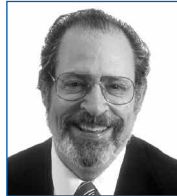


CareerSmart Advisor™

Strategies & Solutions for Your Career Success

A Note From Dave

The July issue of *HR Magazine* contains a list of the 50 best small and medium companies to work for in America. I have to admit that there are many companies on this list that I have never heard of, but I saw a theme among the things *HR Magazine* identified that made them great — an emphasis on the needs of the workforce and an appreciation for the hard work that every individual makes to the organizational goals.



It is no surprise that a magazine devoted to human resource issues would place high value on companies that place high value on their employees, but aren't people the very core of business? What good are all the strategy, technology, PowerPoint demonstrations and 50+ hour work weeks if the right people aren't executing the goals — and shouldn't they enjoy doing it too?

For example, Badger Mining Corp. in Berlin, Wis. (177 employees) allows for flexible scheduling, unlimited time off for family issues, and they empower each employee to provide input on decision-making. Dixon Schwabl Advertising (70 employees) in Victor, NY includes "fun as a line item in the budget." Fishers, Ind.-based Bowen Engineering Corp. (206 employees) is owned by the staff, and \$2.5 million was paid out last year through profit-sharing and bonuses.

Some of these companies pay for trips for the staff, and the number of purchased plane tickets doesn't seem to matter. A company with 54 employees — Heinfeld, Meech & Co. PC, a financial services firm in Tucson — rewarded their workers with a free vacation as did Ultimate Software in Weston, Fla. with 610 employees.

The entire list can be found here: <http://www.shrm.org/hrmagazine/articles/0707/0707cover.asp>

Sincerely,

Dave Opton
ExecuNet Founder & CEO
www.execunet.com/davesblog

Secrets from Master Networkers

By Robyn Greenspan

Networking may seem like a current hot trend aided by the explosion of technology-enabled platforms, but the art of building relationships and connecting with others is as old as time. The renewed emphasis on networking often leads executives to assess their ability to form meaningful relationships, revealing whether they are among those who feel at ease or those who struggle.

Wherever you fall on the spectrum, the underlying philosophy of networking is to give before you take, yet many reach out only when there is motivation. "Networking isn't something you do only when you find you have a need that can only be addressed by networking — that's 'needworking,'" says Ron Bates, managing principal at Executive Advantage Group, a retained executive search firm. "Networking is about giving, before getting, and that implies it's something you invest in." Bates adds that networking should be a "careerstyle" — part of your everyday business reality.

Scott Allen, *About.com* Entrepreneurs Guide and co-author of *The Virtual Handshake: Opening Doors and Closing Deals Online*, says to incorporate a networking mentality into everything you do, but to individually assess each situation. He says to learn about the business of everyone you meet to find how you may be of service and to not be reluctant to talk about your own professional needs. "Who says you can't talk about business — ever — at Thanksgiving dinner or church or the golf course? If it's appropriate, be comfortable with it. Don't hog the conversation and certainly don't deliberately bring it up, but don't be uncomfortable with it either. Except maybe at a funeral!"

Whether you're a reluctant networker or someone who wants to improve your connection skills, the leading networking experts counter all the resistance points and offer their tips, allowing you to find the opportunity with anyone anytime and anywhere.

Who

If you are not comfortable networking on your own behalf, you can break the ice by introducing others. ExecuNet member Sidney Gilford, Ed.D., a senior-level administrator with experience in nonprofits, higher education and corporate, says that his networking campaign has intensified

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FastTrack Programs
July/August 2007
Hosted by Dave Opton,
founder and CEO, ExecuNet

