

Career & Business Journal

Reinvent Yourself: New Century, New Career, New You

by Greta Couper, Director, Alumni Career Services

With the dawning of the new century, many people are reevaluating their lives and goals. This does not mean you need to completely change the person you are—in fact, to do so would be to lose some wonderful qualities and skills. What it does mean is that you should take the time to see if you are currently using all your inherent skills and potential. By tapping into underused skills you can "reinvent" yourself to become a more successful and happier version of the person you already are!

In this rapidly changing world we can no longer think in terms of a single career, a single calling. You will change careers—not just jobs—three to five times over the course of your working lives, especially since the Internet has brought the global community closer and opened up a wealth of new job opportunities. But this world of change, with all of its potential and promise, shouldn't be feared or seen as an unfortunate development. Although traditionally secure jobs may not exist, this also means that being stuck in an unwanted job in a rigid, hierarchical organization for life also does not exist! What is required to be personally successful is the ability to adapt to new situations as they arise. How can this be done? Let's take a look.

(see REINVENT, page 9)



Alumni at first Industry-Insights panel, Seaver College Career Faire (L to R) Jay Rubenstein SC'77, Nora Hughes SM'86, Jennifer Sakurai SC'87, Dirk Lay SM'88

Benefits Abound ...

When you graduate from Pepperdine University you gain a diploma, a first-rate education, lifelong friends and professional colleagues, skills necessary for a meaningful career, AND, you join a new family—the Pepperdine University Alumni Association (PUAA). But the benefits do not end there. New benefits for 2000 include:

- **FREE lifetime Web-based e-mail** for alumni, students, faculty, staff, and friends. You may sign up by visiting PepperdineAlumni.com.
- **A Personalized StartPage** is available that you can modify.
- **An expanded Alumni Registry, Résumé Posting, and Job Posting.** Check our link at www.pepperdine.edu/alumni for these new services.

Ongoing benefits of membership in PUAA include:

- Networking, Professional Development Seminars and Social Events
- Community Service Opportunities
- Publications, including *Pepperdine Voice*
- Lifetime Career Assistance
- Travel Programs
- Business Referrals
- Library Privileges
- Bookstore Discounts (10%)
- Various merchant discounts (See alumni Web page)
- Center for the Arts Discounts (10%)
- Athletic Tickets Discounts
- Athletic Facility Privileges (for one year from date of graduation)

- Rental Car & Hotel Discounts
- University Credit Union Membership
- Insurance Programs (Medical, Dental, Vision, Group, and Auto)
- Pepperdine VISA Card (with no annual fee)
- Theme Park Discounts

We add new benefits all the time! Contact us with suggestions for programs you would like us to offer. The Pepperdine University Alumni Association relies on active corporate partners to maintain and increase its programs, services, and activities. For more information, please contact Kim Gibbs at (310) 568 5668. Call 800-767-ALUM or send your request for a benefits packet or alumni card to alumni@pepperdine.edu.

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ALUMNI: Your Untapped Resource for Career Connections

by Kim Gibbs (SC '90), Director, Alumni Outreach Services

George Pepperdine remarked, "I am counting on you, the alumni, to live long after I am gone and to continue the ever-increasing and widening waves of good citizenship and Christian influence embodied in the ideals of our college."

The Pepperdine University Alumni Association (PUAA) strives to maintain the spirit and mission with which this University was founded more than sixty years ago. We are dedicated to strengthening the name of Pepperdine University and promoting communication and interaction among the University and the Pepperdine alumni family, students, faculty, staff, parents, donors, and friends.

Alumni place great value in the friendships and experiences they developed at Pepperdine. They believe that with local involvement the future of the University, as well as their future prospects for making new acquaintances and business leads, can be dramatically enhanced.

The professional development benefits and areas of involvement with the outreach programs include:

- business networking
- social, cultural, and community service opportunities
- meeting prominent alumni and community leaders
- attending guest speaker and industry-related forums

- business leads
- job and internship leads
- Industry Insights seminars
- summer employment program for students
- lifetime career services
- Free web-based e-mail

Past events include career nights, job fairs, career mentor programs, internships, and career enhancement seminars (featuring prominent community leaders, alumni, and business professionals). We are constantly looking for energetic volunteers to help. If you are interested in coordinating send-off parties, community service projects, events, athletics, or any other ideas, please call Kim Gibbs (SC '90), director of Alumni Outreach Services, at (800) 767-2586, ext. 2. We would like to see new volunteers involved with all our alumni programs.

For additional information, visit: www.pepperdine.edu/alumni



Kim Gibbs, (SC '90) Director, Alumni Outreach Services, with Jill Tate, Administrative Assistant, Alumni Outreach Services.

The Mission of Pepperdine University

Pepperdine is a Christian university committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and Christian values, where students are strengthened for lives of purpose, service, and leadership.

Connecting to Business Partners

Management Partners is a community of Graziadio School (GSBM) alumni, students, and friends dedicated to: 1) providing ongoing education that enhances the value of the Pepperdine business degree; 2) increasing opportunities for professional advancement; and 3) providing financial and other support to the Graziadio School of Business and Management.

