

# The Suburban Connection

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## Letter From the President:

### CHANGES & CHALLENGES: A NEW DIRECTION, A NEW YEAR

Very often the start of a new year dictates changes in our lives. We make New Year's resolutions that are designed to assist us in living healthier, being kinder to our neighbors, or working smarter in an effort to move forward in our careers. Sometimes, changes beyond our control have the greatest impact of all on our lives.

Over the last couple of years, we have seen a number of our friends and neighbors lose their jobs. Our communities have empty spaces that once housed full parking lots of commuters coming from great distances, working to get ahead, to get through the volume of work, or just to get a paycheck. When an economic slowdown of this magnitude forces us to view what we once took for granted, we may find ourselves in a slump, depressed, unable to think of the future.



The fact remains that nothing lasts forever: *bad or good*. Neighbors move, businesses close, family members leave home for new opportunities. But then, new babies are born, new jobs are found, new friendships begin, and new values are formed. Our once frivolous lifestyle turns to a serious study of "pulling in the belt," sharing a meal at home with friends or family, living with family members for emotional or financial support, or embracing our faith in an effort to survive and get through the next day. We find new directions, new strength, and renewed determination in these crisis times. And in doing so, we build our inner strength as we move forward.

Do things happen for a reason? Do bad things happen to good people? No matter what our belief in the answer to these questions, it is important to remember that as a participant in this life, we all have something to give someone at some time.

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If fear is the reason we have become self absorbed and paralyzed to think beyond our own difficulties, then we have identified our next challenge—conquer the fear!

It is a smoother road we travel when we identify what we need most in our lives, and we shed those things that encumber us. Fear of failure is often the burden that prevents us from seeing the forest through the trees. It makes us feel alone and isolated. Successful people have always been perceived as capable of doing things all on their own. In fact, the opposite is more likely the truth. We all need help. There is no shame in the asking or the offering of assistance.

Perhaps the best avenue for our own success is to reach out to others, to offer a helping hand. When we are surrounded by despair and feel our strength ebbing, it is easy for us to feel the need for others to help us. But what we must remember in these difficult times is that we are all a part of the same human family. Each of us has something important *to give to others*.

My hope is that all of you have the opportunity to see the good that comes from new challenges faced every day. Perhaps in this New Year we can all become more aware of the time and care we give those who touch our lives. If we look less critically and more supportively, hopefully we will find our own rewards in the generous heart of giving.

-Nancy M. Carlson, President



## New W-4 for 2003

For those of you who wish to change your deductions for 2003, you are required to complete a new W-4 (2003) form. Please call our office, or download the form from a link on our website.

Be certain to fill out a new form if you have changed any of the following: your name, address, marital status, or deductions for supporting family members.

**You may call (508) 366-8521  
or log on to [www.suburbanstaffing.com](http://www.suburbanstaffing.com).**

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# Helpful Hints for Getting the Job

Looking for a job can be a long and tedious process. In the current market, you are competing with a larger number of people than before. It is imperative that no matter how long you have been looking and how frustrated you are that you remain focused, positive and professional.

Recruiters receive a large number of resumes when they place an online or print advertisement for a job. If you are serious about getting the job, you've got to make your candidacy attractive. The first question to ask yourself is "Why am I the person they should hire?" Based on your answer, customize your resume and cover letter to "sell" yourself. You are your own marketing agent.

## THE RESUME

Your resume and cover letter are the first piece of marketing material that the potential employer encounters. Remember the basics:

- Did you run spell check?
- Does your resume reflect a solid work history and skills that are appropriate for the position? Regardless of how redundant it may seem, be sure that your resume has skills listed such as MS Word, Excel or other skill requirements that the advertisement specifies. Bear in mind that employers have automated the recruiting process. They scan your resume into a database which allows the recruiting staff to quickly find suitable candidates for the current staffing need, as well as future openings. They simply search on **KEYWORDS**, meaning, if your resume does not have them, they will never find you.
- Did you have someone you trust proofread the document? You need to ensure that your resume will be placed in the "yes" pile of resumes the recruiter receives. If your resume contains errors, it may not make it.

## THE INTERVIEW

This is your time to make your pitch. Ask yourself again: "Why should this company hire me?" You need to stay focused on the specific job and the questions at hand. If you want to give the best impression, you need to be honest and forthcoming with the interviewer. Think of ways that your past experience can contribute to the company and share them in concise, specific examples. You want to paint a picture of you that is positive and professional. At the end of the interview, let the interviewer know you want the job. Be direct, but not confrontational. For example: "I thank

## Did You Know?

■ **JOHN CARLSON**, working at National Grid USA, announced the birth of his new son, William John, on July 11, 2002!

■ **ALISON LINKKILA**, former Recruiter with Suburban Staffing, gave birth to a bouncing baby boy, Matthew James, on December 29, 2002!

■ **JUDITH MONTAGUE**, working at Suburban Staffing, is pleased to announce the birth of her new granddaughter Sophia Grace, born Sept. 7, 2002.

■ **NICOLE MURRAY**, former Placement Counselor with Suburban Staffing, gave birth to a bouncing baby boy, Ryan Patrick, on April 6, 2002!

