

Good News –

A quick MSCCN assist helped an applicant get hired. Judith V. called Deb Kloepfel on July 21, 2009 to receive resume assistance and job interview coaching. Deb Kloepfel and Anne Wight tweaked Judith's resume in two hours due to a job interview Judith had the day she called Deb Kloepfel. Deb sent a final version she revamped just minutes prior to that interview.

Judith informed Deb that both recruiters commented on the well written resume and hired Judith on the spot. Deb received approval from Judith to use her full name, along with a picture for MSCCN's use regarding a website success story.

As of 17 July, Kate reported in a **mid-month report**:

Work-at-home Job Summary

Over 1200 candidates have applied to work at home through the MSCCN since we began our work-at-home initiative in November 2008. 126 candidates have been hired to date - some as temporary workers and many as full-time employees. Convergys has been on a hiring hiatus for the past two months but have over 30 spouses who have completed the application, testing, and interview process and are in-line for positions as soon as the next requisition opens. Since we've been working with Convergys, hiring military-affiliated candidates for their work-at-home positions has become their #1 priority. Not only are they thrilled with the quality of the candidates, but they are honored to be helping military family members in any way they can. Convergys makes a special effort to work with the MSCCN in setting up Virtual Career Fairs and will be attending several of our on-base events in upcoming months to assist with presentations and providing information. Alpine Access has had fewer positions available in the past few months also but continues to get a steady stream of candidates from MSCCN (299 to date) with 15 eligible for hire when jobs become available and 38 still in the testing process. As Alpine Access' hiring manager told me "These are AMAZING results!! Thank you again for partnering with Alpine Access!" Alpine Access will be adding Wyoming as a state to hire from this month and New Mexico is pending. Cloud 10, who hired many spouses initially for the "transition to digital TV project", has managed to hire many military spouses for full-time positions. The stumbling blocks for spouses getting jobs with these organizations continue to be: equipment (PCs don't pass test), not completing the entire application process, and not doing well on the assessment testing.

Candidate Contact and Outreach

In the past 120 days we have had 589 new candidates upload their resumes into our database. We have connected by phone or by email with candidates a total of 6732

times in this same period. Each of our new candidates is individually contacted (by phone or email) within 72 hours to learn more about their interests, get additional information about their skills and background, make suggestions on tweaking their resumes, give tips for other places to search for positions, etc. We also regularly contact candidates in our database when we receive new job postings near their location for which they are qualified. We typically receive 10-12 calls a day from candidates, make 10-20 calls to candidates and send out at least 30-40 personal emails. By the time that a candidate has found a position, we normally have an established relationship with them and they are proud to notify us they have received a job. We also send out blanket emails from our database to candidates to find out their job status, see if we can be of assistance and provide needed encouragement. All contact with applicants is tracked in our database so we have wonderful record of the services we provide. (Work-at-home candidates are typically not included in this number because of the requirement that they apply directly on the hiring company's website - we collect their information when they utilize the bypass from our website to the hiring partner and follow up with them by email or phone). An Excel spreadsheet is kept to track our work-at-home candidates.

Job Search Successes

Because of the current job market, it normally takes between 3-4 months for a candidate to find a position (unless they are extremely lucky). We have many candidates who have been actively searching for positions for 6 months or more utilizing a variety of websites and job search techniques. Almost every candidate we talk to is amazed at the "personal touch" that MSCCN offers -- they often have sent out scores of resumes and never heard back from anyone until they came to the MSCCN. If we don't have positions in their area on our website, we try to assist them to locate companies with jobs in their field. So many of our candidates are exhausted and frustrated by their job search and they need to hear they're not alone -- that it is a tough job market - that recruiters are telling us they receive from 50-100 applications for every position. The ideas, suggestions and support that we give them help them to continue their job search with a new attitude.

Some of our successful placements in the past 120 days include:

Erin B. - Ft. Campbell, KY - Bank Teller - she's been looking for work since Dec. 08

Dana G. - VA Beach - Marketing Representative - looking for work since Jan. 09

Vivian L - Lady's Island, SC - she'd been looking for work for 8 months, got assistance from our resume expert and was hired in June 09

Zowie L - VA Beach - Admin for the City of VA Beach

Jessica R - Colorado Springs - Human Resources

Dustin W - Alexandria, VA - Program Manager

Sandy Y. - Ft. Leonard Wood, MO - Optical technician
Matt C - San Diego - Community Outreach Associate

We also have numerous candidates nearing the end of the interview process and we hope to hear soon that they too have achieved success in their job search.