The Management Partners Leadership Council is currently planning several outstanding events for 2000. Past speakers have included Sky Dayton of EarthLink, Mike Roberts of McDonald's USA/West Division, Mark Lormer of Autobytel.com, and Scott Weller of CNN Networks. Whenever we can, we will be collab-

orating with business and industry to provide you information on events of interest with the most current, up-to-date speakers and topics.

For additional information, contact the Office of Advancement and Alumni Relations at (310) 568-5761, or visit the Web at: www.pepperdine.edu/alumni/events/gsbm.htm

The school's on-line business journal, the Graziadio Business Report, can be found online at: <http://bschool.pepperdine.edu/gbr>. It provides current articles written by Graziadio professors, a booklist of recommended business books, and several other interesting sections. Bookmark this site and return to it often to maintain cutting-edge business information



The *Pepperdine Career & Business Journal* is an annual publication of the Alumni Career Office. This tabloid is dedicated to providing career information to all alumni through an overview of the Pepperdine University career centers and services; to increasing the success of alumni-owned businesses; to promoting friends and local merchants through advertising products and services; and to providing a means for corporate recruiters to specify their hiring needs and contact information.

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Connecting to Colleagues in Education and Psychology

The Colleagues organization was established to encourage active involvement and support of alumni and students of the Graduate School of Education and Psychology in the mission and programs of Pepperdine University. Benefits of a Colleagues membership include:

- a subscription to *Colleague*, the alumni magazine of GSEP, and *Pepperdine People*, the University's color magazine featuring alumni and

friends;

- invitations to networking and professional events, such as the Call to Leadership event on April 1, 2000, featuring educator Linda Darling Hammond speaking on the topic "Creating Powerful Professional Renewal in Schools";
- invitations to special school and University social events;

(see *CONNECTING*, page 9)

Use The Internet To Help Reinvent Your Business

By Clay H. Womack (SM'94), Chairman and CEO of Direct Stock Market (www.dsm.com)

Is yours an Internet-savvy business? If not, it's time to think about reinventing your organization.

The Internet has changed forever the way businesses operate, bringing greater flexibility, faster execution, and more opportunities. The Internet gives you new ways to promote yourself, identify and contact customers, forge strategic partnerships, raise capital, lower costs and build successful relationships. It's a powerful tool to help you position your business for greater competitiveness.

Even reinventing your mindset about the Internet can be a major boost for your company. And if you're thinking that you have to be strictly a high-tech, emerging-growth company to benefit from the Internet, think again. Low-tech businesses also can gain a productivity edge by harnessing the Net. Here are a few quick ideas for you to consider.

Is your business effectively using e-mail? I know this may sound like a very elementary question, but there still are small businesses out there that

feel technology—including connecting to the Internet for e-mail—is an expense their businesses don't need. But communication is the lifeblood of any business. Don't let yours be anemic. E-mail is the new standard for communicating and transmitting documents, both internally and externally.

Do you have a Web site? Just about everyone has a web site—from community churches to kids at school. You may have a Web site for your business, but are you using it efficiently? A Web site can give your business opportunities for better customer service, more visibility, and 24-hour access, seven days a week. Potential customers and clients can use it to access marketing materials, learn more about what you do, and how you can help them. Make the Web a new pathway to your company.

Can your sales force access company marketing materials online? Flexibility is essential for today's selling strategies and tactics. One client's needs differ from another's. The Internet can help your sales force change presentations, adapt proposals to client needs, even tailor

materials that can be electronically delivered to the customer's email address. Empower your sales force for greater profits.

Are you promoting your business on Web sites where your potential clients visit? Our Web site—www.dsm.com—for example, contains a unique community of service professionals that can be utilized by its convergence of emerging companies and investors. The DSM Professional Services portal is a rapidly expanding community, ranging from advertising and public relations firms to recruiting and technology services companies. From specialized consultants and attorneys to printing and translation services, DSM is providing a growing list of experts to aid in all aspects of making business work. I invite you to electronically drop by and look at how we might be able to help promote your business.

Companies that aren't constantly looking at how to improve what they do are boxing themselves in. Reinventing what your company does is one way to make sure you stay competitive. The Internet is the engine that can make it happen.

Mobile Computing Gets Personal

These days, with the proliferation of mobile access solutions and pervasive nature of the Internet, it should come as no surprise that everyone is talking about mobile this and wireless that. However, the real news is not only the sheer volume of mobile computing choices, but that users can personalize their particular mobile access solution to reflect their individual needs. As the industry sits on the edge of an explosion of communications technology options, mobile users will demand the flexibility of accessing their personal and business-related information, perhaps via a combination of these technologies, from any location, anytime.

Communications technologies are poised for another "growth spurt." Broadband and wireless technologies are due to provide dramatically improved speed and service as well as gain more general acceptance. With mobile professionals constantly on the lookout for the next great solution that will offer more convenience, reliability, and make the speed of business go even faster, companies like Xircom are challenged to satisfy unique user needs in a "sea of choices" and changing technologies.

