

**POWER TACTICS**

**JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES THAT WORK**

# **YOU'RE HIRED!**



**RAE A. STONEHOUSE**

# YOU'RE HIRED! POWER TACTICS

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JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES THAT WORK

RAE A. STONEHOUSE



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This book contains the complete contents of the following books:

- You're Hired! Resume Tactics
- You're Hired! Leveraging Your Network
- You're Hired! Job Interview Preparation

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## 1. OVERVIEW

**W**hile looking for a new job and going through hiring interviews can be exciting for some people, for many of us it can be a stressful experience.

Searching for and landing a job can be a stressful, demoralizing experience, especially... if you don't know how to do it properly. The 'old ways' don't work anymore. Finding rewarding work... is work!

Looking for work and going through stressful job interviews isn't something we do every day. It is difficult to become skilled at an activity, if you don't practice regularly.

**You're Hired! Power Tactics** is a compilation of the contents of the following books in the You're Hired! Job Search Strategies That Work series:

- You're Hired! Resume Tactics
- You're Hired! Leveraging Your Network
- You're Hired! Job Interview Preparation





IT IS OFTEN SAID THAT “RESUMES ARE YOUR TICKET TO JOB searching success.” **You're Hired! Resume Tactics - Job Search Strategies That Work**, focuses on resume writing tactics to maximize your job searching effectiveness.

You won't win a lottery if you don't have a ticket and you are unlikely to be invited for a job interview if you don't have a dynamic, effective resume that features you as a potential solution to a problem. Your resume is your ticket that leads to being invited for an interview where you can expand upon your value.



MANY JOB SEARCH INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS SAY THAT networking is the single most effective strategy for landing your next job. You may think you don't know anyone who can help you with your job search. But you know more people than you think, and they are willing to help you. However, you need to reach out and connect with them first.

**You're Hired! Leveraging Your Network - Job Search Strategies That Work**, focuses on tactics to build and leverage your networking effectiveness.

“It's not who you know... it's who knows you know...”

**You're Hired! Leveraging Your Network - Job Search Strategies That Work** puts you to work in learning how to use 'best practices' to create a professional network that will increase your likelihood of landing your job.

Now it's time to work at letting people know 'what' you know and get to know 'who' they know. Your next connection may be looking for a candidate to fill an open position.



**YOU'RE HIRED! JOB INTERVIEW PREPARATION - JOB SEARCH Strategies That Work**, focuses on the job interviewing process:

- how to prepare for your job interview
- how to anticipate and answer questions in a manner that lead towards your successful landing a job.

This book offers strategic tactics to maximize your job interviewing effectiveness.

**You're Hired! Job Interview Preparation - Job Search Strategies That Work** puts you to work in learning how to use 'best practices' to land your 'dream' job.

If you are a sports fan, you will recognize that any sport has a set of rules and varying degrees of competition. Searching for a job, your job, is a competitive situation. It could come down to two or more possible candidates, hopefully you, being one of them, having very similar qualifications.

Hiring managers are under pressure to hire the right candidate. Your task is to become the **only** choice. The **right** choice.

# **YOU'RE HIRED! RESUME TACTICS**

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JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES THAT WORK

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## CONNECT WITH US



Visit us on the web at <https://yourehirednow.com>.

Check out our **Jobs Now Blog** @ <https://yourehirednow.com> for job searching advice to frequently asked questions.

For even more job searching tips & techniques, join us on **Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/jobstrategiesthatwork/>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/yourehirednow>

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## 1. WELCOME!



**H**i there! Welcome to **You're Hired! Resume Tactics - Job Search Strategies That Work.**

Make no mistake. Searching for work... is work!

It takes time, effort and a lot of self-motivation to succeed in your search.

While you have your skills and experience in place to be able to apply and land your dream job, or one that leads you to it, searching for a job requires a whole different set of skills.

It is often said 'resumes are your ticket to job searching success.' This book focuses on ***resume writing tactics*** to maximize your job searching effectiveness and is excerpted and expanded upon, from my book **You're Hired! Job Search Strategies That Work.**

Nobody can make a promise that if you follow their program, you will be guaranteed the results you are looking for and I won't either.



However, I'm confident that if you follow the strategies outlined in this book, your chances of succeeding in landing a job are increased.

From my experience, one of the biggest problems job seekers often face is they feel they are coming from an inferior position and they don't have a lot of personal power. The belief being that the Employer has the superior position and has all the power.

Yes, they have the job and they have the power to give you the job... or not.

What you may not realize is many Hiring Managers are under similar pressures as you, the job seeker. They have the pressure of finding the right candidate for the vacancy they need to fill.

They are accountable to their superiors should the person they hire not work out. It has been said that an inappropriate hire can cost the organization an additional 30 to 50 percent over the job position's annual wage. This would include lost productivity incurred when the new hire is oriented, the cost of advertising for new applicants and the time taken to interview and follow up with applicants.

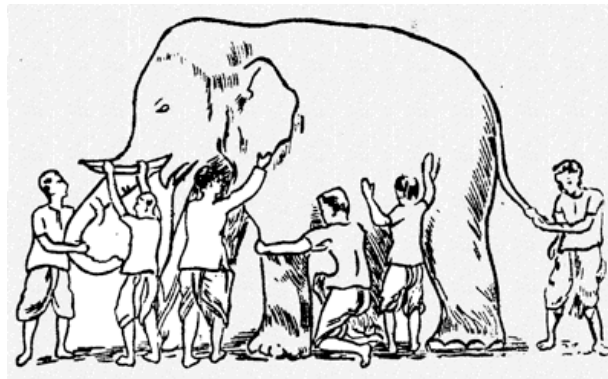
Hiring managers are under pressure to hire the right candidate.

Your task is to become the **only** choice. The **right** choice!

As I mentioned earlier, we are likely not experts at searching for jobs and landing one. It isn't something we do on a regular basis.

As I researched the content for my book **You're Hired! Job Search Strategies That Work**, I found that the problem is compounded by a lack of hard facts on what are the best-practices for job searching.

I'm reminded of an old parable about a group of blind men that were required to touch an elephant and to describe their observations.



Each one felt a different part, but only one part, such as a tusk or the trunk. When they compared notes, they learned that they were in complete disagreement.

I found the same to be true when researching strategic job searching skills.

Each webpage from my search results on the internet spoke from the perspective of the writer whether they were a resume writer, an Employer Hiring Manager, recruiter, etc.

Much the same as the blind men describing what an elephant looks like, their advice is from their perspective.

That makes sense to me. We all create our own reality. My reality is completely different from anyone else's.

The problem is that the job search 'experts' state their observations as hard facts. They believe what they write is true. And then next article you read, will dispute what the first expert had said and they will present their truths.

How can something be both true and false at the same time? You must never do this. You must always do this.

Same advice. Can something be both yes and no?

I don't consider myself an expert at job searching.

What I am very good at though is taking subjects that people struggle with, finding better, easier ways to do things and breaking it down to basic strategies that work.

I create *systems* to solve *problems*.

Years ago, I moved my family across Canada to a city where I didn't know anyone.

I had a brand-new home built for me, but I didn't have a job waiting for me when I got there.

At the time, the new location was very hostile towards people that had moved from the east to the west coast.

I often heard "you Easterners come out here and steal our jobs..."

I found that jobs were limited. I found getting an interview for a position I had applied for was like winning a lottery.

I also found that my new geographical area had what they called a 'Sunshine Tax.'

As a desirable place to live, the cost of living is higher and employers believe that they can get away with paying their employees lower wages. The idea being that you the worker should be grateful to have a job and that the employer can get away with paying you less.

'If you don't want the job, somebody else will!'

I got so tired of hearing about stealing local jobs that I started to change my story when I attended local business networking events.

Instead of saying that I was *unemployed*, I would say that I had *retired* early.

I was 39 years old and the illusion that I had retired early seem to resolve the 'you Easterners' complaint.

However, I used to add "if the right job came along, I would likely consider going back to work."

It was offered somewhat tongue in cheek.

It took me a good six months to land a job. It wasn't as good a job as I had hoped.

It was a compromise until something better came along.

I describe my employment experience at my new location as being like a roller coaster ride.

I went from being unemployed, to employed. I went from not getting enough hours to getting too many.

I went from being employed to being laid off.

I went from being employed to being self-employed.

Self-employment ended when I came back from a vacation to find that my only client had sold their business i.e. a vocational school and the new owners had no idea who I was or had need of my services.

Back to being unemployed.

Then I got a job in another city. It was a 90-mile round trip, daily.

I went from being at the employer's beck and call for three years working as many hours as I could as a casual staff. Then I got fired!

Then I got *unfired* and a new job, same company, a few blocks away.

I went from full time to no time to part time to even more part time. Then less time and even less time.

I had to tell my manager that I couldn't afford to stay and I couldn't afford to go.

We solved the problem by me picking up hours from another worker who wanted to work less.

The downside is that I work a lot of night shifts and it is still a 90 mile, 150-kilometre round trip for work.

I think you can see why I call it a roller coaster ride.

Over the years, I have been invited to numerous job search training programs as a guest speaker, promoting the value of public speaking skills and networking to the job search and interviewing process.



Throughout this book, I will be providing you with what I consider to be best practices for creating and writing your resume.

Some content may disagree with what the so-called experts would say but then again... the next one would likely agree with me.

If you are a sports fan, you will recognize that any sport has a set of rules and varying degrees of competition.

Searching for a job, your job, is a competitive situation.

It could come down to two or more possible candidates, hopefully you, being one of them, having very similar

credentials and qualifications.

If there was ever a time that self-promotional skills and self-confidence would come into play, it would be in the job searching and interviewing process.

Being able to effectively promote yourself can make the difference between landing the job and a ‘thank you very much, but we won’t be hiring you at this time.’”

Welcome aboard and I hope you enjoy our journey together!





## 2. RESUMES OVERVIEW



**Y**ou would think that creating a resumé would be an easy task.

Even spelling it looks a little weird.

In Canada, resumé is the sole spelling given by the Canadian Oxford Dictionary; résumé is the only spelling given by the Gage Canadian Dictionary (1997 edition).

In the US & Canada, there are three major spellings of this word: résumé, resumé, and resume. And that comes from Wiktionary.

You will likely see several different spellings throughout this book.

They are all acceptable.

I would expect that if you were searching the internet for advice on how to create a resumé, you would become awfully frustrated. I know that I certainly was.

There is the old-school way of creating one and the so-called new ways to create a resumé.

The problem seems to be that nobody really seems to agree on what the new way is.

Everybody has their own 'pearls of wisdom' that has either worked for them or is based on their personal perspective of the job-searching process.

If you dig deep enough, you will notice patterns on the advice given. Each piece of sage advice to the positive seemingly has someone else who believes the opposite.

Much of the resumé writing advice is given in absolute positives 'you must do this!', 'you must never do this!' or 'that is so out-dated... here is how you do it now!'

'Write for a robot resume reader' or 'don't write for a robot resume reader. That's so 2016!'

What I have tried to do is to create a system to help you create your resumé, yourself.

I've highlighted techniques and tactics gathered from self-proclaimed experts on the internet and have organized them in a manner that should make it easier for you to decide for yourself and create a winning resumé.

## **So, what is the purpose of a resumé?**

If you're fairly new to job searching, you might have been led to believe that a resumé is the document that gets you hired.

That's not precisely how it works.

Your resumé is indeed the document you use to apply for jobs (along with a customized Cover Letter where appropriate).

However, the real function of your resumé is to simply whet the employer's appetite and get them to want to call you for an interview.

It's critical to always bear in mind that your resumé is a tool with one specific purpose: to win an interview.

Some people write a resumé as if the purpose of the document was to land a job. As a result, they end up with a really long and boring piece that makes them look like desperate job hunters.

The *objective* of your resumé is to land an interview and the interview will land you the job (hopefully!).

Your resumé is not a place to brag; nor is it a place to be modest. Its sole purpose is to generate interest in you.

What differentiates you from the competition?

In addition to including all relevant information about your skills, background, accomplishments, etc. you should find ways to include details that could generate curiosity.

If you are new to the job market, perhaps you are just out of school and haven't developed a repertoire of skills yet, you may find yourself looking for what is called an entry-level job.

You may find yourself dropping your resumé off at various businesses with the hope that they may have a vacancy and your resumé might entice them to call you. In this case, your resumé becomes a 'leave behind.'

I'm reminded of a couple local young fellows who didn't quite understand the concept of 'leave behind.'

The two of them were on their way to drop off some resumé's at local businesses in the hope of finding some work.

For whatever reason, they decided to do a B&E, that is a break and enter of a home, on the way to pass out their resumé's.

Being very polite, when they broke into the house, they took their shoes off at the door, so they wouldn't make a mess.

When they were finished with burglarizing the home, they went on their merry way, back to dropping off their resumé's.

There was one big problem though.

In their haste to get away from the house, they had put their shoes on and closed the door, but one fellow

inadvertently left his resumé on the floor beside where his shoes had been.

I can feel you wincing.

Yes, this is one leave behind that you never want to do. I'm pretty sure he got an interview, but not quite the one he had hoped for.

### **Who is going to read your resumé?**

It depends on the job you are applying for and where it is located.

For a larger company, there may be a Hiring Manager, whose duty is to review resumé's for specific job vacancies.

A smaller organization may have a manager who finds themselves having to fill two or three vacancies a year. Then there are those managers that find themselves hiring for the first time.

You also have Recruiters who are paid on commission for every successful candidate that they place into a job vacancy.

The hiring managers for large companies may use software i.e. robots, to review incoming resumé's, sorting them into 'yes' for follow-up by human, or 'no' straight to the waste-paper basket or Trash in cyberspeak.

You supposedly only have **5 to 6 seconds** to impress or catch the eye of a hiring manager that may be tasked with reading several hundred resumes for a single job.

But then again, they may only get a few resumes in each mail delivery.

You need to create a resume that not only catches the attention of whoever receives them, but you want them to dig deeper and contact you for an interview.

Your resume's purpose is to get you called for an interview, not to get you the job.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE WILL LOOK AT HOW GRAMMAR, SPELLING and formatting can help you get invited for a job interview... or not!

**“THE OBSTACLES YOU FACE ARE... MENTAL BARRIERS WHICH can be broken by adopting a more positive approach.”— Clarence Blasier**

**“OBSTACLES DON'T MATTER VERY MUCH. PAIN OR OTHER circumstances can be there, but if you want something bad enough, you'll find a way to get it.” — Max Steingart**

**“WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU KNEW YOU COULDN'T FAIL?” — Robert Schuller**

### 3. GRAMMAR AND SPELLING/FORMATTING



**I**t goes without saying... avoid spelling or grammatical errors but I'll say it anyway "avoid spelling or grammatical errors!"

Yet, it may well be one of the biggest reasons that job seekers are not called for an interview. There are some recruiters who will discount your resumé the second they see a spelling or grammatical error.

Your eyes often see what you meant to type instead of what's really there.

Although it can be painful, make sure you don't just read over your resume several times, but also that you have a friend take a peak, too.

You would be well off to locate a friend that has good grammatical skills, or you could pay someone to review your resume. It's easy to miss even big, embarrassing mistakes when you've been looking at your resumé for too long.

An objective reader can make a big difference in helping you catch spelling and grammar problems as well as many of the other mistakes identified in this section.

It is important to proofread carefully if you are applying for jobs that require writing skills and/or attention to detail. For a potential future boss, your resume is your first work sample and should reflect your ability to write, edit, and proofread if hired.

Let's look at some specifics:

### **Watch Your Tenses**

Improper tense is another common error that can hurt you in the eyes of hiring managers.

If you are still actively working in the role you are describing, use the present tense and use words such as *manage, deliver, organize*.

If you are describing roles you have had in the ***past***, use past-tense verbs. Some examples are 'managed, delivered, organized.'



## **Avoid First Person Pronouns**

As a general practice, don't use words like "I" or "me" or "my."

So, instead of saying "**I** hit and exceeded company sales quotas 100% of the time" say "Hit and exceeded sales quotas 100% of the time."

Employers look at your profiles to see if they can find out more about your qualifications, to see if you are creative, and to see if you'll be a good fit with their team.

They'll also be watching for red flags such as poor grammar and spelling, anti-social behaviour, or anger issues.

## **CONSISTENCY**

Your resumé must be error-free.

That means no spelling errors, no typos. No grammar, syntax, or punctuation errors.

In addition, there should be no errors of fact.

Any recruiter or hiring manager will tell you that such errors make it easy to weed out a resumé immediately.

You should list your information in a consistent way.

Let's take a closer look at formatting.

You want your resumé to stand out, but there is such a thing as standing out in a bad way. You may think it's

creative to use 6 different fonts and colors, but that kind of creativity tends to just look clumsy.

Avoid too many font types and steer clear of font sizes that are too big or too small. Big fonts make you look like you are SHOUTING (and can also indicate that you don't have enough good content to fill a resumé with normal-size text).

Small fonts may help you keep your resumé to one page, but it's not worth it if the reader needs to squint.

You should also avoid long paragraphs and long blocks of text.

Most people scan resúmes very quickly and often skip long paragraphs and miss key information.

Use white space and bullets to make your resumé format easy on the eye. Use of bullets can also ensure better reader comprehension when visually scanned.

You should leave comfortable margins on the page and make sure that everything is aligned. Look neat. Look smart.

Also, keep in mind that there's a good chance your resumé will be scanned electronically as more and more companies use special software to index resumes.

If you're using wacky fonts, the software may not pick up important keywords in your resumé.

Save and send your resumé as a PDF, rather than a Word document, as it freezes it as an image so you can be sure hiring managers see the same formatting as you.

If you send it any other way, there's a chance that the styling, format, font and so on, could look different on their computer than yours.

Labeling your resumé file correctly is important.

Too many people save this important document with random or generic file names like sgks123.pdf or resume.pdf.

Remember that recruiters will see the name of the file that you send them and also remember that they get tons of resúmes every day. Make it super clear whose resumé they should click on by saving it under a logical name like `FirstName_LastName_Resume.pdf`.

I also include the date I created the file as part of my file name. Doing so can be helpful if you have multiple versions saved of your resumé.

Even more important than naming the file in a logical manner is laying out your resume in an organized manner.

How you lay it out depends on where you are in your career path and what you're looking to do next.

While a chronological approach is the default format, it's not always the best way to make your case.

**I want to reinforce here that you need to be consistent with your formatting.**

For example, if you bold the name of the organization in one section, you need to do it everywhere. Yet at the same time, be sparing with your bolding.

Your formatting should emphasize and reinforce the focus you chose, not distract from it.

AS AN EXAMPLE OF CONSISTENCE, EVERY JOB IDENTIFIED ON YOUR resumé should list information in this order: **Title**

**Name of Employer**

**City and State or Province**, depending on where you live and the years you worked there.

Use **boldface**, underlining, and *italics* consistently.

If you decide to **bold** one job title, all titles should be in boldface.

If you underline one section heading, underline them all.

In addition, you should be uniform in your use of capital letters, bullets, dashes, hyphens, etc.

So, if there is a period after one set of job dates, there should be a period after all job dates.

If one degree is in bold, all degrees should be in bold.

Whatever you decide about such things stylistically, be consistent.

It may seem obvious, but spelling and grammar are critical—even if you are in computer programming or sales.

Spell check is not foolproof. Just because it's a word doesn't mean it's the word you want to use.

A grammar error or misspelling can stand out like a sore thumb and tell the employer that you're careless. These mistakes are easily avoidable.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT HOW TO FEATURE YOUR contact information.

**"DON'T SAY, "IF I COULD, I WOULD." SAY, "IF I CAN, I will." Jim Rohn**

**"WE MUST LEARN TO APPLY ALL THAT WE KNOW SO THAT WE can attract all that we want." — Jim Rohn**

**"EVERYTHING COMES TO HIM WHO HUSTLES WHILE HE WAITS."  
— Thomas Edison**

**"MAKING A LIVING IS EITHER A STAIRWAY TO A COFFIN... OR A stepping stone to greatness... your path awaits you."  
— Doug Firebaugh**

#### 4. CONTACT INFORMATION



**I**n this chapter, we look at the correct way to use your contact information on your resume.

AFTER ALL, THAT IS THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE RESUME IN THE first place. You want them to contact you to arrange for an interview. Let's make it easy for them.

PUT YOUR NAME AT THE BEGINNING OF YOUR RESUMÉ, WITH contact information on separate lines, immediately following your name.

Include mailing address, telephone number with voicemail, professional e-mail address.

Avoid slang or nicknames in your e-mail address.

Buckaroo Bonzo @ Hotmail.com might work for you if you a rodeo star but not so well in the corporate world.

A G-mail e-mail address is considered more professional than a Hotmail or Yahoo one.

Make it easier to contact you by hyperlinking your email address so you're only one click away.

Make sure you have control of and access to all e-mail and phone numbers used. You only need to include one of each (e.g. you can use your cell phone number if you have voicemail).

Your voice mail should have a pleasant and professional welcoming message. It doesn't have to be your voice. It might be better to use your personal cell phone as a contact rather than have a family member answer for you when the big call comes.

Use between two and four lines for contact information.

Make your name a few font sizes larger than other information so that it stands out.

If you've moved or changed phone numbers, make sure that your phone number, address and e-mail information is up to date.

You can include all social media profiles relevant to the application.

LinkedIn is the first on this list, followed by Twitter and the rest.

However, resist the temptation of including all your profiles, because while creative designers may need to include their Instagram profiles, accountants and engineers may not.



If you are going to post your social profiles, you need to ensure that they are professional in nature and up to date.

We'll talk about your social profiles in greater detail later in the program.





IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE WILL LOOK AT YOUR OBJECTIVE  
Statement.

## 5. OBJECTIVE STATEMENT: IN OR OUT?



**S**tarting your resumé off with an **Objective Statement** is one of the many 'new' rules.

Short version... don't do it.

Why not, you might ask?

Traditionally, many resúés have begun with an opening paragraph about what the job seeker is looking for in their next role.

Employers spend little time on their initial scan of resúés and a paragraph about your objectives has none of the

things they are looking for.

So, this is a waste of valuable real-estate that can harm your chances.

According to the so-called experts, don't begin your resumé with an objective statement that describes your desires and career goals.

Today's hiring managers aren't concerned with what is it you're looking for—they're focused on finding the right hire. Even the most caring senior executive doesn't care what you are looking for - he only cares about "what's in it for me?"

He or she may care about what you want later when they know you, but for now it's all about them.

This means you need to replace the objective statement with a powerful summary that shows how you will add value to potential employers. The key is to demonstrate to the reader that there is a clear fit between your skills and their needs.

This is where the **Summary Statement** comes in or what some like to call your 'written elevator speech.'

We'll expand upon preparing your Summary Statements shortly.

## **Resumé Summary Statements**

Now that we know *Objective Statements* are out and *Summary Statements* are in... let's take a closer look at them.

Here are the Basics — Your Summary Statement should comprise of a title and a few lines of text.

The text can be in paragraph form and/or use bullets. The Summary Statement should appear directly below your contact information at the top of the resumé and should show the general (or specific) idea of your career goals.

