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The Wall Street Professional's Survival Guide: Success Secrets of a Career Coach. 2010. By Roy Cohen, FT Press, www.ftpress.com. 261 pages, \$25.19.

Reviewed by [Martin S. Fridson, CFA](#)
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Abstract

The advice in *The Wall Street Professional's Survival Guide* is ideally suited to investment professionals who are between jobs, expecting the ax to fall, or securely employed but seeking a change. In short, this book will prove handy in dealing with almost any employment change you are likely to face.

Bottom line: Buy this book if you are between jobs, expecting the ax to fall, or securely employed but seeking a change. In fact, buy it even if you are not currently in one of those situations, because chances are you will be at some point. The financial industry evolves too rapidly to assume that your career path will always be smooth and upward and confined to a single enterprise or institution.

When the time comes to seek new employment, you are likely to encounter some of the many hurdles described in *The Wall Street Professional's Survival Guide: Success Secrets of a Career Coach*. Your résumé may shout "job hopper." Perhaps an unpleasant, vindictive (former) boss cannot be counted on to provide a favorable reference. Or your previous experience may not obviously qualify you for the job you want.

Author Roy Cohen offers concrete and sensible advice on these and numerous other challenges. He communicates his prescriptions effectively through case histories drawn from more than 20 years as a career coach. Cohen's book is not a mere listing of dos and don'ts for writing résumés, interviewing, and networking, although he provides up-to-date, savvy guidance on all such activities. (You think a personal letter sends a better message than an e-mail? Think again.) *The Wall Street Professional's Survival Guide* analyzes the thought processes of employers and recruiters and supplies the logic and even the phrasing that can increase your chances of success.

Cohen makes clear that achieving your objective is a matter of not only persuading others that they need what you offer but also managing your own attitudes and responses. He bluntly states that you must swallow your pride at times and put aside any bitterness about the circumstances of termination from a previous job. Some readers will have to step up their assertiveness quotient to capitalize fully on Cohen's recommended techniques. For example, here is the voice-mail message he advises readers to leave with an acquaintance who has ducked repeated requests for networking assistance:

Leslie, hi, this is Bill Johnson. I'm hoping you're okay. I've left a couple of messages for you and hadn't heard back. I'm really just calling to make sure you're all right. Here's my number and my email . . . again. I'm calling just to make sure you're okay.

Cohen admits that this play is not foolproof but claims it works most of the time.

Although the advice in *The Wall Street Professional's Survival Guide* is applicable to a job search in any line of work, it is especially pertinent to investment professionals. Cohen worked in outplacement at Goldman Sachs for 10 years, and several of his case histories involve CFA charterholders. He addresses issues of specific interest to workers in the financial industry, such as switching from buy side to sell side and moving from trading to risk management. Many of Cohen's techniques are also useful in seeking a new position with a current employer. In

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short, this book will prove handy in dealing with almost any employment change you are likely to face. And sooner or later, you are likely to face one.

—M.S.F.

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