Some of the more savvy manufacturers are offering technology in modular units that can be used alone or mixed and matched to meet communications needs both now and in the future. Rather than have users dispose of existing technology and invest in something new, they can combine existing products with the newer technology. In other words, users can personalize their solutions by purchasing the technology they need

now, and upgrading to what they need later, without having to completely "swap out" and replace their original purchase. The trend toward personalization offers customers the freedom to add on only what they need and eliminate what they don't need.

Equipping customers with a variety of information access options creates more personalized connectivity solutions that precisely fit their needs. Recognizing that mobility will increasingly become a personal choice and that the Internet will drive mobile users' desire to be connected "all the time, everywhere," Xircom is looking at traditional product categories with a view to bringing forth personalized mobile access solutions.

Xircom, Inc., co-founded by Pepperdine graduate (MBA'90), president, and CEO Dirk Gates, created the mobile networking market in 1988 with the introduction of the Pocket LAN Adapter, the industry's first solution for connecting notebooks to local area networks. Continuing its leadership in providing access solutions for mobile PC users worldwide, Xircom designs and develops a diverse set of communications products. For more details please visit www.xircom.com. Whether in the office, from home, at a customer site, or from a hotel room, Xircom solutions enable mobile users around the world to access the resources they need easily and reliably.

Evaluating a Start-Up Concept

How do you evaluate a start-up to determine if it will be successful? Look carefully at the business concept or model. The concepts that have proven to be successful are those that transform an existing industry or enhance the relationship between customer consumer and business. An example is eBay's model of bringing people together who don't typically have other means to communicate or a physical place in which to exchange goods and services.

A concept that provides choice, convenience, and control, especially on the consumer side, can be a success indicator. Good sites and business models also include communication, commerce, and community as part of the process.

An early revenue stream is a positive indicator, also. The Internet allows companies to bring people together in many ways for many reasons. Whatever can be used to provide immediate revenue should be exploited. Information sites have more challenges for early revenue, obviously, but with good business concepts they can still be successful.

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The Road to a Fundable Business Plan

Almost without exception, every ambitious early-stage technology company needs money—and lots of it—to secure a foothold in the business community. The price of entry into this competitive fund-raising arena is a thoughtfully constructed, compelling business plan that piques the interest and commands the support of top-tier venture capitalists, individual investors, and venture bankers. There are, of course, infinite variations on the theme of how to write a plan that reaps sufficient capital.

Often neglected is an exploration of the preliminary thinking process—that period of intense creative brainstorming, research, analysis, and business-concept testing that should precede the drafting of the plan document itself. While struggling to formulate a viable plan, entrepreneurs invariably take two steps forward and one step back. It's an uneven path, fraught with unforeseen frustrations and difficulties. But thrashing out those difficulties belongs in the plan development stage, not while you're hammering out the text. This development process begins with a commitment by company principals to think seriously, with fresh perspectives, about their core business concept.

At this preliminary stage, entrepreneurs need to ask themselves tough questions. What's our edge in the market? Is it innovative technology? Do we have a particularly savvy management team? Is the idea viable as it stands, or do goals, strategies or tactics need refining? New information uncovered during this preliminary development stage could mean a change in direction for the fledgling company, sometimes a drastic one. Don't be afraid to amend the business approach or new product direction while it's still early in the game.

A key goal for business plan developers is to formulate the sense of purpose that sets their company, its people, and products apart from competitors.

Further, emerging-growth companies in search of funding need to gather and assess data from outside sources to lend credibility to their cause. It's essential to secure and factor in accurate information about competitive products, regulatory constraints, and product or technology patent conflicts.

Venture capitalists (VC) and venture bankers need convincing that the start-up's market, technology, and management team are viable. Despite the fact that successful VCs make their own expert assessments of company revenue potential, they will evaluate an entrepreneur's business acumen at least in part on his or her ability to make reasonable five-year growth projections regarding revenues and rates of investor returns. To help establish credibility for a company's financial growth projections, entrepreneurs should seek out and include references to published market data from well-regarded analyst firms.

Another important plan component is a specific funding request, namely, the amount of money needed to carry the fledgling company to a major milestone. When you write the plan, you will need to detail how investors' funds will be spent, and how they will make money. Whatever you do, don't rely on old clichés like, "We'll be a billion dollar company in five years." That's the quickest way to undercut your credibility.

A critical step in business plan development

involves securing professional help to prepare realistic company and new product cost projections. And, before you start writing the business plan draft, find out how your concept is rated by respected business people, both inside and outside your immediate circle—people who know nothing about your company and its technology, and people who do.

In sum, the time is right to draft a business plan when you've: (1) asked yourself the hard questions; (2) refined your business or product ideas accordingly; (3) collected and assessed relevant market data; (4) secured needed facts and financial projections from professionals; (5) sized up your competitors; and (6) tested your core concept with business associates and influential members of the market segment you've targeted. The cumulative effect of this considerable investment of time, energy, and brain power will pay off handsomely in the form of a business plan that successfully secures needed funding.