Starting off with...

**Your Title:** This should communicate your professional identity.

Think of it as a headline that will catch the reader's eye and help them see your fit for the position at hand.

Some examples might include Social Media Brand Strategist, Senior Marketing Executive, Multifaceted Art Director and Global Operations Professional.

We talk about it elsewhere, but the title you use here in your resume's Summary Statement should be consistent with your title on your LinkedIn profile.

It also means you must customize your resumé at least slightly for each job opportunity.

Make sure that the Summary Statement is customized based on the job description if you want to catch the hiring manager's eye.

Next, we need to look at the **Format** — The main body of your Summary Statement should be 3-4 lines of text and should NOT be written with first-person pronouns.

If you are tempted to make your Summary Statement longer to squeeze in more details, resist the temptation.

As we have said, most hiring managers spend only seconds reviewing a resumé before they make up their minds to call a candidate or not. We also know when they see large chunks of text, their eyes will skip over it.

Therefore, it is vital to limit the length of a Summary Statement to ensure it gets read.

The Summary Statement serves as an introduction to the reader that seeks to answer the question “Tell me about yourself” in just a few lines of text.

The resume Summary Statement will help your resumé stand out by:

- Catching the reader’s attention immediately
- Ensuring a clear understanding of your top selling points at a glance (important when hiring managers are skimming through dozens of resúms at a time and attention spans are short)
- Putting emphasis on your career highlights and key strengths in an easy-to-scan format
- Briefly communicating your professional objective if relevant (if the objective is not obvious)

EVERY RESUMÉ CAN BENEFIT FROM A SUMMARY STATEMENT. FOR some candidates, it can be critical.

Here are some specific groups of job seekers that can benefit from using Summary Statements in their resume.

**1. Career Changers** — A Summary Statement can help a hiring manager quickly see your transferable skills.

Without a Summary Statement, a recruiter might look at your most recent experience, assume you're not a fit because your experience isn't traditional and toss your resumé.

**2. Recent College Grads** — A Summary Statement can help you customize your resumé for different opportunities.

This is especially helpful if your background is somewhat general.

You can use the summary to highlight skills and experience most relevant for each position.

**3. Experienced Professionals with Diverse Backgrounds** — For experienced professionals, a Summary Statement can become the 'executive summary' of your resumé, tailored for each position.

This allows you to pull the most relevant and impressive skills and career accomplishments and feature them at the top of your resumé.

NEXT, WE ARE GOING TO LOOK AT *HOW* TO WRITE YOUR RESUMÉ Summary Statements.

Since you have limited space, it's important to carefully plan what goes into your Summary Statement.

Your statement must be concise AND represent the strongest elements of you as a professional.

Here are three steps to writing a strong Summary Statement for your resumé:

**Step 1: First, think of three or four skills that define you as a professional.**

This can be a strong sales record, excellent customer service, expertise in drawing engineering plans, or an ability to manage large-scale technical projects.

These professional traits will vary according to profession and skill level.

Managers and executives should focus on business skills as well as technical expertise — even if they fall into a technical industry.

Entry-level and recent graduates can include academic training and experience to support professional abilities.

**Step 2: Next, think of the things you enjoy the most in your work.**

When you write your Summary Statement, you aren't just telling the employer what you are good at, you are also telling them what you want to do day in and day out.

Therefore, no matter how well you do something - don't talk about it if you don't want to do it.

### **Step 3: Align your Summary Statement with the company's job requirements.**

Once you identify the skills you want to focus on, do some research and see if they line up with job requirements listed for the positions you are seeking.

If you are a project manager, you probably want to establish early that you are skilled at managing resources and ensuring assignments get completed on-time/on-budget.

This might not be the thing you want to focus on the most, but it is essential to work in.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT SOME EXAMPLES OF 'WRITTEN elevator speeches' or summary/branding statements with titles.



**6. WRITTEN ELEVATOR SPEECHES OR SUMMARY/BRANDING STATEMENTS WITH TITLES**

**O**ur first example is for a **PROFESSIONAL WRITER**.

A versatile and creative writer fuses a background in journalism and academics with expertise in business writing to deliver quality, customized material spanning news, marketing, web content, curriculum, and career development.

Provides sales support and highly rated client service and excels in meeting deadlines in quick-turnaround settings.

**OUR SECOND IS EXAMPLE IS FOR A FINANCIAL & OPERATIONS SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL**

Blends academic training in economics and business administration with hands-on experience in sales and operations support to offer employers a track record of delivering on tasks accurately, efficiently, and quickly.

Known for providing best-in-class customer service and communications in a variety of business settings.

WHAT WE CAN SEE FROM THESE TWO EXAMPLES IS THAT THEY ARE short and to the point.

There should be no confusion or misunderstanding in the mind of the Hiring Manager as to what the applicant is all about.

Here are more helpful Tips on creating your Resumé Summary Statement.

### **TIP 1 . CUSTOMIZE IT FOR YOUR EXPERIENCE LEVEL**

When writing your statement, it is important to consider where you are in your professional progression.

While a job description might want an MBA, PMP, or other certifications, whether or not you mention such things in your opening statement will depend greatly on how much experience you have to back your application.

If you are a young job seeker and don't have a history of jobs to refer to it's okay to rely on your academic experience to strengthen your qualifications.

And it is best to call that out from the start.

Here is an example:

This one is for a **BIOLOGY GRADUATE**.

Blends lab management experience with academic training at the University of Victoria to offer solid skills in clinical experiments and research activities.

Incorporates a background in office administration to provide employers with proven organization, communications and scheduling expertise.

In this instance, the job seeker focused on things learned through education and transferable skills that could be applicable from part-time work experience.

On the other hand, if you have strong experience, there is no need to rely on your academic training any longer and it doesn't need to be mentioned.

## **TIP 2. FOCUS ON YOUR MOST IMPORTANT SELLING POINTS**

Some requirements can be covered in the body of the resumé and just aren't important enough to place in that opening paragraph.

One example is proficiency in MS Office.

Even if you are a technical professional, software and hardware skills need their own section on the resumé and don't belong in the opening statement.

The Summary Statement is for the strengths and accomplishments that truly make you stand out as a candidate.

Of course, there are other things you might want to call to the reader's attention early, including language proficiencies, award-winning performance, or being named on one or more patents.

While these qualifications can be contained in the body of a resumé (and should still be placed there), it could be relevant to highlight them early to establish your unique value as an employee.

### **TIP 3. SKIP THE “I” AND “ME” STUFF**

Don't start your opening paragraphs with first person pronouns. An example would be “I did this... then I did such and such.”

While you do write the paragraph in present tense, you write it as if you are the understood subject of the resumé. This allows the focus to remain on the employer.

Use of “I, me, my” places the focus on the applicant and the goal of the resumé is to sell the employer on what you can do for THEM.

By telling the reader what you **“do”** and what you are **“known for,”** you get the reader thinking about how you can do those things for them.

This message should be reinforced throughout the resumé as you use achievements and certifications to reinforce your opening paragraph and highlight examples of when you have done the things that your Summary Statement promotes.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE EXPLORE THE PRACTICE OF SENDING A cover letter with your resume. Should you, or shouldn't you? We'll see!

## 7. COVER LETTERS



**C**over letters seem to be another one in the ‘are they in or out of fashion’ categories.

It likely depends on who you talk to.

There seems to be a trend that many Employers don’t seem to adhere to a standardized process for receiving cover letters on their corporate Websites.

Some sites have space to upload or paste in a cover letter; others do not.

Job seekers are less likely to write a 'formal' cover letter when e-mailing their resumé to others.

A simple note such as ("Looking forward to speaking more about [xyz] might suffice. Or...

"My resumé is attached.") is not uncommon.

Whether it is as effective as including a more formalized cover letter, remains to be seen.

It turns out that with **Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)** what some people call robots, often taking the first pass at screening resumes, the cover letter is often never actually read.

If a resumé contains the right keywords, it gets past the software filters and can be read by a human. If the recruiter sees the skills and experience that they are looking for, then the resumé can be shortlisted for a phone call - otherwise it's passed over.

In either case, the decision was made without referring to a cover letter.

One of the most common mistakes people make is to create a standard resumé and send it to all the job openings they can find. Sure, it will save you time, but it will also greatly decrease the chances of landing an interview (so in reality it could even represent a waste of time).

In the **Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)** era, where cover letters are often not read, this equals sending a

generic application with no job or employer-specific customization. Those quickly get tossed.

Tailor your resumé for each employer. The same point applies to your cover letters.

It is important to keep to the employer's submission requirements. Above all, you won't get noticed if you don't follow all of the specific requirements that have been instructed in the job description.

Often both resúés and cover letters are requested in a certain file format (doc, pdf, docx, rtt).

Sometimes advertisements request applications be sent or addressed in a specific way. Adhere to these, and you'll be one step ahead of any other applicants who didn't bother to tune into this detail!

Whether a cover letter is requested or not, I believe there is value in creating one, even if it just helps you clarify and wrap your head around the specific job you are applying for. You don't necessarily have to send it.

Tell what you know about the employer, its products and services, customers, industry and competition either on your resumé or cover letters; this will show the hiring manager or recruiter you are particularly interested in their job and have done your homework.

This extra work on your part could create instant interview opportunities for you and perhaps help you answer some interview questions when you land the interview.



A Pro Tip about creating cover letters is to use a combination of paragraphs and bulleted lists to convey your information. And don't forget to keep your cover letter on one page, otherwise it may not be read.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT HOW TO LEVERAGE YOUR WORK experience.

## 8. EXPERIENCE SECTION - SKILLS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS



**I**n a resume, *experience*, is another way for saying employers are looking for positions you have held in the past.

The '*Old School*' way of completing this section would be to list all your skills to showcase how experienced you were under each job listing.

Here is yet another example of how times have changed.

The purpose of this section is to highlight your top three to five qualifications to a potential employer, from each previous job position.

Your content needs to be crafted so it features you as a solution to the Employer's problem.

If you include this section and you should... use a bullet format and highlight only the skills and/or qualifications relevant to the position you are applying for.

And substantiate with a *brief* explanation of the experience(s) that helped you build that skill or quality.

We will talk about using keywords later in this program.

Career experts recommend that you customize your resumé for *each* job, especially at the beginning of your resumé.

General or generic resumes *do not work* in today's labour market.

For some jobs, you can change a few sentences to focus on certain skills and accomplishments. For others, you may need a *completely new* resumé.

Employers value the skills you have developed, regardless of where you developed them.

This includes skills developed in school, volunteering, extra-curricular activities and in paid employment. Since many employers use past performances to determine whether a candidate will be successful on the job or not; emphasize what you can offer potential employers (or bring to the table) drawing upon your collective experiences, skills, accomplishments, training/education and capabilities.

Validate all relevant successes and contributions made to past employers using numbers, dollars or percentages wherever possible.

Link your experience, skills and abilities to the competency requirements of the job you are applying for using examples of past successes on the job; this will enable the recruiter or hiring manager to visualize you performing the same or a similar role successfully for their organization.

It's easy for people to put any set of skills or abilities on their resumes, but unless you can show those skills in action and the results you got with them, you may not make it to the interview.

Accomplishment statements will demonstrate that you're someone who can get the job done and do it better than other applicants.

Here's another way of looking at it.

When you get to your work experience, don't just list titles and dates. Use a few lines of text to weave a story for hiring managers.

Remember a time in your previous work history when you accomplished something beyond your usual job duties.

Depending on the job and the skills you want to highlight, this 'accomplishment' could be anything between resolving an issue with an upset customer to achieving one million dollars in sales within one year.

**Here are some examples:**

- When did you change industries?
- Why were you promoted?
- Where do you aim to go next?

The only way to make yourself look unique is to dig into what you did beyond the expected. Just remember to make it reflect one of the skills asked for in the job posting.

Then, use bullet points to back your claims with relevant facts and figures.

*STATISTICS* ARE AN EASY WAY TO PROVE YOU DID MORE THAN THE job description demanded.

MANY PROFESSIONAL RESUMÉ WRITERS USE A TECHNIQUE CALLED **CAR or SAR** statements.

Essentially, you're sharing a challenge/situation/problem, the action you took to address it, and what the result was. Ideally you want to frame the result by sharing how it positively impacted your employer or client.

These are the kinds of statements that make impact and tell a story but also give the reader context. Remember to keep it short; mercilessly edit it down to the least common denominator.

In resumé writing it's also a wise practice to lead with the result/impact to the client or employer because this is usually quantifiable.

Here is a quick example of what I mean by a S.A.R. statement:

**Situation/Challenge/Problem:** Company operated at a loss of \$960,000 in 2014.

**Action:** Personally vetted by CEO for company turnaround. Cut costs by 30%, revamped hiring practices to reduce turnover, overhauled budget and spending practices.

**Result/Impact:** Delivered \$650,000 profit in 2015.

You can likely use the same format as the example to write your accomplishment statements.

ALSO NOTE: NO BOT, NOR HUMAN, IS LOOKING *SPECIFICALLY* FOR soft skills.

So, delete overused phrases like 'quick learner', 'hard worker' and 'great attitude' and sub in a list of hard skills.

Distinguishable tech and social media knowledge is particularly relevant in today's job market, and no, the Microsoft Office suite doesn't really count, unless the job posting is looking for proficiency in it.

If you're having trouble completing this section, you might have luck by looking to past performance reviews for ideas.

What have your bosses and coworkers said you do better than anyone else?

Or, some might put it as, "What is your superpower?"

Differentiate this section from the *summary* at the top of your resume by focusing on quantifiable evidence. Think dollar signs and percentage points.

As I was writing this last section it occurred to me that the previous advice and perhaps a lot of it applies to someone who is applying for a job in the business sector.

But what about those of us working in the healthcare sector or other service industries? We may not have any access to being able to influence the financial health of the company.

I would think removing financial references and substituting customer satisfaction, how complaints were handled and/or quantifiable results from your specific industry would be a good substitution.

This will take a little work and creativity on your part. Well, probably a lot of work.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT HOW TO HIGHLIGHT YOUR education.

## 9. EDUCATION



**I**n this chapter, we are looking at how to showcase your education and a few other miscellaneous items worth mentioning.

List your education in reverse chronological order... degrees or licenses first, followed by certificates and advanced training. Set degrees apart so they are easily seen.

Put in **boldface** whatever will be most impressive.



Include advanced training, but be selective with the information, summarizing the information and including only what will be impressive for the reader.

No degree yet? If you are working on an uncompleted degree, include the degree and afterwards, in parentheses, the expected date of completion: B.S. (expected 20\_\_).

If you didn't finish college, start with a phrase describing the field studied, then the school, then the dates (the fact that there was no degree may be missed).

You might want to use a different heading on your resume rather than Education.

Other headings might be 'Education and Training', 'Education and Licenses', 'Legal Education / Undergraduate Education' (for attorneys).

## **AWARDS**

If the only awards you have received were in school, put these under the Education section.

Mention *what* the award was for if you can or just "for outstanding accomplishment" or "outstanding performance". If you *have* received awards, this section is almost a must.

If you have received commendations or praise from some very senior source, you could call this section, 'Awards and Commendations.' In that case, quote the source.

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Include only those that are current, relevant and impressive. Include leadership roles if appropriate.

This is a good section for communicating your status as a member of a minority targeted for special consideration by employers, or for showing your membership in an association that would enhance your appeal as a prospective employee.

This section can be combined with 'Civic / Community Leadership' as 'Professional and Community Memberships.'

## **LANGUAGES**

Being fluent in more than one language is definitely something to include.

## **CIVIC / COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP**

This is good section to include if the leadership roles or accomplishments you have taken on are related to the job target and can show skills acquired.

For example, a loan officer hoping to become a financial investment counsellor who was Financial Manager of a community organization charged with investing its funds.

Any Board of Directors membership or 'chairmanship' would be good to include.

Be careful with political affiliations, as they could be a plus or minus with an employer or company.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Include only if published and provide links where you can if you think the work is impressive and relevant. Summarize if there are many.

## **COMMENTS FROM SUPERVISORS, CLIENTS, OTHER**

**Professional Elite** Include them only if they are very exceptional. Heavily edit for key phrases.

## **PERSONAL INTERESTS**

Tread thoughtfully here. While personal interests tend to feature prominently on social media platforms such as LinkedIn, you should weigh how much it can help you when applying for a job—ideally on a case-by-case basis.

It you include a section like this, keep the following in mind:

- **Advantages:** Personal interests can indicate a skill or area of knowledge that is related to the goal, such as photography for someone in public relations, or carpentry and wood-working for someone in construction management.

This section can show well-roundedness, good physical health, or knowledge of a subject related to the goal. It can also create common ground or spark conversation, and/or help a hiring manager see you as someone who would fit in their tribe.

- **Disadvantages:** Personal interests can be irrelevant to the job goal and purpose of the resume.

Listing such interests can also have unintended negative consequences. For example, if you're highly athletic and the people interviewing you aren't physically fit - or perhaps even self-conscious about that - the fact that you're super-fit might not play in your favour.

If in doubt, do not include a Personal Interests section.

Your reason for including it is most likely that you want to tell them about you. But, as you know, this is an ad. You are advertising yourself.

If this section would move the employer to understand why you would be the best candidate, include it; otherwise, forget about it.

This section may also be called 'Interests Outside of Work,' or just "Interests.'



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT HOW TO USE KEYWORDS TO GET your resume noticed.

**"WORK IS EFFORT APPLIED TOWARD SOME END. THE MOST satisfying work involves directing our efforts toward achieving ends that we ourselves endorse as worthy expressions of our talent and character." — William J. Bennett**

**"YOU HAVE TO DO MORE THAN YOU GET PAID FOR BECAUSE that's where the fortune is." — Jim Rohn**

**"DEFINE YOUR GOALS IN TERMS OF THE ACTIVITIES NECESSARY to achieve them, and concentrate on those activities." — Brian Tracy**

**"DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN MOMENTUM BY WORKING continuously toward your sales goals every day." — Brian Tracy**

## 10.USING KEYWORDS IN YOUR RESUMÉ



**U** sing keywords in your resum  is similar to using keywords when creating a website or writing a blog. The purpose there is to make it easy for the search engines to index it and post the results. With your resume, keywords will help position you as a possible applicant for further attention.

Employers ***do not*** read every word on each resum .

**Keywords** describe skills and qualifications. You might see them in the job posting you are answering and on related companies' websites. It would be useful to carefully scan the job posting to see if any keywords pop out for you. Then you can enhance your resumé by using as many keywords as you can.

But, do not make up experiences, just to use keywords.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT HOW TO MARKET YOUR transferable skills.

**START BY DOING WHAT'S NECESSARY; THEN DO WHAT'S possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.**  
— St. Francis of Assisi

**"OPPORTUNITY IS LIKE A GOLD MINE... IF YOU DON'T PICK UP the shovel, then you will be living in someone else's shaft."** — Doug Firebaugh

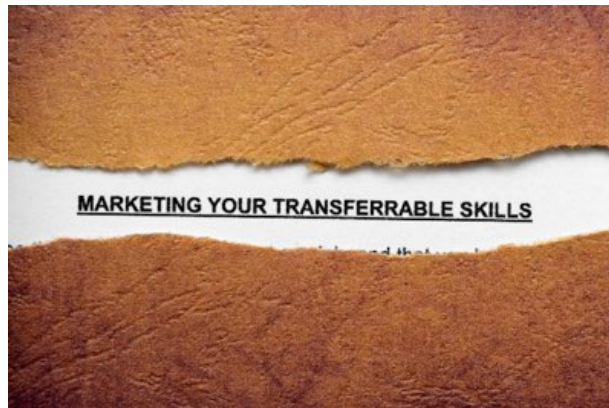
**"WE ARE CONTINUALLY FACED BY GREAT OPPORTUNITIES brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems."** — Lee Iococca

**"ARE YOU MISSING OPPORTUNITIES BECAUSE YOU ARE TOO focused on obstacles?" — Jeffrey Gitomer**

**"SPEND 80 PERCENT OF YOUR TIME FOCUSING ON THE opportunities of tomorrow rather than the problems of yesterday." — Brian Tracy**



## **11. MARKETING YOUR TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS**



**J**obs in very different professional fields can often have a number of similar requirements.

Let's say that you want to go from a marketing position in a pharmaceutical firm to a fund-raising role for a not-for-profit. What are the skills you've already demonstrated that are applicable?

They may be more than you think.

Consider these possibilities:

- Time management
- Project management
- Collaboration
- Persuasive communicating
- Strong decision-making
- Innovative problem-solving
- Composure under pressure

Brainstorm a list of skills you have developed from different jobs that you have had in the past and see if any of them are transferrable to the job you are applying for now.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT USING ***ACTION WORDS*** TO maximize your resume's content.

**ABILITY IS WHAT YOU'RE CAPABLE OF DOING. MOTIVATION determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it. — Lou Holtz**

**"IF YOU ARE DOING YOUR BEST, YOU WILL NOT HAVE TO WORRY about failure." — Robert S. Hillyer**

**NEVER LET THE FEAR OF STRIKING OUT GET IN YOUR WAY. - Babe Ruth, 1895-1948, American Baseball Player**

## 12.USING ACTION-ORIENTED WORDS



Closely tied to your use of correct grammar and formatting is the use of action-oriented words rather than passive ones.

But what are they?

Action verbs are verbs that will get noticed more and that will clearly communicate what your experience or achievements were.

Action verbs *imply* that you *actively* got things done. Examples include *managed*, *coached*, *enforced* and

*planned.*

Look at everything you've written in your resume and add action verbs wherever possible. If you are reworking an existing resume, change any passive words to active language.

Here is a list of what some might call Power Words.

