

Includes 3 national surveys that identify the most important skills employers are looking for

William T. Mangum

99 Minutes
to your
Ideal
JOB

A PROVEN FORMULA FOR
ORGANIZING YOUR JOB SEARCH
AND GETTING THE JOB YOU WANT

99 Minutes to Your Ideal Job

William T. Mangum



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This book is dedicated to all who are seeking a better, more satisfying, and rewarding job—the ideal job.

Every individual is involved in a personal journey. Your job and your career lead to success or serve as a detour. Taking charge of your job search, finding the ideal job, and avoiding detours is what this book is all about.

About the Author

William Mangum is president of the Thomas Mangum Company, an executive search company founded in 1964. The Company has served a broad spectrum of companies including major *Fortune* 500 corporations, medium- and small-size companies in a variety of businesses and industries. As its long-term president, Mangum has been selected by a number of his peers as one of the leading executive search consultants in the industry. He is listed in the *Career Makers; America's Top 100 Executive Recruiters*. Previously, his company was selected number one in a survey conducted by the Southern California Technical Placement committee. Over the last decade, in a continuing effort to gather data on the changing job market and its impact on both job hunters and employers, Mangum has published numerous job market surveys for his business.

Mangum's background involves extensive experience in executive search at all levels of the organization structure, workforce planning, organization planning, and organization development. His background also includes line and staff management experience in human resources management, operations, and P & L management. In addition to executive search assignments, he has assisted in major research and state-of-the-art build-up programs. Such searches have included finding advanced technology, scientific, engineering and management talent for breakthroughs in a variety of industries and technologies. Among them have been searches for the leading aircraft/aerospace and missile/space executives, and teams for roles in advance exploration, such as the Apollo program (moon landing), Viking Mars program, and Stealth program.

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A heap of thanks and praise to the many people who helped shape this book—1200+ survey respondents, thousands of job seekers, hundreds of potential executive search candidates, and hundreds of employers. I am grateful to all of you for sharing your experiences and job journeys. To the hiring managers, human resource directors, and candidates, thank you for an enlightening journey. To the individuals who conducted the surveys, a particular thanks is due for your devotion and interest in gaining knowledge about the ever-changing and dynamic job market medium within which we work. Thanks, also, to Carolyn Carter, a most able associate of some 11 years, who labored through manuscript preparation and typing. Melinda Stephens sifted through thousands of words, editing and offering advice. I am indeed indebted to her. To my wife, Maria Elena, a thanks for patience and understanding. I greatly appreciate everyone's contributions.

Introduction

In recent years I have received thousands of telephone calls and over 50,000 resumes from job hunters in most areas of industry and business throughout the country. Many of these individuals have asked for help in finding a job, and most have asked for an overview of the job market as it relates to their individual job search needs, qualifications, and skills. In the last several years a surprising number of job hunters have needed a reorientation into the realities of today's job market due to the dramatic changes that have occurred.

99 Minutes To Your Ideal Job is my response to the tremendous ongoing request for answers to job hunter's questions about finding a job and handling the job change/search process. Executives, managers, professionals, white-, and blue-collar workers of all levels are seeking help and guidance in larger numbers than ever before due to today's lean job market.

As an executive search company president and consultant, I have created a new view and time perspective (99 minutes) on winning the ideal job. This view is substantiated by recently completed (1993–94) multiple national job market surveys of three thousand employed and unemployed job hunting executives, managers, professionals, and hiring managers; and from two employer surveys (1993–94) of the employment market involving four thousand employers.

During the last ten years or so, employers have found that they must increase both quality and productivity dramatically in order to compete in both domestic and global markets. To meet these de-

mands, employers are seeking employees with skills and experience that are an exact match for the requirements they must fill. Therefore, a more knowledgeable job search effort is required for job hunters to satisfy an employer's needs and be successful in their job search.

To find the ideal job today, job hunters must know today's job market, and they must be able to respond to the changing needs and upgraded demands of employers.

My conclusions are based on today's lean job market conditions described in Chapter 1, the world changes affecting the job market cited in Chapter 2, and the numerous surveys conducted, including the recent surveys reviewed in Chapter 3.

