

Chapter 1

Why You Need to Become a Guerrilla Job-Hunter

The New Global America

It's not the strongest of the species, nor the most intelligent, that survive; it's the one most responsive to change.

—CHARLES DARWIN

Under siege from layoffs, outsourcing, offshoring, rightsizing, downsizing, and bankruptcies, America is in the midst of a profound business transformation. It is the result of developments in information and communications technologies, changing human values, and the rise of the global knowledge-based economy. The sheer complexity and technical sophistication of business has transformed the job market. Business is becoming knowledge based and technology intensive.

Knowledge workers are the backbone of the United States. They are employed in all sectors of the economy, most prominently in the information technology and communications sectors, but also to a growing extent in health care, manufacturing, education, finance, natural resources, defense, and government—in any field that requires innovation to sustain competitiveness. Competitive advantage is rooted in the new ideas of these skilled workers.

Twenty to forty million Americans change jobs every year. Already reeling from the struggling economy, competition for the remaining jobs is tougher than ever, the rules for getting them have changed, and global competition ensures that the rules will change

2 ◀ GUERRILLA MARKETING FOR JOB-HUNTERS

again tomorrow. Many people needlessly drift in and out of dead-end jobs because they don't know which industries have a future or how to present their value in the right terms to the people who can hire them.

To succeed in this new marketplace, you must have a plan. Your plan must be clear and detailed in every way. It must also be:

- ▶ Clever,
- ▶ Results driven,
- ▶ Marketing oriented,
- ▶ Inexpensive to execute,
- ▶ Realistic, and
- ▶ Achievable.

No government agency, educational institution, or think tank has a genuine crystal ball to make a call on the future; there are simply too many unknown factors when it comes to industry and job creation. One thing is certain, whether you are employed but unhappy, or unemployed and in need of a new opportunity, as a job-hunter, you are at a strategic fork in the road.

■ EVENTS THAT CHANGED JOB-HUNTING FOREVER

▶ **The Advent of the Internet**

Just a few years ago if you were looking for a job, you would wait for the Sunday paper and check the classified ads or ask your friends and neighbors. Now, thanks to instant communications and 24/7 access, you can job-hunt in your pajamas.

▶ **Enron, the Dot-Com Bubble, and Ethics**

The dot-com bubble burst when investors suddenly realized companies needed to make a profit to stay in business. In a virtual one-two punch, the scandals at Enron accelerated the changing relationship between employers and employees. Profit became the new god. A post-Enron survey found that 58 percent of workers thought that top executives were only looking out for themselves (Heldrich Center and the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at University of Connecticut). Business violated the old social contract:

“Be loyal and we will take care of you.” Employees feel they are responsible for their own welfare—companies don’t care. Consequently, loyalty is low and many people now think like “free agents.”

➤ **9/11**

The horrific events of September 11, 2001, have changed the face of America. The United States has always been seen as a destination for immigrants eager to build a better life, safe from the ravages of the wars that have plagued Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Because of the events of 9/11, immigration has been restricted. Immigrants bring with them a diverse set of talents, abilities, and skills that America will rely on more in the next decade as skill requirements of new jobs rise and our population ages. For more than 200 years, immigration has fueled growth in the United States and shored up skilled worker shortages. The events of 9/11 altered the mix of people the United States allows into the country and, therefore, unwittingly slowed the natural growth of the economy.

➤ **Retiring Baby Boomers**

Just as the United States is emerging from its recession, a major event is poised to erase all the productivity gains of the past few years and cripple growth across every sector of the economy—baby boomers are retiring in unprecedented numbers. With 76 million baby boomers heading toward retirement, the United States is facing a mammoth talent crunch. In the very near future, there will be 15 percent fewer Americans in the 35- to 45-year-old range than there are now. At the same time, the U.S. economy is likely to grow at a rate of 3 percent to 4 percent per year. Who will do the work? Will more jobs be offshored?

➤ **Tiananmen Square**

The Western world’s reaction to Tiananmen Square helped put China on the road to democracy, opening the single largest market in the world. Most of China’s one billion people live in conditions not unlike those found in the early 1900s in the United States. Shortly, there will be a growing demand for everything modern. China will strain the world’s resources in agriculture, manufacturing, energy, transportation, natural resources, education, and medicine, affecting manufacturing and the cost of raw materials on a global scale.

