

## THE NEW REALITY OF THE JOB SEARCH

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With economic times still tough in the communications industry, the recent seminar by Mary-Frances Fox was both timely, and informative for the employed and unemployed alike. Her presentation at the Ontario Club easily excited the more than 60 communicators who braved the cold weather as they learned tips about how to market themselves and self-manage their careers regardless of economic conditions beyond their control.

Mary-Frances - a career management coach -spoke about the new reality of job searching. It's not just about drafting a cover letter and submitting a resume to an advertised position anymore. Rather, since most jobs are not listed, Mary-Frances stressed that one's search for work and career management is an ongoing search, and is all about building networks in a variety of areas. She suggests individuals build a network of 25-50 people who are aware of your special skills and are in a position to bring your name up when they are talking to their friends, colleagues, and relatives that may be looking to hire.

Mary-Frances talked about discovering your true talent, 01- your "sweet spot," and then using this skill to market yourself as it distinguishes yourself from others in your field. She then recommended building stories around this talent and in job interviews, and in discussions with potential employers to use these anecdotes of your work history to illustrate your skills, rather than just spouting off facts of your accomplishments. This way you will relate more to the interviewee on a human level, and you will illustrate the benefits that you can bring to the company through concrete examples.

The seminar also talked about one being the "product manager" of one's career. Mary-Frances stressed that you are a product and you must sell yourself accordingly to potential employers using the same "four P's" of traditional marketing gurus: price, product, placement and promotion.

Mary-Frances finished her presentation by talking about the art of salary negotiating. This drew the most questions from those in attendance and was an informative lesson on how to prepare yourself to deal with the "salary question" in a job interview. According to Mary-Frances, most employers would give an extra 10 percent if only a potential hire had asked. She explained that one should delay the question of salary until the end of the interview and she offered advice on how to accomplish this. Part of the art of negotiating explained Mary-Frances is to know what your worth by researching market salary surveys, like the one published annually by the Board of Trade.

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