



By Tasha Phelps

Employment Victimization – Solutions in Today’s Economy

In today’s economy, businesses and employers have struggled to keep good employees onboard, while managing the expense(s) of their tenure. Because of the struggle, employers are forced to consider downsizing and a minimized workforce. Unfortunately, women are equally as susceptible to the potential loss of a job as their male counter parts. In as early as August 2005, the US Census Bureau reported, “women in the workforce earned an average of 77 - 80 cents to every dollar a male earned,”¹ yet women are equal victims of the poor economy. This statistic does not prevent women from being included when a company-wide layoff is being considered, because the bottom line for a business is, simply, survival.

Indiana is certainly not exempt from these issues. Workforce development agencies around the nation (including Indiana) continue to work on plans to ease the tension and anxiety *after layoffs*. *For those employees that are aggressively pushing to get back into the workforce, their realizing that it’s a little different. Now, the flexibility in the ways for even COMING onboard a company has grown:*

W-2 Salaried Employee

W-2 Project Employee

1099 Contractor

Consultant

Part Time Employee

One company seems to have gotten their arms around the variances, and has developed a powerful approach to a “win-win” solution.

“The concept of 10 til 2 began years ago. The four founders of 10 til 2 realized there was a growing need to provide part-time jobs for people who were discontent with the business paradigm that one either had to choose to work full time or to leave the work world after having a family. Hand-in-hand with that, we knew that there was an enormous need in industry for bright, motivated, college educated employees to work in positions that did not require a full time person. In September of 2003 the founding partners of 10 til 2 realized that we could fill this need. We organized 10 til 2 in November of 2003. Our database of college-educated candidates grew rapidly and by January, 2004 we had made our first placement.”²

Locally, [Betsy Knoke](#) has become a franchisee of this one-of-a kind organization. She recently shared many of her thoughts, ideas and perspective on A) becoming a franchisee, and B) being a successful in a new venture.

In a recent interview, Knoke shared that she courageously started the franchise last September independently with no staff. She admitted that one of the biggest challenges to overcome in the Indianapolis area is there is NO name recognition for the company. “A lot of people in Denver, Colorado (where the company was founded), know the 10 til 2 name, but that’s not the case here in Indiana.” She continued to explain that she is the only franchisee in Indiana / Indianapolis area.



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Because of this challenge, the question then became centered around how she FOUND prospective clients and even candidates for staffing. Knoke was very definitive. She said that because her marketing efforts are pretty much done independently, the #1 (most successful) marketing strategy is networking. Indianapolis is known for its very abundant networking opportunities and professional organizations, so Knoke seems to be collecting on the benefits of the Indianapolis business community.

She continued to share that in these networking sessions, she's always scouting for clients that are of the small businesses caliber who are growing (< 10 people) and in no particular industries. In the same instances, she's also scouting for prospective candidates but says, "we can only place a candidate if we have an appropriate position to place them in. We keep them at our fingertips for as long as they want us to."

Because 10 til 2 has such a wide variety of services to provide, Knoke (often times) engages in significant HR functions for the client. She consults with the client to be sure of the clients needs, and then performs that service.

In the past year, she says that wearing many hats (as a business owner) has pushed her to be more aware of time management. One critical piece of information she'd like to convey is that, no matter what kind of business one is in, it is important to find a niche in the market and then REALLY promote the business to make sure the right message gets out.

One final note to the public from Knoke, about the lessons learned in the past year, is that "just because we have candidates that want to work part time, doesn't mean that they won't give 100%. That's a stigma that the community has put on the definition of a 'part-time' worker, and it needs to change."

Strategic Tips for Workforce Re-Entry Success:

- Modify your resume accordingly. Build a *functional*, rather than *chronological* resume to help minimize the employment gaps.
- Push for a face-to-face interview. Employers still want the best personality match for their team environment.
- Be prepared to hit the ground running if hired. Employers may perceive that the time *out* of the workforce may have tarnished the ability to "get in and get moving."
- One very important thing to have is adequate computer skills. Almost every position today requires some technical capability. Being an *expert* is not necessarily required, but familiarity certainly is.
- Be Flexible. Don't try to replicate past experience from a past / former career, but rather, be open to possibilities and new experiences and ways of doing things.

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¹ http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/005647.html

² <http://www.tentiltwo.com/>