



Dialogue

SPRING 2002

ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN SEARCH EMPLOYMENT & STAFFING SERVICES

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President's Message

GREETINGS, and I trust 2002 is treating you well.



I say this sincerely, as I am sure all of us are looking forward to a better 2002 than last year. I have two

messages to communicate to you in this newsletter – first, that as an association, 2001 was actually a pretty good year, and second, as an industry we have every reason to believe that 2002 will be better.

For ACSESS as an association, 2001 was a successful year. We had a very strong year in the four major areas of professional development and training, me-

dia relations and publicity, government relations, and chapter development and growth.

We ran a very aggressive training program in the fall, after an outstanding spring conference, taking Jeff Skrentny, Peter Leffkowitz, Kit Grant and others across the country. In media relations and publicity, our list of frequent columns keeps growing, and includes amongst other publications the HR Reporter and *Toronto Sun* Career Connection. In government relations, we responded to legislative proposals across Canada and gained significant recognition and credibility by government at all levels. ACSESS notified Ontario members of the successful conclu-

sion of our Employment Standards/Public Holidays lobbying efforts. In September 2001, an exemption was granted, and industry specific recommendations were adopted and implemented by members. In Quebec, we assisted members with new Pay Equity legislation and addressed proposed changes to CSST employer rate group classifications. In BC, we responded to the Employment Standards Review Project. In 2002 ACSESS will continue to bring our industry's views to the attention of public policy decision makers, legislators and the general public. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, chapter development and growth continued to enhance services at the local level. ACSESS added a chapter in Mainland BC, we are making a concerted effort to strengthen our presence in Atlantic Canada, and most existing chapters across the country experienced strong programs and increased activity.

And as for 2002, I am looking forward to a great year
continued on page 8

Conference 2002 will feature among others Barbara Bruno, CPC, and here is what Valerie Gilmore had to say about Barbara at a recent ACSESS meeting.

"Please feel free to use me to convey to others the remarkable value of attending a Barbara Bruno session. A number of my professional staff have recently been given the opportunity to learn from Barbara. They returned to their desks highly motivated, completely aware of what they heard and able to put this learning to immediate use. They then had the magic of seeing this new level of knowledge bringing results.

"Barbara is one of a very few top speakers who blends a natural ability as a trainer with a completely up-to-date knowledge and understanding of what it is we really do. Her training carries even more impact as Barbara works a desk coming up against the daily challenges we all face.

"This is the first time Barbara has come to ACSESS, and I highly recommend her."

Valerie Gilmore, CHRP, CPC
Gilmore Staffing Solutions

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ACSESS Conference 2002

Question: What's in it for Me?

Answer: A lot!

Take your professional goals, add them to your professional challenges, and look for the solutions in the following sessions:

Owners/Managers

THURSDAY, MAY 9

Tom Copeland, C.A., will present a session that no owner or manager should miss. He will provide recommendations on how to develop your client base to minimize the effect of an economic downturn, and will give direction on how to increase the financial strength of your company. He will also give tax planning advice for growing businesses.

Dr. Leigh Quesnel will help leaders to better understand how to develop a "thinking organization" – a company that can be flexible and ready to find opportunities for success regardless of the challenges.

AWARDS DEADLINE EXTENDED TO FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 2002

A brochure calling for nominations for top industry awards was mailed earlier in the year. It's not too late to nominate a member for their outstanding contribution to the staffing industry in Canada, or to nominate your own company for its outstanding involvement within the community.

The call for entries is also posted on the ACSESS Website, www.acsess.org. Download your copy and send it along without delay.

FRIDAY, MAY 10

Dr. Fred Leafgren, Chairman of Personality Resources International will speak on the incredibly important subject of team balancing, employee retention and creating happy workplaces.

Jackie Supper of The Staffing Edge will share her extensive knowledge on WSIB claims management within the staffing industry.

Anne Charette, CHRP, President Elect of the Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations, and **Bruce McAlpine, CPC**, ACSESS National President 2001-02, will discuss industry standards, the importance of certification, and industry self-management versus government licensing.