WEEKLY STATS from Kate Midden for week ending 2 Aug:

Resumes uploaded = 64
Jobs posted = 80
Applicants contacted = 1420+
Recruiters contacted = 9

The applicants contacted number is so large because I emailed 965 applicants that have uploaded their resume with MSCCN since Jan. 1. Many of these applicants, especially in the earlier months of the year, had little or no contact from MSCCN. I received (and am continuing to receive) responses back from applicants (over 340 in two days but it's slowed down a little now). I also had phone conversations with 16 applicants, including 2 wounded warrior spouses and 4 vets.

I learned that 8 halted their job search for now to go back to school full-time. 2 are starting their own business. 18 have found jobs (some are part-time and are still looking). I sent resume templates to 82 candidates and job search tips to 160 candidates. I also sent info on the Convergys on-line job fair to 48 applicants. Several of my responses suggested companies that I should approach re: hiring military spouses which I will start on today. I am also in the process of compiling the information I received in a report format.

Here are new people I heard from who have found jobs:

T. Anderson - (took on-line customer service training) - work-at home job - AZ
B. Billy - working through a temporary agency - AZ
G. Chappen - First Command Financial Services - HI
A. Collins - School psychologist - FL
N. Davis - Healthcare Admin - CA
S. Bollinger - Sales - CT
K. Green - Americorps - AL
Z. Hernandez - Serco - VA
E. Linville - Part-time admin - NC
A. May - Admin - VA
B. McCrady - Naval Hospital - VA

M. Morgan - City of San Angelo - TX
B. Owsley - SRA Int'l - VA
K. Stewart - MCCS - SC
D. Tedder - US Army - LA
L. Vaxter - New Corp, MS
M. Venzke - Reinstated in Gov't position - OH
C. Williams - PT Admin - GA

Kate was very busy in July, contacting applicants and attending a week-long special training at Kenexa. Her report:

I attended the Kenexa Brass Ring Administrator Course and the Kenexa Brass Ring Workbench Administrator Course at the Kenexa facility in Waltham, MA July 20-24, 2009. The cost of this course (\$3,000) was waived by Kenexa and my expenses for the trip were approx. \$1000 including airfare.

The benefits I received from attending these courses are priceless. Although I've been working on the MSCCN Talent Gateway for approximately four months, I very quickly learned that I was only using about 25% of the power of the Kenexa Brass Ring Gateway. I also learned many shortcuts and tips that will make me more effective in my position, save me time, and allow me to assist many more candidates. I'm happy to report that I'm now a certified KRB Administrator/Super User.

The first two days we covered topics including:

- Managing Requisitions
- Organizing
- Working with Folders
- Routing and Processing Resumes
- Candidate Searches
- Screening Candidates
- Tracking Candidates
- Talent Matching
- Scheduling & Communications
- Reports

Days three and four were focused on Workbench (the back end of the KBR system). This material was totally foreign to me but will be critical to making changes to the MSCCN and getting the VetConnect Gateway setup. Some of the topics covered included:

Accessing and Navigating Workbench
Defining and Setting up User Types
Best Practices
Exporting Lists and Information
Managing the Database
Administering Candidate Forms
Elements of Form Attributes
Managing Form Options
Synchronizing Changes
Administering Req Forms
Creating Standard and Custom Req Fields
Managing Talent Gateway Form Fields and Questionnaires
Managing Settings
Managing Candidates
Creating Default Search and Output Fields

The last day was a review and a chance to learn about the Automation Manager, New User Interface, and Data Insight Tools (wonderful new options that Kenexa offers to certified administrators in their latest version that we could only access once I had this training). I feel comfortable that I passed the final exam, will get my certification, and will be able to utilize these new tools to be even more effective on the Gateway.