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60 Seconds and You've Got the Job

Of all the techniques I've ever taught about job search, the "60-second sell" is the one most tell me "was the best thing I ever learned." Many wrote me after reading about it in my book *60 Seconds & You're Hired!*, stating that this was the most influential tool they used during the interview process. The 60-second sell helps you target your skills to meet the employer's needs. It allows you to summarize your most marketable strengths in a brief and concise manner.

Successful job hunters praised the tool for several reasons:

- It was effective in capturing the employer's attention.
- It provided an excellent concise answer to tricky questions.
- It was very easy to use the formula.
- It was a great way to end an interview.

The 60 second sell is a memorized statement that summarizes and links together your five top selling points to perform that employer's specific job. For example, if the employer were hiring an accountant you would want to summarize your years in the field and your computer expertise as two of your selling

points. You must put each point into an order so that the thoughts flow together in the most effective way. When you verbalize the sell statement it should take 60 seconds or less. Once memorized, this technique will be easy for you to recall during the interview.

When to Use It

Most interviews are over before they ever really get started. You have to immediately capture the employer's attention as being a top-notch candidate. Open the interview by using your 60-second sell! Very typically the opening interview question is: Tell me about yourself? In a recent interview I conducted, I got a 20-minute answer. After a first minute or two, my attention was lost. Had the person answered with a 60-second sell, he might have started the interview with me listening and interested. Questions such as Tell me about yourself? require a brief summary noting your most marketable skills, not a life story.

Why should I hire you? is another question to which your 60-second sell is the perfect answer. Other applicable inquiries include: What are your strengths? What makes you think you are qualified for this job? What makes you think

you will succeed in this position? Why do you want this job? These questions offer you an excellent way to stress your most marketable skills. The 60-second sell is effective because it demonstrates your strengths and illustrates how you will fill the employer's needs. That is the key to its success, and yours.

Be Memorable—End With a Convincing Close

Most seasoned interviewers will tell you that it is very easy to forget a person 60 seconds after they leave. Close the interview with your 60-second sell. Be sure to incorporate any major point that you learned from the employer during the interview, replacing one of the original five points with a new one to match their need. The last words the employer will remember is your statement: "Thank you for this opportunity to meet with you today. In closing, let me summarize for you what I'd bring to this job ... insert your 60-second sell."

Robin Ryan is a Seattle-based career counselor and best-selling author of five books, including 60 Seconds & You're Hired! Sbe can be reached at (425) 226-0414.

Mentoring for Maximum Benefit— a New Twist on a Great Idea

Organizational success today depends upon the continuing ability to develop talent, retain capable people, and build strong leadership skills up and down the organizational ladder. Mentoring is critical to developing leadership for the twenty-first century. Done well, mentoring produces win-win results:

- The protégé can more easily accomplish his or her business, career, and personal goals.
- The organization can address training issues and spot advancement opportunities.
- Productivity increases, especially when it enables new hires to contribute more to the organization sooner.

Mentoring also can help organizations retain valuable employees, particularly Generation-X workers. A recent article in *Workforce* magazine called mentoring a "non-negotiable demand" in the eyes of many young, talented professionals today. How ironic then, that just when individuals and organizations need the benefits of mentoring the most, opportunities for establishing mentoring relationships are evaporating! As hierarchies flatten and workers change jobs more often, many organizations have not retained enough veteran executives to mentor newer workers in the traditional sense. Then, too, overworked top managers sometimes feel less than enthusiastic about investing time in protégés who may not stay with the organization on a long-term basis.

Three years ago, CPH recognized a need for an intentional mentoring process that would benefit the company and jumpstart the professional growth of our middle managers. As we thought about how to touch the maximum number of middle managers in the most efficient way, we decided to try mentoring in a group setting. We modeled our first attempt—the Alpha Forum—on two groups we already knew well:

- A weekly gathering of internal senior management staff
- A monthly group sponsored by an external local management association

Each of our senior managers serves as a mentor or "learning leader" in one of the CPH Forums. Before being assigned to lead a group, these managers receive eight hours of facilitator training. The training addresses issues like the essentials of group dynamics, the ins and outs of learning styles, the art of storytelling, and ways to give effective feedback. It also involves an orientation to the unique role the learning leader serves in the forums. We consider this training essential to our model because we want each of the executive forums to give all the participants—including the learning leaders—the

opportunity to:

- Challenge and evaluate their own attitudes and abilities;
- Discuss challenges and concerns in a safe, nonthreatening environment;
- Find a sounding board for ideas;
- Learn the nuances of our organizational culture, especially what our culture values;
- Learn what it takes to be successful in our organization;
- Find ongoing support and a sense of community in which to try out new behaviors, take on new challenges, and build new relationships.