■ **DOROTHY ORENTLICH**, welcomed her two new grandchildren into the world! Sarah Elizabeth on November 11, 2001 & Jared on February 20, 2002.

■ **BETTY WARSEN**, Accounting Manager at Suburban Staffing, announced the birth of her first grandchild, Meredith Grace, on December 9, 2002.

you for meeting with me and explaining the position in more detail. I am excited by the work you are doing and would like to work for your company. When do you plan to make your hiring decision?"

## YOUR REFERENCES

Be ready with a list for the interviewer. You'll want to be prepared if you are asked. Have the name, phone number, email contact information and a quick note about your relationship with them (ie: "former manager" or "coworker"). Try to gather a minimum of three references that are business related, no relatives or friends necessary. Be sure the list is current and the references are reachable.

## THE "THANK YOU" NOTE

A simple, handwritten note is all that is needed. Express your interest in the position and thank the person for their time. If you feel you need to cover something that was missed in the interview, perhaps you can explain it in this note. However, keep it simple! An email is another great way to follow up. Remember, everyone wants to work with people who are professional, courteous and kind. Keep that in mind when you follow up.

Best wishes for a prosperous new year!

-Suzanne Santospago, Senior Counselor

# Winning Attitudes for the New



The holiday season revealed itself to us with a myriad of colors, events, and emotions. Like a kaleidoscope that bursts forth an ever-changing perspective of colors and forms, life, too, presents and is, a kaleidoscope of change. We experienced much change in 2002. Perhaps more than anything this year, we or a loved one have had to face change in our jobs. There's not a family I know that hasn't been touched by reorganization, downsizing, rightsizing, a reduction in force, or whatever terms companies use to eliminate or redefi-  
fine jobs.

As a recruiter I talk to thousands of people in a year. What stands out most is their concern about jobs and the almost traumatic nature of change in the workplace. More telling, are the attitudes job seekers reveal as they detail their job objectives. Some folks are realistic. Others have a hard time accepting the reality of the situation. And, as one would expect, everyone is concerned. We are, too, because we are seriously committed to helping people find work that meets their skill sets and objectives.

Keep in mind that for every negative feeling that we have about jobs, there are others who are putting a positive spin on their job search. Their positive attitudes will go a long way towards attaining the job that offers them opportunity, excitement and the self-satisfaction of reaching their goals. For something that encompasses a good portion of our waking day, job searching is worth all the efforts it takes. Plain and simple, it's a job to find a job. And one's attitude will help make the difference.

"I've never done a resume before. I never needed one, and I don't intend to do one now."

*"I haven't put together a resume in years. But I went to the local bookstore and found so many books with great ideas on resume writing."*

"I never had to do word processing. I assigned others to do it for me. It takes time and money to learn something new."

*"I'm investing in my future. I've signed up for Adult Education courses. I also plan to take advantage of some classes that the MA Division of Education & Training ([www.detma.org](http://www.detma.org)) are offering. I've read a lot of articles on the Internet that have given me some good insight on career options."*

"I held my previous job for 15 years. I'll only consider a job that pays a salary and benefits equal to what I earned then."

*"I know I can't expect what I previously earned. I'm willing to do what it takes to get on track again, including temping while I pursue a permanent job."*

"I liked what I was doing. I have no interest in learning anything new. I'm too old to learn."

*"I know I need to build new skill sets; as I look back, I was too comfortable in the routine of my previous job. Part of my job involved customer service and I really enjoyed that. Can you help me find something new in that area?"*

"I don't have a computer. I only read the newspaper ads for jobs."

*"I don't have a computer, but I go to the town library to use theirs for free. The unemployment office also provides Internet access. And I've taken some resume writing and interviewing workshops there, too."*

"I worked harder than everyone around me, and I was the one let go."

*"I'm refocusing my goals. I want a new job that will provide me with more personal satisfaction and a decent salary."*

"I don't have any business references. Everyone that I worked for is no longer at the company."

*"I asked for references before I left my last job. I know the name, address and phone numbers of the Human Resources Department where I last worked. If all else fails, at least I get a verification of employment."*

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# Suburban Staffing

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## W-2's Mailed

The W-2 forms for 2002 were mailed out in January 2003. If you have not received yours, perhaps you moved and we did not receive your address change.

Copies of your 2002 W-2 form are available upon request in the payroll office. Call (508) 366-8521 to re-

**A Thought To Share:** "We can't adjust the wind, but we can adjust our sails."



## Help with 401(k)



Planning for your financial future requires a continuous effort, an understanding of how your company retirement plan works, and what your options are.

Carol Winn, V.P. with Morgan Stanley, Dean Witter is the advisor to the Suburban Staffing, Inc. 401(k) Plan. Carol will be offering seminars to those employees who participate in the plan, in an effort to offer suggestions and advice on what to do with our investments.

You will be receiving a letter from Carol in the near future. It will contain information on the seminars that are scheduled. If you are available to attend these seminars, I encourage you to contact Carol to reserve your spot.

For those of you who question your eligibility in this program, please call our office prior to the next sign up date of April 1, 2003.

**Eligibility Requirements:**

- \* Must be at least 21 years of age
- \* Must have worked at least 1 year for Suburban Staffing, Inc.
- \* Must have worked at least 1,000 hours in that year