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Help Friends Find Jobs



Ernest Bernard and my wonderful dog Trixie. Ernest is so amazingly talented, always has a top-tier job and doesn't need help. Sometimes, a kind word or a nudge can always help a decision-maker pick the obvious right choice.

A theme of a relationship book I recently read was that women find their self-worth in the quality of their relationships while men find their self-worth in their work. I equate a man losing a job to a woman losing a best friend. It can be devastating. According to PBS, men are twice as likely to commit suicide when not holding a job. Not surprisingly, the number is higher the older the man. Someone who loses his job after 20-30 years is a prime target to take his own life, but may be the least likely guy to do the unthinkable.

If you would have asked me 20 years ago who would be in my Top 10 most together guy, this guy was in it. He was a top producer at Northwestern Mutual Insurance, a master of referrals and world class follow up. He started to do worse and worse at work, and, sure enough, the guy we all thought had it together took his own life. Similar situation with another friend, so always lend a hand to an unemployed or struggling friend. I have two sad examples, plus a fake-death-and-flee-the-country story. The fake death story is in Chapter 45.

So, I help anyone (from a lifetime friend to an acquaintance) when they are fired or without a job. I take it as seriously as if they were about to commit suicide. I don't half-ass it. I don't just give them one potential job opportunity. I give them as many as they need until they get a job. I don't call once. I check back, and then check again. I look for an opportunity and call the potential head-hunter or employer. I talk about the person's strong qualities or good character. Then I follow up (Those words again). My work is not over until they have a job. I try to call on Monday mornings because that's when you start your week and the unemployed don't have a place to go. A benefit of finding someone in need of a job is the good karma and the feeling that you are doing something for the greater good.

It is extremely rewarding helping someone in need. During my 50 years, I have probably helped 40 to 50 folks get a job. Recently, I helped a friend get to the next step on an interview, and another friend, Chancy Pray, thanked me at a trade show for the kind words to the company that had just hired him. Some

remember that I helped them, and some don't. Some will do business with me in their new job, and some will never contact me again. It doesn't matter! I remember when my father was without a job for the first time in his life in his 50s. He came from an era where you worked at a job for 40 years and retired with a gold watch. The world changed in the 1980s with leverage buyout and junk bonds, companies were gutted, and the generation of guys expecting job security were kicked to the curb. That event changed my father, and it changed me too. I saw what it does to a man to not be able to provide, to have someone think they are better off without you. It hurts and when my friends are hurting I step up! I will continue finding jobs for people until the day I die. It's that important.