

# AT THE Pinnacle

Fall 2005

The Pinnacle Society / Recognizing Excellence in Recruiting

*From The President*

## **The Secret of My Success**

**I**t was the Spring of 1998 at a Ritz Carlton in Pasadena, and my very first Pinnacle Meeting. I had applied only two weeks before, having learned about Pinnacle a day



**Danny Sarch**

before that. At that point, I had fourteen years under my belt as a headhunter, almost eight years running my own firm, and I had never heard of Tony Byrne, or Danny Cahill, or Peter Leffkowitz, or our illustrious group. I went to work every day in my basement (dungeon?) office and did my thing. And made a living. How well I did relative to others was a big mystery to me. Frankly, I never thought about

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## **How I Beat Out Korn Ferry for The Pope Search**

**I** felt I was due. I had lost out on the last three searches from DreamWorks for lead actors in their latest epics. (Korn Ferry cheated by placing Jude Law in all three.) When Martha Stewart needed an interim replacement while she did hard time watching cable and getting Swedish massages, I sent in Heidi Fleiss, who to me was a natural given her empathy for Martha's plight and her shared mission statement of making things happy on the home front, albeit by distinctly different methods. (Her wholesale

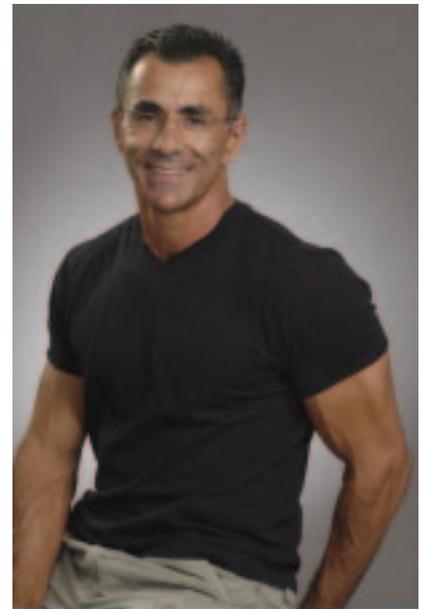
### **Danny Cahill**

*Tony Byrne Chair*

purchases of Stewart's linens and bedding seemed to give her an insurmountable edge.) Alas, my calls and emails were not returned.

So I was thrilled to hear from the search committee, er, I mean, the Cardinals, when it came time to find John Paul's successor. No doubt they realized that I had the qualifications necessary. Successful head-hunting requires that you have a genuine knowledge of the niche you work, but you must keep a detached element. I place executives in software companies, and I must understand their value proposition, but I don't need to know how to program or even demo their product. In the same vein, I was raised Catholic, and understand its ideology and tenets, but I have not attended a mass, save for several of my weddings and a few interminable funeral services,

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*Profile*

## **Who Is Danny Cahill?**

### **Recruiting as theater**

"To be 22-years-old and telling a company president that he ought to hire your candidate," says Danny Cahill, "requires a certain amount of confidence and nerve. I didn't have those attributes then, but I had a natural sense of theater. So I *pretended* I was a really good recruiter. I assumed the voice of a good one. I also performed sense memory exercises in my head. Soon, I became what I pretended to be."

Danny's reference to theater and play-acting are not simply useful metaphors. Yes, his first job out of college was, indeed, as a recruiter. But he had already, as an

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THE  
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Fall 2005

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**Our Purpose**

The Pinnacle Society was established to honor high volume producers in the Personnel Contingency and Retainer Placement employment services industries. It provides an educational forum through which members share information and ideas.

# Attaining The Pinnacle

## Kevin San Juan

Kevin San Juan, the Editor of *At The Pinnacle*, has a background as unique as any other member of this elite society. A self-described “fanatic” ski racer as a youngster in his native Vermont, he began college in the Green Mountain state. But so strong was the pull of the majestic snow fields of Colorado that he transferred to a school in the west, turned pro after graduation, and spent the next 13 years on the tour, working the last seven in Steamboat Springs in ski school and at world champion Billy Kidd’s race camp. He was a marketing rep for Steamboat Springs Ski Company in the off-season.

Back east one year, waiting out the “mud season” on the western slopes, Kevin began hanging out in Connecticut with an old friend who headed a recruiting firm at the time. “I bothered them so much that they challenged me to place a secretary with one of their clients. I made three placements in three weeks and I was hooked, especially by the commissions.”