## **POWER WORDS**

**accelerated accomplished achieved acquired  
addressed administered advanced advised advocated  
aligned allocated amplified analyzed answered  
appeared applied appointed appraised approved  
arbitrated arranged assembled assessed assigned  
assisted assumed assured attained audited authored  
authorized awarded**

**blocked boosted bought briefed broadened brought  
budgeted built**

**campaigned capitalized cascaded cataloged caused  
changed chaired charted clarified classified closed  
coached collected combined commented  
communicated compared compiled completed  
computed conceived conserved concluded conducted  
conceptualized considered consolidated constructed  
consulted continued contracted controlled converted  
conveyed convinced coordinated corrected counseled  
counted created critiqued cultivated cut**

**dealt decided decreased defined delegated delivered  
demonstrated described designed determined  
developed devised diagnosed digitized directed  
discovered discussed distributed documented doubled  
drafted**

**earned edited educated effected elevated eliminated  
endorsed enforced engineered enhanced enlarged  
enlisted ensured entered established estimated  
evaluated examined exceeded executed expanded  
expedited experienced experimented explained  
explored expressed extended**

**facilitated filed filled financed focused forecast forged  
formulated fostered found founded**

**gained gathered generated graded granted guided**

**halved handled headed up helped hired**

**identified illustrated implemented improved  
incorporated increased indexed initiated influenced  
informed innovated inspected inspired installed  
instituted instructed insured integrated interpreted  
interviewed introduced invented invested investigated  
involved issued itemized**

**joined**

**kept**

**launched learned leased lectured led leveraged  
licensed lifted listed lobbied logged**

**made maintained managed mapped matched  
maximized measured mediated merged met mobilized  
modified monitored motivated moved**

**named navigated negotiated**

**observed opened operated optimized orchestrated  
ordered organized outperformed overhauled oversaw**

**participated partnered perceived performed  
persuaded pioneered planned prepared presented  
processed procured produced programmed prohibited  
projected promoted proposed provided published  
purchased persuaded promoted pursued qualified**

**qualified quantified questioned**

**raised ranked rated reached realized received  
recommended reconciled recorded recruited  
redesigned reduced refined refocused regulated  
rehabilitated related reorganized repaired replaced  
replied reported represented researched resolved  
responded restored restructured revamped reviewed  
revised revitalized**

**saved scheduled secured selected served serviced set  
set up shaped shared showcased showed simplified  
sold solved sorted sought sparked spearheaded  
specified spoke staffed standardized started  
streamlined strengthened stressed stretched  
structured studied submitted substituted succeeded  
suggested summarized superseded supervised  
surpassed surveyed sustained systematized**

**tackled targeted taught terminated tested took  
toured traced tracked traded trained transferred  
transcribed transformed translated transported  
traveled treated trimmed tripled turned tutored  
umpired uncovered understood understudied unified  
united unraveled updated upgraded used utilized  
verbalized verified visited  
waged weighed widened won worked wrote  
yielded**

### 13. REFERENCES INTRODUCTION



**T**his is another one of those areas of the job searching process that have been modernized.

Where it was once appropriate to write 'references available upon request', it is now considered to be bad form. For one thing, you are stating the obvious. Of course, they are!

Asking and checking out your references is part of the hiring process should you be successful in your interview. Even more of a no-no is providing your references names and contact info as part of your resume.



If the employer has access to your references, they may just contact them before talking to you. That in turn prevents you from giving your contacts a heads up to tell them that a potential employer may be contacting them to learn more about you. You want your references to be ready to act as a cheerleader on your behalf.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE INTRODUCE THE IDEA OF BRANDING your resume.

**"IF YOU AREN'T FIRED WITH ENTHUSIASM, YOU WILL BE FIRED with enthusiasm." — Vince Lombardi**

**"DOING WHAT WE WERE MEANT TO DO CREATES FUN, excitement and contentment in our lives, and invariably, in the lives of the people around us. When you're excited about something it's contagious." — Mark Victor Hansen**

**GET EXCITED AND ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT YOUR OWN DREAM. This excitement is like a forest fire — you can smell it, taste it, and see it from a mile away. —Denis Waitley**

**"WHEN THERE'S HOPE IN THE FUTURE THERE'S POWER IN THE present." — John Maxwell**

## 14. BRANDING YOUR RESUMÉ



I'm a strong proponent of personal marketing and promotion, blowing your own horn, so to speak. I believe business professionals should market themselves in a professional way.

Where businesses have branded their products and services for years, this practice has carried over to personal branding. Some would tell you that this is the way to go when job searching to ensure you stand out from all the other applicants.

I'm not going to tell you that this is the definite way to go, but I will give you some info on the topic and you can

decide for yourself.

One suggestion might be to create a *so-called* normal resumé as well as a branded one. You could try using each of them and see what happens.

To start with, develop a personal branding or value proposition statement and use it on your resumé, cover letters, interviews, networking and all job-related communications, including social networking activities.

When it comes to personal branding, all branding for that matter, it is important that you are consistent in all areas.

A personal branding statement or value proposition is similar to what is often called a USP (Universal Sales Proposition) in the business world. It is a short tagline that encapsulates how you *differentiate* yourself from others.

This can take some time to develop and you will want to test it on friends and colleagues to see if it works for you. You don't want to come across as being cheesy or boastful.

Please locate and read the ***Developing your USP*** document. It's available in the Resources section at the end of this book.

We talked earlier about how *Career Objective Statements* are a thing of the past. Some resumé writers believe the strategy of using a profile summary or *career summary* is now also history.

Instead, they suggest it should include a ***personal-brand snapshot***.

The idea is that you give the reader *newsworthy information* in *short, effective statements* so they can get the facts and move on.

This reason is *exactly* why newspapers and news articles start with a great headline, give the most critical facts/details first, and then gradually fill in the not-so-critical details further down in the story. They know you want the important information first and don't want to wait for it.

Those same resumé writers advise doing the same in your resumé.

Start with your branding statement and make it answer the decision maker's questions:

“Why should I care?” or

“What's in it for me?”

When time is of the essence, answering these questions first gives readers exactly what they need to know up front; then they can choose to keep on reading for any details.

Corporate branding marketers utilize certain colours to emphasize their brand. The same applies to developing your personal brand. Certain colors may have specific meanings to **you** and can be used to develop your personal brand!

With ever-decreasing attention spans, some resumé writers are suggesting writing tweet-sized resumé sentences as a

sound strategy. And this doesn't seem to be a trend that is fading away in the coming years either.

The next time you write a sentence for your resumé, see how many characters are included. And then see if you can get it down to 140 characters or fewer without losing impact.

Consider what is *essential* and what is *critical*.

Ditch the *essential* and run with the *critical*.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT LEVERAGING YOUR DIGITAL media footprint.

**“DRESS FOR SUCCESS. IMAGE IS VERY IMPORTANT. PEOPLE judge you by the way you look on the outside.” — Brian Tracy**

## 15. LEVERAGING YOUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT/USING SOCIAL MEDIA



**R**esumés, used to function as your ‘first impression’ to an employer.

In some industries, things are *rapidly changing*. They are now *quickly becoming* the second or third thing an employer may see about you.

With the rise of social media sites such as LinkedIn, website resumés, portfolios, video resumés, and job-search strategies that allow job seekers to tap into the hidden job market and bypass sending a resumé as a first introduction, the human eye is quickly becoming the #1 gatekeeper.

Employers may be *looking* for you, or someone like you, to fill a vacancy, using the very same social media tools, such as Facebook, Twitter and blogs. If you are on-line and you have your keywords highlighted to resonate with those that an employer would be looking for, there is a good chance that you will be discovered.

This is even before the employer has seen your resume.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE IMPORTANT - IF YOU DON'T WANT A potential employer to see something, don't make it publicly accessible or put it online at all.

LET'S LOOK AT *LEVERAGING* YOUR ON-LINE PRESENCE, OFTEN called your digital footprint. You can use social media to your advantage. Remember that you're marketing yourself.

Owning your digital footprint is also about taking advantage of an additional opportunity to make a good impression. Here lays the challenge. Not everybody is on-line.

Staying off the grid on social media can work against you. While you may want to keep your private and professional lives separate, having such high privacy settings that no one can find you online, or being offline altogether, can hurt your chances during a job search.

93% of employers say they screen candidates on social media before hiring them and **if** they can't find any mention



of you online, it's a red flag. They could very well interpret it as you have something to hide... or that you're simply not very technologically savvy and not using the latest communication tools.

SO, ASSUMING, THAT YOU ARE ON-LINE, HOW DO YOU LEVERAGE your on-line presence?

One way is to utilize your social profiles in a way that will confirm what employers want to see. The most common websites for recruiters to screen candidates on are LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. What you post and how you behave on these sites can create a first impression of the sort of person you might be or want to be seen as.

Employers look at your profiles to see if they can find out more about your qualifications, to see if you are creative and to see if you'll be a good fit with their team. They'll also be watching for red flags such as poor grammar and spelling, anti-social behaviour, or anger issues.

This doesn't mean linking potential employers to your Facebook photo albums so your prospective new boss can see how fun you are when you go on vacation or having a good time at a party.

This means linking your LinkedIn profile (and if you don't have one yet, you should get one--the basic version is free) to your resumé and making sure they match.

When LinkedIn first came on the scene, it was very much like having your resumé on steroids.

Now, it is very similar to the new way that we are using for resumé writing. You don't want to just copy and paste your resumé on your LinkedIn profile.

However, you should spend some time updating it so that your LinkedIn profile generally contains the same job history and responsibilities as your resumé does. They should work together to promote you as an ideal job candidate.

Your LinkedIn profile allows you to expand a little upon some of the details that you used in your resumé. LinkedIn can also be a good venue for posting testimonials from people you have worked within the past.

Be sure to ask people to provide recommendations for you, in particular those people who can speak to the strengths that you most want to be emphasized. These aren't the same as references, however some of the glowing testimonials may very well serve as a source of references for you.

Be sure any e-mail addresses and social media handles shared are appropriate that is... unprofessional looking. If you have identified in your resume publications or articles you have written, your LinkedIn profile can be a great place to highlight them.

Don't forget that you should also have a recent photo on your LinkedIn profile and while it can be candid, it should also have an air of professionalism about it.



postings and clean up any content that you wouldn't want a prospective employer to see.

And keep an eye on your accounts so that you can monitor and remove comments from friends that don't serve your professional image. Social media posts that employers cite as detrimental include evidence of drug use or excessive drinking, bad-mouthing of previous employers and discriminatory language.

Being active on social media can advance your professional interests and possibilities. Engage on networking sites to increase your visibility and searchability with prospective employers.

And while you're active on social media, to accommodate search engines, be sure you are using a consistent version of your professional name. If you're "Robert A. Jones" on LinkedIn, you should be Robert A. Jones in your resume and on your other social media accounts - not Rob Jones here and there. Your professional 'screen name' is probably your most important keyword especially for search engine generated results.

Let's look at using social media and on-line resources for job searching.

You can find lots of valuable information on-line about a potential employer, if you are willing to spend some time researching.

And you should!

As mentioned, follow your prospective employer on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and any other social media platform they may use. Don't forget their company website! Think of what you see as an aggregated news feed about the employer.

It doesn't take long to begin to get a real sense of the organization's culture, values, and work environment intel that can help you prepare the most thoughtful resume possible - and it can also help you immensely as you later prepare for an interview.

- Make sure that you have cleaned up your own social media profile, if necessary.
- What is their history?
- What do they emphasize in their messaging?
- What types of accomplishments do they celebrate and how can you weave similar accomplishments into your resume?
- What kind of language do they use to describe achievements?

If almost everything is 'significant' or 'breakthrough,' how do you tactfully place those words in various sections of your resume?

- Who are the decision makers?

- What is their hiring philosophy?
- What kind of work culture is it?

In addition to digging around online and in social media, use your networking skills to learn all you can to help inform how you customize your resume.

Do all the research you can, from on-line searches and social media tracking to networking with people you know. If you know anyone who works there, approach them for a conversation – or better yet, coffee or lunch.

Research shows that your resumé must demonstrate that you have at least 70% of a job's requirements to have a legitimate hope of landing an interview. And bear in mind that one of the advantages of social media is that you can gain access to people you otherwise might not.

Search for someone within your connections who is connected to a person of interest to you. Perhaps they are in the field in which you are seeking work; perhaps they work for a company you wish to get in to – then ask your contact to introduce you.



You can leverage your research results to tweak your Skills and Accomplishments section of your resume. When customizing your resumé for a specific position, take careful note of the skills required and use any number of those words in your resume.

If you think of yourself as someone who ‘leads stakeholder communications,’ but the employer uses the phrase ‘stakeholder engagement’ – that’s right, you’re now an expert in stakeholder engagement.

If you have ‘increased website and social media traffic’ in your current job, but your prospective employer’s website discusses ‘online presence’ – your resumé should note that you ‘elevated online presence.’

The big caveat of course, is that you really do have those skills.



OUR NEXT CHAPTER IS SPECIFIC TO PROFESSIONALS WHO HAVE been using a curriculum vitae to search for a job.

**“IF YOU THINK YOU CAN DO A THING OR THAT YOU CANNOT DO a thing, in either case you are right.” — Henry Ford**

**“START BY DOING WHAT'S NECESSARY; THEN DO WHAT'S possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”  
— St. Francis of Assisi**

**“I USED TO SAY, ‘I SURE HOPE THINGS WILL CHANGE.’ THEN I learned that the only way things are going to change for me is when I change.” — Jim Rohn**

**"CONSULT NOT YOUR FEARS BUT YOUR HOPES AND YOUR dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do." — Pope John XXIII**

**"IF YOU BELIEVE IN WHAT YOU ARE DOING, THEN LET NOTHING hold you up in your work. Much of the best work of the world has been done against seeming impossibilities. The thing is to get the work done." — Dale Carnegie**



## 16.CV TO RESUMÉ



**A** Curriculum Vitae (CV) is mainly for professors, teachers, lawyers, scientists and related professionals. At least in North America it is. I understand that the term CV is used interchangeably with that of resume in other parts of the world.

This chapter is directed at professionals that use a Curriculum Vitae, which is basically a story of the professional life.

Academics may have 10- or 12-page-long CVs, or even more.

The downside with so much information is that *often*, some of their most impressive experiences get lost on page six or seven. You need to get to the point! It is recommended that you highlight your most notable achievements on one page.

The goal is to get a hiring manager to get excited about you and what you bring to the table. If the manager likes what they see, they of course can then read through your entire CV.

So, short version, change your CV to a résumé.

Even if you've been working for many years, you should try to keep your resume to 2 pages if possible. And don't throw out that CV. Some job postings may ask for either. Be prepared!



**"THERE ARE TWO WAYS OF MEETING DIFFICULTIES. YOU ALTER the difficulties or you alter yourself to meet them." — Phyllis Bottome**

**"AFTER EVERY DIFFICULTY, ASK YOURSELF TWO QUESTIONS: 'What did I do right?' and 'What would I do differently?'— Brian Tracy**

**"ATTITUDE, HUMOR AND ACTION (PERSISTENCE) WILL WHIP fears and rejection. Fear of failure doesn't exist, if you believe it doesn't." — Jeffrey Gitomer**

**"DON'T LET MINOR SETBACKS CLOUD YOUR VISION OF THE future. Be like Captain James Cook, the famous English explorer. He faced monumental obstacles, but he kept sailing on. Said the captain, 'I had ambition not only to go farther than any man had ever been before, but as far as it was possible for a man to go.'"**— Neil Eskelin

## 17.ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**H**ere is a collection of job interview preparation related questions asked on Quora.com and answered by me, Rae Stonehouse.

It's cumbersome to add hyperlinks in this printed version, so I haven't.

If you would like to read more answers to the questions, from people who may or may not agree with me... and some... who may be from outer space and worth a chuckle, just visit Quora and enter the title of the question into their search bar.



## 18.DEVELOPING YOUR USP

### **Y**our *USP*:

Your **unique selling proposition** (a.k.a. **unique selling point**, universal selling point or **USP**) is a marketing concept used to differentiate yourself from your competitors or others in the market place.

Some good current examples of products with a clear USP are:

- Head & Shoulders: “You get rid of dandruff”

Some unique propositions that were pioneers when they were introduced:

- Domino’s Pizza: “You get fresh, hot pizza delivered to your door in 30 minutes or less—or it’s free.”
- FedEx: “When your package absolutely, positively has to get there overnight”
- M&M’s: “Melts in your mouth, not in your hand”
- Metropolitan Life: “Get Met, It Pays”

The term USP has been largely replaced by the concept of a ***Positioning Statement***. Positioning is determining what place a brand (tangible good or service) should occupy in the consumer's mind in comparison to its competition. A position is often described as the meaningful difference between the brand and its competitors. **Source:** Wikipedia

I recently was blindsided at a Chamber of Commerce function in my city when we were standing in circle participating in what they call a power networking session. We were asked what makes us or our business unique. I didn't recognize it as a USP question and provided an ineffective response. If I had recognized it for what it was i.e. a USP question I would have responded with "Mr. Emcee is a full-service event organizer. From start to finish ... we do it all!"

Your challenge is to develop a USP that on one hand is short and to the point, yet is clear enough that it captures the essence of your business and will stick in the mind of whoever you are sharing it with. Having it prepared in advance, believing in it and being able to recite it with a moment's notice will go a long way in reducing your anxiety and fear which are all part of shyness.

I would also suggest researching your competitors or others that are in a similar business that are not necessarily your competitors to see if they have chosen a similar USP as you have. I am aware of two business coaches that chose a USP that had only one word that was different. That one word totally changed the context of the USP but it really upset one of the coaches accusing the

other of stealing her idea, even though they had been developed independent of each other.

### **Power Networking Logistics:**

1. Research your competitors to learn what their USPs are.
2. Create a USP for your business.
3. Share it with colleagues and ask their opinion. Ask if it makes sense. Ask if it is easy to understand. Ask if it captures the essence of your business.

**WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR?**

**WHAT IS YOUR USP?**



**19.QUESTION: WHAT IS THE BEST FORMAT TO INCLUDE A PROFESSIONAL INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENT ON A RESUME? (ENGINEERING ASSIGNMENT IN JAPAN FOR 6 MONTHS)**

**A** **answer Provided:**

How you proceed is likely determined by whether your international assignment is part of your overall, i.e. additional experience, or your sole experience.

I would start off by taking a close look at what your duties in the assignment were. Cross-index them with the specific job description you worked under if you still have access.

Brainstorm a list of duties & skills that you were required to use in the position. Create a separate file with all your brainstormed items.

Any position that you apply for should have a resume specifically created for it.

Taking a close look at the job description and its requirements, look to see what skills and experience you have that meets the job description.

It has been said that if you meet at least 70% of the requirements, you are likely to get an interview.



Take your newly crafted and highlighted skills & experience and add them to your Experience section. You want the employer/hiring manager to quickly see that you have the right stuff for the position and are worthy of an interview.

You should also craft your opening Summary Statement so that it highlights your experience as a worthy candidate for the position.

Good luck in your job search!

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**20.QUESTION: WHAT CAN I DO IF MY BOSS  
CAN'T GIVE ME A REFERENCE?**

**M**y boss at my last job of many years is contractually forbidden to give me a reference for my job search, other than confirming my dates of service. How should I handle that in my resume and in interviews?

**Answer Provided:**

I see providing your boss as a reference for your current job searching as a wasted opportunity. If the new employer is checking you out, they are likely to contact your former boss anyways. And yes, they are limited to what they can say about you.

You would be far better off in creating better references. These are people you have worked with. They may be work colleagues, customers, clients and/or other supervisors.

The idea is that they are in position as your cheerleader. They know what and how you did at work and they are willing to promote you for the job in hand.

They need to be in communication with you. As your resume should be crafted for a specific job opportunity, your references should also be specific. You can develop a

list of references and pick and choose from your list depending on their credibility in relation to the job you are applying for.

Your references have no place in your resume. And don't say "references are available upon request." Of course they are!

I can't see how your current boss not giving you a reference would come up in an interview, other than perhaps in a question like "What would your former boss say about your ability to do your job?" This gives you an opportunity to promote yourself, using your boss's words, which you have made up of course.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

**21. QUESTION: HOW SHOULD YOU LIST SAME JOB TITLE IN THE SAME COMPANY BUT DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS ON YOUR RESUME?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

This question seems to have been kicking around for a while, but hopefully my response will help anyone pondering the same question.

I would suggest separating the two jobs. They were two different jobs, just happening to have the same title.

I would list it as the 'Job Title/Position' 'Department' 'Years i.e. start/end'.

This would allow you to expand a little upon the slight differences in each position.

As for the company wanting to hire you now, they have already seen your resume. I don't see any need to say anything, as it may make you look unsure of yourself.

If the interviewer is curious about the two jobs being lumped together, they are likely to ask you about it. Be prepared to answer how the two similar jobs came to be.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**WHEN YOU WANT SOMETHING BADLY ENOUGH, YOU WILL develop the confidence and the ability to overcome any obstacle in your way. — Brian Tracy**

**"WANTING SOMETHING IS NOT ENOUGH. YOU MUST HUNGER for it. Your motivation must be absolutely compelling in order to overcome the obstacles that will invariably come your way." — Les Brown**

**IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO REALIZE YOUR AMBITIONS. TAKE THE first step by daring to dream big dreams. Then have the confidence to take a few risks and make those dreams a reality. You'll be glad you did. — Don MacRae, President of the Lachlan Group**

**"DON'T GET COMPLACENT. PUSH YOURSELF OUT OF YOUR comfort zone and set higher standards of achievement for yourself. Once you've achieved a standard of excellence, never let it rest--push yourself even higher." — Dave Anderson**

**"IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP YOUR UNIQUE TALENTS AND abilities, the things that make you special." — Brian Tracy**

**22.QUESTION: IN A COVER LETTER, IS IT OK TO SAY “THANK YOU FOR YOUR DISCRETION” TO AVOID THEM FROM CONTACTING CURRENT EMPLOYERS?**

**A** **nswer Provided:** I had to give some thought to this question.

Your cover letter is presumably written to accompany your resume and perhaps an application form, in anticipation to being invited for an interview.

I don't see why they would want to contact your current employer at this stage of the game as they haven't even met you yet. So, I would say don't add 'thank you for your discretion.'

If you make it to the interview stage, you are going to need to be prepared for the fact that they very well may contact your current employer.

Some will make the offer, contingent upon contacting your references.

Some may want to do some preliminary research on you prior to making an offer.

If you make it this far, you will need to be prepared for your current employer being contacted. Might be a good idea to

advise them in advance that you are looking for another job.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).





**23. QUESTION: IN APPLYING TO DIRECTOR-LEVEL "MBA" TYPE JOBS, HOW MUCH TIME SHOULD IT BE TAKING ME TO CUSTOMIZE MY RESUME BULLETS AND COVER LETTER?**

**A** **Answer Provided:**

It'll take as much time as it takes to do so...

In creating a resume, if you haven't already, there is value in brainstorming a list of duties and responsibilities that you have had with each of your positions. This would go into your resume data file.

When you are customizing your resume, you need to take these generated duties & responsibilities and rework the wording on them tying them into the requirements of the job requirements.

That would likely mean that your resume would be substantially different for each position you apply for.

Your resume should be a dynamic tool i.e. it is always being changed to meet the requirements of a specific job.

As for the cover letter, there are likely elements such as the opening and the closing that can be reused for different applications, but the so-called meat and potatoes i.e. the body of the letter should be customized for each position.

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**24. QUESTION: WHAT DO YOU PUT IN A RESUME FOR AN INTROVERT WHO HASN'T DONE MUCH SOCIAL STUFF IN SCHOOL?**

**A** **Answer Provided:**

The fact that you are a self-proclaimed introvert, is irrelevant when it comes to creating your resume.

You also claim to be shy i.e. 'hasn't done much social stuff in school' doesn't get reflected in your resume but certainly will when you start applying for jobs and going for job interviews.

You don't say what field you will be applying for jobs in, if any specifically. I'm also assuming that this may be your first job in the working world and you likely don't have a vast amount of work experience to draw upon.

We all had to start somewhere. Everybody has a first job. It may not be exactly what you are looking for, but it can be a stepping stone to bigger and better jobs.

The fact that you are shy may be an obstacle in performing the duties of the job if the employer has the expectation that the new hire is an outgoing person.

There are many jobs out there that fit the needs of introverts, or where introversion or extraversion doesn't matter. You may have to do some research to find one.