We now have five executive forums functioning at CPH. Each group includes eight high-potential middle managers and one senior manager. Research done by Dr. Beverly Kaye, a pioneer in the process of group mentoring, suggests that from four to ten participants is an optimum size for mentoring groups. Even so, Kaye encourages organizations to experiment with both size and format as they tailor the process to meet their unique organizational structure and needs. The executive forums operate under three essential and zealously enforced rules:

- All participants come as peers/equals. There is no hierarchy. Thus, all are entitled to their own ideas, beliefs, and assumptions;
- The goal of the group is personal and professional growth. The ideas, beliefs, and assumptions of others are not to be criticized, judged or dismissed out-of-hand; rather they are to be explored and understood;
- Everything that is said in a forum is confidential within the group.

The forums do not function as task forces. Nor do they have any decision-making or policy-making power. We want the groups to learn, to grow, to form strong professional relationships, to try out ideas, to ask questions. Given the limited Forum time and the members' other company responsibilities, these goals keep everyone busy and fully engaged. Organizations need to remember that such groups are not meant to be productive in the output sense. Rather, they help participants see meaning in, and learn from, experiences that they share as they meet together. Group mentoring can work and work well!

Geroge J. Oebloft (MBA '80) is vice president of corporate development at Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri.

Doing Business in the New Millennium

What will it be like to do business in the new millennium? As we move farther into the Information Age, what will change about the way we work?

Manufacturers who move to e-commerce and cut out the distribution chain create an immense shift in the way we do business. The distribution channels and all the people employed in them will have to change as a result. This will result in the major shift of employment patterns. Goods will still have to be warehoused and distributed, but many types of businesses and jobs will no longer be viable. At the same time, many new businesses and jobs will be created. The personal question for each of us then becomes: "How do I make the changes required to keep my career or business earning a living for me and my family in this rapidly changing world?" The answer is threefold.

1. **READ WIDELY.** People who read publications from a number of differing disciplines can spot the trends. Read magazines like *The Economist* for a global view of issues and events that are categorized both by geography and topic. MIT's *Technology Review* provides understanding of where technology is taking us. Look at global policy issues through publications such as *Foreign Affairs* to understand sociological trends and issues and how American policy makers view them.

2. **CHANGE THOUGHTFULLY.** We have to be willing to be fleet of foot and make the changes required to keep up. Look for trends and movements, not isolated instances of change. When you see a trend, thoughtfully consider what you can do to capture the benefits of that trend.

3. **CONNECT PROFOUNDLY.** We have been taught that change is what happens to us quickly. Transition is the process of understanding and adapting to the change—it takes time. We look at it as a two-step process: First something happens to us to change things; then we make the transition. A fresh view is brought from a line in a poem by Rainer Maria Rilke: "The future enters into us, in order to transform itself in us, long before it happens." We can have an attitude that embraces the transformation before the change actually happens. We can form an image, create a worldview, of what life will look like in the future and anticipate its arrival. Connect profoundly with the world that is coming and you will be able to transition quickly, creating for yourself resilience in the midst of the most business shaking changes.

Nora Hughes (MSOD '90) is president of The Hughes Consulting Group, Inc., a change management consultancy. She can be reached at www.hughesconsult.com or (818) 366-4992.

*Everyone thinks of changing the world,
but no one thinks of changing himself.*

LEO TOLSTOY

From MBA to Corporation: A Process for Success

When I found out my company had a paid tuition program, I immediately enrolled for a Pepperdine M.B.A. I figured that taking a couple of classes a semester at night, with little of my own money, would be a breeze! After almost five years, including time off to have a baby, taking a new job which didn't cover tuition fees, and having to pay for my own schooling, I discovered the real value of this experience.

The last required course, Business Strategy, was to be the culmination of everything I had learned. My group was wrestling with the task of submitting a joint final project, the strategic analysis of a company. I had been thinking about the concept of a company that would create an L.A. network of businesses that provided products and services at a discount to members of the entertainment industry. Thankfully, my two class partners were very gracious about undertaking a project that would ultimately mean more work for all of us. We wrote a business plan for a start-up called UMDN. Upon graduation, I had an M.B.A. and a sound plan that gave me the confidence to embrace the future!

Three months later, my husband and I took the money from our 401K, set up a 400 sq. ft. guest house as headquarters, hired a musician as our only employee, and went into business as UMDN. We both continued our full-time jobs. It wasn't long before we grew to the point where we had to sell our home and one of us had to devote fulltime to the business. I quit my regular job and handled the day-to-day operations, including all bookkeeping and taxes, tele-marketing, outside sales force, and customer service. He continued to handle infrastructure matters, the constant maintenance of our Web site, live operator service, and the online and in-house data systems. Other duties such as marketing and sales training were handled jointly.

As our plan unfolded, we saw a much larger opportunity. Instead of just offering discounts to the entertainment industry, we could deliver an entire consumer product base to one of the largest and most powerful affinity groups in the world, the 34 million union members of America. We would provide local discount networks, insurance benefits, online shopping, internet and other services at a discount, and the unions would help us reach their members! We

began work on a new business plan for a vision that was much more ambitious.

