

# Networking is key strategy to proactive career management according to recent poll

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## NETWORKING IS KEY STRATEGY TO PROACTIVE CAREER MANAGEMENT

Poll reveals executives swap passive for proactive approach to next job move

More and more senior level professionals are taking control of their career paths and applying a much more proactive approach to their next job move through their own networks, according to a recent poll of 500 executives carried out by Armstrong Craven, the Manchester and London-based executive research, business information and career management specialists.

40 per cent of those executives surveyed ignored job ads and passively waiting to be headhunted in favour of both personal and professional networks, with half enjoying success in identifying and securing a position. 68 per cent kept in touch with their network group at least quarterly, with half of this group doing so monthly. 24 per cent had been headhunted and 29 per cent had responded to an advertisement. All respondents agreed that career management should be an ongoing, proactive project, rather than a short lived one

The executives polled were familiar with the Career Management Services offered by Armstrong Craven, a practical, research-based approach to helping individuals through periods of career transition and companies looking to offer job seeking workshops to employees. The company invites individuals seeking senior executive positions with salaries in excess of £50K to its own network events and half of those executives surveyed cited these as a very useful element of the service offered. More than half contacted Armstrong Craven to seek a new challenge or to change career, with 63 per cent of respondents securing their latest role within six months.

It has always been recognised that networking is a fundamental activity that shouldn't be ignored when planning your next career move and the findings of this recent survey bear out that more and more executives see this as a key strategy to proactive career management, rather than waiting for fate to intervene. Armstrong Craven's networking events are designed to give individuals a forum to explore and share their personal experiences within the job market, and talk about career transition, providing much needed specialist support and advice for those taking a leap of faith into the unknown.

76 per cent of those polled would consider taking a salary cut averaging between 20-30 per cent in order to achieve their career goal. The key factors influencing respondents' next move included a new challenge, better long term prospects and achieving a better work-life balance – money and location were further down the scale and family friendly policies were not considered key.

When asked the appropriate time to start planning the next career move, 43 per cent of respondents felt that 2 years into the job was the best time to start thinking about future roles with 12 per cent citing the first day they start a new job as an optimum time! 71 per cent felt valued by their current or most recent employer and 66 per cent said that 1-2 years was the minimum acceptable time to stay with a company.

The view was split as to whether the executive job market was inactive due to executives “staying put” and half of those polled felt that transferable skills was the biggest factor that influenced employers when selecting a senior employee. Only 27 per cent agreed that it is common for executives to fail in their first year in the job.

92 per cent had taken a career risk from changing industries and starting a new business to leading an MBO. When asked if they thought forums aimed at helping senior executives and entrepreneurs to become better business leaders were worth the money, time and effort, a massive 78 per cent agreed that they were worthwhile. Amazingly, only 20 per cent took legal advice prior to signing their latest contract or service agreement.

Armstrong Craven’s Career Management service uses a wealth of experience gained from over a decade as a leading executive research and business information provider to give practical, information-rich advice on how to negotiate the job search world. Clients are able to choose from a menu of services leading to a bespoke programme. Key elements of the service include:

Research – using its expertise in the field of research to provide individuals seeking their next career move with detailed information on prospective employers. Individuals have direct access to a team of experienced researchers who use state of the art technology-based solutions.

Web Site solutions – a sophisticated and highly accessible website has been set up to assist individuals in their search for a new career. This website provides support and information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Coaching and Counselling – a range of solutions are used to ensure the needs of individuals are effectively met eg Career Review and Self Awareness sessions which can include a combination of any of the company’s services from self-awareness discussion, emotional coaching to job hunting skills and alternative options such as self employment, further training and voluntary work.

Support – communication can be enhanced by being able to support individuals either remotely or face to face dependent on location. Secretarial support is also available.

Lisa Gibson, director of Career Management Services at Armstrong Craven says: “There is an increasing need by professionals for this specialised service and it is refreshing to see more and more senior level executives taking a proactive approach to their careers. With our track record in the executive research world, resourcing senior and middle management roles, we are perfectly placed to support those seeking a career change or simply looking for support and advice in the executive job search arena.”

ENDS

Note to editors

Armstrong Craven is Europe's leading provider of executive research, the cost-effective, proactive way to resource boardroom, senior and middle management roles. The company also offers a knowledge and information service, gathering intelligence on markets, companies and individuals; and provides career management to support individuals through periods of career transition.

Armstrong Craven serves an international client base ranging from FTSE 100 companies to SMEs, private equity firms and professional advisers and has an ongoing commitment to client service and innovation. Established in 1990, Armstrong Craven has offices in Manchester and London and is part of Work Group plc.

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