■ THE NEW GLOBAL THEATER

The United States is again at a major crossroads in history. The current “jobless” recovery is a consequence of the economy’s rapid evolution from a natural resources- and manufacturing-based economy to a knowledge-based one. We are witnessing the first economic recovery in what has become a full information economy.

For most of the twentieth century, a recession was a cyclical decline in demand—the result of excess inventory that needed to be sold off. People were temporarily laid off—inventory backlogs were reduced and demand would snap back quickly. As product demand increased, workers returned to their preexisting positions in factories, or they found an equivalent job with another company.

Over the past few years, dramatic advances in information technology have allowed companies to establish tightly integrated demand and supply chains, and outsource manufacturing and low-end service jobs to save money. Rightly or wrongly, many of the jobs that have entirely disappeared from North America have reappeared in India, China, and Latin America. Rather than furloughs, many people were let go, forcing them to switch industries, sectors, locations, or skills to find a new job.

If job growth now depends on the creation of new positions, you should expect a long lag before employment rebounds. Employers incur risks in creating new jobs and require additional time to establish and fill positions. Investment in new capital equipment is no longer a pendulum swinging from recession to recovery and back again.

Instead of resources or land, today *capital* means human capital. It doesn’t take a shoe factory to go into the shoe business these days. Nor do you need raw materials or fleets of trucks. Nike became a shoe industry leader by concentrating on the value-producing capacity of its employees for design, marketing, and distribution know-how. The real capital is intangible: a person’s knowledge level, combined with an aptitude for application.

Numerous labor market studies indicate that there is already a looming knowledge worker skills shortage—a shortage that impacts competitiveness and economic and social development. There is every reason to believe that these shortages will not diminish soon because skilled baby boomers are retiring in unprecedented numbers, while the newly created knowledge economy jobs require more education and higher skill levels.

■ WHY YOU NEED TO BE A GUERRILLA

With a radically smaller pool of skilled workers and the increased demand for profits, the original War for Talent of the late 1990s has morphed from a quantitative to a qualitative one, best described as the *War for the Best Talent* by author Peter Weddle in *Generalship: HR Leadership in a Time of War* (Stamford, CT: Weddle's, 2004). The old “bums on seats” mentality of many employers is quickly being replaced by “brains on seats.”

Faced with stiffer competition and tougher hiring requirements, companies of every sort are becoming single-minded about productivity and bottom-line performance. Consequently, competition for jobs is increasing as management seeks and hires only those persons who appear to have the most potential for helping to boost the company's profits. For many companies, employees are now viewed as a variable cost—hence the term *human capital*—to remain “on the books” only as long as they continue to produce. Looking for an old-fashioned job like the one “Dad used to have” is a waste of your time—Jobs are temporary in the new economy—henceforth you always need to be looking for the next opportunity.

The people who market their talent the best will win!

■ OFFSHORING AND AMERICA'S FUTURE AS A GLOBAL INNOVATOR

During the 2004 presidential election, both President Bush and Democratic presidential candidate Senator John Kerry had a lot to say about the future of offshoring and what the practice of shipping jobs overseas means for the U.S. economy. Even after the election, Republicans and Democrats disagree on this subject.

The macroeconomics will be argued for some time to come. As a guerrilla job-hunter, you need interest yourself only in the microeconomic impact of offshoring and how it affects *your* career—in short, which jobs are likely to disappear over time and what industries are likely to benefit.

Your job is at risk to offshoring if:

1. It can be broken down into many smaller tasks that can be redistributed to lower skilled, lower paid workers;
2. Your company's profits are under constant assault by low-cost competitors; or

GUERRILLA INTELLIGENCE

You can read the full article, “Who Wins in Offshoring?” at <http://www.mckinseyquarterly.com>. If you want to know more about the topic, read these two reports—one pro and one con—regardless of the industry you are in:

- ▶ From the Information Technology Association of America—“Executive Summary: The Comprehensive Impact of Offshore IT Software and Services Outsourcing on the U.S. Economy and the IT Industry” (www.itaa.org/itserv/docs/execsumm.pdf).
- ▶ Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers—“Offshoring Study Misses Important Issues” (<http://releases.usnewswire.com/GetRelease.asp?id=28211>).

