

## Seeding the Clouds

How to make it rain on you even during a dry spell

A presentation by John Hedtke  
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## Speaker Background

John Hedtke has worked in high tech for over 30 years and has written documentation and books for many leading software products. John owns and operates *JVH Communications*, a company that provides writing, consulting, and training services to private and government clients in all fields. He also runs a blog for people who want to become authors at <http://tradebookauthor.com>.

When not otherwise occupied, John lives in Eugene, OR, where he writes magazine articles, plays the banjo, and writes button slogans for a button company. John is a Fellow of the STC and served on the STC's Board.



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## What this presentation covers

These are two dozen things you can do to improve your chances of finding work.

Don't try to do all of them at once.

Pick the three or four that really grab you and start with those.

Add more as you have the time and inclination.

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## Get Started

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## Hot tip #1

### Update your resume.

- Make it sparkle!
- Have it sell you as a product.
- NO TYPOS!!!

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## Hot tip #2

### Create a portfolio.

- Only 5% of us have portfolios.
- They stand out.

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### Hot tip #3

#### **Evaluate what you've done already.**

- Are there things you can improve?
- Is there something in common you hadn't considered?

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### Hot tip #4

#### **Add some new skills.**

- Technical skills.
- Professional skills.
- Take classes.
- Read books.
- Do online training.
- (Check out the resource page.)

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### Hot tip #5

#### **Read more books and magazines.**

- Are you in the top 5%?
- Look for both classic and current books.
- There's a starter reading list for everyone at <http://tradebookauthor.com>.

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## Go Beat The Bushes

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### Hot tip #6

#### **Change your mode.**

- Captive vs. freelance.

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### Hot tip #7

#### **Change your venue.**

- Do a different kind of TC.
- Consider going back to college.

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## Hot tip #8

### **Expand your geographic area.**

- How far will you go for a job?

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## Hot tip #9

### **Sign up with a lot of agencies.**

- Not normally the best idea...
- Use human agencies and online.

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## Hot tip #10

### **Consider lowering your standards.**

- Who would you work for?
- How much (less) would you work for?

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## Market Yourself

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## Hot tip #11

### **Build a web site.**

- A professional site, that is.
- Separate your personal stuff.
- Buy a domain, too.

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## Hot tip #12

### **Develop a social media presence.**

- LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook at least.
- Add other networks as you wish.
- Get a cell phone that supports this kind of activity.
- Monitor yourself with Google Alerts and Klout.com.

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## Hot tip #13

### Build a blog.

- Even if you don't yet have something to say professionally, start a personal blog. It's good practice.
- Look at other blogs that interest you and see what you like about them.
- Follow other professional blogs and comment on them.

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☞ ☞ ☞ **Intermission** ☞ ☞ ☞

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## And now, kiddies, it's story time!

### Miscellaneous interviewing tips

- Common stupid questions (also see [http://theoatmeal.com/comics/interview\\_questions](http://theoatmeal.com/comics/interview_questions))
- "You're overqualified"
- "Have you done [this preposterous thing you've never heard of]?"

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**Network!**

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## Hot tip #14

### Network as much as possible.

- Have good business cards.
- Carry your resume with you, too.
- Network *online*, too!

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## Hot tip #15

### Go to every STC event you can!

- The STC is right where most of us want to live, professionally.
- We can help each other.

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## Hot tip #16

### **Go to lots of non-STC events, too.**

- Expand your horizons.
- Change your venue, too.
- And be ready to sell the STC while you're at it.

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## Hot tip #17

### **Volunteer!**

- New skills.
- New contacts.
- New resume entries.
- It keeps you occupied.

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## Hot tip #18

### **Speak to groups.**

- It's good marketing!
- It's good practice.
- Being visible is the first step to getting hired.

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## Hot tip #19

### **Participate in your alumni association.**

- More contacts, again.
- Good marketing and resume bait.
- Front-loading your future.

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## Do Something Really Different

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## Hot tip #20

### **Write magazine articles.**

- Great exposure.
- A new venue.
- Quick bucks.

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## Hot tip #21

### Write a book.

- Not a great moneymaker up front.
- Really good marketing.
- Stretches your professional abilities.

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## Hot tip #22

### Write 3<sup>rd</sup>-party books for a company.

- Not a manual, a real book.
- Some money up front—a sweetheart deal.

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## Maintain Your Attitude

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## Hot tip #23

### Don't let your employment situation affect your lifestyle.

- Don't get depressed.
- Exercise!
- Do things in your non-job-seeking time.

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## Hot tip #24

### Be ready when the floodgates open.

- You'll be too idle or too busy.
- There may suddenly be too much work.

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## How To Be Immortal

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## Resources

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## Resources

- Go to <http://hedtke.com/clouds> for links to this slide deck, an article entitled *What to Do When You're Running Out of Money*, and many other links of interest.
- Want to see how I'm approaching this? Go to <http://hedtke.com/jobinfo>. I have resumes, samples, and job information on that page. (Since I'm looking for work, feel free to pass this URL to anyone looking for a writer, trainer, or author.)

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## Recommended reading

- *The Secrets of Consulting* by Gerald M. Weinberg
- *Peopleware* by Tom DeMarco & Timothy Lister
- *A Whack on the Side of the Head* by Dr. Roger von Oech
- *Clutter's Last Stand* by Don Aslett
- *The Richest Man in Babylon* by George S. Clason
- *The Time Trap* by Alex Mackenzie
- *Learned Optimism* by Martin Selig

(A more detailed version of this list, with comments, appears at <http://tradebookauthor.com>.)

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## In Summary....

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## Summary tip #1

**Do more.**

- Whatever you've been doing, do more of it.
- Try new things, too.

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## Summary tip #2

**Do it differently.**

- It ain't working now, so change it.

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## Summary tip #3

### Have fun.

- This is **hard!**
- It's scary and stressful.
- Laugh as much as you can.

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## Thank you!

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Feel free to email or write  
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