Today, we have fifteen employees and more than 400 businesses as "preferred providers" in Los Angeles. We soon expect to close a round of funding in excess of \$5 million to facilitate a national roll-out. We have often said that if I hadn't made the decision to study for an M.B.A., and produce this business plan as my final project, UMDN might never have been anything more than talk over morning coffee. During hard times, I recalled a lecture or a business we had studied, and drew strength from the fact that others had been through the same process and succeeded! It was the knowledge, skill, and confidence I gained through the Pepperdine degree that has carried me through all the changes of direction, rapid growth, and cash-crunching times. I am sure they will serve me well as we enter the doorway of a new, larger world!

Starla Keith, MBA '98, is CFO of UMDN.com, the Union Members Discount Network, a Santa Monica-based company that provides benefits to the nation's unionized workforce.

Business Success: First Education, Then Charm

by John F. Scheifele, BA '73, MBA '76

Like most new graduates, I exploded "out of the chute" after graduating with a Pepperdine M.B.A. I believed industry, in short order, would pursue me for a promising senior executive career—how wrong I was!

After joining Ford Motor Company as an executive trainee, I quickly learned I was at the bottom rung of a mile-high career ladder. You can imagine my disappointment! Five years later, I switched industries and selected high technology/telecommunications. Again, I began essentially at the bottom. With increasing success and experience, I quickly began climbing the ladder, obtaining a position managing a separate business unit for a major telecommunications equipment manufacturer. I was ecstatic, believing I "had finally arrived" and achieved the position I was clearly entitled to achieve. This began my personal odyssey of "managerial self-realization."

None of my initial methods worked—unit sales failed to materialize, employee discontent was rampant, turnover of employees became unmanageable, and my boss began a serious program of mentoring. I faced a personal choice: (1) Dig in [no one understands my style] or (2) accept very constructive criticism and choose to change. I made the decision to change (everyone can't be wrong; it had to be me). I decided to attend corporate "charm school," a one-week intensive program designed to identify style, personality, and attitude, followed by a corrective program to be implemented by the attendee. Although person-

ally difficult, it worked and changed the scope of my career journey.

From this growth experience I achieved various executive positions within high-technology corporations. I successfully implemented the tenets taught me and now empower my employees to "be all they can be." I implemented the following tenets: (1) Value employees and always allow them to disagree with decisions, (2) value absolute teamwork and believe everyone in the organization is critical to a collective success, (3) drive critical decisions to the lowest levels and collect feedback before finalizing decisions, and (4) conduct "employee/boss" peer reviews and ask for frank feedback on my own performance. If I err, I change. I constantly ask how I can improve. All of these tasks have worked. Results have exceeded expectation, turnover is nonexistent and the team has a sense of fulfillment.

For new graduates, I recommend the following:

1. Realize all of us begin at the bottom rung—an M.B.A. does not entitle us to begin as vice president!
2. Factor the "human element" into your personal style.
3. Realize tens of thousands have an M.B.A.—there is no room for self-importance.
4. Work for your selected company and career as a true steward of the business.

Enjoy the opportunity before you and have fun—You will be amazed at the resulting successful career path unfolding before you.

The Many Paths We Take

by James R. Villegas, SC'91

Realizing I'm not doing what I meant to do, that I'm not where I meant to be, I felt a void. "I'm going to reinvent myself!" I announced. Life laughed good-naturedly. "I already invented you. Have a look."

Turning around I could see all the paths I had taken, demarcated by the choices I made. I saw the path I first started on, but along the way a need arose and I took a quick little side path that met it. Then, an opportunity presented itself, one that met other needs, so I followed it. There a crisis, there love, there pain, there desire, there more needs and there more demands. I saw myself taking turn-offs because they were easier or because, at the time, it was the right thing to do. A large gap now lay between me and what I had meant to be.

Life saw where I envisioned myself. "You can still get there: reinstate yourself."

"I don't understand."

"You've already remembered where it was you wanted to go, what you wanted to be. If you turn those thoughts into regrets, they will turn into guilt and make you neurotic. Use them to make a map instead."

Looking over my shoulder, Life said, "Where has your path been leading you? See that dream behind you? You know how to grab it," said Life, indicating the future. "There are many paths leading there. You will explore deserts, swamps, and chasms, play in meadows and survive torments; it is all part of Life. Reinstate your values, reinstate who you are, be responsible and persevere. Keep a golden compass handy. Most importantly, follow your heart and learn to relish Life's fare along the way."

ExamWeb: A Successful Alumnus Startup Company

Indicators everywhere are pointing to an increased need for specialized knowledge in the workforce worldwide. More adults are leaving jobs to attend graduate school or taking professional examinations for a certification that will lead to a better job. Many are doing both.

Employers are forcing the trend too, requiring training geared at building expertise in specialized functions of business or industry. The surge in training needs resulted in an increase in professional certifications. Many workers are finding themselves with two or more certifications as they position themselves for more rewarding job opportunities in their prospective industries.

After getting his M.B.A. from Pepperdine's Executive Program in December 1995, Matt Harris recognized this trend. Using Internet technology, he created ExamWeb. According to Harris, "The timing is excellent for the merging of technology and education." Starting with downloadable exam prep courseware, the company has evolved toward a pure online experience and has raised investment capital from both angel investors and the internet.com Venture Fund II. Candidates log in worldwide to take full exam prep courses and study practical review questions.