Kevin returned to Colorado briefly to quit the ski world, and then settled permanently in Connecticut. Within his first year, he made 74 placements and garnered the “top producer” title. “This many placements in a short time brought me a lot of useful experience

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## Brenda Patterson

Brenda Patterson moved out of the house during her senior year in high school and worked part-time in a newspaper office until she graduated. She then found a job as a receptionist, answering phones and relaying product requests to the owners of a steel fittings manufacturing firm. Not content with being a “receptionist,” as she puts it, “I persuaded them teach me their inventory system so I could actually fill the orders without having to involve them in the process.” They were very pleased with the results of her initiative, and she enjoyed the creativity that she had added to what started out as a ‘no-brainer’ job. Before long, she had further grown her position to include competitive bidding and quoting on orders for the company’s products.

Brenda was clearly not a drifter in the stream of life but one who took charge of her own future. When the steel fittings company was sold, she didn’t like the new management’s philosophy of poor customer service and product quality. So she took her updated resume to National Steel, also in Indianapolis, where she manned an inside sales desk for a year and a half. But after attending a Tommy Hopkins program, she conceived a strong desire to move into outside sales, and got her wish when an older colleague retired.

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# Living Out on The Edge

by Jim Ashworth

**K**evin San Juan called this morning to say the golf lesson using NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) techniques I gave him in the bar had resulted in an incredible improvement in his golf game. Then, he tells me he wants someone to write a Pinnacle article that's different, and "out on the edge." Since I once told Kevin, "If you're not living out on the edge, you're just taking up space," he thinks I'm just the guy to write the article. So, after looking up the Pinnacle bylaws to see if I could be dismembered for writing an "out on the edge" article, we agreed I would talk about the NLP techniques I use in recruiting.

Basically, I shared a few golf tips with Kevin that I learned from Chuck Hogan, the father of golf instructors who use NLP in their lessons. Chuck's influence caused me to go from being a lifetime 20 handicapper to a 14 in three months, and down to an eight handicap three months later without spending any more time practicing the game! I also had two holes-in-one during this time!

Ever wondered about the other 88% of your brain capacity that you've been told never gets used? NLP can provide some insights into this question and some truly amazing results. My interest in NLP began in 1988 when I read an article in *Boardroom*, a monthly magazine for executives, that talked about using "visualization" exercises to remedy headaches at the office. At the time, I had never heard of visualization, and I thought it was a strange article for such a conservative magazine.

Basically, the exercise required me to visualize removing the top of my skull, exposing my brain sitting in a pool of murky, dark liquid. I was then to work on rinsing or cleaning this liquid out until it became totally clear. Then, I was instructed to simply replace the top of my skull. (Hey Kevin, do you think the guys are thinking I'm out on the edge, yet?) Since I had been experiencing daily headaches most of my life, I was willing to follow the instructions, and to my amazement it worked, immediately.

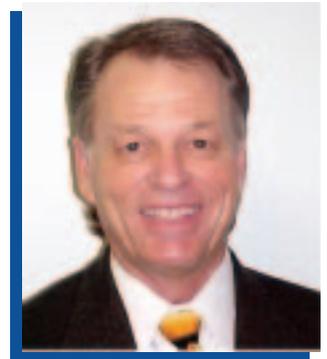
Coincidentally, three weeks later, I was at the Scott & White Clinic for an annual physical and mentioned the article to the head physician, who acknowledged the value of this exercise and encouraged me to continue using it. He also confidentially told me that the medical profession knows all about NLP, but for obvious reasons doesn't want the public to find out about it.

About this time, I met Rick Marshall, the president of the recruiting and placement firm I would later join. We discovered that we had a mutual interest in NLP, and we have been religiously studying the subject together ever since.

There are countless forms of NLP, but before describing some practical applications of NLP in recruiting, let me tell you about some of my more interesting experiences.

- During my golf lesson with Chuck Hogan, he suggested I have myself videotaped taking a good golf swing and then watch it 15 minutes a day for two weeks before playing again. I had a video tape made and set to music (the music was specifically selected based on a tempo that worked best for my swing). As instructed, I watched the tape for two weeks without playing. On my very first subsequent round of golf, three of my friends witnessed my first hole-in-one.