3. Someone else with a high-school education can do your job with less than a week’s training.

Here’s what you can bank on:

1. The offshoring trend won’t stop anytime soon.
2. Companies will continue to maximize profits and reduce costs.
3. The government will not solve your career problems—at best it will provide limited retraining assistance.

■ SKILLS THAT WON’T BE OFFSHORED

▶ Leadership Skills

Self-confessed team players are often regarded as “followers” or “hangers-on” by senior management. I know you have been told: “We are supposed to be team players!” The Human Resources department may have told you that, but there’s a difference between leaders who *can* follow others, and those people who always *need* to follow others. My advice to you—forget about buying another power tie, instead invest in a course on leadership and look for opportunities to test your new-found skills within the company or outside as a volunteer. The ability to lead will be the number one requirement for guerrilla job-hunters.

➤ **Project Management Skills**

Develop the fine art of managing people and projects. Learn how to deal with customers, work with vendors, and interact with management in ways that satisfy the needs and objectives of the organization. This elusive talent is of great value and will support the notion that you are becoming a person who is of great value to your organization. My advice—look into a formal accreditation through the Project Management Institute (<http://www.pmi.org/info/default.asp>).

➤ **People Skills**

If you become the person who can pull teams together, support communication, and make things happen, that will help make your position and perceived value within the organization more visible and support the argument that leaving your job intact is a good business decision. My advice—learn to be likable and how to work a room without looking like a self-obsessed shark.

➤ **Communication Skills**

Writing and public speaking are critical skills whether you are representing your company or merely trying to sway your boss. A public-speaking course will have you on the podium and in the limelight faster than any other single action you can take. Your value and confidence will increase dramatically. My advice—join a Toastmaster's networking group near you today.

➤ **Sales Skills**

There are many jokes about salespeople: What do they really do besides lunch and golf? Bring in the business, that's what, and today that's everyone's responsibility. New business is the lifeblood of every business. When you become known as a rainmaker, the chances of your job being offshored diminish dramatically. My advice—become great at it. Start with a few books like *Selling to VITO* by Anthony Parinello (Cincinnati, OH: Adams Media Corporation, 1999) and *Advanced Selling Strategies* by Brian Tracy (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). Devour those books and then take a formal course.

■ JOBS THAT WON'T BE OFFSHORED

There are some jobs that, at the moment, just can't be offshored. Can you imagine offshoring your personal financial planning to a stranger in some foreign country? Are you going to fly to a foreign country just to see a doctor or check yourself into a hospital? Is a salesperson from Asia likely to travel to your home or place of business to sell you insurance, a new car, computer, or clothes? Unlikely.

There is a clear pattern here. Many jobs because of their "personal" nature or "security" cannot be offshored, which means they will be protected from rampant offshoring. Baby boomers are the wealthiest generation ever and scores of new jobs will be created because of our obsession with youth, advances in medicine, bioengineering, and security.

The security issues that were exposed by the 9/11 terror activities have spawned whole new industries as the United States looks to secure its borders from terrorists. The banking, travel, agriculture, energy, medical, and other industries vital to our social and economic well-being are vulnerable and not likely to be leaving our shores anytime soon.

Understanding which jobs are not likely to be offshored and why can help you make informed career choices.

Industries that won't be offshored include:

- *Energy:* The war in Iraq and general instability in the Middle East are prompting a greater push to find new sources of energy. There will be more demand for the people who search for, mine, and develop new sources as well as for people to manage marketing and sales, accounting, human resources, and technology, and the list goes on.
- *Preventive Health Care:* This is a hot area for growth right now and it will continue for years to come as the baby boomers age. The demand for workers applies to all levels.
- *Security:* In addition to antiterrorism needs, there is growing concern among companies to protect their greatest asset: information. Additionally, employers are increasingly concerned about the backgrounds of people they are hiring, which will give rise to investigative services.
- *Military:* Need I say more? The demand will increase as will the educational requirements for people looking for the jobs in communications and intelligence.

