Introduction

- Information technology is a great career choice!
- Career building
- Concepts for accelerated advancement
  - The value-added technologist
IT Is a Great Career!

• Unprecedented growth—still.
  – The U.S. department of labor statistic places information technology as the fastest growing job segment over the next 10 years.
  – Technology professionals still fare better than similarly trained professions (in terms of time spent).
• Performance-based advancement.
  – What have you done for me lately?
• Less prone to tenure/time seniority grids for advancement.

But what happened?
  – Thousands of poorly conceived businesses, run by fledgling technologists, who were moved into management; and then built by, entry-level developers, in a newly developed/preadolescent/marginally accepted economy...
    • What were we thinking?
  – An industry forced to mature quickly due to several highly-publicized failures must hit the breaks and take a look at where it’s going.
These two bullets are worded a bit awkwardly and are hard to follow. Can you reword?

Karen Gill, 11/15/2004
• This is a great thing!
  – *For the producer*: If you can develop the full set of talents needed to solve your client’s problems, you will separate yourself from what I call widget-producer technologists.

• Career building is exactly that—building.
• Getting a job or a string of jobs is not synonymous with building a career.
• A builder must have a plan.
• A builder must have the right tools.
Career Building: The Concept

• A theoretical career path...

Career Building: The Concept

• A more realistic picture...
Career Building: The Tools

- A summary of what you will need...
  - Attitude
    - I have value—somewhere.
    - No job makes a career, and no job breaks a career.
    - You’ll need bridges, so don’t burn any.
  - True pride
    - Trade “I have too much pride to put up with that” for “I have so much pride that someone’s bad attitude or demeanor means little.”
    - Use the conflict resolution tree.

Career Building: The Tools

- The Conflict Resolution Tree

  - Point of conflict
    - Yes
      - Is the point of conflict true?
        - Yes
          - Do I need/want to change?
            - Yes
              - Plan, and then act!
            - No
              - Disregard and move on.
        - No
          - Disregard and move on.
    - No
      - Disregard and move on.
Career Building: The Tools

• What you’ll need (continued)
  – Correspondence
    • Ongoing and continuous.
    • Insistent yet nonintrusive.
  – A network of contacts
    • Outlook, Access, and so on.
    • When should you follow up?
    • Trade opportunity. Give to get, not the other way around. Be the initiator!

Career Building: Put Your Tools to Use

– Network.

– Trade pay for opportunity.

– A plan of action makes the tedious bearable and creates more objectivity.
Conclusion

- You have opportunities, even in a recession.
- Careers always exist because they are long term.

Accelerated Advancement

- The value-added technologist
  - Why technologists must learn to speak business
  - Concept Over Process
  - The role of technology
  - Automation! Impact and approach
Why Technologists Must Learn to Speak Business

• My validated warning:
  – The solution-sloppy late 1990s has bred a general distrust of technologists.
    • Think of blacking the CEO’s eye.
  – Technologists are largely to blame.
    • Look at management consulting in the 1970s and early 1980s.
    • Best of the best (Ivy League).
    • An almost mystical persona or business messiah...

• and then...
  – Early 1990s and Y2K
    • Demand far outstrips supply.
    • “Big 8” + other firms need bodies.
    • “Puppies” became the core of project teams.
    • “Dangerous company.”
Why Technologists Must Learn to Speak Business

- An Actual Project Team

  Project Manager (5–7 years)
  $300/hr. x 1 = $2,400/day

  Project Leads (1–4 years)
  $225/hr. x 2 = $360/day

  Puppies (6 wks–2 years)
  $150/hr. x 4 = $600/day

  Project Totals:
  $10,800/day   |   $226,800/month   |   $2,721,600/year

Why Technologists Must Learn to Speak Business

- KPMG/ComputerWorld Study
  - CEOs were asked how they felt their IT dollars were spent.
    - Many (more than 50%) stated a distrust of their IT departments and professionals.
    - Most (more than 80%) felt IT did not desire or attempt to understand their business.
    - Almost all reported that IT spoke about business solutions in purely technical terms.
You say project leads and puppies would work for 2 and 4 days respectively. You multiplication reflects that, but then you say the rate is $3600/day, for example. Instead, it's $3600 for two days for project leads and $4800 for four days for puppies.

Karen Gill, 11/15/2004
• A Project Development/Project Guidance Methodology
  – Emphasizes concepts, definitions, business model, and relationships as much more critical than the actual technology used.
  – It is not either/or; it is both/and. Technology should be excellent.

• “The Goal” – Eliyahu Goldratt
  • Lofty ideals, mission statements, and quality of life are all means in which to allow a company to achieve its goal.
  • Our individual goals should be the same.
  • Goal = viability/profitability
    – Not greedy: You can’t even provide nonprofit service at a loss.
• After you’ve determined the goal:
  – Understand the industry.
  – Understand the business.
  – Understand the workflow.
  – Understand the relationships (intra-/intercompany/vendors/customers/and so on).

• Understanding is best achieved by
  – Following the flow of money
  – Following the flow of data
  – Following the flow of production
  – Finding the incongruencies
Concept Over Process

- **Remove “Myth of Limitation”**
  - Caused when management defines the technological solution.
    - In most cases, management does not have a larger technical picture. You do.
    - Management should help you understand the business, and you should provide the technological solution.
    - This requires your understanding and ability to speak in language terminology.

- **Process/Workflow Analysis**
  - What currently works?
  - What currently does not work?
  - What is currently excluded or not addressed at all?
The Role of Technology

- Storage and retrieval of information
- Analysis/decision support
- Automation of the delivery of product or service

The Role of Technology: Automation

• Impact and Approach
  - Look past the obvious.
  - Where are the products and services of a company developed?
    • End users produce a product or service at their desk, every day.
Automation Seldom Happens. Why?

- Automation is typically focused on the final product or service that a company provides.
- Micro automation is often overlooked or viewed as too costly to implement.
- One reason is that much of IT’s function is still done manually.

Automate IT First!

- IT must first automate IT.
  - Creates time to work with users to understand their product or service
  - Profiles, desktop settings, software deployment, code generators, printers, and so on
Conclusion

• To become a value-added technologist, you must understand the role of technology, understand and speak in business terms, and provide solutions that are focused on that understanding.

• Technology is just a tool!