I also had the opportunity to meet with representatives from four other organizations. I learned more about how they handle candidate hires, got contacts within their organization I need to speak with about MSCCN, and got them really excited about the services that MSCCN has to offer. I also learned lots of hints and tips used by the individual companies that will help not only with the Gateway, but also with helping candidates get positions with their organizations.

Program changes/challenges

Last month (July 2009), we had 4008 web site visits down from 4042 in June. Daily visits averaged 129 and peaked at 175 on July 30

As of July 31, the number of current active resumes was 10455 and job reqs currently active was 7805.

In checking the web statistics, it was interesting to note how viewers got to the MSCCN.org website (called referrers):

#1 was directly to the website (it's great we are known by so many) - same as last month and every month since reporting

#2 was from a Google search (not surprising) - same as last month

#3 was from www.exalead.com search up from #7

#4 was from NMFA.org (a good connection) – same

#5 was from Yahoo search (up one)

#6 was from google images (down three)

#7 was from bing search (up from 9)

#8 was from Military Homefront

#9 was from npc.navy Family Resources

#10 was a specific IP Google search

#11 was from welcomebackveterans.org

The website was accessed from 66, up from 55 countries – here are the top 25:

1	Network
2	US Commercial
3	Unresolved/Unknown
4	US Military
5	US Educational
6	US Government
7	Non-Profit Organization
8	Germany
9	Taiwan
10	United States
11	Italy
12	Russian Federation
13	Austria
14	Australia
15	Japan
16	Hong Kong
17	Mexico
18	India
19	Canada
20	United Kingdom
21	Israel
22	Brazil
23	France
24	Ireland
25	Poland

Our wonderful European volunteer, Christine Brugman, is relocating back to the States. She has been a tremendous help to MSCCN and our European applicants. We hope that in some way we can keep Christine, but if not, our next hope is that she finds a wonderful position with a great employer. MSCCN deeply appreciates the work that Christine has done!

We have found some wonderful new websites and other resources to help job seekers. In a Team conference call, we discussed how to share what we found and have developed with military family centers and how we can help to distribute what military centers have already developed to those who cannot travel to them. Any family center may download and distribute MSCCN articles and the MSEJ as long as proper credit given and nothing is altered. MSCCN would love to post helpful information and resources that military family centers have created and will do so following the same rules of providing proper credit and no alteration. We ask that the Service POCs advise their family centers of this request.

Lessons learned

The most significant lesson learned this month is through the appreciation shown for MSCCN's continuing personal communication and follow up to applicants. MSCCN is receiving emails of appreciation on a daily basis. We have learned that ongoing communication with job seekers is appreciated by them and helpful to us. We are able to motivate them when they are discouraged by their job search, and their stories always inspire us to do more.

We also realize that we need more sponsors to help with needed work equipment for caregivers of war wounded. One caregiver who wants to work from home needs a computer and paid internet service. An excerpt from her story tells of her difficulties when her husband, a Sergeant in the Marine Corps who served his country for eleven years including two tours in Iraq and one tour in Afghanistan, returned as a war wounded service member:

Warren was diagnosed with PTSD and hospitalized. Maria worked full-time to help support the family. Once Warren was released, she missed many days of work taking Warren to appointments in Fayetteville, Durham and Jacksonville, NC (they live in Beulaville). She never knew when she would have to leave work at a moment's notice because Warren often called her in panic, needing her at home.

Their daughter was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes and Maria shouldered the additional responsibility of more doctors' visits and the need to monitor her daughter's sugar levels, administering 4-5 insulin injections a day. Maria's health suffered – her

blood pressure skyrocketed and she experienced debilitating attacks of spastic colon, problems her physician attributed to stress. She was also diagnosed with a heart defect and was finally forced to give up her job.

Warren's income was drastically reduced when he transitioned from active duty. When Maria lost her job, this proud Marine family's finances bottomed out.

In March of 2009, Warren was diagnosed with TBI and now receives numerous medications to relieve his debilitating headaches. He is now unemployable - experiencing vision and memory loss, three-dimensional and double vision and erratic mood swings.

MSCCN needs to line up sponsors for war wounded families in advance to avoid any delays in helping them to become financially stable through working. If you know of any companies or individuals who are willing to sponsor computers and internet access, please advise them of the urgency for cases such as Maria's and us of their interest in helping those in need.