

Welcome to the September 2007 issue of EZSteps!

A quarterly e-zine from Susan Urquhart-Brown, M.A.
Career and Business Success Coach

Author of *The Accidental Entrepreneur*

More information at <http://www.careersteps123.com>

1. EZ Tip: Green Your Business
 2. How to Stand Out and Win A Consulting Contract
 3. Notable Quotables
 4. Susan Sightings! Talks & Events
-

EZ Tip

What Simple Things can you do to Green Your Business?

Use energy efficient light bulbs in your office or install a dimmer switch to use less energy with regular light bulbs. Use email for contracts, letters, forms, correspondence of all types. Use hard copies only when necessary. Recycle. Purchase supplies in bulk, water landscapes efficiently, use less toxic products. Everyone cares about the environment. Customers appreciate businesses that make an effort to be environmentally friendly. For more information on how to become a Certified Green Business, go to www.greenbiz.com

How to Stand Out and Win a Consulting Contract

Life as a consultant or independent contractor often involves interviewing frequently for consulting projects with a variety of companies. One mistake consultants make is sticking with one large contract with one company and then, if or when that contract ends, they have no clients, no network and not many prospects. This is why it is essential to market yourself even when you are busy with current projects and clients. Remember, you are selling your expertise and ability to solve your client's problems.

Be prepared to answer these questions clearly, concisely, and powerfully:

What can you offer us?—What are your value-added skills, industry knowledge, successes?

How are your services unique? Why should we contract with your company?

These are our expectations and our company culture. Will you please explain how you plan to interact with our team so that you can solve our problem productively and efficiently?

Who recommended you?—This is why networking and building relationships is so important.

Can we talk to some of your past clients?

Competence is essential but confidence is often the most powerful selling point.

Faith in your own ideas and abilities; willingness to take an independent position in the face of opposition or possible conflict. If you don't believe in yourself it's hard for others to believe in you.

For example: I recently was asked to give a recommendation for a colleague for a contract position. I asked why they were so interested my colleague. They said, "We felt that she was confident and very competent even though she hadn't worked with an organization exactly like ours before."

Tips:

Do company research before you meet with them! Know their challenges. Think of ways you can offer solutions to their specific problems or issues.

Key: Show what you can do for the company. What benefits do you bring? How will you boost the bottom line? Other benefit categories: Save money. Save time. Make life easier for managers. Improve relationships. Increase customer satisfaction.

Your first impression might be your voicemail message. Be professional. Also, think before you leave your initial voicemail for a meeting.

Don't do this: I got a message from a consultant who said: Someone told me you had a need for a business consultant. I don't know what it is but please call me back.

Confidence and composure counts. Script, practice, believe in yourself. It's contagious!

Ask for the contract. Express interest. Ask for next steps before you leave. Make sure you have answered or asked for any concerns the manager may have. Don't want to leave them with a question about you. Follow up after presentations and request status, next steps, and express your interest.

In summary, be authentic, define your service clearly and explain the benefits of working with you—why you are unique. Ask for the business.

Notable Quotables

Food for Thought:

Everything you need you already have. You are complete right now, you are a whole, total person, not an apprentice person on the way to someplace else. Your completeness must be understood by you and experienced in your thoughts as your own personal reality...Wayne Dyer

Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense...Ralph Waldo Emerson

Susan Sightings!

If you or a colleague are looking for a speaker for a professional or community group, Susan's topics based on her book, *The Accidental Entrepreneur*, are:

UNLEASH YOUR PASSION AND POWER

HOW TO AVOID THE 5 COMMON ROADBLOCKS BUSINESS OWNERS FACE

SKYROCKET YOUR BUSINESS THROUGH REFERRALS

THE MAGIC FORMULA FOR SUCCESS: INTUITION & INTENTION

Contact us at 510-654-4352

www.careersteps123.com

Susan Urquhart-Brown, M. A.

Career Steps Consulting & Coaching

"Put Your Passion and Power to Work!"

Oakland, CA 510-654-4352

Individual Career & Business Coaching &

Business Success Team Seminars

Email: susanub@careersteps123.com

Copyright (C) 2007 Career Steps Consulting. All rights reserved.