Recruiters/Consultants

THURSDAY, MAY 9

Peter Leffkowitz will present a one-day recruiter session specifically designed for ACSESS Conference 2002.

FRIDAY, MAY 10

Tony Bruno, CPC – following on his sell-out session at ASA, Tony will address temp consultants on the subject of how to increase your market share in today's economy.

Barbara Bruno, CPC – "rated the best,"

Barbara focuses her presentation on hands-on, results-oriented training for direct-hire recruiters.

Keynote Addresses for all Attendees

FRIDAY, MAY 10

Michael Adams – "What's Your Tribe? Cultural Values, Social Perceptions and Business Success." One of Canada's leading market researchers, and a frequent commentator on social and political trends, Michael is a highly sought after speaker addressing HR associations and staffing professionals.

Mike Lipkin – "Values Based Sales & Customer Service." An international trainer on customer service and team values, Mike will explore the key ingredients to making our businesses a success.

Networking Opportunities and Social Events

FRIDAY, MAY 10

Join with peers and colleagues for lunch and the launch of the ACSESS Plan for the Future.

Gala Dinner, Awards Presentation and CPC Graduation

Special Guest Speaker – Alvin Law – "No Such Thing As Can't"

Some of the best North America has to offer are brought to you by ACSESS.

ACSESS acknowledges the generosity of Corporate Sponsors whose support enables us to deliver the best possible programming at annual conferences. As this issue of *Dialogue* goes to press, 2002 Conference sponsors are:

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ACSESS Update

NATIONAL BOARD meetings were held in October of 2001 and February of 2002. Directors from Kamloops to Halifax flew in to discuss items of importance to our industry and our members. Here is a synopsis of current programs and new services that are being explored.

Meeting the ACSESS goal to offer educational opportunities across Canada, a Fall Tour featured a series of workshops in Winnipeg, Toronto and Edmonton. **Tom Wiseman's** Winnipeg session was a sellout and feedback excellent. **Jeff Skrentny's** Toronto session was very highly rated, and it is unfortunate he was unable to present in Edmonton as, sadly, his father passed away that weekend. **Kit Grant** was also well received, and special thanks go to **Bruce McAlpine** who stepped in and filled the Edmonton morning slot in Jeff's absence.

Working in partnership with ACSESS, **Peter Leffkowitz** offered extremely successful Owner/Manager sessions in Vancouver and Toronto in November.

Unfortunately, January plans for **Kimberley Chesney** to present in Vancouver did not pan out. It seems our members were so wow'd by Peter in November they were not able to guarantee their attendance at another event in January. Nonetheless, it is important to note that we had an international speaker (who just happens to be Canadian and an ACSESS member) supporting our efforts and ready to make herself available.

Program plans for the first six months of 2002 include **Tom Wiseman**, who presented in Halifax on March 4 in another highly rated seminar, and **Jeff Skrentny** booked for June 21 in Edmonton. As this is to make up for the missed session, Jeff has generously offered ACSESS a special reduced rate, which we are able to reflect in registration fees. Turn to page 5 to see what members said about Jeff last November.

ACSESS programs are priced to provide value to our members. A number of other industry-related programs are ei-

ther definitely or tentatively scheduled for Canada this year, including offerings by Rice & Cohen. These are great programs, yet they will cost more. As an association we will continue to work to bring in the best, and trust your support will be there. Names on our potential list for the fall include **Carlton Masi** (www.carltonmasi.com), and **Fazila Nurani**, a Privacy Consultant and very knowledgeable speaker who has offered to develop a program for ACSESS addressing the impact of privacy legislation to come into effect in 2004.

National Conference 2002 will be held at the Toronto Colony Hotel on May 9 and 10. In response to member feedback, the program has been designed with two specific tracks. Owner/Managers will attend sessions on business, operational and financial planning, while Recruiters and Consultants will be able to choose from industry-specific training sessions. The format has moved to Thursday/

Friday, and we will evaluate the success of this change. The Gala Dinner will include a keynote speaker and – best of all – new incentives have been added in the registration fee structure.