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- I had been an insomniac for years, often lying wide awake for hours. Then, I learned the technique of visualizing each of the colors of the rainbow, one at a time. Now I fall asleep within seconds.
- A few years ago, I had two vertebrae removed from my neck because I suffered from spinal stenosis. I was told to wear a neck brace 24-hours a day for three to six weeks, not to work or drive a car for three weeks and not to lift anything heavier than 20 lbs. And *no* golf for at least three to four months. Not wanting to lay off that long, I created another visualization process to accelerate my healing. I basically visualized my heart pumping out millions of tiny welders into the blood stream and over to the neck area. I was required to take an x-ray to the doctor's office two weeks later for follow-up. To my amazement, he immediately released me, saying I had somehow "miraculously healed." Of course, I played in a golf tournament that weekend, pain free. Recently, I taught my 74-year-old mother the same process. She was also "miraculously" released from rehab after knee reconstruction surgery in a third of the time the doctors had predicted.

OK, here are just a few NLP applications I routinely use at work.

- ▲ I use a visualization process to develop job leads or to remember names of previous applicants for job matches. It's also a great

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## Who Is Danny Cahill? *Continued from page 1*

undergraduate, written a play that “some of my college actor friends peddled in New York city, where an off-Broadway theater bought it. So, even as I was named recruiting rookie-of-the-year, I had a play running in the Big Apple.” It was the first of seven of his plays—one was an award winner—staged during Danny’s first few years in recruiting. (He also did comedy sketch writing for an ill-fated TV series.) After work, he’d drive into the City from suburban Connecticut and “hang out with my theater pals,” returning home at 2:00 am (or simply going straight to the office if dawn were breaking!).

### **“People raised in the Internet Age, with e-mail, no longer need an emotional attachment to the person with whom they’re sharing information.”**

Today, Danny muses that his involvement in theater also helps explain the great success of his speaking and training careers, which in turn have made him a better recruiter because he is continuously thinking about how to do the job better and communicating this to others, both his employees and participants in his training programs. “To be able to have notes, or download a rebuttal, or read a website seems like stealing to me after acting, where your moves are blocked by a director and your lines are committed to memory. People ask me if I get nervous when I speak, but it’s actually the only time I’m not nervous.” Despite having the industry’s largest training firm, most of Danny’s income still comes from making placements as he continues to run Hobson in a hands-on way, every day, locked into each and every deal and working to secure additional retainers for the firm.

### **Biographical watersheds**

Danny represents his life in recruiting as a series of ascending watersheds. He crossed the first at the age of 27. A top biller at Hobson, he had become involved in management mainly because the owner was going through a divorce, burning out, and ruining the company in the process. In addition, “I wanted to do things my way. I wanted to build a real search firm, and go national. I wasn’t interested in running an employment agency. So I told the owner, ‘Either you sell me the company or I’m going out on my own.’ He was smart enough to sell.” Danny was now free to give life to the tenets of his developing recruiting philosophy.

He reached the next watershed a few years later as he shared his recruiting ideas while serving on a series of producer panels. “I made them laugh.” As a result, he got calls to present at dinner meetings and industry programs. He developed tapes, and they sold. “I felt I had a different ‘take’ on recruiting, different

from Tony [Byrne] and the others, and I believed I could compete with them.” It was the early ‘90s. Hobson Associates was in excellent shape and large enough for Danny to devote more time to building his training business.

Yet another watershed loomed in 1996 when Danny realized that he couldn’t run Hobson the way he wanted to while at the same time growing the training enterprise. So he hired Lisa Iannone to be the general manager of his recruiting arm. “Hiring Lisa was the best single decision I ever made. You can’t grow until you get out of your own way. She was just plain better than I was.”

An important benefit of Danny’s dual career is that “my search firm has become a think tank for my training company.” Danny also believes that his website is fresher and more organic than others’ pages because the case studies it illustrates come directly from the real-life experiences of his recruiters. (And Hobson recruiters appreciate what Danny’s creative ideas have done for them—their average tenure with the firm is between 15 and 20 years!)

### **His impact on the business**

“People say about me, ‘He’s a funny, entertaining guy,’ but we [Hobson] are much more than that. We originated a lot of the things recruiters do today,” including: contingency search firms also working on retainer; the relationship recruiting call (as opposed to the traditional, ‘Hey, I got a job, wanna talk’ call); structuring the day using time management techniques; closes that he’s invented over the years; and more. “People depend on us to look at the world in a fresh way. That’s what we’re known for. We take a great deal of pride in having reinvented the placement process.” And they continue to reinvent it.

