

# 2009

Quantum Common  
Wealth

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## [ CAREER CAPITALIST MANIFESTO ]

A challenge and opportunity to rethink and remake today's career marketplace using career management models that work for a talented new workforce.

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# Career Capitalist Manifesto

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*New career management approaches for today's job seeker and tomorrow's workforce*

*"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty." Sir Winston Churchill*

## *Today's Challenge – Suitable Jobs for Suitable Workers*

It's readily apparent to any casual observer that today's job market is challenging for almost any job seeker. These challenges are compounded by the typical jobseeker themselves, because they are often unprepared emotionally and mentally to take ownership for their career. These job seekers tend to believe that they made a tradeoff of lower income for the prospect of job security. Therefore, when they enter the job market (through layoff or other means) they are unprepared to meet the challenge because they have not determined what value they bring to the marketplace. All they believe they brought to their last job was hard work and a lower (but still acceptable) wage. One former manager said it best; "I worked hard enough so they didn't fire me, and they paid me just enough so I wouldn't leave."

Contrast this to any high level executive or senior manager level person in job transition, they have available to them outplacement assistance and possibly career counselors and job search assistance. Why is it that they made no tradeoffs of income for security, yet they enjoy the benefits of professional career management? Further, what can be done to provide this same level of income and service benefit for the typical jobseeker over the long term?

## *Incomplete Options Abound*

Currently these workers can attend their local Workforce Center, where an abundance of resources are available to them. Information, computers, fax machines, workshops and training programs, even career counselors if the job seeker qualifies under federal or state programs. Truly these Workforce Centers have positioned themselves to be the job search campaign headquarters for today's self service job seeker.

Of course, there are an abundance of community support programs, too. Food shelves, community workshops and many numerous other charitable and government supported programs are available virtually for the asking.

Recruiters and temp agencies are also a good way to make inroads into companies. These people have built relationships with companies and have a great understanding of what makes an ideal candidate. They have the incentive to make sure the person is a fit before they even present a resume, thus ensuring the best chance of success for the job seeker.

They all suffer from one minor flaw – they require *self-directed* job seekers to take ownership of their career. Not just their job search, but their entire career management. They provide great help for a specific need or problem. This is a tremendous asset to the typical job seeker, but there is a clear opportunity to provide more – while obtaining tremendous value and benefits for the long term for the job seeker, the employer and the community.

### *Models That Work*

A fundamental principle of systems design is to start with a model that works. This principle applies for Architecture, Business Processes and information Technology. There's no reason we can't start with a model that works for long term career success. The only question is: What models work?

Consider that actors and sports and music entertainment professionals are among the highest paid individuals working in the highest paying industries, we can begin to ask, what models and systems work for those employees? And how can we cross-contextualize those models and systems to fit today's workforce and tomorrow's job seeker? In essence, how can we stop being job seekers and start being career managers, focused on creating talent?

For the purposes of this discussion, let's limit our focus to two types of roles: **Talent Scout** and **Talent Agent**.

**Talent Scouts** are responsible for finding the raw, undiscovered abilities that can be crafted into something greater. They are responsible for identifying the unsung sports hero at the college and high school games, and deciding if this person has potential to become someone of value. Value to the team, value to the franchise and value to the public.

**Talent Agents** are managers of talent. They manage a person's career trajectory in the sports or entertainment industry. They know the key players, have connections and are able to persuade, position and represent people of talent as solutions to problems and people who create opportunity.

How can we apply these models to today's workforce? If we first change the context of expectations of roles, we find similarities but also significant differences.

**Talent Scouts** for job seekers do not readily exist, except in exclusive areas such as Military recruiters. Using this model allows us some interesting comparisons. Imagine someone actively reading trade and industry publications for companies that have solved unique and challenging problems, asking 'who did that project?' or haunting the halls of higher and lower learning, college and high schools, applying the equivalent of the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery), a test designed to find talent, in that case, talented soldiers, in ours, talented workers.

And when they did find this raw potential, have the wherewithal through significant financial backing to entice this person to focus on what they are truly good at. Today's job seeker challenge is first to identify just what skills and talents they possess. Often in the self-service model, latent talents languish in undiscovered country, never to be retrieved or capitalized upon, to the detriment of the job seeker as well as today's companies. **Talent Scouts** solve this problem for the employer and work community.