As a result of poor traffic in recent years, there will be no trade show. Instead, Sponsors are being offered opportunities to display literature and, if applicable, offer hands-on demos in the ACSESS Gold Floor Lounge.

Take advantage of this tremendous learning opportunity at a cost that is hard to beat. To register on-line, visit www.acsess.org.

Our Membership Committee, headed by Kevin Dee of Eagle Professional Services in Ottawa, is looking at ways in which to expand our numbers. A key recommendation of this Committee is the introduction of special interest groups (SIGs), which will allow us to focus services to those in niche markets. For example, com-

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panies may choose to have representative(s) in the ACSESS database receive material for an Executive Search, or Government, or Technology SIG. It is hoped the introduction of a Student membership category (for full time students) will spread the word about the staffing industry as a career choice.

In the area of membership we have also introduced exit interviews with companies that do not renew. Fortunately, this has only amounted to a handful of calls, and all had a good reason, mainly merger/acquisition, or retirement and closure of an entrepreneurially run company.

Membership naturally leads to Member Benefits, and ACSESS is paying more attention than ever before to the importance of value-added services. Ideas currently being researched include extended health & dental for full time employees, office content insurance, preferred long-distance and Internet rates, car rental, bulk purchasing on office supplies, Website banner advertising, discounted rates with job boards, hotel discounts, on-air messaging. Be patient, it will take a little time for us to bring these ideas to fruition. However, if you feel strongly that any have particular merit, or if you would like to add another area to the list, please email acurtis@bbandc.com.

Among benefits already in place are the *Tools of the Trade Manual*, which is currently undergoing a full review, and the discount arrangement with Carswell Publications, which is promoted as an insert in this issue of *Dialogue*.

The CPC continues to be very well supported with 35 successful candidates from November and March examinations. Short-term and longer-term goals are in place to ensure that this program measures up to similar certification programs in the U.S. and worldwide. The *Study Guide* will be fully reviewed prior to November 2002 examinations, and more innovative upgrades may be in place by 2003-04.

Our Public Relations efforts are paying off. Leslie Hetherington has been working hard with ACSESS staff and it seems our coverage in the print media – both newspapers and trade press – is increasing daily. A comprehensive PR summary was last circulated to all members in December, and articles are posted on our Website when we can obtain permission.

Staffing for Canada Week will run from June 2 to 8. Letters are again being requested from all provincial Premiers and the Prime Minister. Regional plans will be announced over the coming months.

The revised ACSESS Complaints Process is working well. Of course no industry wants to hear of complaints. At the same time, however, it is important for an association to be able to demonstrate a high level of professionalism and meaningful standards. In the relatively few instances when official complaints are filed with ACSESS, we are able to bring closure on the matters raised – and in the majority of cases to provide a heightened level of awareness by all involved.

Toronto/SW Ontario Chapter held an excellent program in December of 2001

featuring several HR professionals. It was gratifying to hear complete consensus that very, very rarely did they have bad experiences with our industry.

Financial and Governance matters recently addressed, have included approval of an operating budget that allows for growth while at the same time ensuring fiscal prudence, and release of nomination materials. The results of the election for national directors will be available by the time this issue of *Dialogue* is mailed. In the meantime, suffice it to say we are delighted by the exceptional interest displayed this year. A number of candidates have stepped forward from points across Canada expressing a desire to actively contribute to ACSESS.

Planning documents were reviewed by National Board, and include an exciting directional focus. Be sure to attend the Annual Meeting on May 10, 2002, to hear our short- and longer-term goals.

Government Relations, of course, continues to be a major area of activity. Mary McNinch provides regular reports both provincially and nationally and can

ACSESS B.C. Mainland Chapter Publishes First Newsletter

ACSESS B.C. Mainland Chapter recently published their first newsletter – March 2002, Volume 1.1. Congratulations go to Editor Elaine Hay on the format and content of this very professional-looking e-Newsletter. Topics covered include Chapter Committee Mandates, Communications plans, the Calendar of Events, Volunteer Contacts and reference to a Chapter Survey, which has been designed to determine what owners/managers and recruiters/consultants would like to see in the region. Also included is the following message that is a good reminder to all of us: “Did you know? Membership in ACSESS extends to all employees of the Member Company.”

