

## **Job Search Ends Where it Started**

**By Tammy Joyner**

It might pay to hang on to your former employer's phone number.

Doing so helped William Grube of Lawrenceville get his old job back.

Grube lost his job last fall after business slowed at specialty auto parts provider Mustangs Unlimited, where he sold restoration parts for the classic Ford muscle cars. He and a few other people were let go.

Grube spent the next four months trolling the Internet looking for work, doing the networking routine and applying, he estimates, for some 120 jobs. The result? Nothing.

"So I decided to circle back around," he said. "I knew they had a small turnover from time to time, and I hadn't checked with them. I decided to place a phone call to them to see if they had anything going on."

That was back in February. As luck would have it, the company had just lost a salesperson the week before. Grube was hired — or should we say, rehired.

"He was a good employee to begin with," said Andrew Allen, the general manager who rehired Grube. "When it came time to refill a position he was someone we wanted on the sales floor. He knows the product pretty well."

**Atlanta career expert Rick Smith called Grube's job search "fascinating."**

**"With the amount of [job] shuffling going on, clearly it pays to stay in touch and keep as many bridges open as you can," said Smith, author of the book "The Leap: How Three Simple Changes Can Propel Your Career From Good to Great."**

**Smith, founder and president of an Atlanta-based global executive networking firm called World 50, noted that research shows that 80 percent of jobs are found through networking.**

**"The broader and better your reputation is, the more likely you'll find a job," he said.**

And it can't hurt to make sure your network includes former workplaces, assuming you haven't been fired for cause or burned your bridges when you left.

As for Grube? He hasn't missed a beat at work. In the last month, he said he was the third best-selling salesperson on the staff of 12.

"Timing is everything," he reflected, noting, "They didn't have to train me. That's good for them."

And for Grube, he not only got his old job back, but earns the same salary and was assigned the same cubicle, where, he laughed, "Most of [my] sticky notes were still on the wall."