- 7/25 — **Build Your Talent Pipeline** — Louise Kursmark
- 7/26 — **MarketOne: Land a Top C-Level Role This Year!** — Karen Armon
- 7/27 — **The Next Level: What Insiders Know About Executive Success** — Scott Eblin
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- 7/25 — **Portland, OR** — Jean Walker
- 7/26 — **Columbus, OH** — Janine Moon
- 7/26 — **Columbia, MD** — Ed Loucks
- 7/26 — **Atlanta** — J. Patrick Haly
- 7/27 — **St. Louis** — Bill Severson & Cyd Dodson
- 8/1 — **New Haven** — Paul Mathews
- 8/1 — **Cincinnati** — Mike Lynch
- 8/2 — **Southern Wisconsin** — Clary Nydam & Tom Senge
- 8/3 — **Colorado Springs** — Dr. David Solly
- 8/7 — **San Diego/Carlsbad** — Mark James
- 8/8 — **Stamford** — Howard S. Bader
- 8/8 — **Philadelphia Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Ed Kelleher
- 8/8 — **Philadelphia** — Ed Kelleher
- 8/8 — **Cleveland Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Rick Taylor
- 8/9 — **Atlanta Sr. Executive Roundtable** — J. Patrick Haly
- 8/10 — **Tampa Bay** — Gina Potito
- 8/13 — **Miami/Coconut Grove** — Jeannette Kraar
- 8/14 — **Orlando** — Jim Douglas & Mike Murray
- 8/14 — **Phoenix** — Feed Coon
- 8/16 — **Princeton/East Brunswick** — Rod Colon
- 8/16 — **Greensboro, NC** — Nick Yacabucci & David Hammer
- 8/16 — **Pittsburgh/Cranberry Township** — Vince Papi

Registration information can be found at members.execunet.com/e_network_results.cfm

Insider Insight

Is an Ace of Hearts Better than a King of Diamonds? A Director's Perspective on the CEO-Chair Debate

By Dr. Curtis J. Crawford

The roles of the CEO and board chair are distinctly different. The CEO is responsible for leading the company's management, whereas the board chair is responsible for leading the board. Traditionally, in most U.S. corporations, one individual holds both positions.

A perceived flaw in the dual CEO/chairman role is that when the CEO also chairs the board, the CEO functions as his or her own supervisor. Therefore, combining the two roles is not viewed favorably by some investors and industry pundits.

Historically, when many directors of U.S. corporations functioned as mere rubber-stamp employees of the CEO, the risk posed by this structure was considered to be somewhat insignificant. However, in the present climate of shareholder activism, the perceived risk is considered to be more significant. Thus, the wisdom of combining the roles of CEO and board chair has evolved into a matter of contentious debate.

Success in the Right Environment

On one side of this debate are those who believe that most U.S. companies function best when CEOs also take on the board chair's role. They hold that the dual CEO/chair role bridges companies and their boards. In this environment, a great CEO clearly understands his or her accountability to the board and earns board support through excellent performance. A CEO who chairs an energetic, highly enlightened board of directors can foster constructive dialogue and debate among board members and encourage them to engage in meeting challenges facing the company.

A dual CEO/chair who wants to work with an effective, independent board certainly can effectively create one.

Too Much Power?

Some corporate governance advocates fear that the CEO who serves as board chair compromises the board's primary functions, assessing the CEO's performance and compensation and replacing the CEO when necessary. They are concerned that combining the positions assigns too much power to a single individual, which may minimize constructive dissent and diversity of perspectives.

In the case of an ignorant, apathetic board whose members don't know much about their own duties and don't care to know more, such concerns are not misplaced. However, in the case of what I describe in *Compliance & Conviction* as an "enlightened board," directors actively inform themselves and energetically fulfill their tasks. Fears amount to an unfortunate condemnation of the intelligence and integrity of directors quite capable of carrying out their responsibilities with or without the concurrence of the chair.

Injecting Energy into a Lethargic Board

The willingness of an enlightened board to objectively carry out their duties when their leader happens to be both CEO and board chair has been demonstrated in a number of high-profile cases, including those involving AT&T, GM, IBM and HP. The most effectively managed examples of performance management and succession planning by boards, however, never make the front pages of influential business publications because

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they are accomplished with minimal disruption to the corporations involved.

Gone are the days in which directors functioned mainly as deferential employees of the CEO, and the CEO who is largely unsupervised by the board is quickly becoming an anachronism. In contrast to a low-energy board that obviously tolerates director apathy and ignorance of the company's activities and directors' duties, a highly energized and effective board collectively expects each of its members to contribute intelligent, active leadership.

Fortunately, energy can be transmitted and transforming a lethargic board into an energetic one — although not easy — is quite possible if the ineffective board attracts into its ranks someone who really cares about the company and is determined to make a difference in it.



A dual CEO/chair who wants to work with an effective, independent board certainly can effectively create one.



Just one highly energized and effective director (who need not be the board chair) can raise the expectations of an entire board. By the same token, a self-serving director who is less interested in making a strong contribution than in rubbing shoulders with the winners on a board can weaken the entire group.