### **E-mail versus telephone**

“People raised in the Internet Age, with e-mail, no longer need an emotional attachment to the person with whom they’re sharing information. You don’t have to ‘bond’ over the phone to get a referral or a ‘yes’ in the era of digital sharing.” Despite this truth, says Danny, most recruiters have not yet adapted to the “sea change” in the way we communicate. They’re still proud of the number of calls they make in a day. “It’s a testosterone thing. ‘I made more calls than you did.’” The situation reminds Danny of the telephone’s advent in the 1870s. Despite the device’s superiority, the average salesman still knocked on doors until World War II. Now, the Internet is the better way, but most people haven’t yet changed their *modus operandi*. They refuse to let go of the model that worked so well in the past.

But they should give it up, Danny stresses, because e-mail is, indeed, now the primary mode of business communication. “What’s the point of making calls when 80% go into voicemail? Today, I train my recruiters how to write e-mail, and how to count and measure the responses. I don’t have all the answers here, but let’s start talking more about e-mail and how it works.”

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## **How I Beat Out Korn Ferry** *Continued from page 1*

in twenty years. I'm detached like nobody.

Of course I knew the search would get a lot of press and attention. I heard the Big Boys, (aka Korn Ferry, Heidrick and Struggles) were making a pitch to the Cardinals, and so were some of the boutique firms, like Falwell Search and Billy Graham's People R Us, and there was even some noise about them allowing that lower level temp firm, "Pimp a Priest," to take a shot at it.

But I learned a long time ago what all you recruiters know. You don't sell to anyone who can't buy. So while my competition was wasting time pitching to the Cardinals, an erratic lot with conflicting interests and various axes to grind, I went to The Juice, and made my pitch directly to God.

It wasn't easy to get Him. (He claims not to read His personal e-mail, and not to carry a cell phone.) Gimme a break, you think you're dealing with an amateur here? And I'll grant you that His Gatekeeper was tough. She kept telling me: "He has your message," even though I hadn't left one. "You don't understand: He knows what you want," even as I would point out I hadn't said what I wanted. Like all good EA's, she was very protective and loyal to Him. So I used the time-honored recruiter's method that is fail-safe.

"Tell Him it's not about the Pope search. I have another search. One for Him. I think he might be interested."

"You have a job for Him? Better than the one He has?"

"Possibly. I can't determine that until I talk to Him. Or until He, 'Lo, comes unto me,' or however He wants to work it. Let's set it up."

He wanted to do lunch, but like all recruiters, I hate to have a meal when I'm trying to pitch a client. I want to put my game face on and go, I don't want to deal with ordering and making sure I'm not using the wrong fork, and there's that uncomfortable moment when He orders a drink, and you're not sure if it's cool for you to order one, so you don't, but now you really want one. He seemed to sense all of this without me saying a word, so we met midmorning. I'm a morning guy. He didn't stand a chance.

He told me He had quite an extensive personal network of contacts and wasn't sure He was even going to retain a search firm. "Nobody knows more people than I do," He said.

"Don't take this the wrong way. But are you a Headhunter?" He shook his head. "Then let's not waste time talking about your network. I mean, please."

He tried the Internet objection: "I see a lot of good resumes on Monster."

"Leftovers. Losers. You'll get unemployed Popes, or mentally unemployed Popes. And if they're on Monster, they've been interviewing actively. You'll have trouble closing them."

I had to give Him credit. He never questioned the fee. He knew it was a critical position and wasn't about to scrimp on spending. He valued Talent. I liked that about Him. Then again, He has more money than, well. . . you know.

"How long is your guarantee?"

"60 days."

"I can't evaluate in 60 days. In 60 days, he's still learning how to put that big hat on."

"That's your problem. Guarantees require me to predict the future. Can you do that?"

"Actually, yes."

"Then you don't need a guarantee. Or references, now that I think about it."

Then I pounced. Recruiters get business by not seeming to need business.

"Look, God. Can I call you God? This will not be an easy search. I know it has a certain caché, and I can get good people to talk to You, just because of your rep. You've got that Jack Welch, Warren Buffet kind of star power. No, don't be modest, I mean that. But once they're in, there are issues."

"Like what?"

