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### **Tips for the Job Hunter**

The numbers are daunting and the challenges significant for individuals looking for work in San Diego. Recently released data indicates that the unadjusted unemployment rate for March in San Diego County jumped to 9.3%, the highest rate since the early 1970s, up from the revised February rate of 8.9%. This is nearly double the unemployment from March of 2008.

Behind these statistics, notes Scott H. Silverman, Founder and Executive Director of Second Chance, stand people who need money for food and housing. The job market teems with competition at all levels, from the chronically unemployed and people reentering the job market after incarceration, to the newly unemployed: white collar workers, people in construction and retail sales. Virtually all segments of the work force feel the ongoing strain of the world-wide economic crisis.

“Every day people arrive at the Second Chance Program’s doorstep looking for answers,” say Silverman. “They’re hoping for the magic words, the secret plan, the fast-track strategy that will get them into the workforce. The answers are not so simple. It takes work to find work, and short cuts rarely exist.”

At the nationally recognized Support Training Results in Valuable Employees (STRIVE) workshops at Second Chance, Silverman and his team teach candidates what it takes to get a job and hold a job. STRIVE is based on the premise that better attitudes and better preparation result in people that employers want to hire and who will be successful in their jobs. With pre-employment attitudinal and job readiness training as well as post-job placement support services, the Second Chance STRIVE program created nearly 800 employment placements in 2008.

“Many people seeking work spend a good deal of time on their resume,” says Silverman, they are primarily an introduction, not a decision-critical tool.” He offers the following advice:

- Resume: Keep it simple, keep it clean. Make sure your contact information is current. Fill in the time gaps. Stay honest. Carefully check spelling and grammar. Typos and misspellings are the quickest ways to get your resume tossed.

- **Networking.** Don't hesitate to call on friends and family for referrals. Losing a job is tough and even embarrassing. Get over it, and quickly. Use all your resources to find a new job. Always stand ready to pitch yourself to businesses you have frequented. Mention your availability to faith-based organizations. If you have a strong social network, use it. Stay active. Keep your attitude positive and your head high.
- **Options.** Consider everything. If your company is resizing, find out what it will take to stay onboard. Entertain a pay cut or reduction in hours if that's what it takes. Accept more responsibilities or activities that are not in your job description. Do what it takes to prove you're a team player interested in the long-term viability of the business.
- **Preparation.** When looking for a job, do your homework. Learn everything you can about a business before you visit them. Know what they do and how long have they done. Learn what you can about the company's decision makers. Your knowledge of a potential employer can only impress them.
- **Appearance.** Look the part. Dress appropriately for interviews. First appearances do matter. Wear a coat and tie. Sport clean shoes. Shake hands firmly with a smile and your focus on the person you're greeting.
- **Awareness.** Always remain on the lookout. Attend networking groups. There are many around San Diego, and they'll grow larger as unemployment increases. Remember though, that all groups are networking opportunities. Check out local businesses and organizations. Consider a series of part time jobs.
- **Attitude.** Remain assertive and positive. Use your enthusiasm (not your desperation) to earn an interview. Handing over a resume and walking away will not get you far. Maintain a "Can Do, Want to, Will Do" attitude.

On Friday, May 15, Second Chance will present a Community Job & Resource Fair from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and will feature employer and community resource information and individual resume critiques by human resource professionals. The event will take place at 6145 Imperial Avenue, San Diego, CA 92114. Scott H. Silverman, along with Mark Cafferty, Director of the San Diego Workforce Partnership and Phil Blair, CEO of Manpower, will speak at 1:30 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. offering tips and tricks for finding a job in this difficult economic climate.

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*Founded in 1993, Second Chance creates opportunities for self-sufficiency by providing job readiness training, employment placement, and affordable housing and life skills for homeless and unemployed men, women and youth. Visit Second Chance at [secondchanceprogram.org](http://secondchanceprogram.org).*