"Not only are more people going after more professional certifications, but they want to do it quickly, effectively, and if at all possible, from home," comments Harris. "With ExamWeb you can be sitting in your bathrobe on the farm at 2 a.m. and be studying for the bar!" Additionally, online materials are always current. One problem with purchased software is that sample questions and material is often several years old. Some exams change frequently, and as they do, ExamWeb simply uploads new questions to their site. The user sees the new material the next time they log on.

ExamWeb has released online prep courses for the California Bar, the Multistate Bar (MBE), the real estate exam, the LSAT, the GRE, and soon will add others.

If you're planning to take a professional exam, log on to <http://www.examweb.com> and check out the free limited use demos. Where does Harris see the company in a few years? "My vision is that onsite exam preparation and continuing education will be a dinosaur. Learning online is effective now, but will become even more effective as bandwidth increases and as Wall Street recognizes this type of business model. Our goal is to keep our position in the front line of this learning revolution."

Horse Sense: Lessons from an Unlikely Mentor

The trainer leans, arms folded on the top rail of the corral, watching as the horse trots in unbridled freedom. He squints in concentration, watching his subject move, feint, and toss its head. He reads the animal's temperament from its body language, and studies its eyes as it notices him.

These two do not share a common language, but these clues, and many others, will form a foundation the trainer will use to forge a mutual relationship with the horse. The trainer brings about this "miracle" not through coercion, but through understanding the horse's mind, and using the subtlest persuasion to alleviate his instinctive fears.

Imagine yourself as a horse trainer who follows these steps:

- See the horse's potential and form a vision of what it can become.
- Observe the horse carefully, starting with the reality of the facts
- Approach him from a desire to develop his potential motivated by the ethics of service to your subject
- Have the courage to sustain your initiative, to stand at the center of the arena while the horse, powerful in its own right, gallops around you, testing its independence.
- When the horse tires of being alone and senses your desire to help him, he will give subtle cues that say "I want you to lead in the relationship." And you do.

Ten years ago, I entered Pepperdine's Master of Science in Organizational Development program in the School of Business and Management. In addition to the regular entrance exams we were also required to successfully complete an activity where eight students were given the group task of saddling a horse, packing saddlebags, and then leading their horse to a site where we were to camp overnight. I knew nothing about horses at the time and this activity served as a glaring mirror, reflecting my leadership behaviors while working to accomplish a task in a team environment. That experience was the beginning of the reinvention of myself.

Five years later I took up the recreational sport of horseback riding and a few months later became a horse owner. I was surprised to re-discover through my interaction with my horse, Saracen, that how I am with a horse is how I am. I notice, for example, my actions and reactions when the horse goes too fast or too slow, when he goes in a different direction than I want him to go. And I notice my actions and reactions when we are in complete harmony, moving together as one.

The horse trainer metaphor is wonderfully accurate for twenty-first century leaders who, in order to survive and flourish, must find innovative ways to reinvent their businesses and them

(see LESSONS, page 9)

Charity Begins at DOTCOM

By Alan Bergstedt, MBA, PKE61

We had a problem! Wycliffe Associates (WA), where I served as CEO, was going to die unless we connected with the Internet generation. In September 1999, I heard about OnlineGiving.com (OG) and invited its founder to show me more about this service. At that time WA had 15,000 visitors to its website, but there had been only one online donation! Clearly, we needed expert help to make the website "e-friendly" for charitable donors to contribute online.

Like many charities, WA does not have the knowledge, experience, staff, or funds to pay the up-front costs to develop its own Internet "contribution process" and to make it safe, secure, and trusted by its donors. I wanted WA to be one of the first clients of OnlineGiving.com, because the costs to develop sophisticated Internet applications are high. Experienced Internet-savvy developers and marketers are difficult to hire and retain. Managing Internet applications would distract Wycliffe from its mission.

OG invited me to be an advisor during the development process to make sure that the needs of charities were met by the "contribution engine" that they were building. As I learned more and more about the potential of this service to help charities in the twenty-first Century, I got more excited. Then I decided to join this new firm and am reinventing myself as a 'dotcom' entrepreneur.

OnlineGiving.com is reinventing fund raising by enabling charities to acquire new donors and better serve existing donors. Charities don't have to cut back on their current programs to spend money on Internet programming. OnlineGiving.com will reduce costs by delivering electronic information rather than costly direct postal mail solicitations. Internet contributions will soon become 40%-50% of total donations given by individuals. By bringing philanthropy to the wired world we will make it possible for more people to support causes they care about. The Chronicle of Philanthropy published this statement: "Americans could give another \$242 billion to charity without causing hardship to anyone." It's a big market that needs new inventions and newly invented business people to serve the new century.

Reinvent

(continued from page 1)

- Have a "career portfolio" of at least three vocations. Include the position you are currently working in, then add two more that you think you would enjoy doing. This means you may have three distinct résumés! How can your experience translate into three industries? Write down the projects and skills that you have used in your previous jobs, full or part time, and in your hobbies and volunteer activities.

