

March 2003

My job search is over! I have taken a fulltime position with Kaiser Permanente, a very large HMO. It's been one whole month and I have deposited my first paycheck, making it finally feel real. It was 11 months door to desk and quite an experience. Info on the new job is at the end of the message.

Thanks to everyone who helped me in my search in this difficult job market. I really appreciate you concern, assistance, ideas, and support. Special thanks to the folks at Spherion and CPC in Danville; couldn't have done it without them.

How did I get my new job? – Networking, pure and simple. A member of a networking group that I participated in landed at Kaiser in January, saw the opening, and forwarded a copy of the requisition to me. I prepared a cover letter and sent it back to her along with my resume. She passed them to the hiring manager. I had a phone screen with HR followed soon after with a face to face with the hiring manager. Within a week I was back to interview with the next level up and an offer came within a day. It took a couple of weeks to complete background/reference checks and to complete negotiations. I started on March 31 just 6 quick weeks after submitting my information.

What worked/didn't in my search? I started with a focus on recruiters. Next I got into job boards posting to all and applying for jobs on-line. My next big effort was networking. I did a lot of low touch (mainly e-mail and voice messages to any contact I could get) and high touch (actually connecting and establishing relationships). All of the above approaches have merit and should be pursued, but it was 90% networking at the end.

The very best results were from people I did high touch networking – they actually looked for things for me and suggested me to others. I spent a lot of time in job hunting networking groups. Some of these groups are excellent and you feel like part of a team working together sharing leads/concepts/tips and looking out for each other. Persistence applied to each of these areas made a difference - it's easy too approach to a company or person, hear nothing, and give up. I didn't ask for a single "informational interview" as the networking produced more leads than I could follow up with.

Note that I did 3 major rewrites of my resume and finally think that I got it right. I actually felt good about it each time, but after 3 months I did it again based on feedback or insights. Right means that the intro is Compelling, Crisp, and Clear and the "history" follows the standard format – company name/highlights, responsibilities, and quantifiable achievements (3 bullets for each job in the last 10 years). It's like the headlines of a news article, people will read to the last word if they like it, but turn the page if the intro isn't interesting.

What did I do with all of my free time while laid off? – What free time?! I worked at finding a job just about every day, usually 50+ hours a week. Yes, I did have some time off. For my parents 55<sup>th</sup> and in-laws 60<sup>th</sup> anniversaries we spent a week vacationing with

each of them. I performed a week of volunteer work for a non-profit group. I lectured twice to grade school children. I spent about a week helping a friend raise a barn at his "ranch". I spent countless hours helping other new job seekers get off the ground.

The job – (Abbreviated from the job posting) Senior Manager, e-Procurement and Supply Chain Management

“As a result of this restructuring Kaiser has identified the need for a senior manager to lead the development of new applications and the support of existing environments. Provide overall management to a staff of over 100 employees and several multi-million dollar development activities. Proven ability to manage large development and support teams and manage staff that is geographically dispersed is essential” – staff is located in 7 locations up and down the west coast.

“The successful candidate will have a comprehensive knowledge of all aspects of electronic procurement systems and all aspects of supply chain and materials management processing. Familiarity with a broad ranges of platforms and has demonstrated experience with some of the following development protocols: Web, Client server, Mainframe, Vendor product integration. Vendor specific knowledge of integrated procurement and materials management systems, or the integration of vendor products with legacy environments.”

Concluding remarks – I have learned a lot about the process of a successful job search and met a lot of good people along the way. While I hope to never have to go through this again I would be happy to assist anyone else to make it a productive and fun endeavor.

My new work phone is 925-926-5089. My contact information below is still good.