This e-newsletter, which will soon be posted on the BC page on our Website, adds another dimension to ACSESS communication. Thank you, B.C. □



A panel of HR professionals shares great information with Toronto/SW Ontario Chapter members at a December 2001 sell-out meeting.

be reached at any time to answer your questions on legislative, regulatory and labour issues (mmcininch@bbandc.com).

As you can see there is lots going on. Please keep in touch with us. Your feedback is always valued and often helps to bring our services into perspective.

I hope to see you at Conference 2002.

With best regards,

Amanda Curtis, CAE
Executive Director

ACSESS Members in the News

THE 12TH EDITION of the **Women of Excellence Awards** was held at the World Trade & Convention Centre in Halifax last November. Featuring high achievers in the fields of business, arts and culture, public affairs, corporate management, and education and health, the event raises over \$35,000 annually, mostly for programs for at-risk young people. Among the six recipients this year was **Jill Peapell** for corporate management and professions. The *Halifax Herald* announcement read:

"Ms. Peapell opened her own business, Peapell & Associates, at the age of 51, and has built it into the largest independent, locally owned personnel placement company in Atlantic Canada. She has worked in the personnel industry in Halifax for 23 years and is well respected by employers and job-seekers alike." Well done Jill.

Congratulations are also extended to **Harrington Staffing Services** in Ottawa on receiving the Better Business Bureau Torch Award. This award is given to the company with the highest standards and business ethics, and this is the first time it has been awarded to a company in our industry in Ottawa. The Ottawa Better Business Bureau currently has 1,700 members.

Within our industry, congratulations go to **The Keith Bagg Group** on their 30th anniversary. Their company celebrations included involvement by some of the 36 charitable organizations in which the team at TKBG are actively involved. □

HERE IS A SAMPLING of what ACSESS members said about Jeff Skrentny, CPC, when he presented in Toronto last November.

- Jeff always has the audience in the palm of his hand. Great presentation.
- Great learning technique especially for a "new kid on the block."
Thank you.
- A great view from the trenches of what it's really like in the recruiting wars.
- Very dynamic, extremely enjoyable.
- Very great speaker. I would recommend him to anyone as a must in the business.
- Excellent information. Good concepts.
- Informative. This session will really help me a lot in the future.
- Excellent. This is the first conference in which I have learned so much!
- Saw him in '97 and he was great – he's even better now.
- Very enjoyable. Very applicable. One of the best sessions I have been to. Strongly recommend.
- Impressive presentation. Very motivating and practical. Will definitely apply day to day. Great job Jeff!
- Very relevant to current market. Related well with audience.
- Very practical with clear direction and examples.
- It was great – I learned a lot.
- The best presentation that I have seen without question. Very knowledgeable.
- Clearly demonstrated experience showing examples of failures and successes.
- Excellent. Jeff is the most knowledgeable speaker I have ever listened to.
- One word – awesome! Thank you ACSESS.

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ACSESS Honours Long-time Contributors to our Industry

AT THE FEBRUARY 11, 2002, National Board Meeting, Directors voted unanimously to recognize Keith Bagg and Bill Kellie by making them ACSESS Life Members.

The Bylaws state that "Life Membership may be conferred by the National Board on individuals who have rendered distinguished service to the industry," and both Keith and Bill are most deserving of this honour.

Keith Bagg, CPC, was a leader of the Association of Permanent Placement Agencies and Consultants (APPAC) until his recent retirement. His belief in professional standards, ethics and integrity in

our industry led to Keith helping to create the Canadian Certified Personnel Consultant program. He served as APPAC President and was on the national board for many years. Keith was the first recipient of the Association's "Outstanding Contributor Award."

