



## Important Information Regarding the Career Transition Field

Next month marks the beginning of my 25<sup>th</sup> year in the career transition field. Much has changed in the industry and much of what has transpired, in my opinion, has been neither good for the sponsoring organization nor for the individual receiving the career transition service.

### First Transitions' Newsletter Distributed in January

Ironically, in the First Transitions newsletter distributed in January 2007, we described the potential demise of the large outplacement firms based on their inability to provide value to organizations or individuals. This premise is based on a lack of one-one-one career counseling and coaching by the large firms, the single most valuable aspect of the career transition process. Instead "virtual" counselors who work with job hunters by phone or email have become the norm. In the last few weeks one of the large outplacement firms generated a press release describing their "first-ever outplacement service that support candidates all the way through to their career success". The following paragraphs are part of my written response to their company president.

### A Brief History of the Career Transition Field

"When I entered the career transition field in June, 1983, working with individuals until they had completed their searches was the standard in the industry. This practice was the norm, as the product offerings containing differing levels of service for individual career transition programs were not introduced by most outplacement firms until the mid to late 1980's. As time progressed, Executive Level career transition programs became divided into 12 month and unlimited time frame service programs until the industry norm became 12 months as a limit for Executive Level service in the past few years."

### A Qualitative Difference

Since its inception in 1988, First Transitions has maintained the practice of completing EVERY individual career transition program for EVERY participant at EVERY program level. It is clearly spelled out in the enclosed marketing piece "Why Select First Transitions?" and is present on our website, [www.firsttransitions.com](http://www.firsttransitions.com).

My point: what (company name) is offering in its (product name) offering is neither "first-ever" nor unique to the industry as is claimed in the press release. Perhaps it is the re-launch back into providing a service level that once was the industry standard and that First Transitions has offered for the past 20 years, but it is not new or unique. It misleads all who received the press release and to any who might read it on the (company name) website to believe that this release contains accurate information. I won't argue that this is a new product with (company name) with a new name, but new to the industry and a unique offering, definitely not true."

## Maintaining the Status Quo—Quality, Service and Completion of EVERY Assignment

Again, going back to our January newsletter, it states “Call us old fashioned, but at First Transitions, we don’t think it (a product) should change for the sake of change. This is our 20<sup>th</sup> year in our headquarters located in Oak Brook, Ill., and we like to think that we’re still here because we got it right the first time.”

## Never Sacrifice Long-Term Success for Short-Term Gains

Our mission has always been to help people succeed. We break this into smaller components, such as helping individuals to remember their dreams and to then take steps to realize them. This overarching objective – helping others achieve personal success through our support and guidance – governs our day-to-day decision, from the staff we hire to our counselor – candidate ratio, to the time we spend with candidates (virtually endless). The organizations we work for know that the quality of service we provide is the best available in this business and that we don’t cut corners to make an extra buck.”

## Staying the Course

As we suggested a few months ago as a necessity for large firms to change in order to survive, the reintroduction of a traditional product as “new”, indicates that what we suspected is already coming to fruition. It is also interesting to consider that to some, what was new in the early 80’s, was deemed old in the 90’s and is now new once again. At First Transitions, we charted our course a long time ago – provide the best product at a fair price and complete every assignment. Please let us know if you would like a copy of the First Transitions’ newsletter that we distributed in January. Contact our administrative staff at [admin@firsttransitions.com](mailto:admin@firsttransitions.com) and provide your mailing address. Or, you may read the Winter newsletter in its entirety by visiting our website [www.firsttransitions.com](http://www.firsttransitions.com) and selecting the second item under “What’s New”.

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