



## Career Wise

By Steven Landberg

**Question:** What career resolutions should human resources leaders and executives be making for 2009?

This is certainly an appropriate time to reflect upon the impact the turmoil in the economy will have for both hiring organizations and executives. With a new incoming president and the country officially in a recession, there seems to be a shift occurring in fundamental directions that all should be examining.

Insurers are increasingly focused on cutting costs and reducing head count as they review how to best ensure competitive cost structures. However, it is also a time to focus on retaining and obtaining top talent that is the source of long-term competitive advantages. Ensuring that your top talent is secure in their current roles, that they understand their future opportunities, and that they are being compensated appropriately is critical. Targeting specific additional top talent from vulnerable competitors is highly valuable to being better prepared for future opportunities.

Many executives are feeling less confident in their current positions and career opportunities due to the uncertainty in the market. They are carefully watching their own expense outlays, saving more and examining their career objectives. Maintaining a current position by ensuring you are delivering significant value to your organization and are being viewed as an essential part of the organization is even more important today. While the job market is not strong at this time, there are and will be emerging opportunities for top talent.

The beginning of a new year provides a convenient time for reflection. Updating resumes, maintaining network and executive search connections, and staying informed on emerging trends and opportunities are always good ideas.

Don't panic in turbulent times. Instead, examine current situations and future opportunities. This not only will address short-term challenges but also enable longer term success. ER

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