Assuming you are over the age of 18, I would recommend that you research to see if there is a Toastmasters club in your community. Joining one will help you develop your communication & leadership skills, which in turn will help increase your self-confidence. A Toastmasters club also provides ample opportunities to hone your socialization skills with fellow members of all ages.

There can be an added benefit of working on projects or tasks that can add some substance to your resume. In the beginning, every little bit can help.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**25. QUESTION: HOW CAN I WRITE A GOOD CV FOR A JOB WHEN I HAVE NO WORK EXPERIENCE?**

**A** **answer Provided:** You have a challenge before you, but no different than anyone else that graduates from school then goes looking for work in their chosen field.

Others have done it and you will as well.

Looking for work is work... and you have some work ahead of you.

In my part of the world, western Canada, we call a CV a resume, so I will refer to it as such from now on.

From your Bio, it looks like you have a Bachelor of Science in Economics & Banking.

Assuming this is the field that you are looking for work in, you have several strategies that you need to be undertaking, simultaneously.

1. **Creating your resume:** A well-crafted resume helps you get an interview. Wowing the Interviewer in the job interview gets you the job.
2. **Researching the job market:** Having graduated fairly recently and not having a current job to

leverage, you will likely be looking at an entry-level job to start or to get your foot in the door, so to speak. I would suggest researching all of the jobs in your field that are available locally, in your own country and abroad. This helps to give you an idea of what kinds of jobs are out there and what they are looking for in ways of skills and experience. Your research should also provide you with 'buzz' words or words/terminology that are used in your industry. These can be helpful when creating the content for your resume.

3. **Reviewing your educational experience:** You likely have a wealth of skills that you have developed in your education. These are marketable. In addition, you will have skills that are considered to be transferrable i.e. if they are usable in one situation, they are likely usable in others. Then there are your soft skills. Examples of these are having good people skills, work ethic, communicating skills including being a good listener etc. You won't necessarily add these to your resume, but it will be helpful when you get to your interview. So, make a list under these three headings and brainstorm all the skills that you possess under each heading.
4. **Linkedin?** If not, you should be! Your resume and your Linkedin profile should resonate, that is that they should support each other. Your resume needs to be crafted rather terse and succinct. Whereas, your Linkedin profile allows you to expand upon

some of the items that you have highlighted on your resume.

5. **References:** As you don't have work experience to draw upon, you will need to leverage your connections from your school experience. This could include professors, fellow students or perhaps supervisors from school/work projects.
6. **Volunteer Work:** If you haven't already, I would suggest finding some volunteer work in your field. Financial literacy is one subject that comes to mind. There are usually opportunities available with not for profit organizations that help others with their financial knowledge.

NOW BACK TO YOUR RESUME, I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN ABOUT IT.

There are different formats out there, but most follow a basic flow. Starting off with a strong Summary Statement. A Summary Statement can help you customize your resumé for different opportunities. This is especially helpful if your background is somewhat general, as is yours at this point. You can use your summary statement to highlight skills and experience most relevant for each position.

Every job that you apply for should have a specifically crafted summary statement targeting the requirements of the job and featuring you as an ideal candidate.

Next in your resume would be your experience. As you don't have any work experience, you will need to use the

content that you generated from the previous brainstorming exercise.

I read somewhere that if you have 70% of the requirements for a specific job, you are likely to get an interview. This translates to the fact that if you do get called for an interview, then they must think you are worthy of consideration. During the interview, you need to wow them. They know that you are entering the workforce. Your task is to convince them that you are eager to learn and will do your best in the new role.

Good luck in your job search journey.

For more sage advice on job searching and landing your dream job, visit <http://yourehirednow.com>

To keep up to date on what is trending in the job searching field, Like us and Follow us on Facebook. [Job Search Strategies That Work](#).





**26.QUESTION: SHOULD I ADD TEMP & CONTRACTOR POSITION TO LINKEDIN & MY RESUME?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

I don't think it is so much as doing it a proper way as it is doing it an 'effective' way.

Working as a contractor or a temp, are two very different situations.

As a consultant, you are an independent contractor. You are not an employee of the client. You provide specific work for the client. In this case, you would be well-advised to seek permission from past and current clients to be able to publicly post their name. They may not want it known that they have engaged the services of a consultant. Gaining permission to promote your connection to a company may be something that you want to address as a term in your beginning contract or proposal.

You can still promote yourself as a consultant and describe the type of services that you provide without actually mentioning your current client by name. Once you have completed your contract, see if you can get them to write a

testimonial for you. If they do so, this would seem to imply that you would be able to mention their business by name.

Working as a temp would seem to indicate that you are currently working for an Employment/Temp agency that has placed you at a worksite that they have contracted with. Your employer is actually the Temp agency and not the worksite.

I would start off by stating the name of the Temp Agency you are working for. In your description of your experience you could add one or more of the businesses you have worked for and add some details as to the work you did there and the skills that you developed.

The fact that you are a temp, shouldn't make a difference. Work is work.



**27.QUESTION: WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO WRITE A DYNAMIC COVER LETTER?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

'Dynamic' is likely a subjective term. For hiring agents, who likely receive volumes of cover letters, 'dynamic' may not be a term they use.

I would suspect that they are looking for a cover letter that indicates the candidate is truly interested in the available job, they have researched the organization, they are qualified and experienced to take on the position and they actually are available.

With that in mind, like creating a good speech/presentation, I would suggest that you start at the end.

Your conclusion is where you determine what it is you want to leave your reader with. Presumably, it would be to encourage the Hiring Manager to actually read your resume and then to invite you in for an interview where you can impress upon them in person.

Too many people make the mistake of asking for the job in their cover letter. Save that for after the interview.

You should spend some time crafting your Summary Statement for your resume. Your Summary Statement should be prominently featured in your Cover Letter, with an abbreviated version of content from your resume to attract the reader's attention. The idea is that you grab their interest, they then check out your resume for more details.

Your Summary Statement on your resume should be consistent with your LinkedIn profile, where you can provide more details or proof of what you say that you can do. If a Hiring Manager is interested in you, they will most certainly check out your digital footprint e.g. social media.

A big thing to remember with your Summary Statement is that you need to craft your content from the perspective that you are a solution to the Hiring Manager's problem. You need to feature what you can do, not what you have done. To expand upon that a little, you can leverage your past experience to give you credence for what you can do in the future.

Keep your cover letter short at a page or a little more.

Your cover letter needs to be crafted specifically for the position and organization you are applying for. You can reuse much of your content, but it needs to be tweaked for each occasion.

Your cover letter needs to be addressed to the person who is most likely to read it. With the amount of applications that are being requested to be submitted on line, your cover letter may just get to an HR manager, where it is

likely to be chucked out and not to the person who should be getting it.



**28. QUESTION: IF A JOB ASKS FOR A COVER LETTER AND YOU DON'T HAVE ONE, YET YOU ANSWER ALL THEIR QUESTIONS CORRECTLY, CAN YOU STILL GET THE JOB?**

**A** nswer Provided:

Possibly... possibly not!

A cover letter by itself isn't going to get you a job. When accompanied by a well-written resume, it sets up the possibility of being invited to be interviewed.

You mention that you have answered all their questions correctly. You are a little lean on details here. Was this on-line as part of an application process of some sort?

If you have already had an interview and the questions you refer to were part of the interview, I would be surprised if you actually did answer all of their questions correctly. For some questions, there are no right and wrong answers. The test is to see *how* you answer them.

And if you have already had an interview, worrying about a cover letter at this stage serves no purpose. They wouldn't have interviewed you if they didn't think you were a possible candidate.

I wouldn't expect that whether you get the job at this stage would matter at all based on the fact you didn't submit a cover letter.

Probably what is most important is 'what are you going to do next time that a job asks for a cover letter?'



**29.QUESTION: SHOULD I INCLUDE MY WORK ETHIC IN A COVER LETTER?**

I usually dedicate 100 hours per week to work or projects as I love what I do and feel as if I'm not making good use of my time if I work less. I'm tossed between it coming off as fake and/or boastful vs. it being seen as a merit.

**Answer Provided:**

If you are defining your work ethic as regularly working 100 hours per week, I certainly wouldn't include it in a cover letter.

If you are a lawyer, perhaps, but otherwise, no way!

Working that many hours, if anything, illustrates that you do not have balance in your life. As well, working that many hours on a regular basis is not sustainable in the long run. A potential employer could look at your habit negatively and make an assumption that you could be leading to a breakdown, which could in turn cost them money.

Having worked in the mental health field most of my career, I can tell you that there is merit to the old saying of "all work and no play, makes Jack a dull boy!" It can also lead to mental health issues. We are meant to have leisure,



recreational and pleasurable activities in our life. That's where the balance would come in.

If you feel the need to make it known that you regularly put in a lot of hours, you might be better off to have one of your job references make mention of the fact. Or you can have someone provide you a LinkedIn testimonial attesting to the fact.

Highlighting that you are a workaholic in your cover letter would not be a good idea.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO REALIZE YOUR AMBITIONS. TAKE THE first step by daring to dream big dreams. Then have the confidence to take a few risks and make those dreams a reality. You'll be glad you did. — Don MacRae, President of the Lachlan Group**

**"DON'T GET COMPLACENT. PUSH YOURSELF OUT OF YOUR comfort zone and set higher standards of achievement for yourself. Once you've achieved a standard of excellence, never let it rest--push yourself even higher." — Dave Anderson**

**"IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP YOUR UNIQUE TALENTS AND abilities, the things that make you special." — Brian**

**Tracy**

**30. QUESTION: IF WE FORGOT SOMETHING ON THE APPLICATION FORM, CAN WE PROVIDE A COVER LETTER TO ADD THE INFORMATION?**

**A** nswer Provided:

You could, but don't expect it to be of any benefit.

Let's assume that anyone actually reads your cover letter. I would expect that it wouldn't be appreciated. Reading your letter takes them away from something else they need to be doing. They also have to match your new information with your original submission. That takes more time. If there are hundreds of applications, your new information could be a nuisance.

You also don't want to give them the impression you are forgetful or not very well organized. If the new information is important enough to be mentioned... it should have been included in the first place.

I would suggest learning from this experience, so you can include it next time. If you do get an interview and the new info that you have is important enough to mention, do so. At that point, it might be of benefit.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com/).

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**31. QUESTION: WHAT IS GOOD ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO LEAVE ON A RESUME?**

**A** **answer Provided:** This question is a little confusing to me in what it is asking.

Your resume should be crafted so all the information included, serves the purpose of marketing you as the best candidate for a specific job.

Your resume isn't a conversation with the reader i.e. the hiring manager. It is a snapshot illustrating the assets that you have to offer and proof you have done so.

The purpose of your resume is to pique the Hiring Manager's interest to invite you in for an interview.

If you have 'additional' information worth mentioning, this would be the place to share it.

Without knowing precisely what your additional information you are referring to is, you might be better adding it to a cover letter, when you submit your application.

However, don't assume that your cover letter will even be read. With applicant processing software present in many

organizations, your cover letter may not be accepted, nor forwarded on to the appropriate hiring manager.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**32.QUESTION: SHOULD I PUT MY 3-MONTH  
SECONDMENT WITHIN THE SAME  
COMPANY ON MY RESUME AND LINKEDIN  
PROFILE? THE ROLE IS DIFFERENT AND  
IN A DIFFERENT COUNTRY.**

**A** nswer Provided:

Unless the seconded position was totally irrelevant to your career path and adds no value to your resume, I would add it to your resume and LinkedIn profile.

Taking on a time-limited, seconded position can help show that you are flexible and willing to take on challenges.

Experience is experience. The trick is to leverage the skills you gained at the seconded position, to your regular position and hopefully, setting you up for a future position.

I would suggest taking the 'buzz' words from the seconded position's job duties and strategically add them to your resume, under the Experience Section.

Write them in past tense but action-oriented verbs e.g. created, developed, initiated, promoted etc.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**33. QUESTION: HOW DO I ADDRESS BEING FIRED FROM A PREVIOUS JOB IN A RESUME, ON AN APPLICATION, AND INTERVIEWS?**

**A** nswer Provided:

Unless the interviewer personally knows you, or knows of your situation, it isn't likely to come up in an interview, unless you draw attention to the fact.

If you are applying for work within the same company, likely there will be documentation on your personnel record.

The challenge is that you need to be *prepared* to explain an absence from the workforce, as identified in your resume, if it took you a while to get another job. Or if the one you are applying for is the next one since you got fired.

In the off chance that you are asked about your 'firing' you can minimize its negative effect by having a story prepared in advance. The 'why' you got terminated may not be as important as what you learned from the situation.

The last time I got fired, I used the time to upgrade my skills in interpersonal conflict resolution, assertiveness and interpersonal communication. I became a stronger personality as a result of being fired.



Another aspect to address is how you feel about being fired. Being fired can shake you up for a while. The important thing I personally learned was that while the employer can take my job but they can't take my dignity. As you travel through life, you may very well get fired. It happens. But life goes on.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**34. QUESTION: CAN I ATTACH MY PORTFOLIO WITH MY COVER LETTER (AS THE FIRST DOCUMENT) IN THE SAME PDF DOCUMENT?**

**W**hen applying to jobs in the creative industry, if my experience is less than others applying, but I have a killer portfolio, I want the hiring manager to see it right away, instead of viewing my resume/cover letter and then deciding if it's worth going on my portfolio website.

**Answer Provided:**

The only way to know for sure is to try it and see what happens.

If it works, do it again. If not, try something else.

You don't say what exactly it is that you do within the 'creative' industry. Whatever it is, it would likely be worth your while to use your best work in your cover letter/PDF or wherever, as bait, to encourage the hiring manager to go to the next level of checking out your portfolio website.

It's very much like fishing. They won't bite if they don't see anything interesting. Your task is to pique their interest, so they will bring you in for an interview.

If possible, whatever is that you highlight of your work, there should be some kind of a tie in to the job you are applying for. The idea is you want to be seen as the solution to their problem.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**35. QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE VITAL AND PERSONAL INFORMATION THAT SHOULD NEVER BE DISCLOSED ON MY CV?**

**A** **answer Provided:** I don't believe that there are any hard and fast rules of what you shouldn't include, but here are some that I can think of.

1. Don't include your references contact info. If the employer has these in advance, they may contact them first and find no need to talk to you.
2. Don't say 'references available on request.' Of course they are!
3. SIN or Social Security Number. You will be asked for one after you are hired.
4. Don't quote your yearly wage from former positions.
5. Don't list absolutely everything you have ever done throughout your life. Pick the best and highlight it.

You ask about your CV. While many professional positions are asking for CVs, resumes are becoming the norm. Now it's not so much what you have done, as it is what you can do for the employer. Have you created a resume yet?

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

**36.QUESTION: HOW DO I BOOST MY CV AND GET A JOB FASTER?**

**A** **answer Provided:** You ask a simple question that likely requires a complicated answer. As well, since we don't know what professional field you are seeking work in, we need to make some assumptions.

You are asking about a CV. This would presume that you are a professional of some sort.

Have you considered recreating your CV into a resume format?

CVs, traditionally are long-winded way of telling somebody everything that you have done throughout your life. They are focused on what you have done i.e. in the past.

The employer is only interested in what you can do for them... now. They have a problem to solve.

A well-written resume, leading with a powerful positioning statement, can grab the employer's attention with the possibility you might be their solution.

The Experience section of your resume should be crafted to highlight the skills you developed while performing at a

specific job. The idea is that the employer sees what you have done and considers the possibility that you can do the same for them.

Keep the CV up to date though as some employers still ask for them.

As for 'boosting' your CV... in addition to going the resume route, at the risk of stating the obvious, apply for jobs you are qualified for. Look for 'buzz' words in the job listing and factor them into your resume. Every job application should have a unique resume. A one-size-fits-all resume doesn't work anymore.

Maximize your LinkedIn profile for effectiveness. Your LinkedIn profile should resonate with your resume. The value here is that you can expand upon items you have added to your resume. Where your resume needs to be laser-focused, your LinkedIn profile can expand upon your accomplishments.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**37.QUESTION: IF YOU WISH TO HAVE A SKILL IN AN AREA, IS IT RIGHT TO ADD THE SKILL TO YOUR CV WHEN YOU HAVE YET TO ACQUIRE IT?**

**A** **answer Provided:**  
No, definitely not!

A CV by nature, is a synopsis of the journey through your professional career. That doesn't include fantasy trips into the future.

There is nothing wrong with identifying skills you would like to have and taking actions towards achieving them. They would be better used within a job interview where you are asked how you are working on improving yourself.

If you were to make mention of it as identified in your question, it may take any credibility away from you in an interviewer's mind and you really don't to have that working against you.

So short version... no, don't do it.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**38.QUESTION: SHOULD I CHANGE MY RESUME ACCORDING TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF A JOB POSITION?**

**A** **answer Provided:** Only if you want to get invited in for an interview.

The days of only having one, static resume are long gone.

Your resume should resonate with the requirements of the job you are applying. You should look for key words or 'buzz' words in the job posting and factor them into your resume.

Yes, it does mean having multiple versions of your resume if it takes you a while to land a job.

While your resume should be laser-focused on the target job, it should also resonate with your LinkedIn profile. Where you need to be terse and succinct on your resume, you can expand upon individual items in your LinkedIn profile.

If a cover letter is requested, you should also customize it. The more of them you create, the easier it gets. If you keep electronic copies, you can easily cut and paste and with a little editing you can have a unique letter.



As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

**39. QUESTION: HOW DO I WRITE MY RESUME TO HIGHLIGHT MY PAST AND ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE IN HEALTH POLICY INSTEAD OF MY CURRENT ADMIN EXPERIENCE?**

**A** **answer Provided:** If you haven't already, I would encourage you to change how you think about resumes.

Don't think of it as being a static, single version resume.

Your resume should be customized for the specific job you are targeting. In time, it will mean that you will have multiple versions of your resume.

If you are wanting to focus on your past academic experience in health policy you will need to do some brain storming and identify all the different tasks, challenges and skills that you developed during that time.

You don't provide whether all your experience was while in school i.e. academia, or if you actually have some job experience to draw upon.

Were there any problems you helped solve? Did you work on any kind of a task force? Was it successful?

Taking a close look at a specific job posting, are there any keywords or buzz words that pop out?

If so, and I expect there would be, you should factor them into your resume. Robot applicant tracking systems filter resumes by keywords. You want your resume passed on to a human rather than the trash bin.

Rather than opening with an Objective Statement, start off with a strong Positioning Statement that encapsulates who you are and what you have to offer.

You don't define what your current admin experience entails, but you should be able to leverage it to highlight why you are even better now with health policy matters.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**40. QUESTION: HOW SHOULD I LIST AN EMPLOYMENT GAP OF 7 YEARS ON MY CV?**

**A** nswer Provided:

As has been suggested, you shouldn't draw attention to the fact you haven't been in the workforce for 7 years.

However, you definitely need to be prepared to answer a question about it, should you get to a job interview.

At the very least, the interviewer may be curious. At the most, they are doing their due diligence.

While there are numerous reasons that a person may be out of the workforce for that length of time, all valid, it does raise one's curiosity. Many would wonder if there has been a lengthy prison term involved.

It also depends on if this is the first job you are seeking after the gap or if you have had other jobs since then. If you have had other jobs since the gap, it is likely moot.

If you are coming off the seven-year gap, you will likely need to mitigate the effect it has on your employability.

When you were off, did you do any training or any activities that would add to your skills or experience?

Not knowing what field or profession you were working in before you were off, I'm left wondering if your former work experience and skills are relevant? You may need to be prepared to have to defend and promote the value of your previous work experience, if it is relevant to a job you are applying for.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**41. QUESTION: WHAT DOES THE SUPERVISOR MEAN BY THIS 'INTERESTED APPLICANTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SEND THEIR APPLICATION DOCUMENTS (COVER LETTER, CV, CERTIFICATES, DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH EXPERIENCE, AND MOTIVATION) AS ONE PDF DOCUMENT PER E-MAIL'?**

**A n s w e r P r o v i d e d :**

It would mean starting off with a blank Word or alternative word processing document and importing all the requested elements into it.

I would create individual documents for your cover letter, CV, description of research experience and your motivation for applying for the job. Developing them separately allows you to focus on each segment.

As for certificates, you will likely need to scan them to make them digital. Then you will need to save it as a jpg.

Back to your original document, start with your cover letter, then insert your CV etc. Then insert the jpgs of your certificates.

Save this amalgamated file as a pdf. I would suggest saving with a recognizable name e.g. your\_name\_job-title\_application\_today's date.pdf.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

**42. QUESTION: WHAT SHOULD A JOB SEEKER ON LINKEDIN INCLUDE IN THEIR PROFILE?**

**A** nswer Provided:

Once upon a time, your LinkedIn profile could be like your resume on steroids. Those days are gone.

Your resume should be crafted and fine-tuned to meet the requirements of a specific job you are applying for. Where your resume is better off being short and sweet, your LinkedIn profile, which should resonate with your resume, can be a little longer.

LinkedIn allows you to expand upon the job experience you have gained. It also allows you to showcase your transferrable skills you wouldn't have room to feature in your resume.

One of the common mistakes I see that job seekers make is they don't identify in the beginning of their profile they are looking for work or seeking a position.

When you are job seeking, your LinkedIn profile needs to be self-promotional in nature. The employer is checking out your profile because they are interested in you, to rule you

in or rule you out. They may even be checking you out before you apply for a job.

Your LinkedIn profile needs to set you up as a solution to the employer's problem.

Your LinkedIn profile can be a good place to add personal testimonials about you. This is different than your references.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).





**43. QUESTION: IF YOU'RE A JOB SEEKER WITH BEAUTIFUL PENMANSHIP, SHOULD YOU CONSIDER HAND-WRITING YOUR COVER LETTERS AS A WAY TO STAND OUT?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

Not unless you were applying for a job as a calligrapher.

While you want to stand out as being different from the other applicants, you don't want to stand out in a bad way.

Handwritten business correspondence is old-fashioned nowadays. The reader may very well find it to be annoying. Many people have gotten away from reading handwriting and their minds have gotten lazy.

Cursive writing may very well become a secret code in the future, as many primary schools have dropped it in favour of keyboarding.

The only handwritten notes I can recall receiving in many years, is an annual birthday card from my sister, where she wishes me well and shares her latest updates.

While standing out is good, you would have better success in applying for jobs you are qualified for, have a strong

background in the type of work and be prepared to interview well.

You can still wow them in your cover-letter, just do it with your content, rather than your handwriting.

Good luck in your job search.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**44. QUESTION: WHAT DO YOU THINK OF  
PEOPLE WHO PUT THEIR IQ ON THEIR  
RESUME?**

**A** nswer Provided:

While there is no hard and fast rule says you can't do it, I would have to question the reason for adding it in the first place?

I can guess they feel having a high IQ posted on their resume, would give them some sort of an advantage in the job they are applying for.

However, I'm wondering from the Interviewer's perspective, if it makes them look desperate and perhaps vane?

