	Penn Station	Ronkonkoma			
	5:22 PM	6:38 PM			Peak
	5:23 PM	6:45 PM	Jamaica	5:47 PM	Peak
	5:41 PM	**6:49 PM**			Peak
	5:51 PM	7:27 PM	Jamaica	6:25 PM	Peak
	5:53 PM	7:11 PM			Peak
	6:21 PM	7:39 PM			Peak
	6:53 PM	8:12 PM			Peak
	7:11 PM	8:33 PM			Peak
	7:44 PM	9:02 PM			Peak
	8:15 PM	9:37 PM			Off Peak

5. LIRR/Subway Routing to Wall Street

Commuting Schedule Analysis LIRR to Wall St.									
Direction	**Sayville**	**Ronkon**	**Jamaica**	**Penn**	**HP**	**Flatbush**	**7**	**E**	**2**
Inbound	6:08 AM		7:36 AM			7:18 AM			
	6:08 AM				7:26 AM				
	6:56 AM				8:36 AM				

Regional Commuting Times

Regional Travel Originating from Sayville							
5/24/2004							
			Travel Time				
Mode	**Destination**	**Miles**	**off Hours**	**Rush hr**	**Issues**		**Mass Transit**
Car	Whitestone	47.7	75	150	Parking		
	Long Island City	53.8	80	160	Parking, Off hr Safety		Subway/LIRR
	Garden City	34.9	55	110	Time if via Jones Beach		
	White Plains	63.2	94	188	Parking, Weather, Road Condition		LIRR, M North, Bus, Subway
	Bethpage	25.3	40	80	Parking, Weather, Road Condition		

Fuel cost Projection						
1999 Oldsmobile Intrigue						
	Fill @ Qtr tank	**Price**	**Mpg**		**Range (Qtr*mpg)**	**Cost (Qtr*Price)**
	11	$2.50	20		220	$27.50

	Miles per day	**Fill/wk**	**Cost/wk**	**Tolls**	**Parking**
Whitestone	95	2.2	$59.63	$$	$$
Long Island City	107.6	2.4	$67.25		$$
Garden City	69.8	1.6	$43.63		??
White Plains	126.4	2.9	$79.00		??
Bethpage	50.6	1.2	$31.63		??

- <u>Do you need A Car?</u>

  After determining the commuting area and the amount of mileage per week with a margin built in for bad weather conditions and/or going to the store or leisure activities, project the amount of miles per year that you may be putting on the car. Now ask yourself the following questions:

  ➢ Will I exceed the maximum lease mileage?
  ➢ Is the mileage too high and the condition of the car not up to the increased demand?
  ➢ With more demand comes the need for regularly scheduled maintenance in order to avoid breakdowns, can you get the car in regularly?
  ➢ How do you get to work if the car breaks down or is not available?

- <u>Is it time to repair the house or get it ready for Sale?</u>

  Prioritize the repairs against protecting the value of the house or being able to live without making some of those repairs.

- <u>Do I have to buy clothes for the job search?</u>

  Start surveying the department stores and the suit stores to see what is in style and get rid of your suits, shirts, ties, shoes and belts that are not..

  Check the condition of your suits, shirts, ties, shoes and belts that are in style and honestly ask:
  o Do they fit properly?
  o Do they look good? Get another person's opinion before you say that they are okay.

  Don't forget to check your coat! This is crucial at certain times of year and when the weather is bad.

Recommended Reading

Bait and Switch	Barbara Ehrenreich	Barbara goes undercover as an unemployed White Collar worker and her quest for work reveals what most of today's white collar unemployed are facing.
The Secret	Rhonda Byrne	Along the lines of the power of positive thinking, this book is a good motivational tool that can aid you to keep on fighting to get what you truly want and to deflect defeatism.