

An Enterprise of One: Career Management for the Technical Professional

Joe Levy

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The Enterprise of One

- You are in the business of providing a service
 - Your employer is your customer
 - Your customer is your employer
 - Keep them buying what you're selling!
- With the passage of time:
 - Your customers' needs will change
 - Your competition will change
 - Your own motivations will change



Who Am I ?

- (... and what gives me the right to talk about this?)
- Trained as an engineer; work in engineering, IT and Business Analysis
 - No special training in Career Management
- Running the JobSeekers education, networking & support group at Trinity Church, Princeton



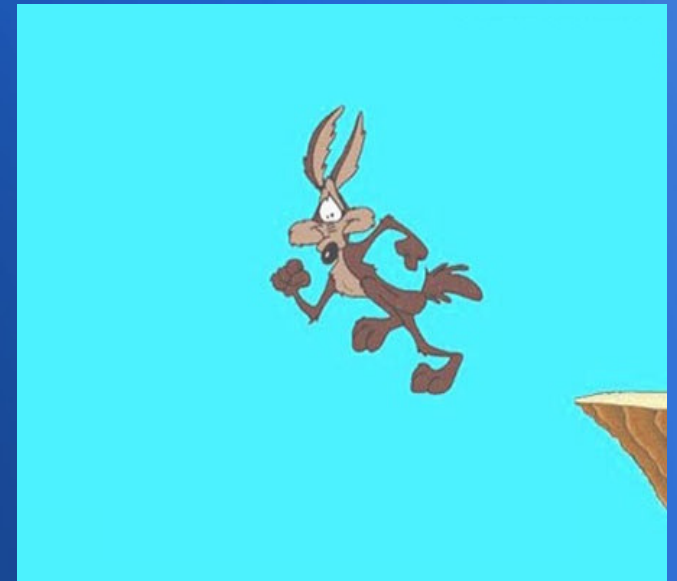
Who Am I ?

- This is the collected Career Management wisdom of hundreds of JobSeekers members
- Learn from other people's mistakes
 - You won't live long enough to make them all, yourself



Career Management Concept

- What is Career Management?
 - An active, continuous process
 - **NOT** a job-hunting activity (only)



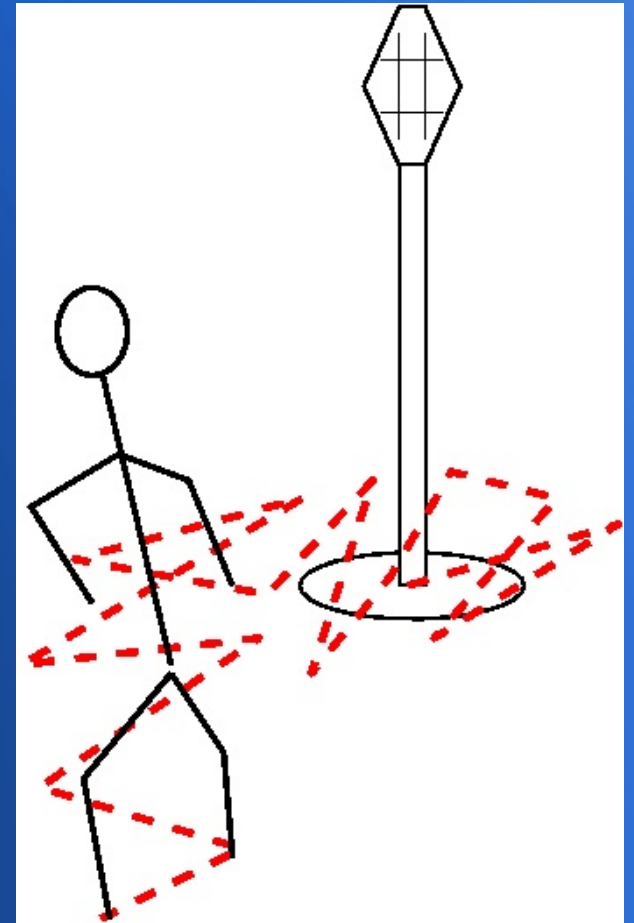
Career Management Concept

- Bring your problem solving skills to this task !
- Don't just let "life happen"
- Invest in your life: enhance Ownership Equity
- Write your own biography in real-time



Make It Your Own

- Take action !
- Use my outline – or not
 - No one right way
- But **DO** take action !
 - Life is not a random walk



The Career Management Cycle

- Set & Revise Goals
 - Periodically
- Assessment
 - Periodically
 - Can be time-consuming
- Take Action
 - Continuous



The Career Management Cycle

- Goals: set & revise
 - Life, vs. career
 - Short, medium, and long term
 - Priorities



Goals

	Life	Career
Short Term	1. <TBD> 2. <TBD> 3. <TBD>	1. <TBD> 2. <TBD> 3. <TBD>
Medium Term	1. <TBD> 2. <TBD> 3. <TBD>	1. <TBD> 2. <TBD> 3. <TBD>
Long Term	1. <TBD> 2. <TBD> 3. <TBD>	1. <TBD> 2. <TBD> 3. <TBD>

(Just Kidding)



The Career Management Cycle

- Assessment
 - Progress against your prior action plan
 - Changes in your market
 - Changes in your competition
 - Changes in your motivations
- Drives revisions to your goals
- Drives your action plan



Assessment

- Progress since previous assessment
 - Results as compared to your prior action plan
 - Goals achieved ?
 - Satisfactory progress ?
 - Why not ?