Defining the Individual Roles

One of the biggest supervisory challenges a board can face is monitoring the activities of the rare CEO who boasts a larger-than-life performance record. Few shareholders are concerned about CEO supervision when they are consistently earning great returns on their investments; thus CEOs who consistently deliver exceptional share-

Dr. Crawford is founder and CEO of XCEO, Inc. (XCEO.net), a consulting firm specializing in executive leadership development, professional mentoring and corporate governance practices. He is the author of *Corporate Rise: The X Principles of Extreme Personal Leadership and Compliance & Conviction: The Evolution of Enlightened Corporate Governance.*

holder value are quite able to reign with supreme control over their colleagues on the board. Even in such a case, however, directors must commit themselves to leading the corporate governance process, not merely participating in it.

Activist shareholders and enlightened boards, with help from Federal law and various agencies, seem to be establishing a slight trend toward splitting the CEO/chair position and a quite pronounced trend toward providing independent leadership for independent directors in the form of a position called “lead” or “presiding director,” whose important responsibilities provide a check on executive power. The lead director is chosen from the independent outside directors to create a balance in the boardroom and to partner with the CEO. He or she has some responsibilities that provide a check on executive power and work with the CEO, when selecting board committee members and chairs, helping to set agendas for board meetings, ensuring that directors receive adequate information and facilitating the board meeting process.

Watching the Trends

Just before the new millennium, in 1998, 18 percent of Fortune 1000 companies divided the board chair and CEO responsibilities between two people, versus 69 percent that combined the CEO/chair duties in a single individual. Just after the turn of the new millennium, from 2001 to 2003, the percentage of companies (overall) having separate CEO/chair positions had increased by 5.4 percent.

By 2003, 21 percent of Standard & Poor 500 boards had split the role; however, in most of these cases, the board chair was a former CEO or other former executive of the company. In only 3 percent of S&P 500 boards was the board chair an independent outsider who never had been a company employee.

By 2005, 27 percent of S&P 500 boards had separated the CEO/chair roles; but almost 70 percent of those with dual CEO/chairs had appointed a lead or presiding director. The slight trend toward division of the position is, in reality, not meaningful.

Deciding Who's Responsible

To effectively oversee the management of a company, a board needs power; and splitting the roles of CEO and board chair is one way to strengthen the board's independence and prevent the CEO from acquiring too much power.

However, no universal formula is available for determining whether or when the roles of CEO and chair of the board should be separated. Separation may work very well in some situations but not well in others. It is the board's responsibility to determine the appropriateness of combining or separating the roles of CEO and board chair.

In general, when a corporation has a strong, seasoned, effective CEO and is governed by a more traditional, more passive board, the CEO and board chair positions should be combined. In such a case, the board is unlikely to have the strength or willingness to lead and the CEO will find it necessary to provide leadership to the board.

These circumstances indicate that it is time to begin developing an enlightened board of directors by attracting people to the board who are strongly interested in the corporation's success and have the energy and ability to learn and lead.

Despite whatever transitions, crises or power struggles are in play in the corporation, the board remains collectively responsible for the company's ultimate success.

Over time, I have served as non-executive chairman; as chairman, president and CEO; as director, CEO and

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Master Networkers

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now that he is in transition; but he regularly enjoys facilitating connections. “I like to help others, and I am enjoying connecting people involved with new initiatives that have not yet hit the street with resources that will help them achieve their goals and objectives.”

The key, says Gilford, is to not feel overwhelmed about networking, as a measured approach can be just as successful. “If you are not reaching out at all because you don’t know how you will find the time to connect with multiple people in a day, maybe your goal should just be one person per day. It may not seem like much, but this will be 100 percent more than you were doing previously.”



You cannot meet the entire world. You need to know who you want to meet and why you want to meet them.



As a result of his efforts, Gilford’s networking with two separate individuals led him to the same contact who asked him to sit on the board of a new museum in Philadelphia. “Individually, each person shared with this lead person how impressed they were with my background, innovation, program development experience and management skills.”

With some critical skills on the verge of shortage, networking for talent is even more important for executives who are charged with building teams, sourcing partners and developing revenue sources. “With more people becoming specialists, networking in order to have access to individuals possessing specialized knowl-

edge or who know people possessing specialized knowledge is even more critical in business,” says Bates.

To reach those specialists, Bates taps into his more than 30,000 direct contacts he has collected. “I get asked all the time, ‘How do you maintain and invest in those relationships?’ My answer, ‘One person at a time — as their needs arise.’ It doesn’t take a lot of effort to have a strong network when you approach it from the perspective of other people’s needs.”

