

LifeMapSM



"LifeMap is a navigational tool to help you on your path towards personal and professional success. Our belief is that you can achieve a more rewarding career, a more productive organization and a more enjoyable and abundant life."

May 2010

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How To Land On Your Feet - a true story!

The last few months have been quite hectic here at LifeMap. The new edition of *Winning Job Interviews* is doing quite well (thank you one and all), we've done a ton of media interviews (there's a huge growth in the number of internet radio "stations") and we've seen more than a few articles and press mentions such as Joyce Lain Kennedy's nationally syndicated column about surviving rejection, an article in Bottom Line Magazine, an article last month on MSN, another mention this month in the Wall Street Journal's Career Journal column, and next month in Cosmopolitan Magazine (don't worry, no pictures)!

This edition of LifeMap centers on the feedback I received from a reader (Britton H.) an American ex-pat living in a small Chinese city. (In China a "small" city has 6 million people.) In the MSN /Career Builder article I suggested (among other things) that job hunters avoid a steady diet of bad news from the media which can lead to pessimism, discouragement, throwing in the towel on a realistic job search or doing something rash and unwise like moving to China without appropriate language skills. From the other side of the globe my new friend Britton took the time and energy to communicate back and forth with me a couple of times to cordially and thoughtfully rebut my latter point.

I have often written that the twenty-first century, global

economy offers previously unheard of career and life opportunities. If this option is something you might want to explore I think you will find Britton's experience and advice as helpful and encouraging as I did.

Paths Forward

• **A Challenge, Not A Barrier.** Britton writes that with less than a month's notice of being transferred to China she had little time to acquire new language skills other than counting from one to ten, "thank you" and "I'd like a beer" (all essentials in my book). She has managed well so far by picking up some conversational Mandarin from friends and co-workers, using an electronic speaking translator, carrying a pen and paper for diagramming and using her facility with Charades. While Britton notes that she "should definitely" learn more Mandarin, she specifically said that it has not been a necessity for her. Furthering this point is the fact that these days English is required in primary, middle and upper middle schools so many Chinese speak English quite well.

• **Flexibility and Resilience.** Imagine being transferred by your company to a job in another country where you don't speak the language and is 7,000 - 8,000 miles away. Within 30 days you successfully sublet your apartment, deal with the utilities, arrange banking, sell your vehicles, decide what to ship / what to store, find and rent a storage facility, get all the required shots, pack and arrive overseas excited if not just a little exhausted. Though performing well at your new assignment your US-based employer ultimately implements a lay-off in which you are included. What would you do?

This happened to Britton but she realized that this was a setback, not a failure. There were still opportunities to learn and grow in this new environment if she was willing to go out and dig them up. Her job search landed her a job teaching English. Though it is different, she notes that she is learning new skills, has time to work on her MBA and though the income is not commensurate with her US salary she has a more than an adequate lifestyle. Whether due to nature or nurture, Britton has the ability to be flexible in her life choices and the personality to meet new challenges with resilience. If you aspire to the ex-pat life it is important that you develop these key traits.

• **What Else?** Britton mentioned a number of other things that a prospective career explorer should consider and I will only mention them briefly. Choosing a community: Some are a bit isolating and others are a bit more Westerner-friendly. Research and networking prior to your arrival can help you sort this out. Medicine: You can buy antibiotics over the counter if you know what you need but the over-the-counter remedies that so many of us depend on are hard to impossible to find. Bring with you what you commonly use and keep an active contact at home prepared to replenish your supply. Cultural Customs: Britton is aware enough to realize that despite her best efforts she probably could have avoided some early problems if she was better versed in appropriate cultural customs and behaviors.

• **In Britton's Own Words.** "I guess it all boils down to research, research, research, then take a deep breath and make the plunge. You will never be fully prepared for another culture. There will always be humorous things, frustrating days, and incomprehensible behavior. The biggest requirement is an open mind and a willingness to learn new things. Those will be your biggest assets."

Well, there you have it: words of advice from someone who

has taken major career risks and enriched her life as a result. What is it that *you* dream of risking?

LifeMap is about listening to those who are willing to share their challenges, their goals, their stumbles, their success and their wisdom.

By the way if you'd like to read the original MSN/Career Builder article go to my web site www.dr.paulpowers.com, click on "Books and Articles", scroll down to Current Articles, see "6 Job Search Mistakes You Can't Afford to Make."

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Resources

· Are you or someone you know job hunting or thinking about it?

The best, concise, all-round job changing guide available. Revised Edition [Winning Job Interviews](#) by Dr. Paul Powers.

In this easy-to-follow, step-by-step book, Dr. Paul Powers demystifies job interviewing, explains why the process actually favors the job hunter, and shows how you can dramatically improve your interview skills. Packed with solid, practical information and laced with both humor and "kick in the pants" motivation, *Winning Job Interviews* is the book you wished you had before your last interview... and is mandatory preparation for your next one!

· Stalled at work? Still struggling to find your true vocation?

Or know someone who is? Order your copy of [Love Your Job!](#) *Loving the Job You Have, Finding A Job You Love* by Dr. Paul.

<http://www.drpaulpowers.com/booksandarticles.html>

Have an issue or question you'd like Dr. Paul to address in a future edition? Send an email to the email address list below.

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