

## **Open Minds Open Doors**

By Chris Hingle

Direction is good. A clear sense of what you want to achieve in the future provides critical guidance for your life, career and company. But don't let discipline blind you to opportunities you may not expect.

Many times career advancement comes from unexpected places, whether it's a layoff that allows time for a promising new venture or a job offer from a place where you never thought of looking. In my practice, I recently recruited a vice president of sales and marketing who worked in the housing sector before briefly leaving the industry. I approached him with a position that matched his qualifications and furthered the trajectory of his career, yet it wasn't one that he considered at the start. While the company and this individual fit well together, the executive had envisioned finding a position in his home town, rather than moving to another part of the country where the management position was offered.

At first, he considered taking another open position further down the corporate ladder so he would not have to move. Sometimes people have ample reason to choose a desirable location over their career. But all too often, an attractive address becomes less desirable if one's career does not provide prosperity and personal growth. Plus, today's tough job market usually opens only one or two doors to executives looking to advance. It's imperative that an executive's family members understand the degree to which his or her career advancement will affect their well being.

When it comes to high-stakes career decisions, selling an opportunity to the family can be just as important as selling one's skills to a potential employer. Family obviously provides support on levels that an employer cannot, and the entire household should be considered an important part of the team that moves an executive's career forward. Executives must take care to communicate the pros and cons of a career change. Often a visit to the new city can help persuade a reluctant spouse that the time and disruption of a move will be worth the opportunity. Kids' needs matter too, and it can be helpful to

identify programs for sports, music and other activities that children can continue in the new location. At the end of the day, ambitious executives will only succeed if their families are on board.

In both job hunting and in recruiting, an open mind is critical to matching a candidate and a position successfully. I explained to the executive the importance of keeping a broad perspective when he considered the offer. Eventually he took the superior job that suited him best. An open mind opened doors for him that he would not have seen, had he stuck to his original thinking.

At Christopher Frederick, we've spent more than 20 years seeking out the candidates best suited to our clients' top positions. To learn more about how we can open doors for your company, contact Chris Hingle at 800-EXU-FIRM (398-3476), [chingle@cfrederick.com](mailto:chingle@cfrederick.com)