



# The karate job coach

By William Armbruster

**Y**ou're preparing for a job interview and you want to present yourself in the best possible light. You learn as much as you can about the company to which you're applying by talking with friends and acquaintances in the industry, especially anyone you know at the company. You go to Google and do an advanced search by typing in "how to prepare for a job interview" and check some of the many links you'll find there. You buy a new suit.

Odds are, however, that you're not going to study karate. But Bill Conroy, who received his black belt seven years ago, uses the principles of *kime*, *zanchin* and *kokoro* to coach people he's recruiting for jobs in transportation and logistics.

*Kime* means that candidates must stay focused on the post that they're interviewing for, explained Conroy, executive director of Ramsey, N.J.-based Tyler Search Consultants. "Candidates can't talk about their career path, their next position or their experience 12 years ago," he said. "Companies are interested in what you've done for your current employer that's had an impact, and what you can do for them."

*Zanchin* refers to "presence of mind and moving with purpose," he said. "You don't want to get too folksy even if you're interviewing with someone who's very dis-

arming. You need to make sure that you're not dropping your guard."

*Kokoro* describes a person's "heart, spirit and attitude," he said. "That's when you express positive energy and an upbeat spirit. Companies are looking for a person with a good attitude."

Job applicants can show these same qualities in their resumé, he said. For example, a Six Sigma Black Belt shows that a person has gone through rigorous training in business principles, said Conroy, whose favorite books include Sun Tzu's classic "The Art of War" — the military treatise written 2,400 years ago.

Candidates can demonstrate *kokoro* — a good heart — by showing that they are members of trade associations or industry organizations, especially if they have been president or another officer, he said.

Another way that recruits can show *kokoro* is by listing volunteer activities outside their work, such as coaching Little League. And if you were an Eagle Scout, by all means include that on your resumé. "I have yet to meet an Eagle Scout who isn't an over-achiever," he said.

While he uses the karate principles with his recruits, Conroy, who has picked up about 100 Japanese phrases during his years as a *karateka* — a person who practices karate — said he does not use the actual Japanese terms with them.

Conroy, who majored in education and irenology — peace studies — during his first two years at Manhattan College before switching to psychology, has fought in karate tournaments. "They're brutal. It's almost like being a kickfighter," he said.

And does he list his karate training on his own resumé? "I haven't done a resumé since 1976 when I graduated. No one would hire me anyway," he joked. ☸

## Job-hunting tips

Bill Conroy, executive director of Tyler Search Consultants, offers these tips for job candidates:

- Advertise your credentials. Post your resumé on job information boards and trade association career sites — confidentially. Remove your name and current employer.
- E-mail your resumé to prospective employers as a Word document attachment. Keep your cover page very brief.
- Add a section at the bottom of your resumé (right below interests and activities) with 15 to 20 keywords. This will help your resumé get flagged when someone is conducting a database search.
- If you respond to an ad, make sure to submit salary information if requested.
- Attend trade association events such as luncheons, dinners and seminars to take advantage of the networking opportunities they offer.
- Keep phoning and talking with industry acquaintances and recruiters. Don't ask if there are any openings or opportunities — simply ask for an e-mail address where you can send your resumé for their review, to pass around and for future consideration.
- Your resumé must be focused, exude good attitude and show a clarity of purpose.
- Quantify your accomplishments, such as cost savings and revenue generation.
- Be specific throughout your resumé and in your discussions.
- Describe how you have been an impact player and how can you be an impact player for the new employer from day one. ☸



Conroy practices his *kata* — a sequence of choreographed karate moves. He used to go four times a week, but has only gone once or twice a week since the birth of his 2-year-old twins.

Reprinted from Shipping Digest, February 21, 2005 • [www.joc.com](http://www.joc.com)

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