I don't have any hard evidence to back it up either way, only opinion. I certainly wouldn't do it. But then again, I'm not a member of MENSA.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**45. QUESTION: SHOULD I LIST MY RESPONSIBILITIES ON MY RESUME?**

**A** nswer Provided:

Yes, you should list your responsibilities. No, you should not list your responsibilities on your resume.

It is a good practice to look at all of the responsibilities you have in any job. I would suggest making a master list to keep track of them all.

When it comes to creating a resume, it should be crafted to meet the requirements of a specific job posting. From your master list, see if there are any responsibilities that connect to what they are looking for in the position. If you have some and presumably you would if you were applying for the job in the first place, then list them on your resume.

If you haven't already, create a LinkedIn professional profile. Under the Experience section, you can list your current responsibilities in greater detail. Any potential employer will check out your LinkedIn profile as part of their hiring process. If you have more, appropriate information listed there, it can likely give you some advantage.

You may need to give some thought to how you feature your responsibilities/duties. You need to quantify and qualify them.

Examples: Why are they important? Did you work independently? Did somebody closely oversee your work or were you fairly independent? Did you use any leadership skills in your current position? Are the skills you currently use in your position transferable to the new job?

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**46. QUESTION: HOW DO I ADD A PART TIME TEACHING ENGAGEMENT TO MY RESUME?**

**A** **Answer Provided:** I believe it fits under the **Experience Section** of your resume.

In a resume, *experience*, is another way for saying employers are looking for positions you have held in the past.

Here is an excerpt on the topic from my book **'You're Hired! Job Search Strategies That Work'**: The '*Old School*' way of completing this section would be to list all your skills to showcase how experienced you were under each job listing.

Here is yet another example of how times have changed.

The purpose of this section is to highlight your top three to five qualifications to a potential employer, from each previous job position.

Your content needs to be crafted so it features you as a solution to the Employer's problem.

If you include this section and you should... use a bullet format and highlight only the skills and/or qualifications

are relevant to the position you are applying for.

And substantiate with a *brief* explanation of the experience(s) that helped you build the skill or quality.

Career experts recommend you customize your resumé for *each* job, especially at the beginning of your resumé.

General or generic resumes *do not work* in today's labour market.

Employers value the skills you have developed, regardless of where you developed them.

This includes skills developed in school, volunteering, extra-curricular activities and in paid employment. Since many employers use past performances to determine whether a candidate will be successful on the job or not; emphasize what you can offer potential employers (or bring to the table) drawing upon your collective experiences, skills, accomplishments, training/education and capabilities.

Validate all relevant successes and contributions made to past employers using numbers, dollars or percentages wherever possible.

Link your experience, skills and abilities to the competency requirements of the job you are applying for using examples of past successes on the job; this will enable the recruiter or hiring manager to visualize you performing the same or a similar role successfully for their organization.

Whatever you add to your resume, should resonate with what you have posted in your LinkedIn profile.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).





**47.QUESTION: SINCE PERSONAL BRAND IS EVERYTHING THESE DAYS, SHOULD I PUT A PROFESSIONAL SELFIE ON MY RESUME?**

**A** nswer Provided:

While I believe personal branding is a good idea for any professional, whether they have celebrity status or not, I wouldn't go as far as to say it is everything these days.

I wouldn't add a photo to a resume. I would recommend you do though, on your LinkedIn profile. Odds are if the employer is interested in you, they are going to check out your LinkedIn profile to see what you look like.

Forget the selfie idea. Selfies are for Facebook and Instagram. Looking for work is serious business and your head-shot photo should look professional. You can easily get somebody else to take the photo for you without the selfie's outstretched arm phenomena.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**48. QUESTION: I SENT MY RESUME AND RECOMMENDATION TO A COMPANY FOR AN INTERNSHIP. THE SECRETARY INVITED ME TO CONNECT WITH HER ON LINKEDIN AFTER ABOUT THREE WEEKS. IS THIS A POSITIVE SIGN?**

**A** **Answer Provided:**

This isn't necessarily a sign of anything at all. It could merely be a coincidence.

Linkedin sends invitations from seemingly random people. Perhaps you checked out the company's Linkedin profile at one point in time.

I don't know if Linkedin does it or not, but they may have an algorithm that matches you with employees or those connected to the company. And then sends you an invite.

If there was a message that came with the invitation from the secretary, you could further develop the relationship. As well, if there wasn't, you can still nurture the relationship.

Send them a message, mentioning you were interested in working there and had suggested an internship and having applied, but not put any pressure on them to help you get the job.

Developing internal connections can be an effective way to gain a job.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

**49.QUESTION: SHOULD YOU INCLUDE YOUR LINKEDIN PUBLIC PROFILE URL ON YOUR RESUME?**

**A** **answer Provided:** No, you should not include your LinkedIn *profile* on your resume. However, you should insert your LinkedIn Public Profile URL.

This should be placed at the bottom of and part of your Contact Information.

The interviewer is likely to research you on-line anyways. This saves them a step.

Your resume should resonate with your LinkedIn profile. Whereas your resume should be tailored for a specific job opportunity, your LinkedIn profile allows you to expand upon your skills & experience.

Your LinkedIn profile can also be a good place to add testimonials. These are in addition to any references you have lined up to speak favorably about you.

Make sure you have optimized your LinkedIn profile for effectiveness.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

**50. QUESTION: HOW SOON MAY I PUT A POSITION ON MY RESUME? I JUST STARTED A PART-TIME POSITION (TWO WEEKS AGO) THAT WILL CONTINUE, AS I APPLY FOR SUMMER INTERNSHIPS. I HAVE ONLY DONE ONE PROJECT THUS FAR. IS IT TOO SOON TO PUT THE PART-TIME JOB ON MY RESUME?**

**A** **Answer Provided:**

There is no rule that says when and when you can't add a job position to your resume. Or you identify and post every job you have ever had in your resume.

As you say that you are looking for summer internships, I'm going to assume that you are fairly new to the job searching process. Everyone has to start somewhere.

Something to consider is that you should look at your resume as never being 'done.' It should be a dynamic process, where you add or remove content as you go through life.

I would add your current job to your resume and then as you get a better understanding of what the job entails, add the skills you have developed in this role, to the content of this particular job.

If you haven't already, I would suggest creating a LinkedIn profile and have it resonate with your resume. The two

work together and your LinkedIn profile can allow you to expand upon items in your resume.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**51. QUESTION: IS IT UNPROFESSIONAL TO  
ADD A SHORT QUOTE ON MY RESUME IN  
THE INTRO DESCRIPTION/COVER  
LETTER?**

**A** **answer Provided:** I'm not sure about it being *un*professional, but I don't think it is professional.

Your cover letter needs to be tactfully written to grab the recipient's attention.

While on one hand, you want to promote yourself in a positive way and pique your reader's interest, you don't want them to get distracted on the purpose of your letter.

You either appreciate inspirational quotes or you don't. If the reader isn't a fan, you risk alienating them. If they are a fan, there is still a risk. Their focus may go towards trying to figure out the quote and what the relevance is.

If you do have an inspirational quote that resonates with you, I believe you would get better leverage out of it by inserting it into the opening promotion in your LinkedIn profile.

As a potential employer/hiring manager is likely to check you out on LinkedIn, it may lead to future conversation if you make it to the interview stage.

**52.QUESTION: IS IT WISE TO ADD A LINKEDIN HYPERLINK IN A COVER LETTER OR RESUME?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

I'm not sure if it would be considered wise or not, but it certainly could be strategic.

Odds are high the employer will check you out on LinkedIn anyways.

By having your LinkedIn contact info featured on your resume or cover letter with your other contact info, it saves the employer from having to Google you.

In the comment section you mention "...for a more comprehensive list of qualifications, please see my LinkedIn." This is ineffective in my opinion, as it makes your resume redundant.

Each resume you submit should be crafted for the job you are applying. If you are using your LinkedIn profile as an adjunct to your resume, it needs to be consistent with the content in your resume.

While the expectation that a resume be one to two pages in length, you have a lot more freedom with your LinkedIn



profile. This allows you to post more comprehensive experience, that may help you in landing a job within a different field than that of what you have been working in.

Something to remember is the copy in both your resume and your LinkedIn profile has to be crafted from the perspective of how you can solve the problem a perspective employer has rather than how wonderful you are and what you have done in the past.

This is a major difference from how resumes and LinkedIn profiles used to be written in the not so distant past.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**53. QUESTION: SHOULD I MENTION MY GOLD MEDAL FOR BEST ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AT UNIVERSITY ON MY RESUME, OR WILL IT LOOK BOASTFUL AND IRRELEVANT, AS IT'S BEEN 5 YEARS SINCE I GRADUATED?**

**W**alt Whitman, American Cowboy Poet is often quoted as saying, “if you done it, it ain’t bragging!”

As to its relevance, it depends on the requirements of the particular job you are applying for. Your resume should be crafted for individual jobs, not be a one-size-fits-all version.

While others might advise that including your gold medal as a waste of space as nobody will ever read it, well that’s just an opinion, as is this...

If it is relevant to the duties of the position you are applying for, including it may just be the leverage point to set you a little higher than another applicant whose academic achievement isn’t as stellar.

At best, it might open up a question from a curious interviewer, at worst, they will ignore it.

I think it is worth the gamble.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com/).



**54. QUESTION: IS IT PROPER TO ADD MY  
LAST COMPANY WHERE I WORKED AND  
WAS FIRED TO MY RESUME?**

**A** **nswer Provided:**

I wouldn't bother thinking in terms of whether it is proper or not. Far better to think in terms of asking 'is there value in posting it or not?'

Despite having been fired, there were likely skills you developed and experience you gained while employed in the job.

Your resume doesn't need to be a complete list of every job you have had, like a curriculum vitae would be. However, it should be tailored to meet the requirements of the specific job you are applying for.

If your skills and experience are relevant for the job, use it. If not, leave it out.

If you leave it out though, you will need to be prepared to answer a question about the break in your working history. Same thing applies to adding it to your resume and then being prepared for a possible question of "so why did you leave that job?"

You will likely find that as you go through life, you may very well be fired a few times. As time passes, it lessens in importance. One caveat though ... hopefully you have learned from the event.

**55. QUESTION: WHAT SOUNDS BEST IN MY CV: TEACHING ASSISTANT, RESEARCH ASSISTANT, OR PERSONAL ASSISTANT OF THE PROFESSOR?**

**A** nswer Provided:

To me, they sound like three different positions as well as different duties.

What is important is you link the one you choose to the requirements of the specific job you are applying for.

You can then expand upon the duties and skills developed under the title you choose to highlight your experience.

When it comes to resume/CV writing, think of self-promotion. You want to be seen as the solution to the employer's problem.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**56. QUESTION: IN APPLYING TO DIRECTOR-LEVEL "MBA" TYPE JOBS, HOW MUCH TIME SHOULD IT BE TAKING ME TO CUSTOMIZE MY RESUME BULLETS AND COVER LETTER?**

**A** **Answer Provided:**

It'll take as much time as it takes to do so...

In creating a resume, if you haven't already, there is value in brainstorming a list of duties and responsibilities you have had with each of your positions. This would go into your resume data file.

When you are customizing your resume, you need to take these generated duties & responsibilities and rework the wording on them tying them into the requirements of the job requirements.

That would likely mean your resume would be substantially different for each position you apply for.

Your resume should be a dynamic tool i.e. it is always being changed to meet the requirements of a specific job.

As for the cover letter, there are likely elements such as the opening and the closing that can be reused for different applications, but the so-called meat and potatoes i.e. the body of the letter should be customized for each position.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**



Rae A. Stonehouse is a Canadian born author & speaker.

His professional career as a Registered Nurse working predominantly in psychiatry/mental health, has spanned four decades.

Rae has embraced the principal of CANI (Constant and Never-ending Improvement) as promoted by thought leaders such as Tony Robbins and brings that philosophy to each of his publications and presentations.

Rae has dedicated the latter segment of his journey through life to overcoming his personal inhibitions. As a 25+ year member of Toastmasters International he has systematically built his self-confidence and communicating ability. He is passionate about sharing his lessons with his readers and listeners.

His publications thus far are of the self-help, self-improvement genre and systematically offer valuable sage advice on a specific topic.

His writing style can be described as being conversational. As an author, Rae strives to have a one-to-one conversation with each of his readers, very much



like having your own personal self-development coach.

Rae is known for having a wry sense of humour that features in his publications. To learn more about Rae A. Stonehouse, visit the Wonderful World of Rae Stonehouse at <http://raestonehouse.com>.



## **PUBLICATIONS BY THE AUTHOR**

**Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!**

<http://powernetworkingforshypeople.com>



**PROtect Yourself! Empowering Tips & Techniques for Personal Safety: A Practical Violence Prevention Manual for Healthcare Workers**

<http://protectyourselfnow.ca/>



**E= Emcee Squared: Tips & Techniques to Becoming a Dynamic Master of Ceremonies**

<http://emceesquared.mremcee.com/>



**Power of Promotion: On-line Marketing for Toastmasters Club Growth**

<http://powerofpromotion.ca/>



**You're Hired! Job Strategies Search That Work: Available as a self-directed or instructor-led on-line e-course.**

<https://yourehirednow.com/online-course>



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**You're Hired! Leveraging Your Network - Job Search Strategies That Work: Available as an e-book or paperback.**

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**If you have found this book and program to be helpful, please leave us a warm review wherever you purchased this book.**

# **YOU'RE HIRED! LEVERAGING YOUR NETWORK**

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JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES THAT WORK

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## 2. CONNECT WITH US



**V**isit us on the web at <https://yourehirednow.com>.

Check out our **Jobs Now Blog** @ <https://yourehirednow.com> for job searching advice to frequently asked questions.

For even more job searching tips & techniques, join us on **Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/jobstrategiesthatwork/>

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**WELCOME!**



Hi there! Welcome to **You're Hired! Leveraging Your Network - Job Search Strategies That Work.**

Make no mistake. Searching for work... is work!

It takes time, effort and a lot of self-motivation to succeed in your search.

While you have your skills and experience in place to apply for and land your dream job, or one that leads you to it, searching for a job requires a whole different set of skills.

In many job markets being invited for an interview can be like winning a lottery. Your resume likely got you in the door, now you need to wow the Interviewer and do your best in the interview to land the job.

This book focuses on strategies for ***building and leveraging your network*** to maximize your job searching effectiveness and is excerpted and expanded upon, from my book **You're Hired! Job Search Strategies That Work.**

Nobody can make a promise if you follow their program, you will be guaranteed the results you are looking for and I

won't either.

However, I'm confident if you follow the strategies outlined in this book, your chances of being successful in landing a job are increased.

From my experience, one of the biggest problems job seekers often face is they feel they are coming from an inferior position and they don't have a lot of personal power. The belief being the Employer has the superior position and has all the power.

Yes, they have the job and they have the power to give you the job... or not.

What you may not realize is many Hiring Managers are under similar pressures as you, the job seeker. They have the pressure of finding the right candidate for the vacancy they need to fill.

They are accountable to their superiors should the person they hire not work out. It has been said an inappropriate hire can cost the organization an additional 30 to 50 percent over the job position's annual wage. This would include lost productivity incurred when the new hire is oriented, the cost of advertising for new applicants and the time taken to interview and follow up with applicants.

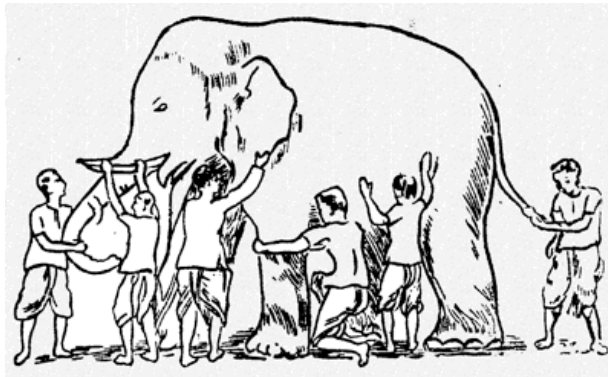
Hiring managers are under pressure to hire the right candidate.

Your task is to become the **only** choice. The **right** choice!

As I mentioned earlier, we are likely not experts at searching for jobs and landing one. It isn't something we do on a regular basis.

As I researched the content for my book **You're Hired! Job Search Strategies That Work**, I found the problem is compounded by a lack of hard facts on what are the best-practices for job searching.

I'm reminded of an old parable about a group of blind men were required to touch an elephant and to describe their observations.



Each one felt a different part, but only one part, such as a tusk or the trunk. When they compared notes, they learned they were in complete disagreement.

I found the same to be true when researching strategic job searching skills.

Each webpage from my search results on the internet spoke from the perspective of the writer whether they were a resume writer, an Employer Hiring Manager, recruiter, etc.

Much the same as the blind men describing what an elephant looks like, their advice is from their perspective. That makes sense to me. We all create our own reality. My reality is completely different from anyone else's.

The problem is the job search 'experts' state their observations as hard facts. They believe what they write is true. And then the next article you read, will dispute what the first expert had said and they will present their truths.

How can something be both true and false at the same time? You must never do this. You must always do this.

Same advice. Can something be both yes and no?

I don't consider myself an expert at job searching.

What I am very good at though is taking subjects people struggle with, finding better, easier ways to do things and breaking it down to basic strategies that work.

I create *systems* to solve *problems*.

Years ago, I moved my family across Canada to a city where I didn't know anyone.

I had a brand-new home built for me, but I didn't have a job waiting for me when I got there.

At the time, the new location was very hostile towards people who had moved from the east to the west coast.

I often heard "you Easterners come out here and steal our jobs..."

I found jobs were limited. I found getting an interview for a position I had applied for was like winning a lottery.

I also found my new geographical area had what they called a 'Sunshine Tax.'

As a desirable place to live, the cost of living is higher and employers believe they can get away with paying their employees lower wages. The idea being you the worker should be grateful to have a job and the employer can get away with paying you less.

"If you don't want the job, somebody else will!"

I got so tired of hearing about stealing local jobs I started to change my story when I attended local business networking events.

Instead of saying I was *unemployed*, I would say I had *retired* early.

I was 39 years old and the illusion I had retired early seem to resolve the 'you Easterners' complaint.

However, I used to add "if the right job came along, I would likely consider going back to work."

It was offered somewhat tongue in cheek.

It took me a good six months to land a job. It wasn't as good a job as I had hoped.

It was a compromise until something better came along.

I describe my employment experience at my new location as being like a roller coaster ride.

I went from being unemployed, to employed. I went from not getting enough hours to getting too many.

I went from being employed to being laid off.

I went from being employed to being self-employed.

Self-employment ended when I came back from a vacation to find my only client had sold their business i.e. a vocational school and the new owners had no idea who I was or had need of my services.

Back to being unemployed.

Then I got a job in another city. It was a 90-mile round trip, daily.

I went from being at the employer's beck and call for three years working as many hours as I could as a casual staff. Then I got fired!

Then I got *unfired* and a new job, same company, a few blocks away.

I went from full time to no time to part time to even more part time. Then less time and even less time.

I had to tell my manager I couldn't afford to stay and I couldn't afford to go.

We solved the problem by me picking up hours from another worker who wanted to work less.

The downside is I work a lot of night shifts and it is still a 90 mile, 150-kilometre round trip for work.

I think you can see why I call it a roller coaster ride.

Over the years, I have been invited to numerous job search training programs as a guest speaker, promoting the value of public speaking skills to the job search and interviewing process as well as networking skills.



Throughout this book, I will be providing you with what I consider being the best practices for leveraging and building your network.

Some content may disagree with what the so-called experts would say but then again... the next one would likely agree with me.

If you are a sports fan, you will recognize that any sport has a set of rules and varying degrees of competition.

Searching for a job, your job, is a competitive situation.

It could come down to two or more possible candidates, hopefully you, being one of them, having very similar credentials and qualifications.

If there was ever a time self-promotional skills and self-confidence would come into play, it would be in the job searching and interviewing process.

Being able to effectively promote yourself can make the difference between landing the job and a ‘thank you very much, but we won’t be hiring you at this time.’”

Welcome aboard and I hope you enjoy our journey together!





### 3. INTRODUCTION TO YOUR NETWORK WEB



**W**elcome to Section One. In this lesson, we look at how to create and use your **Network Web** to help search for your job.

We are also going to look at some strategies to help you when you are out there networking. I call them power networking strategies.

But before we do so, it is probably a good idea to explain what a Network Web is and why you should create one.

In the not too distant past there was a principle identified as *Six Degrees of Separation*.

According to Wikipedia... Six degrees of separation is the idea all living things and everything else in the world are six or fewer steps away from each other so a chain of “a friend of a friend” statements can be made to connect any two people in a maximum of six steps.

It was originally set out by Frigyes Karinthy in 1929. Karinthy was apparently a Hungarian Author.

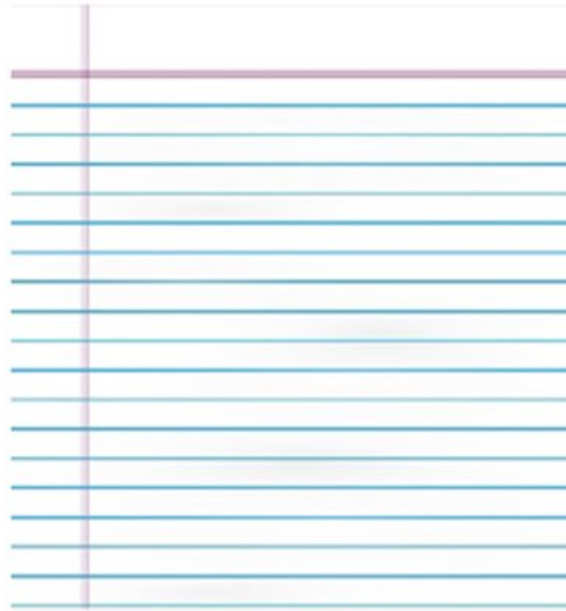
With the rapid development of on-line social media venues, it has been said the degrees of separation that connect you to almost anybody in the world is now down to three degrees.

If you are on LinkedIn, and you should be, you can easily see as your number of 1<sup>st</sup> degree connections increase, your 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree connections increase exponentially. Your 3<sup>rd</sup> degree connections could easily be in the millions.

So how do we take advantage of this worldwide interconnectedness?

The answer to that question while it is an easy one, does take some work.

The *Network Web* is a tool that helps you draw upon your personal network to find the ideal job you are looking for. Your ideal job may not be posted yet, in fact, it may not even be created yet. Your Network Web can help put you in front of decision makers and key people that are in the position to hire you.



**STEP ONE** IS TO MAKE A LIST OF YOUR PERSONAL CATEGORIES.

These are your interests and the organizations, formal and informal that you belong to.

These may include hobbies, family, church, professional organizations, sports teams, current and past employment.

Create a page for each of the above categories as well as any others you can think of.

Once you have completed the task, please go to the next step in this strategy.