Bill Kellie started his career in our industry in 1968 as is still referenced on the Kelly Services Website... "In the late 1960s, William Russell Kelly made the momentous decision to begin an international expansion of his enterprise, Kelly Services. It is no surprise that he opened his first international office in Canada, the country of his birth. The exact date was June 1,

1968, and the first manager was Bill Kellie." That same year, Bill was one of the founding members of the organization that later became the Canadian Association of Temporary Services (CATS). Bill was always a dedicated volunteer serving on the National and Chapter Boards of CATS and its successor associations.

We look forward to raising a toast to Keith and Mary Bagg and Bill and Britt Kelly at the Conference Gala Dinner on May 10.

Other Life members of ACSESS are Jackie Carter, CPC, Bill Coke, Bob Cohen, CPC, and Gil Rosen.



ACSESS invited our most recent Life Members to submit the funniest or fondest anecdote from their long years in the staffing industry.

Bill Kellie writes:

As I indicated in my letter of February 26, the amusing incidents I have experienced or witnessed during my years in this industry could fill a book as long as *Gone With The Wind!* I do, however, remember the following vividly and with a great deal of compassion for the applicant.

This took place in my Kelly Services, Scarborough, office. We all know how nervous some applicants can be. One particularly nervous lady, having completed her evaluations and interview, was leaving the office when, unfortunately, she opened the wrong door and walked into the clothes closet, closing the door behind her.

She was so nervous and embarrassed, she just stayed there until someone found her, goodness knows how much later.

(Needless to say, we had signs on the doors thereafter!)

In addition to amusing anecdotes, my entry into the industry also brought about the single most important meeting of my life! During my year with Office Overload as a Sales Rep., my CSR was one Britt McMurren. The following year she became my wife. Thank you, Bill Pollock!☐

7 Steps to Reaching your Goals

The following is extracted from a an article "How to Achieve Your New Year's Resolutions" appearing in The Winning Edge, a newsletter from Dr. Kerry Johnson.

LUNACY in business is defined as doing things the same way and expecting different results. If you want to improve, you have to change something.... It's amazing that the more money we make and the more successful we become, the more we forget about the basics that got us there: setting and achieving goals.

If goals are so important then why do so few of us even do the minimum and write them down? A lot of the difficulty may be the fear of failure. The logic follows, "if I don't set goals, I won't fail. If I fail, I will have to face a loss of self-confidence." We've all heard that it's better to set high goals and miss, than to fail to set them at all. But this simple philosophy doesn't always work. You can't listen to a motivational speaker pump you up and suddenly expect to be an achiever. Its a little like the salesman who walked into his manager's office and said, "I can't make my goals this month." The manager said, "What do you mean you can't make

your goals this month? I paid a motivational speaker \$7,500 to pump you up. Do you remember what he said? Be positive. What do you have to say for yourself now?" The salesman said, "I'm positive I can't make my goals this month."

Dr. Johnson acknowledges that it is easier to reach goals than it is to set them. Yet, no great achiever has ever succeeded without goals. Working towards a goal will cause you to become more profitable and productive and it will build your self-esteem.

7 Steps to Reaching Goals

- Set specific, realistic goals.
- Consult your partner or peers for agreement on your goals.
- Set goals in long-term, mid-term and short-term increments.
- Recognize that to achieve goals, you may need to make a change in your business and personal life.
- Write down your goals and place the list in a visible spot.
- Monitor your goals weekly/quarterly, etc.
- If you aren't meeting your objectives, perhaps you need to adjust your vision or your commitment to sacrifice to get them.

PRESIDENT from page 1

business-wise, as we come out of the downturn we experienced last fall. What makes me bullish? Let's compare the end of 2001 with the end of 1990.

A quick glance at Table 1 will show that we as an exporting nation are much better poised this time than the last time we were looking forward to the end of a downturn. My own feeling is that we have now plumbed both the depth and the breadth of the bad times.

