



May 11, 2016  
By Jade Scipioni

## He Got Apple CEO Tim Cook Hired; Now He Can Help You

His claim to fame was introducing Tim Cook to Steve Jobs in 1998.

“I was in the room and I knew he liked him,” Rick Devine, CEO of TalentSky, tells FOXBusiness.com.

Devine, an executive tech recruiter at the time, was working with Jobs to find a new head of manufacturing operations and possibly a new CEO for Apple (AAPL).

“Steve had a very specific list that was important to him,” Devine says. “He was also looking for the right person—the right cultural fit—which he had very good instinct about. My job was to deliver the skill quality to him so he can make that judgement call.”

And, the fit was perfect. Cook signed on as senior vice president for worldwide operations and later became Apple’s chief executive in 2011, after Jobs went on medical leave.

Now, Devine is looking to help others in their job search by creating a new social networking platform aimed at addressing the skills gap crisis affecting most job seekers today.

“It’s a social network like others but users talk about their work and the use of their skills. And then they invite colleagues to rank the use of those skills so the network can expose their strengths,” he adds.

The biggest problem in the job market today says Devine is that people don’t know if they have the skills that employers need.

And, according to the United States Department of Labor, it’s expected to get worse. It estimates that the skills that most Americans will need for jobs in 20 years don’t even exist yet.

“The industry is calling this the digital age. The impact of technology is in all forms of work whether you’re driving heavy equipment, plowing a field, or behind a computer screen—technology is now everywhere and it’s transforming work. People feel like they’re losing touch with their own employability,” he adds.

LinkedIn (LNKD), the world’s largest professional network, has struggled in recent years to find momentum but is seeing a rebound in 2016 with a 10% increase in stocks and additional users. Still, the company maintains its deficit, with a net loss amounting to \$45 million.

“LinkedIn succeeded in exposing people’s interest in having a profile but they didn’t go deep enough with regard to skills. Not only how the individual will use them but also how companies will use them to cast their employment demand at the skill level, not as a job description,” Devine says.

TalentSky works differently by connecting jobholders with their employers through continually updated job skills. The idea is for users to “create a moment” of their work accomplishments and invite their colleagues to rate their skills.

Companies like Target (TGT), IBM (IBM), Foot Locker (FL) and eBay (EBAY) have all signed up to use the service. Devine estimates that they have over 1.5 million total users and says they’re charging companies around \$30 to \$60 per person.

“Companies want to enhance the level of satisfaction of their own employees and the number one thing people want in companies is development. And, if you’re showcasing the skills that you have, you may never need to look for a job again.”



▲ TalentSky’s CEO Rick Devine talks to FOXBusiness.com’s Jade Scipioni about his new career startup aimed at addressing the skills gap.

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