“You cannot meet the entire world. You need to know who you want to meet and why you want to meet them,” reminds ExecuNet member Wendy Taylor, chief product development officer at San Francisco-based Prosper Corporation. “When you identify a person you really want to meet or a company you really want to work for, reach out to all of your online networks as well as the people in your contact database. Let everyone know. Do this every few weeks and keep them updated on your progress.”

What

Allen emphasizes the importance of having a networking plan and therefore avoiding haphazard or habitual networking. “Many people just check out whatever seems convenient or interesting — choosing a networking meeting based on the time and location rather than the attendees and format of the meeting, for example, or whatever social networking site they just got an invitation to. Others network by habit — going to the Chamber of Commerce lunch every month because that’s what they’ve done for the last five years, or participating in just the one social networking site they found two years ago.”

Instead, Allen suggests picking your venues and activities more strategically. “Different types of activities support different aspects of relationship-building. You have to align those activities with your strategic objectives in order to achieve the best results.” A series of questions can help you refine your networking objectives:

- What are you trying to accomplish right now?
- What kind of people do you most need to meet to help you with that?

- Do you need to meet a lot of new people — strangers — or do you need to build stronger relationships with the people you know to help drive more referrals?
- Do you need to focus more on building trust and knowledge of your character or your professional reputation as an expert in your field?

Gilford clarifies his objectives before making contact. “Am I just touching base; do I need something; do I want to get additional, new contact names? This helps me keep my message clear and to the point.” And in the true spirit of networking, Gilford says that he always asks what he can do to for the other person, and that he is intent on building a reciprocal relationship.

Are the relationships in your network equally helpful to you and to others?

Not at all	2.5%
Rarely	14.0%
Sometimes	57.1%
Often	23.2%
All the time	3.3%

Source: ExecuNet, 2007

Gilford takes a unique approach by doing research to learn about his networking contacts, enabling a more personal route when reaching out. “I like to know recent achievements, milestones and activities in which they have been involved. It is always great to start with ‘Congratulations on...’ instead of ‘What have you been up to lately?’”

Where

Whereas Allen approaches networking as a strategic and deliberate activity, value can also be derived from random, spontaneous interactions with others. “Take advantage of life’s interruptions such as taking the car to the mechanic, going to the dentist, or spending an afternoon at the DMV,” says Keith Ferrazzi, author of the best-selling book, *Never Eat Alone and Other Secrets to Success, One Relationship at a Time*.

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Master Networkers

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Designated one of the most “connected” individuals by both *Forbes* and *Inc.* magazines, Ferrazzi says, “No matter how miserable those experiences have been for you in the past, they can be great places to make new connections. In the waiting rooms, people are sitting right next to you! You have a built-in conversation-starter because you have something obvious in common with everyone there.”

Even if the people you meet don’t wind up on your contact list, there’s a benefit to just being friendly. “They might know people who are on your list,” Ferrazzi points out. “Worst case, you struck up a nice conversation that made sitting there a bit less painful, and you practiced your all-important audacity skills that you can use next time at a business conference.”

“The greatest thing about this little networking plan is that it requires no (extra) time at all,” Ferrazzi notes. “It does, however, require a little bit of guts. And the more guts you have, the more you’ll meet success. Try it, it will pay off!”

When

Executives often complain that they don’t have the time to network, but the master networkers agree that is a poor excuse. “People who say they don’t have time to invest in networking are living in a reality that is 10 to 20 years out of date. It’s like saying you don’t have time to do your job,” says Bates.

“You can’t think of it as ‘Networking is taking time away from sales, marketing, professional development, research, etc.’,” says Allen. “Networking, done right, *is* sales, marketing, professional development, research, etc.”

Ferrazzi suggests taking the pressure off by not forcing networking into a schedule. “If you’re stressed-out because you can’t fit in any time for ‘networking,’ my advice to you is the following: Don’t. That’s right. Don’t even try to squeeze in extra time. Instead, focus on meeting people more often during the things you

already have to do. This way, you can relax and let that ‘networking time’ come to you.”

“Before each of your daily activities, just ask yourself, ‘Could this be an opportunity to meet someone new?’” Ferrazzi adds.

Consistent with his recommendation to adopt a networking mindset, Allen says that the “most important ‘networking’ you can do is everything you can to maintain excellent relationships with your existing customers, qualified prospects, vendors and strategic partners. Never sacrifice meeting a commitment to one of them for the sake of networking.”