**"I heard the Big Boys, (aka Korn Ferry, Heidrick and Struggles) were making a pitch to the Cardinals, as were some of the boutique firms, like Falwell Search, and Billy Graham's People R Us, and there was even some noise about them allowing a lower level temp firm, 'Pimp a Priest', to take a shot at it."**

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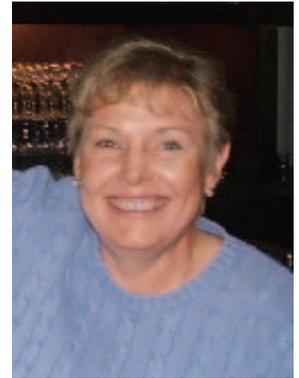
# Pinnacle Fall 200



**Kevin San Juan and his wife, Wendy  
(Or, is that Danny Sarch's 2nd wife?)**



**Ralph Protsik**



**Joni Thompson**



**Shannon Curry and Gwen Hix:  
Two amigas**



**Wow, that tie really pops!**



**Ritchie Harris and Stacy Ethun:  
Dinner for two**



**Ritchie Harris and Stacy Ethun:  
The morning after**



**We love Pinnacle!**



**CEO, Purdue Corporation**

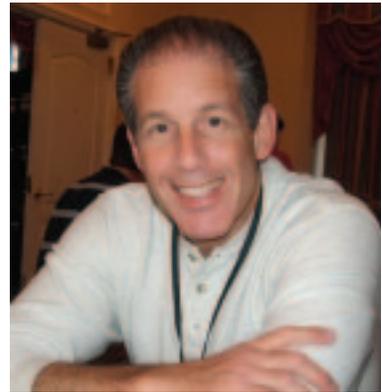
# 05 / Philadelphia



**Don Smith  
(Nice Guy)**



**Danny Sarch and Gwen Hix  
(Or, is that Danny's 3rd wife?)**



**Ken Friedman  
(Nice smile)**



**Jim Ashworth and his wife, Nancy**



**"Not like a firecracker." It's a fashion phrase**



**Suzanne Fairlie  
(Nice hat)**



**Business meeting**

## **The Secret of My Success** *Continued from page 1*

it or cared much either. I just wanted to do better than I had the year before.

I had received a brochure for Tony Byrnes's video set, *Placement 2000*, in the mail. "What a hoot," I remember thinking, "People get money for teaching other people how to do this!" Someone named Richie Harris was quoted in that brochure as saying that Tony Byrne was the trainer that Pinnacle people used. What the hell was Pinnacle?

**I** called Tony Byrne's office and spoke to his assistant (who, I learned much later, was his sister). She explained to me that Pinnacle was this elite society where "big billers" gathered twice a year at fancy places to learn how to be better. She gave me Diana Gazzolo's number.

Diana was the president at the time. I'm not sure if there was a membership chairperson or not. I applied, got accepted, and booked a trip to California. Diana had assured me that meetings were a leisurely affair that got started sometime after 9:00 in the morning.

Thursday morning. . . I eat a relaxed room service breakfast, stroll down to the lobby at 8:45 or so and scan the events list. The meeting, of course, had started at 8:30 (thanks a lot Diana!). The Ritz in Pasadena has a campus bigger than the island of Manhattan and of course the meeting was in a remote cottage that seemed miles away from the main building. I started to run.

"Way to make a first impression, Sarch," I thought glumly to myself sprinting in the heat. I reached the cottage sometime after 9:15 (OK, I walked fast). There was a table outside the room where all the name cards had been laid out nicely, like when you go to a wedding reception. My name, lonely in its vigil, stared back at me.

I took a deep breath, took the name tag, and opened the door. I think Rich Bradley was in the middle of a presentation. Richie Harris, always loathe to interrupt the speaker, stood up and bellowed at me: "Howdy, neighbor!" I took the long, long walk to the lone seat remaining at the table and tried to make myself invisible. A kind soul handed me a meeting directory. A few niceties exchanged, introductions to the people around me, and then I was asked the question: "So, Danny, what is the secret of your success?"

Late to the party, dripping with sweat, embarrassed to be late, more than a little self-conscious, and now I'm asked to summarize my career success up to that point. Up to two weeks before, I didn't even know that I was successful!

It was as if time had stopped for me. Though this person (no longer a member, by the way) was asking me this quietly and privately, I felt as if everyone in the room was still staring at me. The wrong answer would result in disdain, banishment. My mouth was dry, my brain empty. While thinking of myself as glib, quick witted, I am not very good at self-reflection or analysis, so this question took me by surprise. Fortunately, my instincts, honed by a heritage thousands of years old, enabled me to answer the question with the quick-witted question right back: "What is the secret of your success?" I expected some "you first, no you first" banter, but this person responded, quickly and confidently: "I found Jesus Christ."

I have nothing against anyone's religious beliefs. Frankly, I'm envious of those who can be so sure of anything, when I find myself so sure of so little. But I did know that Jesus Christ was not picking up the phone and dialing it for this guy. Did I join a cult? I thought I had seen some other Jewish names on the membership list.