- *Government:* At every level—municipal, state, and federal—demands will only get bigger. Leadership will be in high demand as will bilingualism in many jurisdictions.
- *Insurance:* The more uncertainty there is in a society, the greater the demand for insurance. Providers will continue to need sales agents, claim adjusters, researchers, customer service people, accountants, and lawyers.
- *Consumer Financial Services:* As more people own homes, cars, and so on, demand is increasing for loan agents and title company workers. With losses growing in company-sponsored 401(k) plans, more people are taking greater control over their retirement savings and seeking investment counselors and brokers to manage their money.
- *Agriculture:* Farms employ hundreds of thousands of people in almost every capacity imaginable, from marketing and public relations professionals to genetic scientists. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates there will be nearly 58,000 job openings each year through 2005 (<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome>).
- *Biotechnology/Pharmaceutical:* Greater need for prescription drugs will increase demand in these sectors. As more and more money is dedicated to gene and cloning research, opportunities will grow in the biotech industry.

The prospects in your area of the country will vary, but this list provides a snapshot of what will be happening around the country.

■ YOUR SIX CAREERS

William Bridges, author of *JobShift—How to Prosper in a Workplace Without Jobs* (Philadelphia, PA: Perseus Books Group, 1995), contends that the United States is undergoing a process of “dejobbing”—an end to the traditional job as we know it. “The old pattern of hiring and keeping large numbers of full-time, long-term workers on the grounds that they may be needed in the future is harder and harder for companies to do,” Bridges says.

Twenty-five years ago, the U.S. Labor Department looked at the workforce and at trends in the job market and announced that people will have as many as five or six careers in their lifetime (*Anything Goes! What I've learned from Pundits, Politicians and Presidents*, New York: Warner Books, 2000). Who would have thought they'd get that one right! I certainly wouldn't have, yet I am a prime example.

I started my career in retail, moved into banking, and then into executive search and placement, all before I was 25. Twenty years later, I am still in the executive search and placement industry, but even that career has evolved from a specialty in retail to the construction and property management industries and now into the high-tech marketplace. You could even argue that writing a book is yet another career.

Not long ago, society expected an individual to spend a lifetime at one company. Those expectations have changed. Now you are expected to change jobs every few years.

To thrive in this environment, you need to adopt a guerrilla marketing mind-set. You need to think of yourself as a tightly knit package of capabilities—a value-added product to sell around the globe.

■ GUERRILLA MARKETING IS THE KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS

I can tell you from personal experience that the most qualified job-hunter is rarely the one who wins. The positions invariably go to the person who does the best job at positioning himself or herself as the solution to an employer's problem.

The dramatic changes we are witnessing in the marketplace mean that the tried-and-true methods of finding a job will no longer suffice. They should remain a solid part of your plan, but they don't provide an adequate amount of exposure to potential employers.

In 1997, Tom Peters introduced the concept of *Brand U* in his book *Re-Imagine!* (London, England: Dorling Kindersley, 2003). At the time, self-branding was an assertive marketing concept best reserved for high-flying techies and senior executives who wanted to maximize the financial returns of their biggest asset—their career. *Today personal branding is a matter of survival.*

Becoming a guerrilla job-hunter is the only way to consistently move your career forward. The market is geared toward those who effectively brand and market themselves as the ultimate commodity across multiple distribution channels. Winning the War for Talent requires you to become a guerrilla job-hunter.

■ “YOU INC.”—YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

More than ever in our history, huge value is being leveraged from smart ideas and the winning technology and business models they

create. In the years to come, as companies strive to hire fewer but better people, employers will try harder than they ever have to attract and retain smart, boldly entrepreneurial overachievers. In the new world of work, value is *not* salary—not for the employer, not for you. With millions of dollars at stake, an employer’s search for an employee will be value-focused, not salary-driven.

As a job-hunter, you need to comprehend that the production of *value* is the most important criterion for an employer when hiring. Articulating your value is your key to successful job-hunting; it separates you from all the other job-hunters. Understand, value is not salary; worth does not flow from a job title. Knowing what’s important to a company means looking beyond job descriptions and compensation tables, especially today when sudden changes and uncertainty are the norm.

You need to comprehend:

- What value is a company expecting from an employee’s contribution?
- How do you communicate your value to an employer?

Especially for management and senior positions, companies are rarely looking to fill in a box on a standard employee recruitment form; they are looking for something nebulous and more important. They are searching for a person who can deliver a *quality*, not a quantity, someone who can explode outward from an open-ended initiative-driven space.

Qualities are difficult to find, measure, or test, and you don’t find these qualities by searching for specific salary levels—the qualities that make up the new value table are money-resistant. As initially explained in, *Career Guide for the High-Tech Professional: Where the Jobs Are Now and How to Land Them*. (Franklin Lakes, NJ: Career Press, 2004). The new value table (Figure 1.1 on p. 12) goes beyond skill sets and resumes.

