

## UNIQUE JOB SEARCH MINISTRY OPENS CAREER DOORS THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

By Bill Rose

*“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” -Proverbs 27:17*

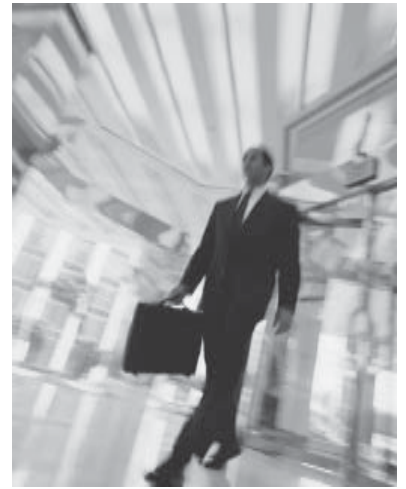
John recently lost his job after 21 years in the same company, and had no idea where to start looking for a new position. Karen needed help rewriting her resume before her job was eliminated. Kent had already been unemployed for eight months. Sally sent out dozens of resumes in response to online ads, but never secured a single interview. Angie felt bitter from being laid off, shortly after expecting a promotion. Nathan lost his confidence and had all but given up hope in finding a meaningful position. Mark lost a high-paying job after relocating to Maryland, and had a wife and four kids to support.

These individuals, and others, eventually found gainful employment largely due to an unsung but effective Chapelgate outreach known as the Job Search Ministry. This vocational transition group has quietly reached out to dozens of men and women within and outside of Chapelgate for more than six years, and has helped to fill new jobs, new careers and new leases on life, one person at a time.

Several years ago, Chapelgate members Benn Bradburn and Alan Bertaux individually felt God was calling them to take the experiences from their own difficult job transitions and career changes, and use them to offer encouragement and insight for people

needing guidance. Benn and Alan soon teamed up and began a small group-based ministry that continues to this day.

The individuals who have benefited most from this ministry all came in with unique situations and challenges, but moved into new jobs thanks to submitting themselves to one defining characteristic of the group: personal accountability.



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“We’re not a career-placement service, nor have we ever intended to be,” said Benn, a chemical engineer with an MBA currently working as the Credit Manager for a local service company. “What we do is simply sit down with each individual, find out their unique situation, and ask the hard questions. We offer them a number of job-search techniques and resources, from resume writing to effective networking, from interviewing tips to salary negotiations, depending on their needs.”

“But most importantly,” Benn continued, “we make a commitment to support them and pray for them and encourage them and hold them accountable to do their homework and follow through, until they land on their

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feet in a satisfying new job. This is the greatest contribution we can make.”

The Job Search Ministry seeks to

support, counsel and assist people in the job loss process, and to provide resources and information on job search techniques. Benn and Alan have both developed a large network of personal contacts that are willing to help individuals along the way.

“We emphasize the importance of networking to everyone who comes through our door, since 80% of all jobs are filled through word-of-mouth and not through want ads or personnel agencies,” said Alan. Alan is a former senior executive for multi-nationals and an entrepreneur. He is also the founder and president of Framin’ Place, a small chain of popular frame shops in the Baltimore area.

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“We don’t do the work for them. But we do what we can to help, and we mostly show them what THEY have to do themselves.”

The coaching and mentoring provided by Benn and Alan, as well as volunteers and Job Search Ministry alumni, are services that would cost thousands of dollars with an outplacement service or career counselor. Thanks to their hearts for this ministry, however, there are no

expenses involved, except for the time and effort required on the part of the job seekers.

As the economy continues to falter as it has the last two-and-a-half years, and as the unemployment rate in Maryland and America continues to hover around 6% or more, God continues to use the Chapelgate Job Search Ministry. He is bringing people together to inspire and encourage, to providentially place men and women into new, fulfilling vocational roles, and to show His grace and mercy to members of the Body of Christ and to non-churchgoers in the community.

The Job Search Ministry meets on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at Benn’s home in Ellicott City, and is open to Chapelgate members and individuals in the community. If you would like to learn more about this ministry, please contact Benn Bradburn at 410.461.3753 or [bradbj@worldnet.att.net](mailto:bradbj@worldnet.att.net).

**“For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”**

**Jeremiah 29:11**