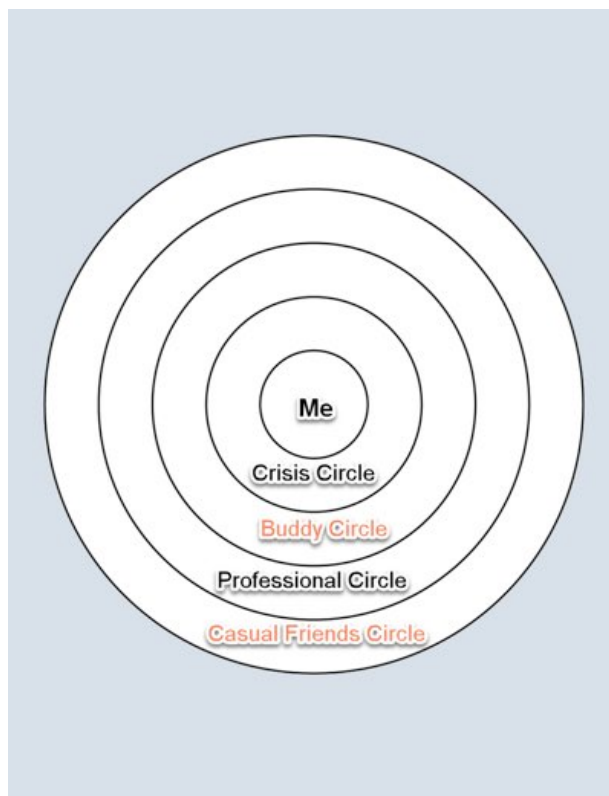
**Step Two** is to make a list of people you know in each category, start with a list of 10 names for each organization or interest category and then add 10 more if possible.

Don't worry about considering if you have seen them recently or not.

At this point, your task is to generate as many names as you can you can.

When you have completed this task please go to the next step in this strategy.

**Step Three:** For illustrative purposes, we will use this drawing. It is basically a web with you at the centre and four circles located on the web.



You should create a document with the names of the circles as your headings.

**First Circle:** The ***Crisis Circle*** is closest to the centre of the Web.

These are the people you can really count on.

You should have at least four people who will be supportive in the event of death, illness, divorce or bankruptcy. They can include family, friends, your doctor or lawyer.

**The Second Circle:** This is your *buddy circle*.

Friends you have fun with, the people who accept you for who you are. There should be at least three people in this circle.

**The Third Circle:** This is your *professional circle*.

People who you know professionally, can provide reference letters and can speak about the quality of your work and character. You need at least 12 people in this category.

**The Fourth Circle:** This is your *casual friends* circle.

People you can share ideas with. You may work with them or know them through organizations or volunteer work. Some may become closer friends and eventually form part of the more inner and intimate circles.

NOW YOU HAVE SOME WORK TO DO.

Create a list of people under the four circle's headings e.g. My Crisis Circle... My Buddies Circle ...



UP TO THIS POINT WE HAVEN'T FACTORED IN OUR LINKEDIN connections.

Likely, many of your LinkedIn connections will fit into your Third Circle, your *professional circle*.

Once you have gone through your LinkedIn connections, go through your other social media accounts and your e-mail address book and write down names.

You'll be surprised at how quickly the list grows.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LEARN HOW TO LEVERAGE THE connections you have just identified.

#### 4. LEVERAGING YOUR CONNECTIONS



**I**n this chapter, we delve deeper into networking and how we can *leverage* our connections as a powerful job searching strategy.

YOU MAY THINK YOU DON'T KNOW ANYONE WHO CAN HELP YOU with your job search. But you know more people than you think, and there's a very good chance at least a few of



these people know someone who can give you career advice or point you to a job opening.

You'll never know if you don't ask!

Some Job Search Coaches will tell you leveraging your network is the most effective strategy you can use to find your ideal job.

The **Network Web** is a powerful tool. You'll be amazed at all the contacts you do have, and can identify the gaps in the network.

With your goal of finding suitable employment in mind you can ask:

- Who do I need to know?
- Who do I need to bring into my circle?
- And who do I know who can introduce them to me?

### **Reach out to your network**

All the connections in the world won't help you find a job if no one knows about your situation.

Once you've drawn up your list, start making contact with the people in your network. Let them know that you're looking for a job.

Be specific about what kind of work you're looking for and ask them if they have any information or know anyone in a relevant field.

Don't assume certain people won't be able to help. You may be surprised by who they know.

### **FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU WANT BEFORE YOU START NETWORKING**

Networking is most effective when you have specific employer targets and career goals. It's hard to get leads with a generic "Let me know if you hear of anything" request.

You may think you'll have better job luck if you leave yourself open to all the possibilities, but the reality is this 'openness' creates a black hole that sucks all the networking potential out of the connection.

A **generic** networking request for a job is worse than no request at all because you can lose a networking contact and opportunity.

Asking for **specific** information, leads, or an interview is much more focused and easier for the networking source.

If you're having trouble focusing your job search, you can turn to close friends and family members for help, but avoid contacting more distant people in your network until you've set clear goals.

### **START WITH YOUR REFERENCES**

When you are looking for a job, start with your references.

Your best references—the people who like you and can endorse your abilities, track record, and character—are *major networking hubs*. Contact each one of your references to network about your possibilities and affirm their agreement to be your reference.

We discuss strategies for working with your references in greater detail in Section Four but here are a few quick points.

- Describe your goals and seek their assistance.
- Keep them informed on your job search progress.
- Prepare them for any calls from potential employers.
- Let them know what happened and thank them for their help regardless of the outcome.

IF YOU'RE NERVOUS ABOUT MAKING CONTACT—EITHER BECAUSE you're uncomfortable asking for favours or embarrassed about your employment situation—try to keep the following things in mind: It feels good to help others. Most people will gladly assist you if they can. People like to give advice and be recognized for their expertise. Almost everyone knows what it's like to be out of work or looking for a job. They'll sympathize with your situation.

Unemployment can be isolating and stressful. By connecting with others, you're sure to get some much-needed encouragement, fellowship, and moral support.

Reconnecting with the people in your network can be fun—even if you have an agenda.

The more this feels like a chore the more tedious and anxiety-ridden the process will be.

### **FOCUS ON BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**

Networking is a give-and-take process that involves making connections, sharing information, and asking questions. It's a way of relating to others, not a *technique* for getting a job or a favour.

You don't have to hand out your business cards on street corners, cold call everyone on your contact list, or work a room of strangers. All you have to do is reach out.

Be authentic. In any job search or networking situation, being you—the real you—should be your goal. Hiding who you are or suppressing your true interests and goals will only hurt you in the long run.

Pursuing what you want and not what you think others will like, will always be more fulfilling and ultimately more successful.

Be considerate. If you're reconnecting with an old friend or colleague, take the time to get through the catching-up phase before you blurt out your need. On the other hand, if this person is a busy professional you don't know well, be respectful of his or her time and come straight out with your request.

Ask for *advice*, not a job. Don't ask for a job, a request comes with a lot of pressure.

You want your contacts to become allies in your job search, not make them feel ambushed, so ask for information or insight instead. If they're able to hire you or refer you to someone who can, they will.

If not, you haven't put them in the uncomfortable position of turning you down or telling you they can't help. Be specific in your request.

Before you go off and reconnect with everyone you've ever known, get your act together and do a little homework. Be prepared to articulate *what* you're looking for:

- Is it a reference?
- An insider's take on the industry?
- A referral?
- An introduction to someone in the field?

Also make sure to provide an update on your qualifications and recent professional experience.

## **SLOW DOWN AND ENJOY THE JOB NETWORKING PROCESS**

The best race car drivers are masters of slowing down.

They know the fastest way around the track is by slowing down going into the turns, so they can accelerate sooner as they're heading into the straightaway.

As you're networking, keep this "Slow in, fast out" racing mantra in mind. Effective networking is not something that should be rushed.

This doesn't mean you shouldn't try to be efficient and focused, but hurried, *emergency* networking is not conducive to building relationships for mutual support and benefit.

When you network, you should slow down, be present, and try to enjoy the process. This will speed up your chances for success in the job-hunting race.

Just because you have an agenda doesn't mean you can't enjoy reconnecting.

### **DON'T BE A HIT-AND-RUN NETWORKER**

Don't be a hit-and-run networker: connecting, getting what you want, and then disappearing, never to be heard from until the next time you need something.

Invest in your network by following up and providing feedback to those who were kind enough to offer their help. Thank them for their referral and assistance. Let them know whether you got the interview or the job. Or use the opportunity to report on the lack of success or the need for additional help.

### **Evaluate the quality of your network**

IF YOUR NETWORKING EFFORTS DON'T SEEM TO BE GOING anywhere, you may need to evaluate the quality of your network. Take some time to think about your network's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.

Without such an evaluation, there is little chance your network will adapt to your needs and your future goals. You may not notice how bound you are to history, or how certain connections are holding you back. And you may miss opportunities to branch out and forge new ties that will help you move forward.

Taking inventory of your network and where it is lacking is time well spent. If you feel your network is out of date, then it's time to upgrade! Your mere awareness of your needs will help you connect you with new and more relevant contacts and networks.

### **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF BOTH 'STRONG' AND 'WEAK' TIES**

Everyone has both 'strong' and 'weak' ties.

Strong ties occupy that inner circle and weak ties are less established. Adding people to networks is time consuming, especially strong ties. It requires an investment of time and energy to have multiple 'best friends.' Trying to stay in touch with new acquaintances is just as challenging. But adding new 'weak tie' members gives your network vitality and even more cognitive flexibility—the ability to consider new ideas and options.

New relationships invigorate the network by providing a connection to new networks, viewpoints, and opportunities.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE EXPLORE TIPS FOR STRENGTHENING your job search network.



## 5. TIPS FOR STRENGTHENING YOUR JOB SEARCH NETWORK



**T**ap into your strong ties. Your strong ties will logically and trustingly lead to new weak ties that build a stronger network.

Use your existing network to add members and reconnect with people. Start by engaging the people in your trusted inner circle to help you fill in the gaps in your network.

Think about where you want to go. Your network should reflect where you're going, not just where you've been.

Adding people to your network who reflect issues, jobs, industries, and areas of interest is essential.

If you are a new graduate or a career changer, join the professional associations that represent your desired career path. Attending conferences, reading journals, and keeping up with the lingo of your desired field can prepare you for where you want to go.

Make the process of connecting a priority. Make connecting a habit—part of your lifestyle. Connecting is just as important as your exercise routine. It breathes life into you and gives you confidence.

Find out how your network is doing in this environment, what steps they are taking, and how you can help. As you connect, the world will feel smaller and a small world is much easier to manage.

### **TAKE THE TIME TO MAINTAIN YOUR NETWORK**

Maintaining your job-search network is just as important as building it.

Accumulating new contacts can be beneficial, but only if you have the time to nurture the relationships. Avoid the irrational impulse to meet as many new people as possible.

The key is quality rather than quantity. Focus on cultivating and maintaining your existing network. You're sure to discover an incredible array of information, knowledge, expertise, and opportunities.

## **SCHEDULE TIME WITH YOUR KEY CONTACTS**

List the people who are crucial to your network—people you know who can and have been very important to you. Invariably, there will be some you have lost touch with.

Reconnect and then schedule a regular meeting or phone call. You don't need a reason to get in touch. It will always make you feel good and provide you with an insight or two.

## **PRIORITIZE THE REST OF YOUR CONTACTS**

Keep a running list of people you need to reconnect with. People whose view of the world you value. People you'd like to get to know better or whose company you enjoy.

Prioritize these contacts and then schedule time into your regular routine so you can make your way down the list.

## **TAKE NOTES ON THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NETWORK**

Collecting cards and filing them is a start. But maintaining your contacts, new and old, requires updates. Add notes about their families, their jobs, their interests, and their needs.

Unless you have a photographic memory, you won't remember all of this information unless you write it down.

Put these updates and notes on the back of their business cards or input them into your contact database.

### **FIND WAYS TO RECIPROCATE**

Always remember successful networking is a *two-way* street. Your ultimate goal is to cultivate mutually beneficial relationships.

That means giving as well as receiving.

Send a thank-you note, ask them about their family, email an article you think they might be interested in, and check in periodically to see how they're doing. By nurturing the relationship through your job search and beyond, you'll establish a strong network of people you can count on for ideas, advice, feedback, and support.



IN THE NEXT FEW CHAPTERS WE LOOK CLOSER AT SOME STRATEGIES to maximize our effectiveness when out there networking... person to person.

## 6. DRESS FOR SUCCESS



**M**ost of us have likely been told from a very early age “You shouldn’t judge a book by its cover.”

Yet we do it every day, often in the first few seconds of having met someone.

We automatically determine whether they are a danger to us, whether we would want to have a conversation with them, whether we would want them as a mate... or to mate with.

We do it automatically.

It's part of being human and our judgement is often made with the clothing the person is wearing as one of our decision-making criteria. Being dressed inappropriately for a given situation can set you apart so people do not want to approach you to converse.

If you are shy, having somebody come up to you to talk can be a lot easier than having to make the approach yourself. So, don't reduce your chances by dressing wrong.

Wrong? What does that mean?

There is a lot of room for interpretation. What is wrong for one person is right for another. Many people like to express themselves through colourful clothing or cutting-edge fashion.

Many people don't have a clue when it comes to dressing for the occasion.

I once attended a black-tie gala awards event. I was in a tuxedo as was my colleague. We observed some men in their cleanest blue jeans with a black string tie.

I think they missed the point.

My suggestion would be if you were attending a business networking event, then 'business casual' would be appropriate. This can become even more casual in hot climates.

If everyone is wearing shorts and you are in your tuxedo, you may get attention but perhaps not the kind you wanted.

As for dressing for success, it has been proven over and over most people feel better about themselves when they're dressed up. You need every advantage you can get when you are out there networking, marketing yourself.

Don't shut the door in your face before it is even opened. People do judge others by their clothing, don't let them judge you without talking to you first.



IN OUR NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT BUSINESS CARD PRESENTATION and etiquette.

## 7. BUSINESS CARD PRESENTATION & ETIQUETTE



**I**n an earlier chapter in this section, we made mention a couple times about using business cards in your networking activities.

Now we are going to take a closer look at business card presentation and etiquette. If you are planning on doing some serious networking, you should have business cards available to present to another.

Not having a card to present may be a missed opportunity for you.



Besides serving as an introduction for you, they will serve as a visual prompt to remind the other person they met and spoke to you.

It can be difficult to think of using business cards when you are searching for work and you aren't in business. It might help to think of them as being 'calling' cards.

Their purpose is to provide your name and contact information for anyone who might want to get in contact with you.

Hopefully, to tell you about a job lead.

Having business cards printed used to be fairly expensive, but now, they are within everyone's reach. Companies like Vistaprint have regular specials where you can order on-line 500 business cards for \$10.00.

I have purchased from Vistaprint when they have offered special deals. 500 cards for \$10.00... it's hard to beat that deal.

Some job-searching networkers struggle with the fact they don't have a business to promote and they're not sure what to put on their card as their title. I believe they tend to overthink this part of the process.

If you have a professional designation, you would insert it, right after your name. A quick example would be using myself... Rae A. Stonehouse R.N., if I was looking for a nursing position.

With business cards being so inexpensive and if you are searching for work in more than one field, you could easily purchase additional cards that identify you as working in those fields.

When in a networking interaction, if you have your different cards with you, you could easily produce one that connects you with a specific field of discussion.

Now you have your business or calling card, we need to look at the process of sharing your card. Despite what some people think, there is a protocol.

The Japanese take the presentation of a business card in a one to one networking situation far more serious than we do. To them, ritual is involved.

When presented with a business card you are expected to accept it with both hands, hold it in front of you and read the content of the card, both sides. You would then hold it with respect as the other person shares their elevator pitch.

You would only place it in your pocket after you had left the person and you would never deface the card by writing on it.

In North America, we are a little less respectful.

Sometimes, quite a bit!

I have met a fellow that within the first seconds of meeting him he announces “Well let’s get this out of the way” and

hands me his card. I expect he wasn't as comfortable or skilled at networking as he thought he was.

I have also seen an influential woman walk up to a group of people and start passing out her business cards. "Here you go, one for you and one for you!"

She then left the group and went over to another and repeated the process. It was like she was feeding chickens or passing out candy to children who were trick or treating at her door.

The purpose of passing out her business card seemed to be missed. I wonder if she was actually shy and was covering up her uncomfortableness?

So, what is the correct way to present your card to another? How and when?

I'm sure everybody has their own view on the matter.

When I have been offered another's business card as part of an introduction that is under way, I will adopt what I described earlier as the Japanese method.

I will accept it, quickly read the details and I will keep it in my hand in full view. I see the offering of a business card from another as the cue to offer mine in return.

I often make a comment about a detail or an aspect of their business card to reinforce that I have taken a serious look at it. If I don't see any action from my partner towards offering their business card, I will initiate it myself.

Asking, “Do you have a business card?” can be easier than saying “Here is my business card.”

Of course, their providing a card opens it up for me to provide mine. I will also listen for a verbal cue of “I should get in contact with you”, “I will keep in touch” or anything close to that as a signal for me to offer my card.



IN OUR NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT SHAKING HANDS, A NECESSARY part of networking.

## 8. WHOLE LOTTA SHAKING GOING ON

I've titled this chapter **Whole Lotta Shaking Going On**, because when you are out there networking, meeting new people and greeting people you already know, there *really* is a lot of handshaking going on.



A handshake is more than just a greeting. It is also a message about your personality and confidence level.

In business, a handshake is an important tool in making the right first impression. The same applies when you are job searching.

Your ***business*** is finding yourself a job.

Let's take a closer look at the simple act of shaking another's hand. Maybe, it's not so simple after all!

Before extending your hand, introduce yourself. Extending your hand should be part of an introduction, not a replacement for using your voice.

This isn't the cue to start reciting your elevator pitch though.

Extending your hand without saying anything may make you appear nervous or overly aggressive. On one hand (pun intended!) it would seem shaking someone's hand should be an easy process. We have likely been doing it most of our adult life.

On the other hand, some people seem to have problems with it.

I believe part of the problem that creates anxiety is we overthink things sometimes. We are anxious because we give more importance to the activity than it really deserves, and it takes on a life of its own, creating anxiety.

A self-fulfilling prophesy if there ever was one.

Another part that probably creates anxiety is we can only control our portion of the interaction. If our partner is an experienced hand-shaker, then all should go smoothly but many aren't.

There are a few *different* hand-shaking styles that come up in the literature and I am sure you have likely experienced them yourselves.

I personally don't like grasping someone's hand who has the so-called '**wet fish**' handshake. It can leave you with an obsessive urge to wipe your hand as soon as you can, but fight the urge.

Even worse, there are times my hand is sweating and I don't want the label. I have developed the habit of giving my hand a quick, unobtrusive wipe on my pant leg before offering my hand.

THEN THERE IS "**BONE-CRUSHER BILL.**" THE OFFERED HAND often comes in as a curve from the hip of Bill with the express purpose of crushing walnuts.

Or so it would seem.

Bill never seems to realize the pain he causes in others or the fact people start to avoid him. Word can get around!

Another ineffective handshake I call the "**Royal**" handshake.

Someone only offers you the tips of their fingers and no matter how you try you can't seem to grasp more than a few fingers. You are left feeling you were robbed.

The bottom line is *you* should avoid being any of these profiles. If you need to practice at home before going to a networking session, do so.

It seems to be coming more common that friends are hugging when meeting in a social setting. There are many people are what I call 'huggy' people.

I would suggest waiting to see if you offered one rather than expecting one. It could make for an awkward situation if you were to offer a hug on a first contact and it wasn't welcomed.

## **MAINTAINING EYE CONTACT**

Closely related to hand-shaking and interacting with a new contact is that of maintaining your eye contact.

Many people have challenges maintaining eye contact with their conversational partner at the best of times. This can have different reasons.

For some cultures, it is inappropriate to look another in the eyes. Avoiding eye contact can be a sign of respect or deference to the other.

For the most part, maintaining eye contact in a conversation can demonstrate confidence. A couple challenges come to mind though.

A difference in height between the speakers can be challenging, probably more for the short person looking up than the taller person looking down.

Another challenge in a busy room is to focus on your conversational partner, not on people passing by or other conversations going on. It can distract you and give the impression you are looking for a better conversation to join. If your partner is displaying this particular behaviour, they may well be scanning the room for a better opportunity.





IN OUR NEXT CHAPTER, WE EXPLORE THE IMPORTANCE OF following up with what you said you were going to do.

**“DEFINE YOUR GOALS IN TERMS OF THE ACTIVITIES NECESSARY to achieve them, and concentrate on those activities.”  
— Brian Tracy**

## 9. FOLLOW-UP IS EVERYTHING!

**I**t can be a great feeling when coming home from a networking event and looking at the stack of business cards you have collected. You even spoke at length to many of the card-donators.

Some, it can be a little difficult to recall who they were.

“Now was he the tall fellow with the bad hair piece... or was he...?” You’ve probably experienced that scenario more than once. And you know what... perhaps some business people you gave your precious business card to are thinking something similar.

Hopefully not about your bad hair though.

For effective business networking, I recommend the *quality* over *quantity* method of networking.

Some would say networking is a numbers game, the *more* you meet the *higher* the chances of your meeting someone who can benefit you.

Take for example, you are meeting someone for the first time and if the setting and conditions permit, they deliver

their elevator pitch and you return with yours. Then comes the awkward moment, what to say next.

You can either carry on conversing about something of no consequence “Nice day, eh?” until one of you tires of it or you can explore common interests. Assuming, you have a common interest, I would suggest you take the lead in the conversation in getting the other to expand upon the commonality or something they had previously said.

Many networkers make the mistake of trying to sell their *product or themselves* at this juncture. Your *goal* should be to arrange to meet them at *another* time, perhaps for coffee, to discuss those common areas further.

Even though many of us are electronically connected to our offices by our smart phones and can probably check to see if we are available at a certain date and time to make a coffee date, we likely won't.

When you suggest meeting for coffee, later, if the person is willing to set up a date and time, on the spot, I would go with it. Location can always be determined later by e-mail.

If they aren't willing to set a time and date, I would refer to their business card and say something to the effect of “Can I reach you at this e-mail?”

“I'll contact you next week and see if we can set up a time to get together for a quick coffee.”

Unfortunately, for many networkers, this is as far as they go. They don't do the follow-up. Life gets busy, there is

always one more thing to do with your business and before you know it you have lost the window of opportunity.

There is a strong possibility the individual you were networking with also has a list of people they are following up with and other commitments. It is far too easy to get left by the wayside if you don't take action to stand out from the others.

At a recent morning meeting of my Business Referral Group we discussed the issue of follow up.

A fellow member, related that in his experience, if you actually follow-up with a lead, it puts you way ahead of those who don't.

He makes a practice of following up with a networking connection within three days of the original meeting and says it is amazing how many people have said to him "You know, you are one of the few who actually follows up."

Yes, following up can help you stand out from the competition.

THE COFFEE GET-TOGETHER IS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH OF YOU to share your business or professional details and determine if there is enough reason to continue at another time to develop your relationship further and ideally to do business together.

You might ask "I've contacted them three times by e-mail and even left a couple voice mails but they haven't gotten

back to me. What do I do next?”