Taylor regularly practices “work-life integration” by weaving networking activities into the fabric of her social life. “This past Independence Day, I hosted 20 guests in my home including a world-class economist, a cancer researcher, an animal rights activist, a CEO of a medical device manufacturer, and one of the founders of a leading telecommunications software company. While they enjoyed good cooking, good wine and good company, the event also enabled them to make valuable connections. Dozens of business cards were exchanged. No one even realized any business had been transacted.”

How much do you work on building your professional networking relationships?

Very seldom	4.1%
Seldom.....	44.9%
Often	43.8%
Very Often	7.3%

Source: *ExecuNet*, 2007

How

Whether you are managing thousands of connections like Bates or a handful that you are hoping to expand, technology is going to play a role in your interactions. “Today, people have the ability to communicate and share information in a way that has never been known before in the history of mankind,” says Bates, referring to the Internet.

Allen quantifies the value of using online tools to network. For example, in a two-hour speaker-driven networking

event with 50 people, you might interact with 10 people who may or may not be relevant to your current goals. Or, Allen says, “you can spend the same two hours writing a blog post which will be read by several hundred people; posting in two or three discussion forums read by a few dozen people each, and looking up five highly relevant people on ExecuNet or LinkedIn to contact and introduce yourself. Which is the better use of your time?”

John Reinke, an ExecuNet member since 1993, generously runs what he calls a free “turkey farm” for individuals who lose their jobs. “It reminds me every day that I could just as easily be on that side of the glass looking to get ‘in,’” says Reinke. “So what should you do first? Take ExecuNet seriously when they say do x, y and z. Your five-year-old résumé claims that you are ‘an innovative problem-solver,’ so here’s a problem to solve. Where’s your next paycheck coming from?”

Reinke has a checklist to help people activate their networking foundation:

- Renew ExecuNet for five years. Read the articles every day for 15 minutes every weekday.
- Buy a lifetime subscription to JibberJobber. Put all your networking contacts in. Call, email, IM one every day and ask if they need help with something. (Give help before you have to ask for it.) Spend 15 minutes daily every weekday.
- Sign up for LinkedIn. Find all your networking contacts. Write one endorsement every weekday for 15 minutes.
- Find five people who are out of work and help them with their process. Spend 15 minutes on a different one every weekday.

Do you use online services to build your professional network?

Never	12.1%
Rarely.....	31.2%
Sometimes	42.8%
Often	11.2%
All the time.....	2.7%

Source: *ExecuNet*, 2007

Your Career Advisor

Self-Defense for Bullied Employees

By Robert Mueller, JD

Almost half of all employees have been targeted by a workplace bully. According to a March 2007 study by the Employment Law Alliance, 44 percent of us have been bullied by an abusive manager or supervisor. Here are some more statistics:

- 81% of bullies are managers
- 50% of bullies are women and 50% are men
- 84% of targets are women
- 82% of targets ultimately lost their jobs
- 95% of bullying is witnessed

And the statistic that causes the most indignation? It's estimated that only 7 percent of workplace bullies end up censured, transferred or terminated.

With new and better information, however, that last statistic can change. Employees no longer have to sit back and "take it." Employees don't have to quit. All targets or victims of workplace bullying can become what I call "workplace warriors," using some tried-and-true self-defense strategies designed to restore power, dignity and options to the bullied employee.

Myths and Truths about Bullying Bosses

Before we get into self-defense strategies, let's clear up some common misconceptions about bully bosses.

Myth: It's a good idea to confront your bully so he sees that you're not afraid.

Truth: Personal confrontations with bullies are almost never productive.

Myth: The first thing an employee should do following a bullying incident is talk to management.

Truth: Management team members interpret any confrontation an employee might have with a boss as also being a confrontation with them, and without well-documented proof of a pattern of

“

All targets or victims of workplace bullying can become workplace warriors, using some tried-and-true self-defense strategies designed to restore power, dignity and options to the bullied employee.

”

behavior, they will likely view the employee as the problem.

Myth: You should avoid your bullying boss whenever possible.

Truth: If bullies notice you're ducking them, they will not see this as sensible avoidance, but as cowering behavior.

Myth: Don't look a bully right in the eye. It's provocative.

Truth: On the contrary. Maintain steady eye contact. If too difficult, then focus between his/her eyes on the bridge of his nose. One bullied employee even removed his Coke-bottle-thick glasses before a meeting so he could maintain direct eye contact with his boss without feeling intimidated.

