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Ben Shepherd

People person and closet nerd

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Ben Shepherd · 1st

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1d · Edited ·

For those of you who know me; you know I try to be as open and honest about things as I can be. I just wanted to share some perspective I've gained over the past weeks.

Bottom line? Hunting for work is hard. Like, really bloody hard. After I posted that I was looking for my next role, I was absolutely overwhelmed by responses; a truly humbling experience. Those who reached out fell into two main categories: people who knew me and wanted to recommend me for a role, and recruiters.

Before I took any call or pursued an opportunity, I made the time to write down what I was looking for in a role - I wanted to interact with people, to grow something special, to enhance my cyber and technology focus, and to contribute something meaningful to the industry I would be supporting. I made these requirements very clear to everyone I spoke to - some people were able to interpret those requirements and align my expectations to a particular role. To their credit, I had others say 'thank you for being honest, that's not what we are looking for and we wish you the best' (I fully respect and appreciate that) - but I also had others push me toward fully technical role with limited interaction, selling it to me like it aligned with my career desires.

Honestly - I get it. Sometimes a role exists and it may not be perfect; you make it yours and adapt. Other times, you simply aren't aligned to a role - and that is perfectly ok! But the worst case is when a role is painted as something that it's not. In my years of playing in cyber, technology and Defence, I have learned to pick some key terms out of PDs, or interpret phrases to understand what is actually required in a role - so, please, be honest.

Finally - a job hunt is lonely. Those people who recommended me for roles and followed up have been constant - and I truly appreciate it. But - and I'm being brutal here - after the first 3 days of my phone ringing off the hook, I've literally had two recruiters follow up. That was nearly four weeks ago. Tip for those recruiters out there? Follow up with your people. Even if it's bad news - just keep in touch. Silence is a killer when you're thinking about your next role; a simple 'no' means you can pursue other opportunities with confidence.

So all in all, here's my advice for job seekers:

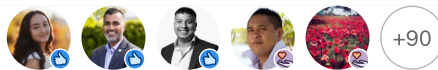
1. Know what you want in your next role and be able to articulate that clearly. I wrote my desires down and discussed every one of them to ensure potential roles were the right fit.
2. Be realistic and know your value. If you know your worth, stay true to that. Understand your value proposition and be able to speak to that.
3. Be patient. These things legitimately take time. This has been my biggest challenge to date.
4. Show integrity. If you don't think a role is right, say so with respect and courtesy. Everyone walks away better for the experience.

The hunt continues. Thank you everyone for your support over this time - I appreciate you all.

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Luca Marzorati • 1st

1d ...

Associate Director - Cybersecurity & DevOps - Connecting the right people, at the right time in the right place - Co-founder @CISO-Connect

It's a long journey my friend, but integrity, honesty and also be patient and realistic will only bring good things.

We'll get there!

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Mark Nicholson CPPD • 2nd

1d ...

Principal Consultant at PARA BELLUM Solutions // Owner at PARACHUTE LANDING Beer & BBQ

May I add that the relationship is a 2-way street. If people know you are hungry for a role with them, they will touch base with you weekly or fortnightly. Don't discount getting after roles yourself or even creating a role with a company that mirrors your skillset. People want to hire people who see an opportunity where no one else can.

...see more

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Ben Shepherd Author

1d ...

People person and closet nerd

[Mark Nicholson CPPD](#) totally agree. And to be honest, I'm having much more success there than waiting patiently for the phone to ring.

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Lee Kushner • 2nd

12h ...

President, LJ Kushner and Associates, LLC

I empathize with you and all others looking for a role and who may have been forced into job search mode due to some reduction in force or layoff.

I think that all of the things that you share make a great deal of sense - but I think you may be overly optimistic to think that the 'right r ...see more

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Kate Boden • 2nd

19h ...

Administrative Coordinator | Process Improvement | Customer Relations

Thank you for sharing this Ben, it's a wild and challenging journey. I found [phyl terry](#), author of the book Never Search Alone, and the Job Search Councils they have created space for ([Phyl.org](#)) to be an insightful and collaborative space.

...see more



Never Search Alone

[phyl.org](#)

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phyl terry (They/Them) • 3rd+


19h ...

Founder at Collaborative Gain; Author, "Never Search Alone"; Founder, Slow Art Day; Co-Author "Customers Included"

Thank you for sharing Never Search Alone and our volunteer-driven community with Ben. As you know, we have helped thousands find good jobs in this tough job market - and want to help thousands more with our free services.

...see more

Like · 🗨️ 1 | Reply





Tim Cullen · 2nd

Services Sales Principal at Hitachi Vantara

1d ...

Love this mate! Well written, the the rawness

Like ·  1 | Reply




Chris Huet (He/Him) · 2nd


Helping Leaders Improve Performance Through Better Communication | Leadership Keynote Speaker | Coach | Poet

1d (edited) ...

Thank you for sharing your experience Ben. I know it will connect with a lot of people here.

Good luck with the hunt. As French fighter pilots say, "a la Cha ...see more

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Jim Roy · 2nd

Search Partner at Page Executive

1d ...

Brilliant Shep, great to share even on a lonely road, well played. Number 4 - integrity is everything.

Like ·  2 | Reply





Tony Bell (He/Him) · 3rd+

Commercial Director || Digital || Business Leader || Football Coach

1d ...

Can relate to this one!!

Like ·  1 | Reply




Lloyd N. · 2nd

Cyber Security Leader | CISSP CCSP MCyberSec GCIA GCFA GNFA GDAT

19h ...

Thanks for sharing! Great advice, very relatable. All the best with the hunt mate :)

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