



Job search group for professionals

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BUFFALO, N .Y. (WIVB) - If you're an upper-level professional who is out of work and looking for a job, there is a unique networking group that has had great success helping members find a job.

A meeting of upper level management includes a transportation and logistic specialist, a geographic info systems expert, an IT specialist, and a construction manager.

But they don't work for a company, they work for each other, they are members of Western New York Executive Candidates, a job search group made up of laid off mid-to-upper level executives.

"Many jobs they look for aren't advertised so they must rely on network that they generate through contacts," said Robert Durante, of Workforce Development Consortium.

Members must be management level, have professional experience with an earnings minimum, but most importantly, they must be willing to network for the group.

They meet every Tuesday afternoon at a church in West Seneca.

Many times they have a guest speaker; they always exchange ideas and suggest contacts.

Durante said, "We try to provide as many different venues for those contacts as possible."

Durante is a jobs specialist for the Erie county Workforce Development Consortium.

Last year, he saw a sharp rise in corporate level clients looking for work. He started this group where the members help each other by sharing their connections.

So how successful is the group?

"Since it started in September, 20 people found a job," said Durante.

Billy Heywood joined the group in September when he lost his manufacturing sector sales position.

Through the group he landed a job as an insurance agent in December.

Does Heywood think it would've taken longer had not been for the group?

Heywood said, "Absolutely."

He says if not for networking, he never would have found his job.

"If rely on paper or job sites, it's not going to work," said Heywood.

Though there is no cost to join, there is a wait list.

"But turnaround has been so good, that people have not had to wait long to get in," said Heywood.

Since we did the story two weeks ago, the number of employed has jumped to 26 with one pending.

They say in addition to networking, volunteering is a good way into a company for permanent employment.

[>> Learn more about WNY Executive Candidates here.](#)