Unlike the booming job market of the past, today's job market is an *employer's market* where job hunters face stiff competition and must be prepared to give their best effort in order to attain the ideal job. To be really effective, this effort must focus on the key 99 minutes encompassing the job hunter's presentation to an employer. The 99 minute time frame provides a guide for the job hunter that includes developing/gaining employer interest, successful interviewing, and getting results/offers. I use the term *99 minutes* to pinpoint the pivotal time frame a job hunter must deal with because ultimately all job search efforts focus and funnel through this time frame. The nucleus of this 99 minute time period is the time frame job hunters have to present themselves and their skills to a potential employer. Therefore, these 99 minutes are the most important minutes in a job hunter's search.

In the following pages, you will learn how to apply the 99 minute formula in today's dramatically changing job market and the job search process. You will learn to use it for analyzing your skills capability, job sourcing, developing a job search plan, marketing and selling yourself, gaining an employer introduction, successfully presenting yourself, and polishing your image. You will also learn the meaning of the new guides recommended here and the following acronyms and their importance in job hunting: WOW candidates, VWP, PEG matching, TNT, and TART. Most important of all, for the highly competitive mid-1990 to 21st century job market, you will gain an understanding of the need to match very closely your skills and experience to employment market needs and specific employer needs.

99 Minutes To Your Ideal Job begins with three vital preparatory chapters on the job market, followed by the *99 Minute Formula* and

winning job search approaches and techniques. The first two chapters will give you a jump-start into understanding today's job market and the vast changes that are occurring. Chapter 3 includes the national job market survey results. Chapter 5 gets you organized to take charge of your job search. Other Chapters give you the hidden key to job search success, clues to how employers recruit and select new hires, and the new job search guides.

Job seekers will find excellent information and some startling figures here in regard to

- Salary and job levels being offered in today's job market
- Employer attitudes toward hiring
- The most effective job sources
- Job search sources and techniques that are working
- Employer contacts required to obtain an interview/offer
- Consulting and temporary work
- The recareering dilemma
- The impact of the *ten year economic cycle*
- What the new lean management style means
- Hiring activity projections

All the vital up-to-date information, methods, and techniques you need to know about your search are here. At the end of every chapter you will find a list of suggestions from hiring managers and successful job hunters on how to better prepare for today's challenging and competitive job market. A careful study of the information provided can make a difference in time spent wisely in your job search, and most importantly in finding the ideal job. A job search workbook is available separately. (See last page of book for more information on this.) This workbook provides additional exhibits, working samples, checklists, and a detailed breakdown of a job search plan and the job search process.

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1

Job Hunting for Success In Today's Job Market

Job seekers today must have job-hunting survival skills to be successful in the competitive job market of the mid-1990s–2000 era. They must be willing to go beyond the traditional job search methods of the past. They must face frank truths about dealing with employers in a lean business world—a job market that is radically different from yesterday's, where new approaches are necessary.

Fact 1: In 1994 the U.S. government reported economic growth of 4.7 percent for the third quarter of 1993, the greatest economic growth in five years. In the same month this report was released, U.S. companies announced planned layoffs of some 108,000 employees. These layoffs are believed to be the largest ever recorded in a one-month period for such a widespread spectrum of U.S. industry.¹ This in the face of resounding economic/business news.

If you want to obtain a better position in today's changing job market, you must adapt to this new business era. To do so, you need an up-to-date education. You need to know:

- The economy's impact on business activity and the job market
- The changing world's impact on your job search
- New strategies for business and hiring

1. "Productivity Index Rises Moderately," and "Major Firms' Planned Layoffs Sets Record," *Los Angeles Times*, 9 February 1994.

2 *Job Hunting for Success In Today's Job Market*

- The best ways to develop job opportunities and approach a prospective employer
- The *99 Minute Formula*

As you embark on your journey for a new job, you will likely find it will try your patience and challenge your skills. There is no question that today's job market is different and, for many, difficult. A positive attitude can make this rigorous task both stimulating and enlightening—in fact, a real adventure!

Fact 2: In the past five years, a record 1.4 million executives, managers, and administrative professionals lost their jobs. In the five-year period between 1981 and 1986, only 782,000 lost their jobs.²

Easy-to-find jobs are a bygone element of the 1970s and 1980s. The generally robust employment market of past years is over, and may not return for years to come. Job hunters today must adjust to the realities of a tougher job market as companies become locked in global competition with smaller and higher quality staff and organizations.