In its simplest form, Figure 1.1 represents the base elements of your personal “brand.” Building your brand—making a “name for yourself”—need not be expensive.

➤ **Create Your Brand—Guerrilla Style**

Personal branding is not about projecting a false image. It is about understanding what is unique about you—your accomplishments, experience, attitude—and using that to differentiate yourself from other job-hunters. Your brand is your edge.

An Employer's Value Requirements	Your Quality That Counts
Create new intellectual wealth for my company; add to my intellectual assets.	A consuming desire to make something new; to cut a new path rather than take a road.
High-energy enthusiasm for the job, regardless of the hours worked.	Work is a game—an integral, vibrant part of his or her life.
Not only is money not the most important issue—it's beside the point.	Internal pride to leave a "legacy signature" on their work, rather than strive for a paycheck.
Enduring performance.	An ability to stay and finish the race, because not finishing is inconceivable emotionally.
"Think around corners" to solve problems creatively.	Have an inner voice saying "There's always a way [to create a technology fix: make a deal]".
Bring up-to-date professionalism into every fray.	Contain a desire to grow professionally—to become the best person he or she can be: invest in themselves.
Ever-increasing contribution.	The key to inner pleasure is recognized as making an individual contribution.
Identify and develop values for your company.	Instinctive grasp and exploitation of today's real value: the intangible capital of brand image, staff talent, and customer relationships.
Challenge the status quo.	Willingness and courage to speak the truth when you see a conflict.

Note: In its simplest form, the New Value Table represents the base elements of your personal "Brand." Building your brand—making a name for yourself—need not be expensive.

Figure 1.1 New VALUE Table™.

Do you buy generic beer, clothes, cars? Do you buy any no-name large ticket items at all? Not likely! If you are like most people, you buy a brand because of the security and peace of mind that come from the quality and reliability of a known brand. Employers do the exact same thing when they hire people.

Personal branding is critical for guerrilla marketers because:

- Employers are looking for results.
- Your results demonstrate your qualities, which satisfy an employer's value requirements.
- Employers won't buy generic employees.
- Employers will buy the intangible qualities implied by your brand (you are like Nike, too).

➤ **How to Create Your Brand**

Personal branding is about making yourself stand out so that people trust you and are interested in you. Guerrillas do this by leveraging their previous employers' brand (names, slogans, and logos) to create an identity that is memorable and desirable to the people they want to reach.

For your cover letter, this means naming the projects you worked on or the clients you sold to. Be specific. Be detailed. Sell the sizzle and the steak.

For your resume, it may mean taking the logos (with permission, of course) of the companies you worked for or product you developed and placing them on your resume for extra punch. Nothing will get an employer's attention faster than a well-known brand's logo, especially if it is a competitor or a coveted account (this reaction is known as the "halo effect").

What would make the person reading your resume take notice of you? Could it be your training at another company? Might it be the

Table 1.1 Suggestion List

Position Sought	Reader's Interest	Suggested Graphics
Sales	Who have you sold to? Are there any major accounts you know they would like to have or would recognize as difficult to get that would make you look like a superstar?	Logos of the companies you have worked for or the major customers you have sold. Perhaps a product you sold if it's more recognizable than the company's logo.
Engineering	Who have you worked for? What major product were you part of designing?	Logos of your employers or customers. A logo or photo of the product you designed.
Marketing	What brands have you helped create? Where have you gotten press coverage for your products? What trade shows have you worked?	Logos of your employers. Logos of the newspapers or magazines you have had coverage in. Media quotes you were responsible for.
Finance	Have you done an IPO on NASDAQ? Have you secured funding from a major venture capital firm?	Logos of your employers or significant partners with whom you have negotiated.
Administration	How have you increased efficiencies?	Logos of your employers.

companies you have sold to? Were you responsible for a major product that the employer might recognize? There are likely thousands of images you could use. You only want to put in five, so choose the five your reader is most likely to be interested in. Putting in more than five makes it too crowded. Table 1.1 is a list of suggestions for you to use in choosing your images.

We go into greater detail about how you can leverage your brand through the clever design of your resume when we discuss eXtreme resumes in Chapter 6, Weapons That Make You a Guerrilla.