

HITTING YOUR STRIDE

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

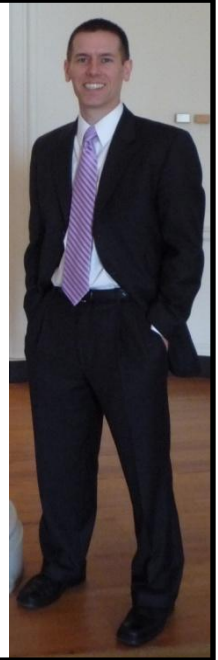
ISSUE 3, JANUARY 2014

In Issue 2, I wrote about the importance of knowing how you compare to your peers & superiors. In that spirit, here are some things your fellow readers have done recently to pursue their goals (initials used to protect identities):

- To improve their initial scores on exams for grad school admission & professional certification, PH, GD, & MB continued to study and re-took took the exams.
- MH is moving to China for a new position with his company, while MS is working toward a move to England for the same purpose.
- College student JJ is spending winter break completing an LSAT prep book, and will attend LSAT classes and one-on-one tutoring sessions this summer.
- While working full-time, MG & EH are pursuing their bachelor's degrees at night.
- ES is doing non-fiction reading and updating his Microsoft Office skills outside of work in preparation for a future career change.

As you think about what you want in the new year, ask yourself two questions: Are you willing to work as hard as the people above to make your desires a reality? How far, literally and figuratively, are you willing to go?

Stride On,
Michael



STAYING IN FRONT

“In reality, knowledge is a very dynamic universe—and what is most valuable is not the body of knowledge, but the leading edge of it.”

- Bill James, baseball historian & statistician

Books to Read This Quarter

[*Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*](#)

- Susan Cain

[*The Smartest Kids in the World: And How They Got That Way*](#)

- Amanda Ripley

[*The Everything Store: Jeff Bezos and the Age of Amazon*](#)

- Brad Stone

Articles to Read This Quarter

[*The New Job Was a Mistake, but You Can Get a Mulligan*](#)

- Sue Shellenbarger (*Wall Street Journal*)

[*Why Successful People Never Bring Smartphones into Meetings*](#)

- Kevin Kruse (*Forbes*)

[*Career Makeover: Stepping Up to Lead*](#)

- Sue Shellenbarger (*Wall Street Journal*)

Hitting Your Stride is written and distributed by Michael Salmonowicz

www.michaelsalmonowicz.com michael.salmonowicz@gmail.com

CATCHING UP

Being on the leading edge of knowledge is important, but it is vital to be familiar with thinkers and ideas from past years as well. This will help you to be more innovative when creating and problem-solving, and also can prevent older colleagues from patronizing you about your age or inexperience.

Books to Read This Quarter

[*The Talent Code: Greatness Isn't Born. It's Grown. Here's How.*](#)

- Daniel Coyle

[*Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die*](#)

- Chip Heath & Dan Heath

Article to Read This Quarter

[White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#)

- Peggy McIntosh

(People have gotten worked up over this article for 25 years, so let me just say this: Whether or not you agree with McIntosh, it is important to know about this piece and to be able to speak intelligently on it.)

REFLECTING

"The single biggest danger in business and life, other than outright failure, is to be successful without being resolutely clear about why you are successful in the first place."

- Robert Burgelman, Stanford University business professor

As 2014 begins, take time to think about the past decade and the coming decade, both in terms of your career development and the changes occurring in your field and the country/world. A personal example illustrates why this is important. As I started my graduate work in 2003, it was the perfect time to build my skill set. But because I didn't foresee the sweeping technological changes that soon would occur, I failed to focus on quantitative analysis, programming, and web design to the extent I should have. (I'm now up to speed in those areas, but it took lots of work on nights & weekends.)

Granted, I couldn't have known exactly what was in store. After all, 10 years ago Facebook, the iPhone & iPad, YouTube, Twitter, Hulu, and Netflix streaming didn't exist, and 11 years ago Skype and LinkedIn didn't exist. Still, I could have spent more time reading about projected trends in education, science, and technology; talking to people in various fields about changes they were seeing in their daily work; and creating a list of skills I believed necessary to stay at the front of the pack in a fast-changing, increasingly competitive economy. I hope you learn from my oversight.

WEBSITE TO KNOW

HireArt (www.hireart.com)

About: Job search site focused on marketing, sales, business development, and customer service/operations positions at corporations & startups.

Usefulness: Supports video interviews & provides dashboard of your application's progress.

PERSONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Your development isn't just about learning new skills; it's about effectively leveraging new skills to gain better job opportunities. But, [as one CEO explains](#), "Chances are that the best job for you won't become available at precisely the time you declare yourself ready. Your best bet [is] to always be looking for a better deal. The better deal has its own schedule." Help yourself find and seize a better deal by doing the following:

- Use your LinkedIn account. William Arruda explains why LinkedIn is [more important than you thought](#) and has a 3-part series on how to take full advantage of it ([here](#), [here](#), & [here](#)), while Susan Adams provides 7 practical steps for using LinkedIn to [find job opportunities](#).
- Revise your resume once per month, taking care to add new, quantifiable accomplishments.
- Maintain a list of your skills and how you've used them successfully in past situations (be specific). That way you can plug those examples into a cover letter and quickly edit them to connect with a particular job description.

BEING (AND STAYING) INTERESTING

Last quarter I wrote about the benefits of asking good questions. But what happens when you are asked a question while engaged in conversation? The way I see it, this is your opportunity to be memorable and impress. You can successfully do this by including in your answer:

1. Something interesting that the other person doesn't know. This might come from a unique job, hobby, or vacation, but it also can come from "staying in front." Reading that new non-fiction book the first month it's out means you can explain its premise, re-tell a story from its pages, and recommend it. This can lead to more questions coming your way, which means more chances for you to be interesting—and perhaps develop a reputation as one of those people who everyone else just has to meet.
2. Something interesting that the other person does know, but didn't realize you knew. Reading across various fields is one part of this, but "catching up" can lead to the real payoff. Referencing a business book or article that your boss read years ago while an MBA student, for example, will not only earn you some respect but also can lead to a longer conversation about other things—which means more chances to show what you know.

DID YOU KNOW...

A [recent study](#) shows interviewers' ratings are based partly on ratings they gave earlier that day, and you can be penalized if the day's earlier ratings were high. Lesson: Schedule a 9am job interview.

WORDS ON WHICH TO RUMINATE

"When I get new information, I rethink my position. What, sir, do you do with new information?"

- John Maynard Keynes, economist