

Podcast Transcript: The Launch of the SAP Career Center on SCN: An SCN Community Podcast with Claudine Lagerholm, Senior Product Manager with SAP  
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**Jon Reed:** Hi, this is Jon Reed of JonERP.com and I'd like to welcome you to this podcast from the SAP Community Network. In this edition, Claudine Lagerholm, a Senior Product Manager with SAP, is going to give us an inside view on an important new area launched within SDN, the SAP Career Center. The timing is certainly right to have another avenue to pursue opportunities, and perhaps the most intriguing part is the potential to connect the SAP job search with active involvement in SDN. We'll explore that connection today.

Let's kick it off by asking you about this exciting launch of the Career Center and what SDN visitors can expect when they visit for the first time.

**Claudine Lagerholm:** This is a very exciting new initiative. We're looking to bring together employers and applicants in the extended SAP Ecosystem worldwide and, for those listeners who may not be familiar with the term "ecosystem," it refers to SAP's extended network, which includes partners, customers, vendors, consultants and others. All these folks are connected to SAP in some way: either they're doing business with us or they're connected to SAP. So it's a very specialized career site just for this audience.

The URL is <http://scncareercenter.sap.com>. The Career Center is free of charge to all applicants. It has a very easy URL and it really only takes a few minutes to register and to upload your resume. We encourage all folks in the community who are looking for jobs that require SAP-related skills to check it out.

**Reed:** Yeah, I actually uploaded my resume; it was pretty smooth and it was fun to fill out my profile, so you definitely made it friendly. A lot of thought went into the context of creating this Career Center and making it relevant, so I wanted to start by asking you about the trends you see today that you think are impacting SAP recruiting.

**Lagerholm:** We're seeing a couple trends, mainly around HR and recruiters using social networking sites for recruitment, and this is something new that's happening in the industry. We're seeing that in blogs, in community sites that may be integrated to recruitment or standalone, but the general trend is that companies out there are using social networking for recruitment. What I find interesting is that it's not just IT companies.

For example, the US Army started recruiting on Facebook. When I first read this, I thought this is kind of interesting and different. But when you think about it, the US Army is looking for young people and young people love Facebook. From that perspective, it's kind of a natural fit.

We're seeing the same demands in the SAP Community Network: the potential employers who are members of SCN have started posting positions in our forums. They

really want to reach out to the SCN community and find qualified applicants, so they started posting in the forum, which is not the right venue, so those postings had to be deleted. Now we're going to offer a formal program on SCN as a natural extension to the community network where we formally bring the employer and the applicant together.

**Reed:** Now, I want to talk about both sides of that equation because for the Career Center to work, it has to work for both the employers and those who are seeking jobs. Let's talk about the employers. It's not always easy for smaller service firms to find the right talent mix: you don't want to wind up with people on the bench, but you also don't want to be scrambling for resources. So how do you think the SAP Career Center can help firms who are in this situation?

**Lagerholm:** We've had feedback from a lot of our service partners for quite some time that it's difficult to find the right talent, and that's the case even in this economy. Smaller service firms may not have a very well established brand name; they may only work in a small geographic area and they don't have a lot of money to spend on HR and recruitment. So the career side gives them an opportunity to get their name out. They can use the Career Center forum to interact with candidates; they can answer questions; they can provide additional information about the companies; they can also leverage other parts of SCN, such as Ecohub. An Ecohub partner can gain additional visibility and build up their brand name as well. It's really about leveraging the community to allow for interaction between the employer and the applicant that you don't find on typical career sites out there.

**Reed:** One of the challenges you faced is that you really designed this to work for employers of all sizes and both permanent and contract openings, and then there's this question of the advantages of locating this on SCN. How can hiring managers use this Career Center in a new way to perhaps get a feel for candidates based on their SCN involvement?

**Lagerholm:** The Career Center allows the employer to be very targeted in their recruitment. Since it only focuses on SAP-related positions, one of the main benefits is that you're not going to get a lot of clutter out there. If you use other career sites, you might get thousand of resumes and applications that are completely unrelated. One of the main benefits for us is that we eliminate a lot of the clutter.

The second benefit is that once you start talking to an applicant, you can get a sense for the depth of their knowledge by looking at the applicant's participation in our community. We have a lot of members who are very active, who post very detailed technical responses in the forum, who build e-learning, who have been very involved in helping others in the community. The Career Center really gives the employer a much more in-depth view of the candidates if the candidate also happens to participate in our community. That is a huge differentiator for the employer. {mospagebreak heading=Page 1}

**Reed:** Let's shift focus now to individuals who might want to use the Career Center and can maybe benefit from some of this visibility with their own SCN contributions. How can an SCN member start to make use of the Career Center?

