

Acing the Long-Distance Executive Career Search

12 tips to capture and keep the attention of decision makers...

In today's job market, it's essential that you set yourself apart from your competition. This is especially important when you are looking outside of your current geographic location for opportunities. One of the best ways to do set yourself apart in today's market is to create a "thought leadership" reputation online. In other words, show yourself to be an expert in the function (like Finance, Operations, etc.) or industry (like Manufacturing, Technology, etc.) to get noticed and to position yourself as an investment that will pay off, and not just a candidate.

One of the great effects of becoming a thought leader is that employers will hire thought leaders quicker and pay them more than any other winning candidate. My firm uses the following techniques to amplify the executive reputation well beyond their current city. So, here are a few ways to create that thought leadership persona to attract the attention of employers and recruiters outside your own metropolitan area. It can take a little extra effort, but the payoff is huge:

1. **Write LinkedIn posts.** These are short articles on LinkedIn in your area of specialty, to show off your expertise. This can be as simple as your opinion on a certain topic or writing about an example of using your expertise to solve a business problem. To get your posts viewed by hundreds, if not thousands, of people, write your post specifically related to the LinkedIn Pulse Editorial Calendar. [Click here to see that calendar for 2016.](#)
2. **Create a free YouTube channel and populate it with short videos of 3 to 5 minutes in length,** where you discuss the same types of topics you would write about in your short LinkedIn posts. Introduce yourself in one of them by answering the question you hear many times in interviews – "Tell me about yourself." You only need 4-5 videos total, but be sure to populate the description area and keywords area in each YouTube video with key words and phrases that employers and recruiters would use to search for someone with your skills. You can even add these videos to your LinkedIn profile to set yourself apart from others in your field.
3. Speaking of LinkedIn, it has become a driving force in executive searching; 70% of employers and 90% of recruiters now use LinkedIn as their exclusive source of finding their next executive talent. **For you, this translates to the absolute requirement of having a robust profile on this business networking site.** Write a compelling summary explaining in no uncertain terms what you can do for your next employer, or what you are doing for your current one. List quantifiable achievements in each position you have held in your career. Also, use the "skills" section at the bottom to list 50 key words and phrases that decision makers would use to find someone with your talent. Finally, LinkedIn just increased their maximum number of groups to join from 50 to 100, and belonging to the same group as employers and recruiters searching for you will bring you near the top of their LinkedIn search results, so join large nationwide groups by function and by industry to attract searchers outside of your hometown.

4. **Write a few press releases that “interview” yourself on a current topic or “how to” article.** Be sure and quote yourself giving advice several times in each article. You will be seen as the expert, and when you submit this press release using a press release service, you will usually show up in over 100 media outlets nationwide, including business journals, local newspapers and TV station websites. I recommend www.PRRreach.com as a press release submission service, because they will also video record an “anchor” reading a summary of your press release, just like you made the news, and you can add this video to your YouTube channel and your LinkedIn profile. You can then call yourself an “expert” and mention in all of your written materials that you have been featured as an expert in your field by over 100 media outlets nationwide or worldwide.
5. **Create your own direct mail campaign to your target employers.** Send a hard copy of your resume, along with a short handwritten note (which takes much less time than a cover letter and gets a much higher response rate) to the person that would be your direct supervisor – not Human Resources. To bypass any gatekeepers like Executive Secretaries or Administrative Assistants, place your resume in a brightly colored greeting card envelope and hand address it. This is because no one is rude enough to open someone else’s greeting card! It will also guarantee that your envelope is the first thing a potential hiring manager will open when they get their stack of mail. You can source envelopes (without cards) online – my preferred resource is www.envelopemall.com , which will deliver high quality envelopes at a low price.
6. **One last technique is to create your own short website,** with your name as the URL. If your name is taken, then try “hireyourname.com.” On this website, you can add a page that is simply your resume, an executive bio page, and then a page that contains the videos mentioned above. You can easily put this together using www.godaddy.com, which offers a low cost monthly fee for hosting the website. Or, conversely, you can buy the URL at GoDaddy and forward it to a free www.Wix.com site, which contains templates for this type of simple website. Both GoDaddy and Wix allow you to easily create this site if you have no technical experience.

Once you have the initial attention of a long-distance employer, it’s important to stay “top of mind” with them after you receive the first phone call. This will move you along the hiring process faster and further than other candidates. There are several strategies you can use to do this.