Once Richie spoke some more, I certainly knew that it was not a religious organization.

Fast forward to September 1998 in Manhattan and the NAPS convention. I was asked to be on a Pinnacle Panel. The room was packed. My new friend, the aforementioned Richie Harris, became ill and had to cancel at the last minute. But his words were ringing in my ears: "At Pinnacle, everyone there cares about you. Always be honest. At NAPS, tell them what makes you successful on Thursday and you will have 50 new competitors on Monday. Don't tell them <expletive deleted>."

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**"Nuggets of brilliance come from [Pinnacle members] everywhere, all the time, out of the blue, from the quiet and the loud, from the fully retained and the fully contingent, from the sole practitioner and the manager of dozens, from east and west, from north and south, from young and old, from those placing CEOs and those placing secretaries."**

## **Kevin San Juan** *Continued from page 2*

and really accelerated my career, much more than if I had made, say, five high value placements, typical of beginning recruiters in their first year.”

Kevin soon became manager of the permanent recruiting division and then managing partner, all the while maintaining his accustomed place among the top ten producers in the state. To date, he’s billed over \$5 million, with a best year of \$780,000 (1999) and an average above \$300,000 over the last eight years.

Kevin credits “my Colorado attitude” for his success. “I’m a nice guy who treats people the way I’d like to be treated.” As a result, both clients and candidates thought he was the friendliest person they’d ever worked with. “If they had that ‘flinty’ New England mindset, I turned them around. That’s my real claim to fame.”

**B**ut Kevin found placing secretaries “wearing.” They were frequently young, and unreliable in their new positions, and of course the fees were small. The turning point came when a recruiter from U.S. Surgical — in the midst of small talk about skiing — asked Kevin if he could provide sales staff. Kevin satisfied the request and soon gravitated to clinical medical placement, searching for the people in radiology who scan our X-rays and MRIs for signs of disease. By 1990, he was working the medical field exclusively, adding cardiology technologists, heads of radiology and cardiology departments, and then executive directors of private practices. “Health care recruiting is very competitive, but my competition hasn’t specialized, and I have 18-years of database. So we do very well. With eight employees working contingency, we dominate the northeast U.S., although we make placements all over.”

All of Kevin’s recruiters share in the niche, enabling them to make more placements, “which makes everyone more profitable. It’s one large desk that’s on fire.” This policy gives recruiters added impetus to build their databases, search for suitable candidates, and share leads and needs at weekly meetings. In addition, “we are constantly training our people, both in-house and out.”

Kevin and his associates are not big Internet users, mainly because “our prospects are not computer-savvy or net-registered, even on radiology sites. You have to reach them the ‘old fashioned way’ — we call them. They’re clinicians, first and foremost, who

love their patients. So what we do is speak directly to them about things like the good patient care environment where we are going to place them, not simply about the money they’ll get. You really have to build a relationship with them. It’s a different kind of close.” (Kevin is currently working on an article entitled, “The Art of the Close: No Counter Offers Accepted,” which will appear in a book to be published by the Pinnacle Society.)

### **The Pinnacle Influence**

Kevin’s perennial success made him an ideal candidate for Pinnacle Society membership long ago, but he held back, “partly out of laziness, but also because I thought I had to provide clients’ names to verify my numbers, which actually wasn’t a requirement.”

**“At first, I saw Pinnacle Society membership simply as a career achievement. I didn’t realize just how much I’d learn from fellow members, people at the highest point of their game, who still act humble.”**

Kevin was slow to join even though Tony Byrne, who helped found the Pinnacle Society, “was my first and most important mentor, my inspiration really, a rare person who shared his great ideas with others all over the world rather than keep them to himself, simply for his own gain.” Kevin characterizes Danny Cahill—Tony’s successor in the Pinnacle Society Education Chair, now renamed the Tony Byrne Education Chair—as the same kind of sharing person.

“At first, I saw Pinnacle Society membership simply as a career achievement. I didn’t realize just how much I’d learn from fellow members, people at the highest point of their game, who still act humble. They have the ethics and standards it takes to sustain really high billing. This is very cool!” ▲

**[www.pinnaclesociety.org](http://www.pinnaclesociety.org)**

## **Brenda Patterson** *Continued from page 2*

The position involved being the head of a regional territory, where she built relationships with customers. But after five years, "I felt, once again, that I was not much more than a glorified order taker." Another move was in order.