Now, sort them into the three areas matched to your career goals. On each resume, stress those tasks that apply to the industry.

- Not sure what you really want to do? Here are a few techniques. (1) Take a look at family vocational genealogy. If your great-grandfather was a blacksmith, explore metal sculpting, construction, jewelry, metal trading, etc. You can add more to the list. (2) Talk to people in jobs you think you might want to do, and ask what they like best and least about their industry. Obtain the names of alumni by industry using your alumni association directory. (3) Attend professional meetings and seminars. These are excellent sources of information on vocations and meeting people employed in specific industries. (4) Take an evening course in a subject you want to explore. Meet your classmates and ask what their experience or skills are in the subject. (5) Ask yourself "How you feel?" about a job or industry. Following your heart can lead to wonderfully creative jobs and personal connections.

- Seeking a new job? Set realistic goals. Be open to both necessity and opportunity. Jobs are found using three principles: (1) The service/product is needed by others, (2) the job is available, (3) you have the skills that are required. That means you cannot simply select a job and work toward it if no one needs that skill at the moment. Teachers will agree. Ten years ago, when few couples were having children, you could not find a job teaching! Now, the demand is great. Survey jobs that are posted in the newspaper and on the Internet, and determine what jobs match your skills and interests. Even better, expand your current job to include a skill that you want to refine and add this task to your job description. This makes you more valuable to your employer and may eventually allow you to transfer to another area within the same company.

- Feeling too old or too young? This common "problem" does not have to be one. For younger workers, stress part time and volunteer jobs to enhance your experience. If you do not have any, apply for internships or volunteer in an area you may want to work. For older workers, remember there are many industries that value experienced people. Some examples are education, retirement and financial advising, counseling, and even customer service. These seek mature people who can bring a sense of stability, calmness, and experience to the tasks.

- In between jobs? Use a technique popular in sales and advertising—do something unique! Sure, post your résumé on a couple of Web sites and respond to job listings that need your skills, but do not rely on these efforts alone. Here are some options: (1) Have a set of business cards printed with your contact information, including e-mail. In place of company and title, put the industry you want to work in, such as "Sales and Marketing Professional." Pass these cards out at social occasions, indicating you would like to be contacted by people needing your skills. (2) Write an article for your local newspaper. Instead of asking for payment, request a tag line so that readers can contact you. Being published tells others you have vital knowledge to share. (3) Give yourself one weekday off as a thank-you for your efforts. That means no job hunting! Do this so that you will spend the other four weekdays working from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the job search. Go to a museum, concert, beach, gym, lecture, library, etc., and be sure to take along those business cards! Who knows who you might meet?

Thoreau once noted that only by advancing in the direction of your dreams, and living the life you imagine, will you meet with uncommon success. But in today's professional world it's not enough to simply have a dream. Because the world is not static, your dream cannot remain static. You must change course when necessary, and you may have to change your profession. In other words, you must be ready to "reinvent" yourself—to change your job, your career, your calling, throughout your life. Remember, on life's journey you ultimately won't be judged by whether you're a great professional—but by whether you're a good person.

Greta E. Couper, M.S., is director of Alumni Career Services at Pepperdine University. She can be reached via e-mail at gcouper@pepperdine.edu or on the Web at: www.pepperdine.edu/alumni/career. Please send your own unique ideas to obtain jobs.

Connecting

(continued from page 3)

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Lessons

(continued from page 8)

selves, through a transformation of our thinking. According to Peter Koestenbaum, internationally known philosopher and business consultant (and Pepperdine visiting professor), there are four principles of expressing leadership greatness in thought and action, which are: vision, reality, ethics, and courage. By increasing our mastery of these innate principles and managing the dynamic tension among them, we can naturally be truly great leaders in all arenas of our lives—work, self, family, social, and financial.

You know, great trainers don't break horses, they develop them. Great leaders don't break people's spirits, they lift spirits. Perhaps it's time we put "horse sense" to work in our business and personal lives. Applying the leadership skills of the horse trainer to business situations is a direct and simple process: We can grow individuals, teams, organizations, and therefore profits ... naturally.

Laura Hauser, MSOD '93, Leadership Strategies International "Growing individuals, teams, and organizations...naturally" laura@lsilt.com www.lsilt.com FAX: 661-251-5062

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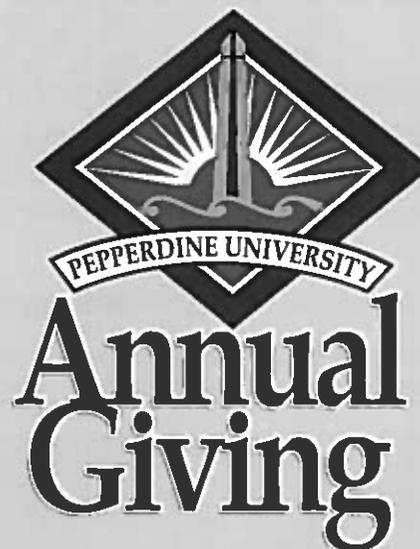
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