**Lagerholm:** The benefits for the employer and for the applicant are actually very similar in terms of being able to be very focused. The Career Center is only for SAP-related positions, so the folks searching for positions will also not get a lot of the clutter they might get from other sites.

And, it allows them to stand out from the crowd. Somebody who is an expert in NetWeaver can say to the employer, "I'd like to use my contributions on SCN as proof of what I know." This is not a formal endorsement, but an employer can certainly tell someone who can walk the walk, not just talk the talk, by looking at their contributions in the community.

**Reed:** Confidentiality is really one of the biggest things that can prevent job seekers that I have worked with in the past from using certain job boards. How do you address confidentiality when you developed the Career Center?

**Lagerholm:** Confidentiality is a huge concern for a lot of job seekers. When you upload your resume to the Career Center, you are asked to remove your name and your personal contact details. When an employer searches the resume database, they'll be able to find resumes that show a person's experience and education but not their name. In order to get their name, the employer needs to submit a request to the applicant, and the applicant can decide whether they want to talk to the employer or not.

From that perspective, the applicant's identity is protected, and the applicant decides which employer they are interested in interacting with. Once the employer receives the name, that's when they can actually do a search on SCN and look at the contribution. But they do need the applicant's permission in order to have their name. That is a part of the confidentiality concern, and we do make sure that we address it.

**Reed:** One thing we hadn't talked about that struck me was when you mentioned the notion that job postings are not really appropriate in the discussion forums. The Career Center does kind of resolve a long-standing dilemma around how to handle the opportunities that aren't really a fit in other areas of SCN, but then you've seen some discussions that a career center wouldn't really work out on SCN. When you were working on developing the Career Center, did you grapple with that a little bit? How to make it fit into the community as opposed to something that would make it seem like it didn't fit?

**Lagerholm:** Well, we really see it as a natural extension. We know there's a demand out there, and we really want to provide a service to the employers but also to the applicants. The downturn in the economy has impacted a lot of very qualified, very experienced folks who are part of SCN. We know those people are looking for jobs and, at the same time, we are hearing from our partners that they are still having a difficult time finding qualified talent. So we felt this was really a natural extension to SCN.

**Reed:** When we were talking about this podcast, you had an important point to share with our listeners about SAP not using the Career Center for their own internal recruitment. Can you tell us more about the thinking behind this?

**Lagerholm:** We'd like to keep it separate, so this Career Center is really just for our ecosystem. SAP is going to continue recruiting on SAP.com and other sites that SAP HR uses. This really prevents any kind of conflict of interest between SAP and our partners and our customers.

**Reed:** The Career Center is just about to go live as we're taping this podcast. Do you want to tell us about some future plans? I'm sure folks will be visiting and wondering what other things you'll be rolling out over time.

**Lagerholm:** We are looking to make it more collaborative and add more services over time. I also wanted to mention that the career site is available as part of our University Alliance, so it's not just available to experienced professionals but also for new graduates.

We're going to be working very closely with the University Alliance, and we really want to be of service to new graduates. We know there are a lot of technical folks graduating from colleges around the world, and we hope that we are going to provide a service to them as well.

**Reed:** Do you think you're going to get some jobs on the Career Center that are not looking for the senior types of resources but folks who might be young and ambitious and looking for that first break?

**Lagerholm:** Yes, in fact, we're also looking to post internships for university students. We'd like to provide service for the entire spectrum, from folks who are just getting started to very experienced professionals.

**Reed:** If you accomplish that, I'll have somewhere to send some of these folks. I hear from a lot of talented people who have trouble getting that first SAP opportunity, so this will be a nice resource to tie into the alliance that you have with universities.

We've talked about the Career Center from the employer's perspective and the job seeker's. Are there any other points you wanted to share with our listeners?

**Lagerholm:** I would just emphasize for everyone to try it out. It's free of charge to the applicant, it only takes a few minutes and we'd love for you to try it and give us your feedback.

**Reed:** If they do have feedback, what would be the best way to relay that?

**Lagerholm:** We have a forum for the Career Center, and I would say that's the best way.

**Reed:** Okay, sounds like a plan. Thanks for joining us today and giving us this exciting preview to what's about to go live.

Before we sign off, I do want to give listeners the URL that you'll be able to type in for this Career Center while you're listening to this podcast. It's [scncareercenter.sap.com](http://scncareercenter.sap.com). If you're not yet registered with SAP's online communities, you can register for all three, the SAP Developer Network, the SAP/BPX Community and the SAP Business Objects Community at the same time. You'll have access to the Career Center through any of those communities.

You can click on the Career Center from a couple different directions: from the tab on the horizontal menu running across the top of all three communities or through the University Alliances section of SCN as well.

On that note, I would like to thank our listeners for joining us today for this SAP community podcast. This is Jon Reed of JonERP.com signing off. We'll see you online soon at [scn.sap.com](http://scn.sap.com).