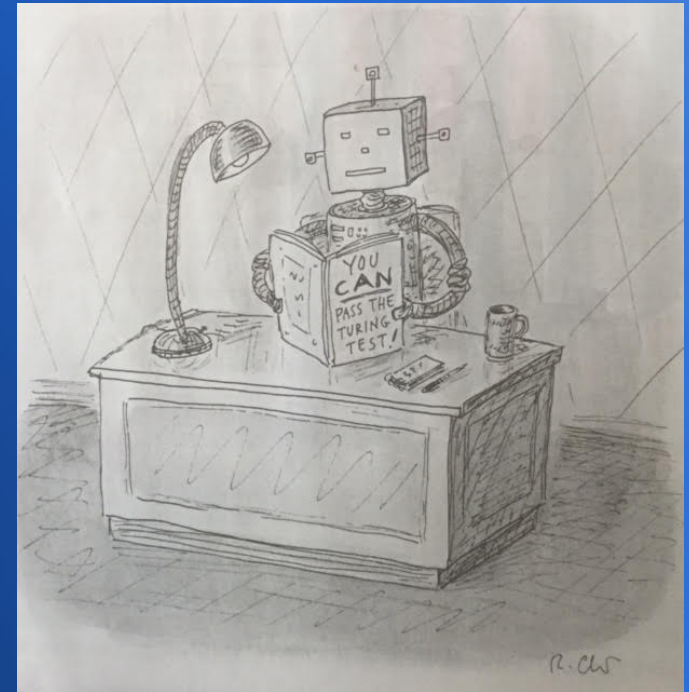
Assessment

- Assess your market
 - Your current customer(s) / employer
 - Corporate health
 - Internal trends
 - Are you part of a cost center or a profit center ?
 - “Core competency” or overhead ?
 - Your industry
 - Is there an easy path to a soft landing ?



Assessment

- Assess the competitive environment
 - You are not the only provider of your service
 - Who is your competition?



Assessment

- Assess the competitive environment
 - How can you distinguish YOUR service ?
 - What new service can you provide, beyond your competition ?
 - Should you be targeting your service at a different market ?
- Change yourself, or change your competition



Assessment

- Assess your motivations
 - How has your life changed ?
 - Do your career goals still support your life goals ?
 - Do you have new goals ?
 - Are some of your goals no longer relevant ?
- What do you want to be when you grow up?





Action

- Revise your goals
- Develop an action plan to drive toward your goals
 - Actions under your control; not dependent on others
 - Don't try to do everything at once



The Career Management Cycle



Record Keeping

- Career Management is a long term effort
 - You can't keep it all in your head
 - A written record makes it concrete
 - Recording it matters; the method does not
 - Use what works for you



Record Keeping

- Record your goals
 - Tangible form makes them real to you
- Record your assessment findings
 - Prepare for re-assessment next time
- Record your action plan
 - Tangible items to check off



Record Keeping

- Activity journal: how much?
 - Significant accomplishments
 - Anything that you might include on a resume
 - Anything you might use in a corporate appraisal
 - Anything that's particularly satisfying
 - Daily journal useful for billing support, but otherwise might be too much



For the technical professional:

- Upgrade your enterprise offerings
 - Continuing education
 - Skills training: self, or OJT
 - Soft skills
- Get out of your rut
 - Leave your comfort zone
 - Seek new roles



For the technical professional:

- Continuing education
 - Degree programs
 - Certificates
 - Specialized product training
- Proactive OJT
 - Learning on someone else's dime
 - Project teams
 - Step up !



For the technical professional:

- Soft Skills
 - Support a more senior role
 - Business focus, vs. technical focus
 - Technical lead or technical manager
 - Line manager



For the technical professional:

- Move from “specialist” to “generalist”
 - Add business related skills
 - Core competency in your industry
 - Project Management
 - Finance and Accounting
 - Communication !
 - Public Speaking
 - Data presentation



For the technical professional:

- Grow, maintain & manage your professional network
 - Starts in college – or earlier
 - Colleagues, classmates, managers, customers, vendors
 - Networking events
 - Social, church, volunteer connections
- Easy to maintain with social media, now



Conclusions

- Don't just let “life happen”
- Write your own biography !
- Drive toward your goals - always



Thank you for coming!

- Questions / comments ?
- <http://tinyurl.com/nj-jobseekers>
- joelevy@computer.org