**S**he called a friend at Management Recruiters International (MRI) for help, but made it clear that she didn't want to work for an 'employment agency,' the kind of outfit that simply sends out a bunch of candidates with appropriate resumes and hopes that one will get hired. She'd already experienced this from the candidate side and found it too shallow. "Gary persuaded me that my work for Management Recruiters would be different. And it was."

Brenda started MRI's first metals manufacturing engineering desk in her region, but with no clients and no candidates. Knowing nothing of the field for which she was recruiting — and not much yet about the fine points of recruiting, either — "I taught myself the metal engineering business. I learned about the companies that hired metals professionals by researching trade journals and by picking the brains of MRI recruiters in other regions who were involved in finding similar candidates. I also studied resumes to learn what skills and background were implied in the titles of the positions being requested." Brenda even took a course in "Basic Manufacturing Processes" at a local college. "And I called, and I called, and I called prospects and clients, which gave me knowledge and confidence."

"I made my first placement four weeks to the day after launching the desk, and my practice took off like wildfire." Brenda's average fee was \$10,000 in the first year (for a total of \$187,000) and she was national rookie runner-up in her 1100-office company. After five years at MRI as a recruiter, in 1991, she was promoted to office manager. The following years were successful in terms both of management and personal production, but Brenda became frustrated with the differing commission philosophies of six different managers in her last five years with MRI. And when, in a regional consolidation, she and the office she had so carefully built were put under another manager, meaning she would no longer be the local decision maker, or get the credit she deserved. she determined to go out on her own. Brenda founded J&K Executive Search (dba Global Recruiters of Indianapolis) in 1999 (the initials stand for her children's names), hired five employees, and had a very successful run, until tragedy struck. Her young daughter, Katelin, who was diagnosed years before with Cystic Fibrosis, became seriously ill. This changed Brenda's life, and her business.

Possessed by a determination to help save her daughter, Brenda has dedicated herself to raising money for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, which finances pharmaceutical and biomedical researchers who are developing the kinds of drugs that are now keeping her daughter alive, even as they seek an eventual cure for CF. This year alone, Brenda organized a golf tournament that netted \$72,000, and a Texas Hold-'Em poker tournament at the Indianapolis Colts' training facility—with dinner provided by Outback Steakhouse—that added \$21,000 to the research coffers. Not long ago, she sent Pinnacle society members a letter explaining her situation and asking for support. "I expected maybe \$1,500. Instead, they sent a total of \$9,700 and many letters of encouragement to Katelin. Two of them mailed checks to my daughter for her personal use. The Pinnacle Society has been unbelievable and has helped me keep on keeping on."

The effect of all this on Brenda's business has been profound. She has switched from recruiting metals engineering professionals to searching for candidates to fill biomedical and pharmacological positions. Her new clients know that she has a special reason

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## Living Out on The Edge *Continued from page 3*

help for finding my reading glasses, keys, or pens, which I am forever losing. I simply instruct my brain on what I want, and then let my brain do the rest. For example: "OK brain, give me some ideas for finding a controller with real estate experience by noon tomorrow, while I get some sleep." The information you asked for will start arriving the next morning. Since everything you've ever experienced is still stored in your brain, you are simply providing instructions to retrieve it.

▲ I previsualize sendouts to create the best model to make a placement. By picturing the interview before it actually takes place, I'm more likely to anticipate possible objections. This provides the opportunity to modify my strategy.

▲ I use modeling in meetings with employers and applicants to improve communications. I simply model their posture or the speed at which they are talking. Try this: Significantly change your posture or change the way your legs are crossed while leading a discussion. Watch, and within a minute or two at least half of your audience will subconsciously change their posture to match or model yours.

▲ I use a left brain/right brain "awakening" exercise to reach peak performance, which is also known as being "in the Zone." When you perform the exercise below, both sides (analytical/creative) of your brain automatically "turn on." It's great before speeches or big presentations. Using the first and second fingers of one hand, tap under your eyes, or the space between the

fourth and fifth fingers on your other hand while performing the following eye movements. Perform each of the eye movements in order for two or three seconds without moving your head.

- Look straight ahead
- Close your eyes
- Look down and left
- Look down and right
- Rotate your eyes through a clockwise motion
- Rotate your eyes in a counter-clockwise motion
- Hum a tune for a few seconds
- Count to ten
- Hum a tune again for a few seconds

Purchase the book "Principals of NLP" to learn what various eye movements will reveal about the person you are talking to. Some attorneys use this process to help them select jurors.