Myth: Get personal with a bully to diffuse some of his or her anger, and to show him your human side.

Truth: Bullies not only don't do the personal, most don't tolerate it in others either. Details of your personal, spiritual or emotional life are weapons in your antagonist's hands.

Myth: Seek help from the company's HR department. That's what they're there for.

Truth: HR can be the chilliest place any employee can visit, and also one of the most dangerous. HR's allegiance is to the

employer — and protecting the employer from legal claims. Approach rarely, with caution, and only when fully prepared.

Myth: It's good strategy to relate your story to as many coworkers as possible, right after an incident, if possible.

Truth: Unfortunately, your story has a negative emotional quality that can repel listeners. Allies must be identified and groomed carefully before you enlist their support. Moreover, it's better to be circumspect about sharing your story — write down detailed notes about it first. You can present it in a more organized and effective way later, when the timing is strategically advantageous.

The Seven Types of Workplace Bullies

As you've already learned, bully bosses are as likely to be male as female. All bullies have certain personality traits in common, however. For example, bullies are impersonal — if you go away, they will use exactly the same tactics on their next victim. They communicate only indirectly through the languages of rules and hierarchy. They often display status symbols and consider targets their trophies. They issue citations rather than employ give-and-take. And they are not particularly interested in business solutions.

Learn what to look for in these seven types:

- **Subtle bullies:** These bullies torment their targets with quiet but piercing techniques.
- **Abusive bullies:** These bosses hound a target employee without mercy.
- **Crude bullies:** These people throw their weight around loudly and physically.
- **Raging bullies:** These people intimidate everyone in the vicinity with their out-of-control anger.
- **Echo bullies:** Not normally abusive, these bullies mimic bullying

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Your Career Advisor
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behavior with their own subordinates.

- **Ghost bullies:** These bullies guide, mentor and supervise lower-level bosses in bullying techniques and tactics.
- **Satellite bullies:** These are people of stature who undermine the target by contributing to someone else's bullying.

Ten Self-Defense Tips for Bullied Employees

If you find yourself the target of a bullying boss, there are definite do's and don'ts in terms of how you should proceed. The most time-consuming aspect — and the one that's the most difficult and involved — is documenting the patterns of abuse and building and nurturing allies and supporters.

Nevertheless, here are the basic strategies that will point you in the right direction.

Approach your bullying problem like a work project. Be methodical in how you behave, perform, document and strategize. Take notes after an incident. Try to stay unemotional. Even though he or she is trying to make you think the opposite, it is the bully who has a serious personal and professional problem, not you.

Be a workplace warrior as you look for other work. Even as you put feelers out for other jobs, dedicate yourself wholeheartedly to vanquishing your abuser, not being a victim.

Sweat the small stuff. Document even the smallest incidents, which often become the most important, illustrating a pattern of bullying that might not otherwise be apparent. Teasing counts. Sarcasm counts. Ignoring or criticism counts. A very public glare or silent treatment counts.

Don't let yourself get isolated. Every day, pick out someone you haven't talked to for a while. Have a brief but focused, attentive conversation. Bullies work hard to alienate targets from their coworkers. Don't let that happen to you.

Display self-esteem and broadcast positive attitude. Pay attention to how your appearance — such as hair and clothes — is perceived by others. Have a comfy chair in your office for coworkers. Put fresh

Robert Mueller, JD, is an expert on labor-management law. A widely recognized workplace conflict counselor and consultant, Mueller is the author of *Bullying Bosses: A Survivor's Guide*. You can find helpful advice and more detailed strategy information at BullyingBosses.com

flowers on your desk. Decorate with tasteful art that will be pleasing to others. Make your personal space an oasis of calm and taste.

Try to stay in safe spots. Your abuser is less likely to attack when you are around other supervisors, known allies, particularly upright employees and customers or other outsiders of importance to the employer. Make a list of those people and places.

“

Approach your bullying problem like a work project. Be methodical in how you behave, perform, document and strategize.

”

During a bullying situation, excuse yourself. Don't beat a hasty retreat and don't leave the building. Tell your abuser that you're late for an appointment with HR, for example. Or casually excuse yourself to the restroom. Never enter the restroom if you are being pursued by a bully.

During an attack, try distracting your abuser. Pick up something physical — as long as it's not a threatening item — such as a critical file that needs the bully's attention or a note with an important phone number that needs to be called. Sometimes a simple distraction is enough to get him or her to stop.