1. **Using a “consultative sales” approach during the interviewing process will set you apart others vying for the same position.** This means asking the interviewer many questions throughout the interview, rather than saving your questions until the end. This is more acceptable in an executive interview, when compared to an interview process for an entry-level or mid-level position. Ask the interviewer about their current and anticipated challenges and initiatives; this will get to their pain points and aspirations. By making yourself relevant to each of these, you increase the likelihood of receiving an offer.
2. **In continuing to use this consultative sales approach, I usually advise my clients to “ask for the sale” during the initial phone call, with the “sale” being a face to face interview,** which is

the next step in the process. This is not feasible, however, in a long-distance interviewing process, as the company foots the bill for flying an executive out for what is usually a string of face to face interviews. Therefore, I recommend asking for a future meeting using a video platform, such as Skype or Google Hangout. An easy way to do this is, at the conclusion of the interview, simply say, *“You know, after talking with you about the position today, I’m even more excited about the potential of the position and the company than before we talked. Is there some time next week that we could connect on Skype to talk about your needs in more detail?”* This will more likely move you forward in the hiring process and give you some valuable face time with the decision maker that other candidates may not have simply because they didn’t ask for it.

3. Every job seeker has experienced that “black hole syndrome,” where they never hear back after an interview. If an executive has completed what they feel is a successful phone interview, but fail to hear back from HR or the hiring manager within the amount of time they anticipated, **there is a little known internet search technique called a “Google filetype search” that will allow them to supply the contact person with a great piece of value, in order to increase the likelihood of getting a response back.** This will invoke the law of reciprocity, and will literally oblige them to respond to you quickly. Simply type into Google (using the quotation marks), “XYZ industry trends 2016”+filetype:pdf if you want to find a relevant white paper, or replace the pdf with ppt to find a PowerPoint slide deck. What most people don’t know is that Google indexes files as well as websites.

These files can be sent as an attachment to a follow up email, to again give you an edge above your competition. The content within the quotation marks would be any keywords you would want to look for in the document, so that can be individualized to the position sought, as well as the industry of the potential employer. So the follow up won’t just say, “Hi, I was just following up to find out where you are in the decision making process...” and instead could be, “Hi, I was continuing my research on your industry and came across this great white paper you might take a look at, especially on page 28, where it talks about...”

4. **Another easy technique for keeping yourself “top of mind” after an interview is to send a hand-written, hard copy thank you note** to each person you talk to during the hiring process. As simple as it may sound, it is hardly ever done anymore, and will make a strong impression on every recipient. Just stick to the rule that the thank you note should only serve to solidify the rapport building, and not used to attempt to sell yourself further. The perfect thank you note should say, *“Dear Robert, It was a great pleasure talking with you, and I’m excited about the possibility of working together at XYZ company. Sincerely, Your Name.”*
5. **A follow up email can be sent, however, to invite the interviewer after the phone interview to check out your personal website (as listed above) or your YouTube channel.** Within the email, you can also direct them to one of the media outlets that published the press release you sent out. It will read like an article, and they will perceive you as a featured expert in that online publication, which furthers your thought leadership status. This email, with the call to action of taking these next steps, will allow them to quickly get to know you more than any of the other



candidates they have talked with, since they will see you on video. It also maintains that top performer image you've created online, and ensures that they are exposed to it.

6. The final, and most important piece of advice I can give you an executive in a long-distance career search, is to **fill the interviews with stories about past achievements that contain quantifiable results**. Stories are the oldest form of communication, and will be remembered long after mere statistics or answers that just give an affirmation of relevant experience are forgotten. These stories must be specific, beginning with, "For example, this one time, I..." or, "This reminds me of a time when I..." and then set up the context and situation, possibly explain the opportunity or challenge it presented you, followed with your actions and the end result.

At an executive level, employers are looking for candidates that have a strong history of affecting the bottom line of their past employers. Having this makes you, as an executive job seeker, a safe bet to hire and an investment that will pay off quickly. One of the most important things an employer wants to know is what you can do for them, and the best way to give that answer is to supply them with specific examples for what you have done for your present or past employers.

If you use these creative techniques to not only get noticed by employers and recruiters nationwide, but to also keep yourself in their minds as they search to fill an executive position, you will skyrocket your chances of making it through the hiring process, even long distance, and become THE choice for their next hire.

If you would like all of these things done for you, to create your thought leadership persona and increase your nationwide presence, please contact Career Resume Consulting today at (816) 600-2478. These techniques work globally as well, and if you are outside of the U.S., just email me directly at Tammy@BeyondJobSearching.com. We would love to explore the opportunity of working together to get you a well-fitting position with a company that appreciates your genius and pays you what you're worth.

Tammy Kabell Bio

Tammy Kabell is the founder and CEO of [Career Resume Consulting](http://CareerResumeConsulting.com), an executive career firm that is internationally known for helping six figure clients land jobs fast and shave months off their searches. She has been marketing her clients successfully into new careers for 13 years, giving them both the competence and the confidence to win the position they love and deserve and be paid what they're worth.

Tammy is considered an authority in the hiring industry, having been featured as an expert multiple times in The Wall Street Journal, NBC News, Fox News, Bloomberg Businessweek, Careerbuilder.com, TheLadders.com, Monster.com, and dozens of other online and paper publications. She has also appeared on numerous local and national TV and radio interviews, and is the relied-upon expert in job searching for Fox TV and radio affiliates.