### **Some requirements for using NLP**

You must believe there is a God. Get in a state of relaxation before the exercise. Slow your breathing down. Close your eyes. Find a quiet place. You can maximize results by doing this before sleep, when your brain has fewer distractions.

Rick and I use numerous other NLP techniques — pick up the book, "Brain Gym" — to stimulate our employees before we begin our day. You may think we are "living out on the edge." We think we are living *with* an edge! ▲

## Brenda Patterson

*Continued from page 2*

for locating potential employees who are totally dedicated to finding cures, not mere technicians. She wants to find and place the very best because she has a stake in the outcome. "My passion is to save lives and make a difference by providing human capital to clients. I can sell a client on this. They buy into it!" Indeed, "Companies I've worked with point to my story and my relationship with them in order to say to the world, 'We are not with her just to make a profit.' "

How has she managed to maintain her business, care for her daughter, mount fundraising programs, and keep her sanity? "I focus, totally. I put one foot in front of the other and do what needs to be done. Wherever I am, I try to 'be there.' Some days I crawl back into bed and give the world a hand gesture. It's not easy, but I have everything that it takes. . . faith, friends and the tools of this business." ▲

**"It's not easy, but I have everything that it takes. . . faith, friends and the tools of this business."**

## **Who Is Danny Cahill?** *Continued from page 1*

### **Generational approaches**

Danny also emphasizes that recruiters ought to approach people of different generations differently. “You can’t overcome a counter-offer objection with a candidate born in 1980—whose parents were laid off in the ‘80s or ‘90s, when their jobs were re-engineered—the same way you deal with one whose World War II-generation parents imbued him or her with the ethos of company loyalty and the positive value of being a ‘company man.’ ” Danny believes that generation should dictate the recruiter’s approach to many classic business propositions. One size does not fit all. “Always ask yourself if what you say in a given situation has value, and if it doesn’t, think of what you might say instead.” And, we might add, consider what Danny might say. ▲

## **How I Beat Out Korn Ferry**

*Continued from page 5*

“Well, the hours for one. Every Sunday? Come on. Rome? You and I both know that place is a yawn and that the guys you want have cribs in NY and LA. The dress code is atrocious. The Popemobile? Don’t think so, chief. I know CFO’s that get Hummers, okay? And by the way, let’s not forget the last one got shot.”

Tough, straight talk. I could tell He liked that. I wasn’t surprised when I got the call saying the search was mine. Now, are the rumors true? Did I have Ratzinger already in my back pocket when I had the shoot-out with God? Yeah, I did. Recruiting 101. He had been second fiddle for a long time to JP II, was 78, didn’t feel like he got sufficient credit, and was just disgruntled enough to hear me out about a Start Up religion search I was about to launch. I had his resume, the job opened up. It’s all timing. Timing and who you know. Korn Ferry never stood a chance. ▲

## **The Secret of My Success**

*Continued from page 8*

Paranoid, maybe. But as Woody Allen said, just because you’re paranoid doesn’t mean that they’re not after you. I don’t remember if the fateful question was asked, but I do know that I was not secure enough in myself to share anything more than the basic platitudes with a roomful of strangers (would be competitors?).

Seven years later . . . Pinnacle in Miami, Colorado Springs, Portland ME, Sedona, Montreal, New Orleans, Los Angeles, Manhattan, Vancouver, Santa Fe, Coral Gables, and Philadelphia. In hindsight, it all seems to have gone so fast. I’ve even been on a few more Pinnacle Panels and managed to be a little more articulate.

I’ve never missed a meeting. I stay for ALL of the sessions (and this is my first year as President so I didn’t “have” to stay up until now). Nuggets of brilliance come from everywhere, all the time, out of the blue, from the quiet and the loud, from the fully retained and the fully contingent, from the sole practitioner and the manager of dozens, from east and west, from north and south, from young and old, from those placing CEOs and those placing secretaries.

Seven years later, and I now work in a “real” office, have a second daughter, more gray hair than black and more head space than any hair at all. I’ve just celebrated the 15th anniversary of running my own firm, and the 21st anniversary of hunting heads. Professionally, the last seven years have been the best of my life and the “secrets” lie in the notes of those colored booklets. Seven years later, and I’m honored to be the President of an extraordinary group of people. Seven years later, and I still have no simple answer to that simple question.

But I do have some complicated answers. . . Just ask me at the next meeting. ▲

### **Our Purpose**

The Pinnacle Society was established to honor high volume producers in the Personnel Contingency and Retainer Placement employment services industries. It provides an educational forum through which members share information and ideas.