

Job board has keys to the executive class

INTERNET | Site based in Vancouver posts highly paid jobs exclusively for professionals

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Finding the job of your dreams through an online job board is a prospect that's often associated with lower to mid-level employees who have already tried several other routes to find meaningful employment.

But what about your typical hard-driven executive, who will accept nothing less than a minimum \$100,000 salary, along with all the fancy perks their position demands?

One way that executives are looking for a new career is through a Vancouver-based website appropriately called Higher Bracket (www.higherbracket.ca), which has been posting jobs exclusively for executives and other high-income professionals since it was launched in June 2005.

"We've noticed the demand for executives has been steadily increasing, especially in B.C., and especially in finance, engineering and sales, Higher Bracket founder Anthony Kaul said in an interview. "I think there's a huge shortage of managerial talent in those sectors. We're also seeing some active recruiting in other provinces of B.C. talent, especially in Alberta and Toronto."

Higher Bracket recently relaunched its job board, so that subscribers to the service can access salary reviews, search for jobs by using keywords, and have access to career professionals for advice.

For those who haven't yet decided to subscribe, Higher Bracket now has a tiered login structure to give users free access to a sample portion of available jobs.

"It [an online job site for executives] is a great idea," Sandra Gilmer, who was downsized from her job as publisher of Vancouver Visitors Choice Magazine, said in an interview. "I don't have to go through a gazillion jobs that are completely unsuitable. I did the usual online job searches [with other online job boards], but they were useless. They didn't cater to the executive level."

Gilmer, who is seeking a position at the vice-president or director level in media sales or media operations in the \$110,000 to \$120,000 per year level, took a year off work when she lost her job to take courses and brush up on her skills.



CREDIT: Bill Keay, Vancouver Sun

Sandra Gilmer, looking for work in media sales or operations, says the Higher Bracket site narrows her search.

She said she signed up with Higher Bracket three months ago and has so far had two serious job interviews through the website. "[They] looked like a good fit, but it didn't work out. But people got back to me. At the other sites, I never heard a word."

With Higher Bracket, companies list their job openings at no charge, while the job seeker is charged \$24.95 per month to view the job board -- a great idea, according to Gilmer.

"You know that when you pay, you get better quality. It means the people and jobs are prescreened."

According to Higher Bracket, the monthly fee means employers get qualified applicants without having to weed through hundreds of unqualified resumes. As well, the company says, job seekers know their resumes are read by the right people.

Higher Bracket says it is efficient at eliminating unqualified applicants and now has over 3,300 subscribers currently using the site. As well, it says, Higher Bracket has more than five times the number of six-figure jobs than any other job board.

"One of the segments of the job-seeking public least served by job boards is the executive segment, people earning over \$100,000 a year," added Kaul. "There's too much traffic on the Internet to distill those jobs."

"We're a niche, and it's an incredibly simple and elegant process. Our user fee keeps unqualified job seekers from applying. It acts like a filter. If they're on Higher Bracket, they might get 20 or 30 resumes they're interested in. They'll have the right education, the right background. And they'll be qualified."

A search of the job site reveals dozens of postings, ranging from a chief financial officer in Vancouver [\$140,000 plus, including stock options], a senior project manager in Kamloops [\$100,000 to \$140,000, plus benefits and relocation] and an engineering and construction manager for a mining firm in Bolivia [\$150,000 to \$180,000 US].

Kaul said that Higher Bracket serves all of Canada, but not the U.S. where there are other online websites offering similar services.

He said the company plans to expand to other countries outside North America. "Over 70 per cent of the people resubscribe to the site. I can't say for sure how many have found work, but we probably place between 10 and 20 per cent of our people."

Kaul said roughly 15 per cent of their postings are exclusive to their website. "The rest we get elsewhere, from recruiters."

"We get between 150 and 250 subscriptions per week," he added.

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