There could be a legitimate reason for them not getting back to you. Life happens! But they could be acting non-assertively and are actively avoiding you.

I would have to respond with “If that was *true*, is that someone you *really* want to network with or to do business with?” If you are to continue, it could easily label you as a stalker.

One suggestion may be to add them to your tickler file. A tickler file is like a day-timer or a planner and you add a date and a time to follow up on a specific item.

A couple weeks down the road, ignoring the fact they haven’t acknowledged you yet, you would be justified in sending them a message something like “I just noticed we didn’t get together a few weeks ago like we said we would.

Where did the time go? It seems to be picking up speed.

Last time we met we were discussing our common interests of... Are you still interested in getting together?”

If you still don’t receive a response, I would put them in the ‘inactive’ file.

When it comes to networking, to *stand out* from your competition, remember to *follow-up*.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT SOME THINGS YOU ***SHOULDN'T*** do when you are networking.

**“MAKING A LIVING IS EITHER A STAIRWAY TO A COFFIN... OR A stepping stone to greatness... your path awaits you.”**  
— Doug Firebaugh

## 10.TOP 15 NETWORKING NO-NOS

**T**hroughout this section and in articles I have written, I have provided tips & techniques to help improve networking effectiveness.

I thought it would be informative and perhaps entertaining to look at the subject from a *different* perspective i.e. what you really ***shouldn't*** do.

It's a good way to reinforce what you ***should*** do.

These aren't provided in any order of priority.

See if you recognize any of them from your adventures in networking land.

- **No Show: (Not showing up for an appointment)**

When all is said and done it can be argued all you really own in life is your reputation.

There are some people who don't respect other people's time. They make appointments they don't intend to keep, or they pre-empt the appointment for something more important than meeting with you.

Soon they get the reputation of not being reliable or keeping commitments. Is this the reputation you want to develop?

- **No Follow-up: (Not following up on something you said you would do)**

BNI (Business Network International) founder Dr. Ivan Misner promotes the concept of 'givers gain.'

Offering to help someone with something or providing information can help an individual move their business forward without expecting compensation, is a good way to develop a network connection.

Not following-up on what you said you were going to do takes away from your credibility and your reputation.

- **No Follow-up: (Not following through with contacting a connection)**

IF YOU SAY YOU ARE GOING TO FOLLOW-UP WITH SOMEONE... DO SO.

If you don't... at the least, you have missed an opportunity to develop a potential profitable connection. At the worst, well who knows!

See **Follow-up is Everything!** in the Resource Section for an expanded version of why you should follow-up.



- **Not focussing on your conversation partner i.e. looking around the room for a better offer.**

I THINK WE ARE ALL GUILTY OF THIS AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER.  
Let's face it, not everybody is interesting to listen to.

And you know what... our conversation partner might be thinking the same thing about us!

Listening is a skill.

You will find the more you listen to people, the more they think you are interested in them, the more they will reveal about themselves and they will think you are a fantastic conversationalist.

- **Using sexist or racist language.**

I HEAR THIS FAR TOO OFTEN IN CONVERSATIONS WITH PEOPLE WHO should know better. It isn't acceptable, and I don't want to hear it.

When you are looking for work and out there making connections, you really don't want people to remember you as a sexist or racist.

- **Fly undone!**

GENTS FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE CHECK YOUR FLY WHEN YOU LEAVE THE restroom.

It might be a great conversation starter "So the bull's ready to get out is it?" But is this where you want the conversation to go?

It can be challenging to recover from a position of embarrassment. Trust me, I know. I was on stage for two hours once as an emcee with my fly undone

- **I'm so wonderful! (Going on and on about yourself and not giving the other person a chance to talk)**

IF YOU HAVE BEEN ON THE RECEIVING END OF LISTENING TO ONE of these types, you will know it is not fun.

I would suggest hitting the *Pause* button and move on to the next opportunity.

While you should have your own story ready to share, which includes the fact you are searching for work, you should be prepared to listen closely to the other person and learn more about them.

- **Talking about someone else i.e. a third party who isn't part of the conversation in a derogatory manner.**

SOME PEOPLE ARE HAPPIEST WHEN THEY ARE PUTTING SOMEBODY else down.

If you participate with someone like this, you are validating their behaviour and you will likely soon be labelled the same way. This is basically gossip.

You can bet, if a gossip is telling you something juicy about someone else, they are also telling someone else about you.

Don't be a gossip!

- **Dump job: (Using your conversational partner as a sounding board without asking their permission to do so)**

WE ALL HAVE CHALLENGES IN LIFE, PROBLEMS THAT ARE bothering us right now. It won't help your networking success rate if you become known as a whiner. That's what counsellors are for.

Leave your complaints at home and come prepared with a success-focussed story to share. You don't even have to be the hero in your story. You can tell a story about how you helped someone else become successful.

- **Monopolizing the Other Person's Time:**

THIS IS A LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM WHAT IS OUTLINED IN #7 I'M so Wonderful!

If you are shy or uncomfortable with networking, it can be easy to stay with one person longer than you should. You are depriving both of you the opportunity to meet other people.

- **Disrespecting a Business Card:**

PEOPLE TEND TO TAKE THEIR BUSINESS CARD QUITE SERIOUSLY. IT is an extension of who they are.

We aren't as serious about it as say the Japanese however, picking your teeth with someone's business card is a not a great way to make friends and influence people.

- **Hit & Run: (Acting like a Shark)**

SHARKS ARE A TYPE OF NETWORKER WHO GO TO A BUSINESS networking event with the intent of making a sale right there, right now.

They don't care about you or your business. They are only interested in what they can get from you.

Don't be one! And don't allow yourself to be attacked by one either!

- **Not having Your Own Business Cards:**

THIS PORTRAYS THE IMAGE YOU ARE NOT A SERIOUS NETWORKER.

If you haven't even taken the time to develop and produce business cards to promote yourself, then why would I want to do business with you?

I have heard it said, "Oh I don't do business cards." "I take the time to write their name down on a piece of paper with their contact information."

"It's more personal, and then I contact them with, hey remember me?"

“Lame, lame, lame.” That’s all I can say about that comment.

I recall a speed-networking event I organized. It was very much like speed dating, except it was for the purpose of developing business connections.

One young fellow who worked as a high-end office furniture salesman didn’t bring any business cards. When I asked him why he didn’t bring any cards, he smiled and said “How can anybody forget this beautiful face?”

Well, I guess they did forget his beautiful face because a month or so later I saw him in his new line of work filling ice cream cones at our local Dairy Queen.

- **Eating Food While Conversing:**

MANY NETWORKING EVENTS OFFER FOOD & BEVERAGE.

Balancing a paper plate in one hand and a drink in the other can be challenging when reaching your hand out to shake another’s hand. My personal belief is if I am eating, I will stand to the side and chow down, then when finished, I will resume networking.

I have had to stand an awfully long time with a plate of food in my hand while listening to another to avoid appearing rude.

Word to the wise... be careful of spinach dips. Spinach stuck to your teeth can take your conversational partner's focus in different directions than what you intended.

- **Networking While Inebriated:**

YOU ARE YOUR OWN LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD. IF YOU CAN'T handle your liquor without getting mouthy, don't drink!

What you say and do may come back to haunt you.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT USING LinkedIn as a job searching tool.

## 11.LINKEDIN REVISITED



**I**n the last section, we briefly mentioned utilizing LinkedIn as a tool to develop connections that can hopefully be a source of employment leads for you.

So how do you do so?

Let's go back to basics to answer that question.

When LinkedIn was first developed, we were encouraged to upload our resumes to our LinkedIn profile. If you had a long work career, your experience section included the duties and responsibilities you had taken on over the years, could be quite lengthy.



It was very much like having your resume on steroids. It seemed the more you had posted, the better.

The same applied to creating your resume. The more you had written, the better off you were.

As they say... the times are changing.

If you are brand new to the concept of LinkedIn, let me keep it brief by saying that you can easily sign up for an account for free.

As I understand, people go to LinkedIn for three main purposes:

- One, to look for *work* or *opportunities*.
- Two, to find someone to *hire* for their business.
- And three, they are looking for a *solution* to a problem they have.

When setting up your professional profile you need to be thinking *self-promotion*.

At this point in your life... that is being in job-search mode, you need to be *easily* seen as a solution to somebody's problem. Your solution of course is you are willing to work for them and you have the skills and expertise to do so.

The promotional copy you add to your LinkedIn profile has to not only *grab* your reader's attention from the beginning, it has to *quickly* position you as someone who is worth digging deeper into your profile.

As I have said before, your LinkedIn profile, starting with your name, title and summary, should be consistent with what you have written in your resume.

Your **Summary Statement** from your resume fits in quite well as the summary for your LinkedIn profile.

The content you have added to the *Experience* section of your resume also fits in well to your **LinkedIn Experience** section with the added benefit of being able to expand upon your personal information you weren't able to do within the limitations of a resume.

If you have any publications or examples of work you have created that would be of benefit to your job search, LinkedIn is a good place to feature them.

In a previous chapter, we talked about using business cards in networking. Especially when job searching, there is value in posting your LinkedIn url to your business card.

The same applies with posting your LinkedIn url to your resume. You want to make it as easy as possible for people to research you and what solution you might have to offer them.

The other sections of your LinkedIn profile should also be completed with a *self-promotional* slant, keeping in mind you still need to be professional.



LinkedIn is not Facebook. Anything you post to the timeline should be professional in nature and shed you in a good light. That is, it should position you as a *credible, experienced* if not an expert, in your field.

Up to this point, we have been talking about you promoting yourself on LinkedIn as part of your overall job-searching strategy. Another equally beneficial feature of LinkedIn is you can search for jobs in the geographical area you want to work in by entering your search query into the Search box on your home page.

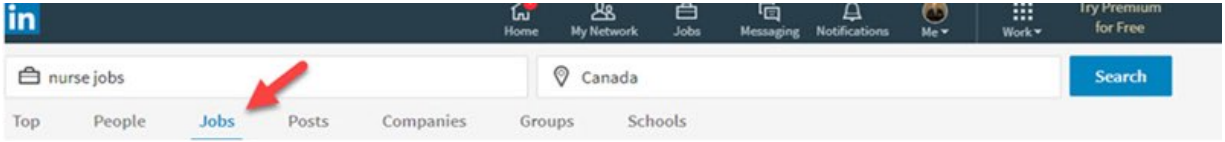


In the graphic below, I clicked on the **Jobs link**, then I entered the term 'Nurse Jobs' in the screen that came up.

in Home My Network Jobs Messaging Notifications Me Work Try Premium for Free

nurse jobs Canada Search

Top People Jobs Posts Companies Groups Schools

The image shows the top navigation bar of the LinkedIn website. On the left is the LinkedIn logo. To its right are icons for Home, My Network, Jobs, Messaging, Notifications, Me, and Work. On the far right is a link to 'Try Premium for Free'. Below this bar is a search area with a search bar containing the text 'nurse jobs' and a location filter set to 'Canada'. A blue 'Search' button is to the right of the location filter. Below the search area is a horizontal navigation menu with the following items: 'Top', 'People', 'Jobs', 'Posts', 'Companies', 'Groups', and 'Schools'. The 'Jobs' item is underlined and has a red arrow pointing to it from above.

You can fine tune it for different geographical areas if you are considering relocating or your own area if you aren't.

Something to remember though is these are just the jobs that have been listed on LinkedIn by the people who are trying to fill the vacancies. It doesn't mean this is a complete listing of jobs available. You will have to check other on-line sources.

With LinkedIn, you can search for members that share similar titles as the job you are interested in applying for.

The advantage to doing so is you can look at their profile to see if there are any ideas or content that you could leverage for your profile that is to add to it.


IN THE GRAPHIC BELOW, I CLICKED ON THE **PEOPLE LINK**, THEN entered **Health and Safety Specialist** as my search term.

LinkedIn navigation bar with search results for "Health And Safety Specialist".

Navigation icons: Home, My Network, Jobs, Messaging, Notifications, Me, Work, Try Premium for Free.

Search bar: Health And Safety Specialist

Search results tabs: Top, **People**, Jobs, Posts, Companies, Groups, Schools.



There is value in checking out the profiles of people you have connected with on LinkedIn. Perhaps they may have something posted that could be a resource to you by way of added knowledge or a connection to somebody who could forward your job-searching activities.

In addition, it is worthwhile doing a search for the company or organization you are interested in or have applied for. You can gain some interesting insights about them if they have a company LinkedIn profile set up. This could be the kind of information that would help you in a job interview with them, perhaps even insider information.



To conclude ... this chapter, how to leverage LinkedIn for job-searching, is easily a subject we could spend a lot of time on.

Like every other aspect of your job-searching strategies, that is developing your resumes, building a network and a team of references, it is only one piece and it has to be consistent with everything else. Make sure you take the time to develop your profile fully and start building and leveraging your connections.

Remember the concept of ***Givers Gain***... a concept developed by Dr. Ivan Misner, Founder of Business Networking International. If you ***give*** something or a service to someone else, ***without*** the expectation of something in return, the odds are you will ***receive*** something in return.

This can be something as simple as sending an article to someone who you think might benefit from it or perhaps writing an informational article on a subject you are experienced in. And what you receive in return, doesn't necessarily come from someone who you have given to. It could be a connection of theirs or perhaps a complete stranger.

Some might call it Karma, others might call it the Law of Attraction in action. Either way, it is a good value and practice to develop.



IN THE NEXT SECTION, WE CREATE STRATEGIES TO MAXIMIZE YOUR references.

**“WORK IS EFFORT APPLIED TOWARD SOME END. THE MOST satisfying work involves directing our efforts toward achieving ends that we ourselves endorse as worthy expressions of our talent and character.” -- William J. Bennett**



**“YOU HAVE TO DO MORE THAN YOU GET PAID FOR BECAUSE  
that's where the fortune is.” -- Jim Rohn**

**SECTION TWO: REFERENCE STRATEGIES**



## 12. MAXIMIZING YOUR REFERENCES



**I**n this section, we look closely at how to strategize and use your references effectively.

The right list of personal references can be the key to success in securing follow-up interviews.

Each reference should:

- Consent to give a reference about you.
- Have a surname different from yours (even if unrelated).

- Work in an office where he or she can receive calls during business hours and can privately **tell** (rhymes with 'sell') about you intelligently, credibly, and enthusiastically.
- Be thoroughly prepared by you to give a *knowledgeable, motivational, inspirational* reference.

### **Additional Reference Attributes:**

As you create your list of preference references, besides being a cheerleader for you as to how wonderful you are, look for these additional attributes:

- A successful professional life.
- A self-confident, upbeat, outgoing demeanour.
- Good oral and written communication skills.
- A fondness for you (with a little PR, if necessary).
- A desire, (preferably burning) to help you succeed.

Remember, you have a wide field to draw from in order to pick perfect professional references.

By only considering former supervisors or college instructors as references, most job seekers neglect 80 percent of the potential reference population.



## **WHO COULD BE YOUR INFLUENTIAL REFERENCES?**

Review your career history and your current business contacts for the names of influential references who can give you ***search security*** without ***job jeopardy***. Your list might include:

- Former supervisors.
- Your boss's boss and other high-level executives at past employers who knew your contributions.
- Coworkers at present or past employers who witnessed your skills and effectiveness.
- Subordinates who can verify your management ability.
- Colleagues or others who served with you on committees or task forces.

- Members of trade associations or other professional groups who know you.

If you haven't already, generate a list of potential references that meet the above criteria.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT MATCHING YOUR REFERENCES to specific jobs you are applying.

### 13. MATCH YOUR REFERENCES TO THE TARGET JOB



**O**ur next step is to take the names from the lists you generated after reading the last chapter and match those references to your target job.

For each prospective position, pick a back-up team of *specialty* references.

These people have special knowledge of:

- The target company
- Influential people at the target company
- The industry in which the company is involved

- Influential people in the industry whose names can be used
- The particular skills required which you possess

**LINE UP THE DEFENCE** NO MATTER HOW YOU PLAN TO PLAY your references, follow protocol. (It's not just polite. It's the only way to win.) When you intend to give a reference's name to an interviewer, or at the very least, as soon as you have, *inform* the reference of the fact!

Provide them information about:

- Who may be calling
- From what company
- About what position



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT HOW YOU CAN PREPARE YOUR references for when they are called to talk about you.

**“EVERYTHING COMES TO HIM WHO HUSTLES WHILE HE WAITS.”**  
**-- Thomas Edison**



**“WE MUST LEARN TO APPLY ALL THAT WE KNOW SO THAT WE  
can attract all that we want.” Jim Rohn**

## 14. PROFESSIONAL REFERENCE QUESTIONS LIST



**B**efore you call upon your references to put them to work, you should help make it easier for them by providing them with a copy of the **Professional Reference Questions List** or the **Personal Reference Questions List as applicable**.

They're included in your Additional Resources Section at the end of this book.

Let's look at the one for Professional references first.

The idea behind these lists is for you to make it easier for your references to *rave* about you.

You will notice some questions are requesting some factual information from your references and others are asking for their opinion.

The idea would be to consult with your references before you go for an interview and help them fill out the form. Some might appreciate your help, others may not.

## **THE PROFESSIONAL REFERENCE QUESTIONS LIST**

- **How long have you known?**

Hopefully, the people you have chosen for references have known you for some time.

- **How do you know?**

This question is asking your reference in what capacity do they know you.

- **Did they work alongside of you in a particular job?**

- **Did they supervise you?**

- **Did you supervise them?**

The *strength* of your reference is *increased* if they are able to demonstrate they have a good idea of how you work.

- **When was he/she hired?**

You would likely need to provide this information for your reference, especially if you are no longer working with them.

- **When did he/she leave?**

The same applies to this question.

If you no longer work with this particular reference, provide them the date you left employment with them.

- **What was his/her salary when he/she left?**

Odds are you will have to provide this as they wouldn't likely know.

- **Why did he/she leave?**

You can provide your reference with the details as to why you left, assuming you did leave of course. Your reference should rephrase your answer to this question into their own words. That is, something they would be comfortable saying.

- **Did you work with him/her directly?**

This appears to be a fairly simple question.

The Hiring Manager is basically qualifying the reference as to how well they knew you. If your reference didn't actually work closely with you, it's not really a problem if the reference is able to describe what your working relationship was.

A Hiring Manager may give more credibility to a reference who has worked *closely* with you rather than one that you had a *passing* acquaintance with.

- **Was he/she usually on time?**

Your reference may not know the answer to this one, so I would tell them to say something like "I'm not really sure about that."

"I can't say I noticed anything related to that."

It's somewhat of an evasive answer but probably better than them saying "Oh yeah, he was late all the time!" You're not going to win any points with a response like that one.

- **Was he/she absent from work very often?**

Your reference may not know the answer to this question.

If you haven't been absent from work a lot, you may want to impress upon your reference you pride yourself on being able to make it to work regularly. Likely, the Hiring Manager will want to hear something like that.

If you have been absent from work quite a bit recently and over the not so distant past, you may want to come up with some kind of explanation as to why you were sick. Your personal health is confidential and of nobody else's business, however a sick time record can work against you when it comes to getting hired.

- **Did his/her personal life ever interfere with his/her work?**

Whoever is checking out your references shouldn't likely be able to ask this question, but don't be surprised if they do. The best answer would be "No, not that I am aware of."

- **What were his/her titles?**

This is a simple question to identify what your job title was. Make sure your reference is matched with the particular job title you had at the time.

The Hiring Manager is also likely checking up on you to see if the job title you actually had, is the same as the one you have identified in your resume.

- **What were his/her duties?**

You may have to explain them to your reference.

If they were had the same job duties as you, they would obviously know them. Others may not though.

The challenge here is that your reference may not have a clear understanding of what your duties were. If you provide them a list and they just read the list off, it's not going to look very good for you.

Another consideration is the Hiring Manager when contacting your references, may want to dig a little deeper about what you have written on your resume. If your reference has an in-depth knowledge of you and your job duties, then well great. If not, your reference might be better off coming up with an evasive answer.

- **Did he/she cooperate with supervisors?**

This is a loaded question.

The desired answer would be "*of course!*"

- **Did he/she cooperate with co-workers?**

This leads to a similar answer as above. You will want to make it seem that you get along well with everyone.

- **Did he/she take work home very often?**

It's hard to say how to answer this one.

On one hand, bringing work home can look like you are a *dedicated, diligent worker*, willing to go the extra step to get something done.

On the other hand, bringing work home could indicate you have a problem with completing your work during your working hours. It could also indicate a worker is having work vs home issues.

You could appear to be *out of balance* if you are doing *work at work* and *work at home*.

- **What are his/her primary attributes?**

This leads to a subjective answer from your references. They will have to come up with their own answer.

Hopefully it will be a glowing, positive one about you.

- **What are his/her primary liabilities?**

This is similar to the last one. They will have to come up with their own answer.

The problem is that this might work against you, so it might be wise to offer a rather small liability but illustrate how you are *currently* resolving it.

So, what you are doing is turning a ***weakness*** into a ***strength***. You'll have to share this with your reference of course.

- **Is he/she eligible for rehire?** If your reference is a co-worker, they wouldn't likely be able to answer this. But if your reference is your manager, they would likely know.



Let's hope they say yes. Otherwise, you should probably be looking for another reference.

**Can you confirm the information he/she has given?**

Your reference will have to wait and see what they are asked.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT A ***PERSONAL REFERENCE Questions List***, for friends and colleagues.

**"DON'T SAY, "IF I COULD, I WOULD." SAY, "IF I CAN, I will." — Jim Rohn**

**"YOU HAVE THE ABILITY, RIGHT NOW, TO EXCEED ALL YOUR previous levels of accomplishment." — Brian Tracy**

## 15. PERSONAL REFERENCE QUESTIONS LIST

**T**his list is one you will use for references that are more of the *personal* nature.

These are friends or perhaps people who you have worked with in a voluntary capacity. They would have a good idea of what you are like, outside of work and would do a good job of referring you.

While it is helpful these references know what job it is you are applying for and what your background is that makes you believe that you can do the job, they *don't* need an *in depth* understanding of the job.

They just need to be able to talk about how it was working alongside of you. They also need to be able to speak concisely and clear. You don't want somebody as a referral who gets tongue-tied under pressure.

### THE PERSONAL REFERENCE QUESTIONS LIST

- **How long have you known?**

Make sure your reference has an answer for this question.

A long-winded “well let me see. My son was three at the time and now he’s eight. But wait a minute... my daughter was two when we met. I remember him coming to her birthday party. No... wait that can’t be right! ”

Their answer should be *short and sweet*.

- **How do you know?**

You and your reference need to agree where it was you met.

Did you work together on a volunteer project or serve on a non-profit board of directors?

- **What is your opinion of?**

This is a subjective answer on the part of your reference of course.

Hopefully, they think highly of you and do some cheerleading on your behalf as part of their response to the question.

- **Does he/she get along well with others?**

As in the previous questions for your professional references, you want your answer to be “yes, you do!”

- **Is he/she usually on time?**

Your personal reference may not know how to answer this one.

- **Is he/she absent from work very often?**

The same as the previous question, they may not know anything about your working conditions.

