

Bringing on Your “A” Game

By Kate Midden, MSCCN

I want to share the story of a spouse I've been working with since mid-August 2009 – yes, 5 months. She'd just relocated to a new area, received an MSCCN invitation to join a virtual seminar, "Desperate Is Not A Job Title", and decided to participate. She warned me in advance that she was shy. After the seminar I received an email from her, thanking me for the information provided, asking for a review of her resume, and requesting that I email her if I heard of open positions near her location.

I made a few suggestions regarding her resume, sent her some ideas on websites and companies to keep an eye on, and mentioned the MyCAA spouse scholarships to her. I received an email back saying that after the seminar she'd started making lists and broadened her job search, doing her homework, and not relying on job boards alone to find positions. She made an appointment with the military family center to get more information to help with her job search and was already signed up and approved to start taking classes through MyCAA.

She told me she knew the competition was fierce for every position and because she was searching for the right job, she'd have to bring on her “A” game. She continued taking training courses with MSCCN, attended an MSCCN event at her base, learned about elevator speeches, wrote her elevator speech, and practiced it until she delivered it naturally. In September I asked her to take part in an experiment. I met another spouse new to the same area and wondered if she'd like a job buddy. They started trading information about jobs and job fairs and in October she went to her first ever job fair. She's now a job fair veteran and encourages other spouses to attend as well. She was truly working and enjoying her job search.

In early January, after six long months and only one interview, her hard work paid off. She interviewed with a number of companies and even turned down a position that wasn't a good fit for her. She practiced several hours a night before each interview. She went to a panel interview (after a very difficult phone interview). She'd already interviewed at another company that morning (great practice) and went fully armed to the big one. She knew the company was looking for someone who took initiative so she'd gone to Office Max and prepared a portfolio for each interviewer that included a really nice cover letter, her resume, references, two letters of recommendation and two examples of work she'd done at her previous position, all professionally bound in the hiring company's colors (\$2 each) and blew the panel away. She received a call on the way home from her interview from the Corporate Office telling her they were very interested in her. She had another interview today with a company that also sounds like a perfect fit for her. I believe her next hurdle will be deciding which position to take. Get out your “A” game - it takes time and effort but the payoff is huge.

PS. She recently accepted her “A” list job.