The new factors in the business and economic equation are created by changes in global/domestic competition compounded by more controlled, regulated, litigated, and financially constrained business management. These factors require companies to have a more productive, flexible, and profitable workforce. As a result, a new operating mode has evolved in American commerce known as *Lean Operations Management*. In other words, a new business era has emerged.

Companies have been forced to refocus on the basic tasks of running a business and why, where, when, and how they utilize their workers. These dramatic and historical changes are affecting millions of people, resulting in far fewer jobs, often at different and more difficult skill levels.

As you begin your job search, you will discover you are facing a very different job market than in past years. You may also find there are some new skills you need to learn in order to meet an employer's needs for the competitive marketing requirements of the mid-1990s and beyond. Your goal should be to make sure you are aware of all the requirements needed for the job area in which you are competing.

After doing your best to match these requirements, you will be

2. Ibid.

way ahead of the game by following the job search process described in the following chapters. To be an aware job hunter, you must know what capabilities an employer requires in today's job market. This is an education in itself. And that is what this book is all about.

The vital information you will discover here comes from 30 years of experience managing executive searches. This experience involves conducting job searches for hundreds of employers involving thousands of job hunters in the executive, professional, and management job market.

Whether you are entering the job market for the first time, thinking about a job change, or have already left your job—either voluntarily or involuntarily—the survey information included here will allow you to utilize feedback from thousands of job hunters, employers, and hiring managers.

The survey questions cover a wide gamut of the ups and downs a job hunter encounters in today's job market. You will find the following list of questions, many of which were asked in the survey, representative of ones you might ask. Answers are provided to each question in appropriate chapters throughout the book.

1. How long does it take to find a new job?
2. What are the more effective ways to find a job in today's job market?
3. What are the best ways to develop job opportunities and approach prospective employers?
4. What specific job sources should be used and which are most effective?
5. Approximately how many employer contacts are required to obtain an interview and an offer?
6. What type and length resume should be used?
7. How effective are unsolicited resumes mailed to employers?
8. What percentage of unsolicited resumes result in interviews?
9. What are the conditions of the job market?
10. What trends are appearing in the job market in regard to hiring?
11. What jobs are reported in demand and available?
12. Should I quit my current job before looking for another position?
13. What percentage of employers offer outplacement assistance for terminated employees?

4 *Job Hunting for Success In Today's Job Market*

14. My approach for a new job, including my resume, is not working. What suggestions do you have?

Your most important question of course is: How successful will my job search be? The *Job Hunter Surveys* (see Chapter 3) indicate that *many job hunters have to substantially revise their search methods to successfully compete in today's job market.*³ This is due to fewer jobs, lack of employer interest, and minimal interview opportunities.

According to the surveys, it takes an average of 6.24 months to find a new job in today's market. When a new job is found, it often pays an equal or smaller amount and offers equal or less challenge than the previous one (survey Chapter Three). This, of course, is what you want to avoid if at all possible.

Survey results show a job market reacting to dramatic change. For approximately a decade, American business has been shifting gears to deal with debt burdens and the need for greater efficiency in extracting more and greater profits in increasingly competitive markets.

New challenges in the business world, such as those created by growing global markets and nations that assist their companies in research, *have created intense competition, both nationally and internationally.* This places pressure on American companies as never before. The past ten years of restructuring, mergers and buyouts, downsizing, layoffs, workplace reengineering, and workforce redesign have resulted in the greatest changes in American business since the Industrial Revolution (see Chapter 2). The result is an extensively downsized workforce and a larger number of unemployed all *attempting to adapt to a changing and more complex evolving business world.*

The evolving business world encompasses a much more competitive national and global economy. This economy adds several new factors: A North American Free Trade Pact, a *more open Russian business climate*, a growing South American market, and the emergence of a united Europe. Combine these factors with increasing competition from other powerful areas like Japan, China, and Southeast Asian countries, and you have pieces of a puzzle that fit very differently than those of previous economic eras.

In order to stay competitive, American companies are responding to this *evolving business world by operating lean—and to some people mean.* They are laying off; selling divisions and business units;

3. In Chapters 2 and 4 you will see how to approach the job market today vs. what worked successfully in previous years, particularly in the booming '80s.