Table 1

Measure	End of 1990	End of 2001
Unemployment rate	12.1%	7.5%
Prime Rate	11.8%	2.25%
Canadian dollar	mid 70s U.S.	Low 60s U.S.
National debt	High	Controlled
TSE	Down 18%	Down 13.9%
Free Trade Agreement with U.S.	Coming	Well established

So be encouraged, work hard and smart for the next three months, and we will all reap strong rewards later in the

year! I look forward to seeing you all at the Annual Conference in Toronto in May!
Bruce McAlpine, CPC

MAY 9-10, 2002

ACSESS Conference 2002

Toronto Colony Hotel

The ACSESS National Conference, will be a terrific event in every way – great education, excellent speakers, networking opportunities, industry sponsors and a Gala Dinner with CPC Graduation Ceremony.

Attending the event is a must for Recruiters and Consultants, Regional and Branch Managers, and Senior Managers and Owners. The educational program has been designed to offer the greatest possible take-home value to delegates.

The new ACSESS Gold Floor Lounge makes great business sense for Sponsors wishing to spend a quiet moment with staffing industry decision-makers.

For more information about ACSESS Conference 2002, visit www.acsess.org, call 1-888-232-4962 or email info@acsess.org.

Full Conference registrations submitted by Friday, April 12, will be eligible to win one free registration.

Membership Report

ACSESS grows stronger every day, and we thank you most sincerely for your continued support. At the time of writing over 80% of members have renewed for the 2002. *If you even wonder whether your company's renewal is still on someone's desk, please check now.*

It is the times when the economy is not as strong and businesses are a little (or maybe even a lot) slower, that association membership is most important. Involvement in an industry association provides an opportunity to network and share chal-

lenges with others who understand your situation, and it offers tremendous discounts on educational programs that allow your staff to be the very best at what they do. And, the support of individual members results in a vital association that is viewed by clients and governments as representing a strong, professional industry made up of companies with a sense of "stick-tuitness."

We are particularly delighted to report an amazing list of 30 new members since October of 2001.

About Staffing Ltd., Alberta
ACCES Emploi, Québec
Acces Ressources Ltée, Québec
Addmore Personnel Inc., Ontario
Antoinette Shelhot Recruiting & Consulting, Ontario
Beechey Management Resources, Ontario
Brock Placement Group Inc., Ontario
Canexecsearch.com, Ontario
CCI Consultantes en Formation et Remplacement, Québec
CFT Inc., Quebec
CRIT Ressources Humaines Inc., Quebec
Executive Solutions Ltd., Alberta
GPS Executive Search Inc., Ontario
Level A Inc., Ontario
Lift Temp Limited, Ontario
Motivated Staffing Inc., Ontario

Nexstaf, Ontario
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Perm-A-Tem, Quebec
Personnel Alter Ego Inc, Quebec
Personnel Search Ltd., Maritimes
PMI & Associates, Ontario
QAS Corporate Placements Inc., Ontario
Service de personnel Mirabel inc., Quebec
Technical Career Connection Inc., Ontario
Transit Du-roy, Quebec
Staffmark Canada Inc., Ontario
Trans-United Consultants Ltd., Ontario
VTRAC Corporation, Ontario
Affiliate (Supplier) Members
Upward Motion Inc.

We look forward to welcoming representatives of these companies at upcoming events.

Choose the Best Clients with this Negotiation Process to Tell the Difference

By Jeff Skrentny, CPC/CTS

OUR PROBLEM BEGINS before we even start. We have a disposition towards negotiation that sets us up to fail. And often we do fail. Not to mention how predictable we are as an industry. We meet them in the middle, we give up too much of our fee, and we allow them to talk us into 15% fees. What are we thinking? **We can't make a living like that.**

All sales people, no matter what they are selling anywhere in the world, only sell four things: Themselves, The Service (or Product), The Company and The Fee. If we do a good job selling the first three things, then the fourth item, The Fee, in theory, should sell itself if a need genuinely exists. My approach to negotiation relies heavily on this basic assumption. I also know that up to 60% of a business-to-business transaction is decided on one issue: how you sell yourself. I use references that I aggressively gather to make sure I can sell myself in a manner that is significantly beyond my competition; my references are superior. With that key piece of the equation on such solid footing, you are set up to have an attentive prospect. **That is critical.**

Next, like all sales professionals, the fee will have to be addressed. Whether this happens on the phone, or face-to-face, what you do after the initial fee presentation can often make or break you. **EXPECT AN OBJECTION, expect negotiation, it is what SHOULD happen next.** Yet, we seem surprised when this happens. Don't be. It is the buyer's JOB to do this. If you expect this, then you won't equate negotiation with conflict, conflict with stress, stress with failure, and find yourselves in an emotional and intellectual position that puts you on the defensive.

