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WORKING

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Summer: It's
time to network

DEREK SANKEY
FOR THE CALGARY HERALD

Summer networking functions are in full swing and job hunters who take the summer off are leaving a wealth of opportunities for eager candidates, says a Calgary professional coach.

"There is a perception out there that nobody's hiring in the summer and that is 100 per cent incorrect," says Eileen Dooley. "What tends to happen is it tends to take a bit longer to hire because ... people do go on vacation, but they're still hiring — there's no question."

She receives more requests from recruiters and colleagues looking for potential job candidates in the summer months — especially August — but she says the whole summer is the time to hit the networking circuit and take advantage of some of those hidden job opportunities left open by fewer active job seekers.

"So many people say 'I'm not going to look for work now' and that's actually good for people who are looking for work because it lowers the number of people you're competing with," says Dooley.

"If you're interviewed

for a job and you ask them where they are in their hiring process and they tell you they'll get back to you in a couple of weeks, if they don't, definitely follow up and give them a call. It could be that vacations could slightly delay the process, especially if recruiters are trying to line up a hiring panel," she adds. "You never know."

Just because it's the summer, it doesn't mean you can't actively look for a job and enjoy some time off, even if you have a job. There's no harm in attending summer business parties, golf tournaments and barbecues. Even if you already have a job and are looking for a switch, then a casual part-time job search could yield surprising results, says Dooley.

"Especially with the economy being so good right now people are leaving and looking for other opportunities," she says. "Networking in the summer, people are a little bit more laid back and relaxed."

In a city where the summers are always too short, people's moods are also generally more approachable because they're looking forward to their vacations or may have just came

back refreshed and ready to hire.

You can take advantage of that by adapting your job hunting strategy. "It's just a little bit of a lighter approach," she says.

Stampede is also right around the corner and there couldn't be a better time to prepare to take advantage of this well-known deal-making event.

There are plenty of pancake breakfasts, corporate parties, social events, lunches, dinners — the list is seemingly endless.

It's definitely a softer approach — avoid the hard sell during Stampede — but asking about what their organization has planned for the fourth quarter or just making social conversation helps break the ice. Then let them know you're looking for a new opportunity and see if they know of anything or anybody as a lead.

Shane Anderson, a Calgary recruiter, says that despite the perceptions of many would-be job hunters, job postings actually increase during August with many people coming back from holidays, but agrees it's good to make connections in advance if possible.



Dean Bicknell, Calgary Herald

Calgary professional coach Eileen Dooley says she receives more requests from recruiters and colleagues looking for potential job candidates in the summer months.