

## OUTPLACEMENT: FROM JOBSEARCH TO CAREER MANAGEMENT

From the late 60's to the end of the 90's, outplacement was a service developed merely to help employees find a new job. The primary benefit they expected from their consultant was to organize an efficient job search on the market.

It meant a lot of training on building an adequate CV, answering job ads in selected newspapers, preparing interviews with recruiters and HR teams and collecting data from huge company databases such as Kompass. The idea was often to find rapidly an equivalent job both in position and income.

Outplacement firms had an impressive workspace capacity with phones, computers and access to data on professions, business sectors and specific companies. To make sure job search would take as little time as possible, they also developed various workshops to improve communication skills within their clients. The most advanced firms made extensive use of video to train their job searchers on interview techniques.

And to be fair, this worked out fine in most cases. Unemployed executives took on average 4 to 5 months less to reposition on the job market when they benefited from an outplacement program.

On top, most consultants stressed out the importance of networking in a traditional job search. Depending on age groups, it varied from 50% to 80% opportunities to find a job.

A huge majority of unprepared clients felt that was it: outplacement was a program that would most certainly provide them with their next job. The outplacement firm would substitute to their former company who had failed to offer them a new career opportunity.

Being actor of their own change was in most cases not an issue! Planning ahead was rarely the mindset of them all. In the best case a wishful thought that had very little chance of success.

In the early 2000's, a new generation of outplacement professionals made it possible to change that mindset by introducing career coaching or management in the outplacement programs.

They feel there is no durable effect in outplacement without a change of posture. The next job is an element of the landscape, a key one, but still, one element only. And there are many more to organize the next steps of a balanced career: environment assessment, personal family and financial background, consistence, pleasure and envy, evolution...

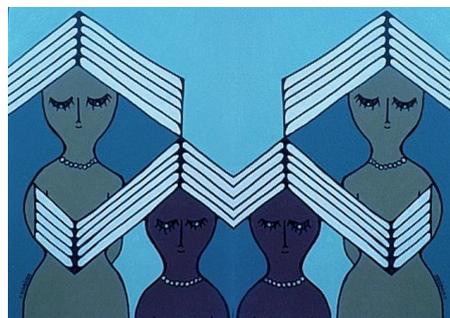
The first phase of the outplacement program will help build a long term project with possibly several steps before reaching the final objective, whichever it may be.



**Marc Saunder**

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The April ACF Europe Newsletter will feature an article by Herbert Mühlenhoff (Managing Partner Mühlenhoff Managementberatung, Düsseldorf) titled: "Outplacement within the project"



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But it will essentially help each individual with a change of posture. Instead of showing how insecure they feel after they have lost their position, their status and their income, the outplaced executives realize that they still have a lot to offer.

They don't only exist through a job title and a business card, but through their own personality. Adopting a low-profile posture, or on the contrary a dominant one during their job search with recruiters, HR, managers and networkers is banned.

A mature posture will enable an adult exchange between two professionals on topics that matter to the potential employer. Empathy and good understanding of the key challenges of their contacts (recruiters, HR, network...) will help the outplaced ones build a positive dialogue which has a better chance to lead to new job opportunities.

The role of the consultant is to guide his client to select the most adapted opportunity to the career he is willing to have. By helping outplaced executives to change their mindset, consultants contribute to build their career strategy. Not a one-shot deal with a fairly uncertain future.

To get there requires quite a lot of training and education, because one of the most critical issues is to manage impatience. The natural attitude for someone looking for a new job opportunity is to multiply contacts and often jump on the first opportunity without assessing all the pros and cons.

In the outplacement process, a consultant will challenge this often rash decision and help his client resist to the first impression and intuition. If he finally decides to take the job, it will be in full knowledge.

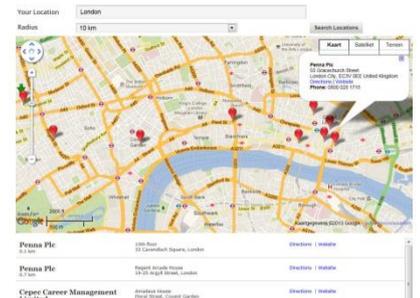
Career management is essential to build a balanced life. Most people do not realize how important this is until they lose their job and are confronted to an outplacement situation. In that respect outplacement can be seen more as a career booster than a job search provider!

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## NEW WEBSITE ACF EUROPE

ACF Europe launched a new website last month. A different look and feel with new features such as a Members Only section (password: MyACFEurope), a link to our LinkedIn platform, a Google based Find Firms area where ACF Europe members can be located in various ways, the ACF Charter, the ACF Bylaws, the ACF Europe Newsletters and much more.



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