Now that we understand negotiating is GOING to happen we can be ready for our next response. **We can make this a PROCESS, not an EVENT.** So let's think about the types of objections we hear. I am going to choose to ignore the objection where they say they don't use our services. I don't believe them, and figure I haven't sold myself, my service and/or my company convincingly; or I shouldn't be wasting my time with them, they are not a serious prospect. If they do give me that objection though, they always get a follow up letter and a few additional letters of reference, just so they know I do make placements. It implies that I need to

get candidates to make my placements from somewhere. Do I need to be more explicit?

Three typical price objections we find with great regularity are:

"We have a company-wide fee maximum of X percent or dollar amount."

"Your competitor down the street charges X percent or dollar amount."

"We don't have to pay fees that high."

How do most of us respond to those three typical objections? We often respond to these objections, or a host of similar permutations in one of three typical ways:

"Let me talk to my boss or manager and see what we can do."

"OKAY," or "Let's meet in the middle at X percent or dollar amount."

"NO," or "We can't do that."

All three responses would be inappropriate at this point. The first means I am a headhunter peon and can't do my own negotiations. The second means I don't believe in my service, or price, and would give you an even larger discount if only you had asked. The third suggests I am an inexperienced negotiator who can only respond by saying "no." Those who debate, by "overcoming objections," seldom position themselves any better.

If we really want to make this prospect a client, we need to throw all the above out the window. I continue my negotiation PROCESS in the following manner. I attempt to disarm their price objection with this type of a remark:

"I would like to consider what you have suggested, and I would like to get back to you on a specific price quote after I have had time to crunch the numbers and compare them with the ROI associated with such a project to make sure we can remain a profitable and successful organization, which is what our partner firms want us to be. But while I have you on the phone it is my hope that we may continue to explore the possibility of a partnership to solve your current or future hiring (staffing) need and make a game plan for learning enough about each other so we can form the beginning stages of that partnership."

It is my experience that the buyer will do one of two things. ONE, insist on a resolution of the price issue before investing any additional time with you. These are **PRICE**

buyers, and I prefer not to do business with them if at all possible. TWO, they will continue to listen, and they will make a final decision on your service based on the VALUE offered, of which price is only one component. I refer to this group as **VALUE buyers**. It is the group I covet as business partners. They actually treat me as a partner, want me as a partner, and find the consultative knowledge I have important to their success, and the success of their organization.

With this approach, negotiation is now a PROCESS that is going to take more than one interaction to conclude. I will often engage my client by sending them some additional references, my standard contract with the fee blank, some blind résumés so they see the type of candidates I represent. I ask them, in turn, to send me the blind résumés of three of the last hires that are indicative of who they would like to add to staff, appropriate company literature for our files, job descriptions for the types of positions they might consider partnering with me to fill, and a blank company application, if they use one. I suggest a client visit. The goal is to engage them in a PROCESS of investing in you,

to help you succeed for them. The higher the perceived VALUE, the more likely they will invest in you, and buy your services.

Watch for Part 2 of this article, "Negotiate Unexpectedly to Regain Your Edge," in the next ACSESS newsletter.□

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Jeff Skrentny, CPC/CTS, ATM-B, began his career in the recruiting, search & staffing industry after graduate school in March of 1987 with one of Chicago's largest clerical placement agencies. In 1995 Jeff made the successful transition from clerical placement to technical search when he opened the **Jefferson Group**. Besides working his busy IT desk, Jeff has done motivational industry training for dozens of industry associations, as well as for select in-house clients. Jeff publishes a free electronic newsletter, the **Jefferson Recruiters Report**[™], as time allows. It has a loyal and growing subscriber base. To subscribe just send an email with your complete contact information and specialty to askjeff@jeffersoninc.com.