We might expect that a temp agency or contract recruiter would fit nicely in the role of **Talent Agent**, except that temp agencies and recruiters are paid by employers, not the job seeker. This means they have a responsibility to the employer first, not to manage the career of a job seeker. If a job seeker wants to retrain for work in another field, the recruiter is not going to help manage that process. It will fall to the job seeker to go get resources for training and education. Enter the **Talent Agent**.

The **Talent Agent** works for the talent (job seeker), not the studio. This implies that if the talent gets paid more, so too does the Talent Agency, as well as the prestige benefits. With a **Talent Agent**, we have someone financially responsible for an individual's career progress. Someone who has the discipline, connections and incentive to keep the job seeker (talent) on track and progressing with their training, work experiences and self-promotion.

Of course, a majority of people are not stars or sports heroes, but we must consider that there's an artificially limited amount of Hollywood demand. Only so many movies and only so many sports teams are available to employ talent. In the real world of work, there are many more jobs in the economy than Hollywood and sports teams.

### *Show Me The Money*

This discussion would not be complete without touching on compensation models. In today's model compensation for Temp Agencies and Recruiters is paid by the employer. Job seekers are reluctant to pay for services, especially given that they may not be currently employed and not have a budget for high level job services, such as they might get if they were an executive or had access to a outplacement firm.

*What job seekers do have however, is potential. Specifically, potential future earnings.*

What job seekers do have however, is potential. Specifically, potential future earnings. If they voluntarily offered a portion of their future income in exchange for professional career management, this tradeoff is good for everyone. It provides the proper incentive for the Recruiter to work on behalf of the job seeker (talent), and it leverages the best accountability of capitalist competition, because if the **Talent Agent** is not taking care of the best interests, the job seeker (talent) will eventually go elsewhere.

The other thing job seekers can offer is something they've been contributing to but have been uncompensated for; Intellectual Property. Critical to the success of this model requires ownership of their solutions needs to be retained by the job seeker (talent) or by their agent on their behalf. This allows today's knowledge workers to capitalize on the unique future earnings value their ideas create. This allows them and their agents to develop alternative revenue streams beyond the 'labor for hours' tradeoff of today. This creates an opportunity for one final role, the **IP (Intellectual Property) Agent**.

The **IP Agent** is responsible for ensuring that revenue from good ideas is not lost. Through a rigorous process of vetting the many ideas that will be presented and determining which ideas have market

potential, this person delivers a solid foundation of future revenue sources. These could in some cases exceed the employee's natural lifetime, thus creating a wealth benefit for their future generations.

But what about the Employer? First, there is a direct savings on recruiting and hiring the best talent because they no longer pay for services. But they also receive greater benefit in exchange. Because the job seeker (talent) is now being trained to understand and communicate their value, the value of what they can do and the problems they can solve for the employer. They no longer are focused on 'what's in it for me'. Instead, they have a compelling and clear benefit that if they provide more value than they ask in return, they can have whatever level of salary they want. If they want a million dollar bonus, then the discussion is clear that they must show a track record of delivering more than a million dollars in tangible bottom line benefits.

This *recalibrated* workforce is more directly focused on the problems of business and specifically on the value they bring through the solutions they create. They are not focused on trivial discussions like cube vs. office or paid holidays etc. Their focus is on how much benefit they bring to the employer.

So, the summary process is a 3 step model for career growth and management:

1. Identify the value each job seeker (talent) brings to the workplace.
2. Promote job seeker (talent) to existing companies.
3. Continuously grow and upgrade job seeker (talent) for future workforce needs.

### *A Summary Of The Future*

As these models mature and take root in the workforce, it will become simply the way we work. **Talent Scouts, Talent Agents** and **IP Agents** working on contract for the job seeker, with a keen interest in the present and future needs of business and employers.

These present and future workers will have a successful playbook for understanding their value and proactively promoting it to a marketplace keen on hiring the best and brightest. Once each employee understands their unique talent and value, they can be rewarded on their value contributions as well as their labor. Employers will benefit by having the best trained, current, modern workforce available, without incurring the burden of training and career management.

### *Next Steps*

No idea or model is ever created in a vacuum. It requires several iterations to ensure it performs in the real world. This requires testing, testing and more testing. It's prudent therefore to begin small with intent to scale up quickly. Therefore it is logical that these new roles be tested and adapted in real world scenarios to develop best *working* practices. From there, moving to large scale national and international deployments will create the best success rates overall.

### **[ 3 STEP MODEL:**

- 1. IDENTIFY**
- 2. PROMOTE**
- 3. CONTINUOUS GROWTH]**