

Bulletin Board: Spouse serves as main career adviser

by Amy_Winter

When in need of career advice, where do most workers seek guidance? Forty-six percent of executives initially turn to spouses or significant others when considering a job change, according to a survey by Accountemps, a staffing service that questioned 150 senior executives. Only 42 percent of respondents answered the same in 2002.

Mentors are also highly regarded when it comes to career guidance. Forty-one percent of respondents say they would first contact mentors, compared to 28 percent six years ago. Turning to a co-worker, other family member or friend have all decreased since the 2002 survey. Seeking a co-worker went from 13 percent to 4 percent, other family member from 5 percent to 4 percent, and friend dropped from 11 percent to 3 percent.

"The advice of mentors, colleagues and other confidants helps when weighing the pros and cons of a career transition, but a job change has personal and family implications," says Max Messmer, chairman and author of "Job Hunting for Dummies." "A spouse or significant other is not only familiar with a partner's overall priorities and motivators, but also has a stake in the outcome of his or her career decisions."

In addition to seeking advice from friends and family, Accountemps recommends considering the following questions before changing careers:

- Is the grass really greener? Consider whether your new position will be more rewarding. Or would it be better to improve your current role with more pleasing duties.

- Will you have room to grow? Make sure your new position won't put you in the same situation you are currently experiencing with your company. Ask about the advancement probability when interviewing for a new position.

- Have you done your homework? Research the company's standards and missions. Make sure the new work atmosphere will suit you.

For more information, visit www.accountemps.com.

FAVORED PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR JOB MARKET

Due to the concerns involving the economy, most job-seekers favor Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama when it comes to voting in this year's primaries. Twenty-one percent of respondents believe Obama will have the most encouraging impact on the job market, according to a survey by Challenger, Gray & Christmas Inc., an outplacement agency that called 500 people during the first day of its annual job search advice call-in. And close behind was Clinton with 20.3 percent of callers.

Only 9.9 percent of respondents favor John Edwards, while another 13.2 percent weren't sure who would be the best candidate to aid the job market. Several Republican candidates make up the rest of the vote. Mitt Romney led the GOP with 9.3 percent, followed by Rudolph Giuliani with 7.7 percent.

"When the campaigning started a year ago, the big issues were the war in Iraq and immigration," says John Challenger, chief executive officer. "However, an ongoing housing slump, which has resulted in millions of foreclosures, plummeting home values and volatility in the financial sector, has a growing number of voters worried about the economy, job security and their pocketbooks."

For more information, visit www.challengergray.com.

COMPANIES EMBRACE WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Many businesses are willing to assist workers in finding a balance between raising a family and working a full-time job. Sixty-two percent of companies surveyed by OfficeTeam, a staffing service that questioned 150 senior executives, have changed policies to help working parents. Thirty-three percent of respondents haven't tried to better accommodate working parents. And 5 percent aren't sure.

"Programs that support work-life balance are attractive to professionals, especially members of the 'sandwich generation' - those caring for both children and elderly parents," says Diane Domeyer, executive director. "For smaller firms that may not have as much flexibility in adjusting salaries as larger organizations, offering these types of benefits can level the playing field."

Benefits such as telecommuting, elder care and extended family care can be an advantage to most workers, not just working parents.

"Many employees are juggling multiple priorities and appreciate these types of programs," says Domeyer. "Companies should actively promote these offerings to all prospective hires, both in job postings and during the employment interview."

For more information, visit www.officeteam.com.

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