How marketable are homegrown skills?

By Shery Silver, Career Source
Intense demand and a shortage of qualified
candidates have made a growing number of
employers reversely to the living information
technology (IT) per ofessionals with "homegrown expertise in sought after technologies.
It is career, says Gleen Swanson,
vitco president of sechnology for Hutton,
Barnes, & Associatos, a search firm in
Shorman Oask, California. "Particularly in
Southern California and Silicon Valley,
employers can just not find enough people.
Recruiting is at a fever pitch.
As a result of that circumstance, says
Swanson, "anyone who can demonstrate proficiency in programming languages like Java
and C++ or with Windows NT, will be considered. That's how strong the market is."

Swanson clarifies that if someone has no
prior work experience, as might be the case
with recent college graduates who have homegrown skills, they may inlittily be brought
into an internship program. "However, someone with 2-5 years work experience programming in C, for example, who picks up C++ or
their own, that person is very marketable,
says Swanson.

The same phenomenon is being observed in

other major technology centers around the country. Ira Broadman, director of staffing for international Management Consulting Inc. (IMCI), a systems integrate and developer of telecommunications products in Vienna, Virginia, confirms, Employers are consulting to the consulting the consulting the confirms, Employers are hard to the consulting the consulting the consulting the consulting the confirms, Employers are hard to impose the consulting the consulting the confirms of the confirmation of the conf

Patti Hiegesell, human resources manager for the U.S. headquarters of H8D Business Systems, a global ERP software consulting firm, agrees, and notes that even upside experience utilizing homegrown skills can enhance a candidate's marketability. New grads who may have used their skills during an internship or summer job working with an organization like Andersea Consulting, or more seasoned professionals who have done some prohon or consulting work for associations, should definitely highlight that experience, she says. And one thing fearlt stress enough is that people should show these skills on their resumes. They can mention them in their covor letters, but they should also include them on their resumes, either in a Technical Skills' section or under the heading "Other Professional Experience."

Swanson agrees that homogrown skills ahould be mentioned in reaumes, but doesn't think people should go out of their way to highlight them as "self taught." On the resume, they should list the hardware they me familiar with, the different platforms," he says. "They should also list the software and

programming languages, but not differentiate those that are homogrown. The idea is for them to get their foot in the door. For those who werry that this approach may seem misleading to employers, Swanson says, As long, as candidates can demonstrate they're pricicion, with a technology, they won't be viewed as having misrepresented or overstated their skilla.

Broadman agrees. The key to making the most of such abilities, he says, is being able to effectively answer questions about the tech nology during interviews.

Finally, besides greater receptivity to home-grown skills, Swanson says the current search ty of people with expertise in certain technolo-gies has made employers more flexible when, it comes to college degrees. If someone can demonstrate proficiency in sought after tech-nologies, he says, "they'll be marketable even without a formal degree."

Sheryl Silver may be contacted by writing to her at Career Source, P.O. Box 65754, Washington, D.C. 200035-5744.

Doctors make certain that we're productive

By David Graulich, Tribune Media

By David caratities, Arbains steems If you want to get some work done, make a doctor's appointment. That insight dearned on me last week, while I was sitting in a doctor's waiting room. I brought a thick folder of dull but necessary business reading. Sure enough, I read the whole folder amid the ever-so-joily ambiance of the waiting roon, whose docer reminded me of a Howard Johnson's motel lobby (circa 1971). My fellow patients-in-waiting were immersed in brief-cases, binders, yellow markers and paperwork. My wife had a similar experience recently, when sho plowed through stacks of work while waiting 20 minutes for a five-minute consultation. We should be appreciative of doctors, who have provided us with a

highly productive place to concentrate on work. How else can you explain the typical doctor's office procedures?

For example, there is the little matter of punctuality. You leave work early for your 3:30 appointment and arrange for someone else to pick up your daughter at the day-care

ease to pick thy Journal analysis: a two according contents.

But a 330 appointment means you see the doctor at 4... or 4,300... or maybe 5:16. We're conditioned to mutely accept this infuniating tradiness, which we wouldn't tolerate at our companies. But now I understand. Doctors do this intentionally because their patients are getting so much work done in the waiting come.

room.

There are other clever touches that

enhance your productivity. Doctors don't want you to be distracted by light reading, so they make sure the magazines strewn around the waiting room are 1) ripped and soiled and 2) ancient.

around the waiting room are 11 rapped and solled and 29 ancient.

Doctors realize that you may get bright ideas about work in the great outdoors, so they reserve the closest parking spots for themselves and allow you, the customer, to park far away and hike back to their office.

Doctors don't want you to feel obliged to make small talk with the staff. So they place their personnel behind a Plexiglas window and train them to ignore you while they talk on the phone and do "filing." Should you desire to use the restroom, you can up on the Plexiglas like a monkey until they notice you and bequeath the lavatory key upon you.

And if you get restless, a nurse thoughfully moves you from the Big Waiting Room to the Little Examination Room With No Ventilation, where you wait some more. Don't forget to bring your work with you, unless you prefer to gaze at the explicit diagrams of diseased organs that hang on the walls of the Little Examination Room.

Yes, the working people of America owe an enormous thank-you to doctors. They've deliberately made our experience as helt-car consumers tedious, disagreeable and degrading – so we'll have a great place to do our work.

David Graulich welcomes comments and stories about the workplace from readers.

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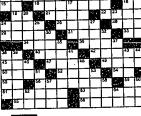
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