Protect your personal information. Tell bullies as little as possible about your life, family, friends, hobbies, interests, religion and so on. Information about

you gives them power.

Hold your cards close to the vest. As you're building a case against a bully boss, the less you talk about your story to others at work, the better. Controlling what you say, when you say it and to whom needs to be part of your overall, well-organized strategy.

Where to Go for Help

After you have documented a substantial pattern of abuse, made allies, collected witness statements from well-groomed supporters and done everything in your power to disarm your bully (such as putting a bouquet of flowers on your desk the day after an incident to show him or her that you are feeling just fine, thank you), then it may be time to seek outside help.

There are agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the National Labor Relations Board, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration and the Department of Labor. All of these have information at their websites that might be relevant or useful.

There are unions, and of course, your HR department. There are also many aid and support groups that focus on representing a special issue or population, such as women or a particular minority. Among the more notable organizations are The National Organization of Women, La Raza, NAACP and the Asian Law Caucus.

There are also attorney groups like the National Lawyers Guild that represent multiple cases, as well as the ACLU, which specifically defends our constitutional rights, such as those associated with the First Amendment. Labor attorneys and workplace conflict counselors are other good options.

However you choose to deal with your bully boss, be a workplace warrior, not a victim. ■

Master Networkers

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Why

Taylor recalls how it was just six years ago when she began actively building her network, thinking that she had nothing to offer others. "Necessity is still the mother of invention, so I started anyway. What I learned was to listen carefully to each person's needs and the value they had to offer. That enabled me to start making connections between people with complimentary needs and talents."

"Before long you will have a rich network and people will be looking for ways to network with you," Taylor found.

In addition to the corporate karma you'll develop when you help others achieve their goals, there's a self-serving benefit to networking too: executives credit networking as their most successful activity for creating career opportunities, outpacing responding to job postings/creating online profiles 2-to-1. In addition, 54 percent of executive search firm professionals and 49 percent of corporate recruiters find candidates through networking, making it their most successful activity for identifying prospects.

ExecuNet member Wendy Taylor, chief product development officer at San Francisco-based Prosper Corporation, offers recommendations that will enable you to begin to master the art and practice of networking to build an executive career path.

- 1. Know what you want and know what you have to offer.** This makes it easy for others to support you. Be clear about what you ask for, make a simple and compelling argument for why people should talk with you, and know how you add value for others in your network.
- 2. Make specific requests.** It is impossible for anyone to help you if you tell them you want a job in the same industry as your last job. If you tell them you need an introduction to someone in Google's strategic business partnerships group, then they can take action. They can check their database, sort for keywords and help you make a valuable connection.
- 3. Serve your employer and serve your own future.** As an executive, you should already be thinking beyond the demands and dramas of the week. Investing in your network is also investing in your ability to learn from others, build goodwill and get things done for your existing employer.
- 4. Trust the process and stay disciplined.** Even though it is easy to get discouraged, it is important to keep reaching out everyday. Your fifth contact of the day may make your day and theirs.

Ferrazzi recommends that executives immediately begin to put some networking steps into action. "I know you can find a way to reach out and meet a few more people this week in the things you already have to do. Could the next boring chore be an opportunity to meet someone important to your life? Of course, and you'll never know how significant that relationship will be until you go out there and build it."

How strong is your relationship with members of your network?

Weak.....	1.6%
Poor.....	6.2%
Good.....	55.3%
Very good.....	29.8%
Excellent.....	7.0%

Source: ExecuNet, 2007

Insider Insight

Continued from page 3

president; and as director of a company in which the combined role of CEO and board chair was shifted to separate roles of president/CEO and non-executive board chair. I have experienced every type

of board leadership role, including presiding director and working with a lead director. In my experience, whether the CEO and board chair roles are combined is situation-driven and company-specific.

In short, if each director exercises his or her authority and responsibility, the chair will remain in check whether or not

he or she has the additional role of CEO. Only irresponsible directors allow a board chair to rule the board without their collective involvement. Enlightened directors are neither weak nor apathetic. They are quite capable of dealing with any board chair. If they are not, they should not be serving on the board. ■

CareerSmart Advisor

Strategies & Solutions for Your Career Success

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A biweekly publication of ExecuNet, the premier executive job, career and networking organization for senior level executives with salaries in excess of \$100,000.

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