- **Does he/she bring work home very often?**

Probably best to answer “I don’t really know.”

- **Does he/she like his/her job?**

If you are currently employed and looking for another job, it would be worthwhile for your personal reference to understand of course you like your current job, but you are looking to improve yourself through a job change.

You wouldn’t want them saying you don’t like your job or hate it as it won’t help your case at all.

- **What are his/her primary attributes?**

They can prepare for this question on their own.

- **What are his/her primary liabilities?**

Encourage your reference to come up with something mild.

This isn't the time to draw attention to your major shortcomings. There is nothing wrong with having them, we all do. But the Hiring Manager doesn't need to know them at this point.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT STRATEGIES TO BE PROACTIVE in your job searching and put your references to work, even before they are called by an employer checking up on you.

**“BE YOURSELF; NO BASE IMITATOR OF ANOTHER, BUT YOUR best self. There is something which you can do better than another. Listen to the inward voice and bravely obey that. Do the things at which you are great, not what you were never made for.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson**

## 16.GO ON THE OFFENCE



**Y**ou needn't wait for your employers to call before you put your references into the game.

Those specialized ***preference references*** can write or phone the prospect to give your prospects a boost.

Here's how.

### **Letters That Lock in the Target**

A ***second***, post-interview letter ***must*** be: A ***super-reference***, written by the ***right*** person, targeted to the ***right*** person (***a decision maker***), and containing marketable information about your abilities and skills.

What someone *says* about you has *ten times* the influence of what you say about yourself.

Use a ***brief***, perfectly drafted one-page letter from a *carefully* selected reference as a cover letter for your resume.

Personalize each letter to individuals inside the target company(ies) who either have: The *authority* to hire you, or *Connections* to those who do.

### **The key is positioning.**

The ***position*** of your reference, the way you are ***positioned*** by your reference in a letter or telephone call, targeting a ***specific*** position, and someone in a ***position*** to hire for it, are all essential elements of a super-reference.

To position yourself for the perfect position, choose a reference who is the best position to write the best positioning letter for you.

### **Who Should Write?**

Selection of the reference cover letter writer is the first element of positioning.

He or she should be:

- Someone who knows the recipient of the letter
- Someone who knows someone else the recipient knows

- Someone who, by reputation, is known to the recipient of the letter
- Someone whose letterhead, title, and responsibilities will attract the recipient's attention or give ***credibility*** to the statements in the letter --- and to you

## **Help Them Say the Right Thing**

Most references simply don't have a clue when it comes to writing the perfect letter.

That's why typical reference letters are ridiculous. References aren't particularly good learners, either. After all, if they weren't more important than you, you wouldn't need them to lend you their importance, right?

It's not only their belief --- it's yours.

So rather than try to teach them or leave the letters' impact to chance, write your *perfect* letters *yourself!* The result is a far more detailed, consistent presentation, and your references will probably be relieved.

Just ask. You'll probably hear: "Sure, whatever you want. Just type it up and I'll sign it."

If the reference is a personal friend or colleague well known to the target, the opening and closing paragraphs should be in the writer's own words. But you can help by supplying the language for the *value* paragraph.



When you let your references know of the impending reference check, let them in on your excitement too. Fill your reference in on what you've learned from the interview and what kind of call he or she can expect, from what kind of person.

Don't coach your references so well they sound 'canned,' but do be sure each one understands: The objectives of your job search

The specific knowledge you'd like him or her to relate in a reference call The delivery necessary for maximum impact on the reference checker Ask your references to accept the telephone calls or return them immediately (you'll pay any toll charges), and to notify you of the details the moment they hang up. You need the feedback and you need it fast.

Always re-contact your references after they've made their play in your behalf to: Express your gratitude and appreciation

Ask about their impression of your prospective employer --- and your prospects Express your gratitude and appreciation. Again.



### **SECTION THREE: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Here is a collection of job interview preparation related questions asked on Quora.com and answered by me, Rae Stonehouse. Links have been added to the articles to provide you with even more answers from people who may or may not agree with me. And some... are from outer space and worth a chuckle.



**17.QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF WRITING A LINKEDIN PROFILE?**

**A** nswer Provided:

The question asks what are the *challenges* of writing a LinkedIn profile.

Challenges are relative to the person creating their own LinkedIn profile.

It may depend on several factors:

- You need to have a high level of literacy. Any spelling mistakes or grammatical errors you make will work against you.
- You need to have good strategic thinking skills. We all likely have a long list of jobs, skills and/or accomplishments we could post. But should we? Your LinkedIn profile has to be consistent with your purpose of creating it in the first place. Sometimes, less is more.
- You need to get comfortable with promoting yourself. As a business would when marketing itself,

your LinkedIn profile is marketing you. You have to make sure it is written to present you in the best possible light.

- It's no longer a matter of sharing what you have done in the past, it's a matter of promoting what you can do in the future. You need to craft your content so it comes across as a solution to somebody else's problem.
- You need to get comfortable with writing about yourself in the 3rd person vs 1st person 'I' statements.
- If you are searching for work, your LinkedIn profile has to be consistent with your resume. Your LinkedIn profile allows you to expand upon some of the claims you have made on your resume and provide examples of your work.
- You need to fill out all of the areas in your profile. This not only means filling in dates and titles, it means providing content once again, shows you in a good light.
- You need to actively build your network of connections. Consider 500 connections as a minimum. It may be the first thing many people look at. If your connections number is low, some may wonder if it's worthwhile connecting to you.

Linkedin is one of many social media venues. You need to ensure your digital footprint is consistent with the professional image you want to portray.

You should consider your Linkedin profile as being iterative. It needs to be tweaked and adapted on an ongoing basis.

If you are using it for job searching, you may want to keep a file of different content e.g. jobs and duties you have had in the past and then change your Linkedin profile whenever you are applying for a job.

From my perspective, there are at least two categories of connections on Linkedin. There are those that take a lackadaisical approach to connecting and those who take it very seriously.

Linkedin is merely a tool for you to use to promote yourself. At present, it is likely the best one for achieving results.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**18.QUESTION: HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO NETWORK IF I AM SHY AND SOCIALLY ANXIOUS AND AVOID SOCIAL EVENTS?**

**A** **nswer Provided:**

Well, the good news, if there is any, is you are not alone. I don't know where in the world you are located but the Shyness Institute, located in the USA, reports that more than 50% of North Americans describe themselves as being shy in social situations.

You would think with all this social media and on-line connectedness, we would be becoming more social and less shy, but the opposite is true. This collective increase in our shyness has been attributed to several causes.

Going back to the 1950s, the invention of TV dinners may have been the start of it. Families were no longer sitting together for their evening meals and sharing the events of their day. Conversational skills started to decline. As the years and decades have passed, there has been a further erosion in families spending quality time together in what was considered a traditional family dinner. Families nowadays come in all different styles and there really isn't anything traditional at all. Many children have been

deprived of opportunity to develop their conversational skills historically provided at shared family meals.

Along comes the invention of the Sony Walkman. We were able to listen to our tunes on our earphones and didn't have to listen to anyone else. ATM (automatic teller machines) have been considered another step in the increase of our shyness. We no longer have to stand in line to do our banking. That means we no longer talk to other people in the line or the teller. The same applies to many stores. We do self-checkout and don't have to have social conversation anymore, if we choose not to.

Technology developed from Walkmans to Discmans and now to smartphones that can store a phenomenal amount of music. One only has to look at a bus stop to see a dozen or so people intently looking at their smart phones, earbuds in place, frantically trying to avoid making eye contact with anyone else. It's sad, but it seems to be our new reality. If we let it!

The thing about shyness is we all experience it differently. Simply put, shyness is a lack of self-confidence and skills to use in a social situation. Nothing more... nothing less. It doesn't mean you are a bad person or a loser. It just means you haven't yet developed your skills in this area.

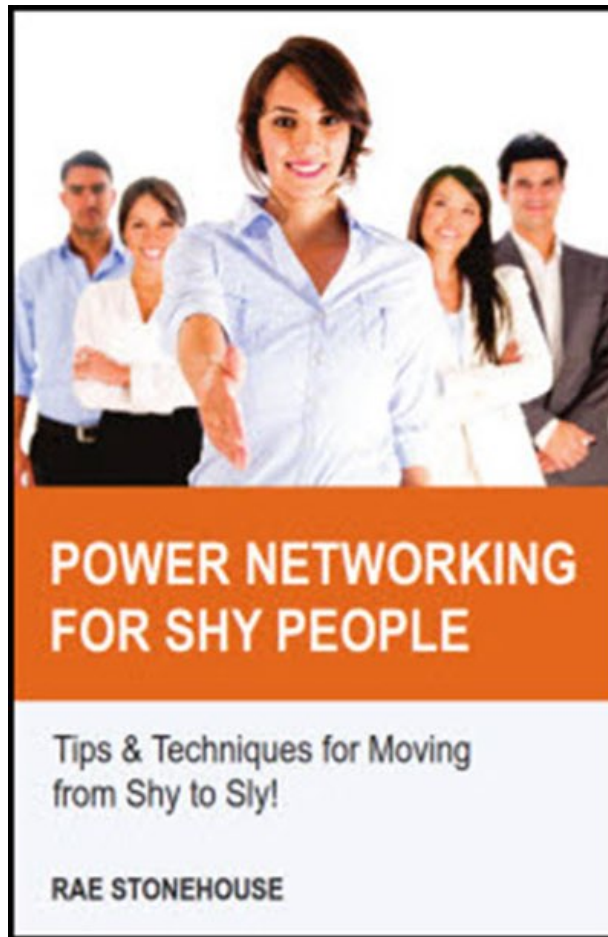
Unless one experiences shyness them self, I don't think they can truly appreciate how debilitating it can be. I think the advice of "suck it up buttercup" is worthless and insensitive.

Many people have conquered shyness and you can too It will take a lot of work though. I have been fighting it all my life. I consider it a life-long journey of conquering shyness. I've researched shyness, I've studied it, I've wrote about it and I speak about it. Some days I am fearless, some days my shyness will get the better of me and I will avoid attending an event.

I too have challenges with shyness preventing me from being effective in business networking. Networking is something you have to do if you want to stay in business. I've heard it said, that if you are not networking ... you are not working! I believe it to be true. And you also have to be networking all the time.

As part of my own self-directed cure for shyness and self-confidence in business networking I researched and wrote a book entitled **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving From Shy to Sly!**





Throughout the book I provide a series of strategies to level the playing field for shy people, helping them become effective networkers. I believe you can still be shy and be an effective networker. I believe the quality of the networking encounters is more important than the quantity as some would have you believe.

Conquering a fear of any subject, with mastery of the subject in mind, is merely a matter of taking a series of small steps towards the goal. Actually have a plan in writing, with a series of steps leading towards achieving the goal, is even better.

I don't think any contributor here on Quora is able to give you a definitive answer as to how you can overcome shyness and become an effective business networker in the limited amount of space we have for our answers. I suggest purchasing my book as it is available as an inexpensive, immediately downloadable e-book. You can start your journey from shyness to self-confidence today!

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**19.QUESTION: WHO'RE BEST BUSINESS NETWORKING PROFESSIONALS?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

Simply answered, the best business networking professionals are those that network professionally.

Being an effective business networker involves quite a few of what might be considered soft skills. Good conversation skills, empathy, listening skills and a genuine interest to help others are a few that readily come to mind.

In attending any business networking event you can expect to see certain professions 'working the room', at least in my experience. Financial planners, realtors and insurance agents readily come to mind.

Some are effective networkers i.e. building contacts and connecting other businesses. Some are like sharks, they expect to make a kill i.e. sale, at the networking event. Those ones give everyone else a bad reputation.

Being a successful business networker involves utilizing strategies that work towards mutual benefits. Sometimes networking is like gardening. You plant seeds. You nurture them. Then with loving care, they grow to fruition.

Networking and building relationships takes time.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**20.QUESTION: HOW DO I EXPAND MY PROFESSIONAL NETWORK IN COLLEGE?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

My first suggestion would be to take the word 'college' out of the equation. You may be currently attending college, but that is only one aspect of the potential network you have to connect with.

Don't discount the value of networking with family, friends, neighbours, businesses and community resources that you frequent. Potential connections are all around us if we keep our eyes open to opportunity.

One of the challenges that I see with networking in colleges, universities etc. is that many of the students don't see the value of networking. They may not have any experience in the art of networking or they may be just too focussed on their studies.

This may mean that one of your first tasks in networking would be to educate the other person on the value and benefits of networking.

There are several skills involved in networking with professionals. One of them is to have your 'spidey sense' on

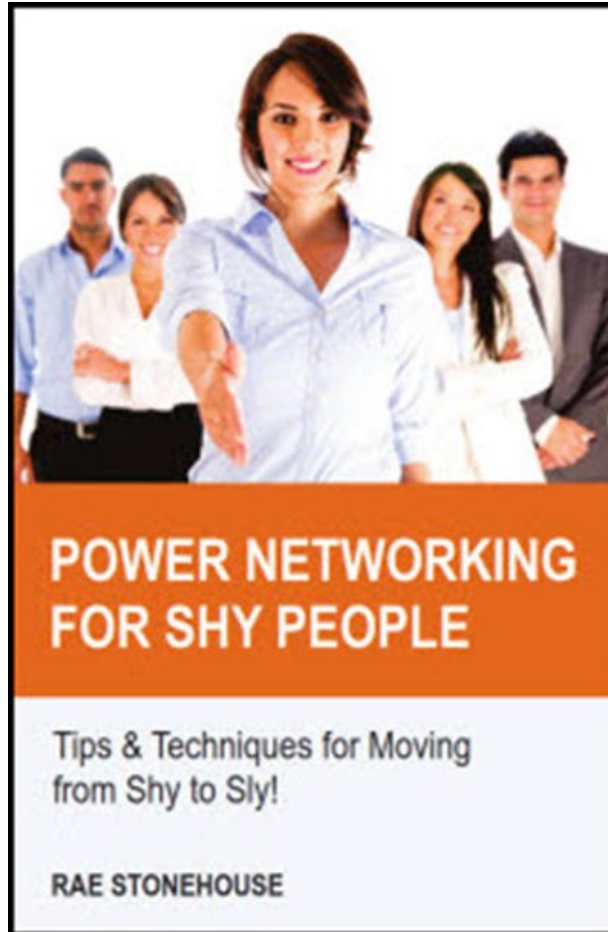
high alert to potential people to connect with.

Combining your awareness with a tool such as LinkedIn to organize can help build your network of connections. If you haven't already, create a professional profile on LinkedIn. This isn't like a Facebook presence, so avoid any partying pics that you would regret posting.

After you meet someone at a social mixer of some sort, follow up with them by sending them an invite to join your professional network on LinkedIn and in the real world.

Speaking of social mixers, I would suggest researching what clubs or social groups exist within the college structure that would provide you opportunity to socialize and network. Clubs like Toastmasters can be a great way to hone your speaking skills, build your self-confidence and network with like-minded individuals.

Don't rule out connecting with your instructors/professors.



I go into quite a bit more detail in a downloadable e-book that I wrote. **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!** outlines strategies for effective networking whether you are shy or not.

Good luck with building your network!

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

**21. QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF LIKE-MINDED CONNECTIONS?**

**A** nswer Provided:



IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO THINK IN TERMS OF THE MUTUAL benefits of like-minded connections. While being like-minded, some may call it resonating, certainly makes it easier to communicate your desire to the other person, there is great value in offering something in return.

Being like-minded doesn't mean that they are exactly the same as you. We all have our own life-experiences, wants,



desires, hopes, prejudices and biases. Even though we are like-minded on specific topics, we are still quite different.

Far too many people in business have the idea that they need to get something from somebody, whether at a cost or free. A different approach, as promoted by Dr. Ivan Misner of BNI (Business Networking International) is that of 'givers gain.' The concept simply put, is that if you give freely to others, you will receive something of equal or greater value in return.

If you are a Law of Attraction believer the concept is that if you do something favourable for somebody else, without the expectation of return from them, the Universe will see to it that you receive something in return. The challenge is in recognizing the fact that what you receive in return may not come from the person you gave to. It could come from another source.

In developing an effective business network, like-minded connections compose only one segment for you. Don't rule out connections just because you haven't established commonalities as of yet.

Here is an article that I wrote in my How's Your Net Working resource articles: ***[Finding Common Interests: Power Networking Tips & Techniques](#)***, where I expand upon the how side of developing connections and finding like-minded individuals.

Thanks for the question!

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

2

**22.QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE BEST WAYS TO NETWORK AT A BUSINESS DINNER AND LEAVE A GOOD IMPRESSION?**

**A** nswer Provided:

Business dinners can be challenging to network at.

There are basically three elements to the event: 1) Pre-meal 2) The meal 3) Post-meal.

1) **Pre-meal:** This is the part where people are coming together. Some are standing around talking to each other, reacquainting themselves with people they already know. It can be challenging to join a group of people if you don't know any of them and introducing yourself to the group. Others may already be sitting at table and talking among themselves. You have the option of sitting at a table of strangers or with people you know. There can be advantages to either option.

You will often find people standing alone. There are shy introverts in every group. They may be waiting for someone to take the initiative to introduce themselves to them. Go for it!

2) **During the meal:** How effective you are in networking here can be limited by how the table is set up. In table

rounds of 8 or 10, i.e. standard hotel options, you tend to be limited to the person on your right-hand side and/or on your left-hand side. Cross table conversation can be challenging, however group conversations tend to be easier.

If you don't know anybody at the table and/or nobody else has taken the lead, suggest to everybody to go around the table to provide a self-introduction. This is a good opportunity to give an abbreviated elevator pitch and to pass your business cards around the table.

Long, two-sided tables, present similar challenges for conversing, in that you are limited to talking to those immediately to your left and your right. As well, depending on the width of the table, to the two or three sitting directly across from you. Once again, your business card and short elevator pitch will be put to use.

**3) Post-meal:** Sometimes people will linger about after the meal which gives you a chance to network. However, more often than naught, people want to get going on their way to other activities. Many may be uncomfortable with networking, so don't stick around.

As for the best way to network, basic networking skills come into play. You only have a limited amount of time, so you need to have a plan.

In advance, learn who is attending the event that it would be worth your while to meet. If you see people you know, reacquaint yourself... find out what is new with them. And don't forget to share what is new with you. In addition,

when talking to somebody you know, ask them if there is somebody at the event they know, that might be beneficial for you to meet. Then ask them to introduce you.

As in any networking event, you are collecting leads as to possible connections. When talking to someone look for common interests. If so, invite them out for coffee. Get their business card and contact them after the event to confirm the details.

Take advantage of your collection of business cards and send them an invitation to join your professional network on LinkedIn.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**23. QUESTION: WHY ON LINKEDIN HAS BOASTING ABOUT ONESELF AND ONE'S ACHIEVEMENTS BECOME ACCEPTABLE AND APPLAUDED? DOES BRAGGING OR HUMILITY SERVE SOCIETY BETTER?**

**A** nswer Provided:

You ask two separate questions. Addressing the first one “Why on LinkedIn has boasting about oneself and one’s achievements become acceptable and applauded?”

I’ll break my response further down. You are asserting that people are ‘boasting’ about themselves. I don’t necessarily agree with that statement.

Sure, with the sheer numbers of LinkedIn members, there would have to be those that are boasting about their accomplishments. They likely do it in other aspects of their lives, be it on-line, or in person.

LinkedIn has developed into a platform that allows the member to ‘market’ themselves.

I find that many people have a challenge with the concept of self-promotion. My perspective is North American. I realize that different cultures may have different views on self-promotion or talking about one’s accomplishments.

I'm fond of a quote from Walt Whitman, American Cowboy Poet. He said that 'if you have done it... it ain't bragging! "

Creating promotional copy in your LinkedIn profile that promotes you as a solution to somebody else's problem takes skill. You want to get the message across, featuring your skills, without coming across as bragging/boasting. This can be challenging if you have a lot of things on the go and desirable skills.

Is it becoming acceptable and applauded? It would answer that question by saying that it has become expected and an effective tool for promoting one's self.

If a person is searching for work, they would be well-advised to have an effective LinkedIn profile that resonates with their resume. You can almost guarantee that an employer will take a look at your LinkedIn profile before inviting you in for an interview, as part of their screening process.

I'm not so sure about the applauded part of the question. If your LinkedIn profile doesn't reveal much about you, your requests for invitations to connect might be on the lean side.

I personally don't connect with LinkedIn invitations that don't have a headshot photo, don't have any information about themselves or LIONS (LinkedIn Open Networkers).

You ask '**Does bragging or humility serve society better?**'

Personally, I don't think either does. But then again, why should it require an either/or response?

I believe that there is an appropriate time to promote yourself and there are times that humility is more appropriate.

I find inspiration in 'everyday heroes.' These are people that have undertaken acts of bravery or courageous ones and when asked about it, reply with something like "I just did what needed to be done."

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).





**24. QUESTION: WHAT ARE TIPS AND TRICKS TO INCREASE YOUR ODDS OF GETTING A JOB AT A COMPANY BY USING NETWORKING SKILLS?**

**A** nswer Provided:

I would suggest utilizing a multi-faceted approach.

Firstly, research the company on-line. Locate and read their social media properties. More than likely they will have a Facebook business page, a LinkedIn Business page and possibly a Twitter profile.

Find out what is important to the company. What do they believe in? What is important to them? What are they most proud of?

Secondly, find out who the key people behind the company are. What roles do they take on in the company? Then check out their individual profiles on LinkedIn.

If you are comfortable in doing so, send them an invitation to connect on LinkedIn and provide them with a reason that they might want to connect. Not the fact that you are looking for a job though.

If the company's social media properties allow for posting comments, see how you can add value by posting replies to

their postings.

Networking face-to-face with people in hiring positions in companies can be a little tricky, in that in most cases, their networking is restricted to events that with other members of the company.

There can be benefit in leveraging your connections to see if anybody knows anyone working at the company in question, or if they have any connections there.

If you are gutsy, you may want to contact somebody in the company for an informational chat, where you ask for the opportunity to pick their brain.

In business networking events, it can be helpful to ask people you connect with out right “Do you know anybody that works at ....?”

I go into strategies such as these in greater detail in my book on job search strategies that work.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**25.QUESTION: SHOULD YOU SMILE ON YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

To start with, I'm going to assume you are referring to your LinkedIn profile photo.

Smiling is usually good. However, there is a degree of smiling that seems to be generally acceptable.

People do judge a book by its cover as the saying goes. They will make a snap judgement on you based on your headshot photo.

You want to appear to be professional. People usually respond favorably when they see someone smiling. It helps them to warm up to the individual. Smiling seems to help build credibility, at least when they are speaking to a group.

I am led to believe from a Russian colleague that if a fellow Russian was smiling, the automatic response would be "I wonder what they are hiding?"

While smiling would seem appropriate, what about a picture where the individual is laughing? Perhaps if you

were in the entertainment industry, it might be appropriate. Not so much I would expect for a Funeral Director or maybe even a Banker.

In a less literal perspective of smiling, I believe our promotional content should be written from a smiling perspective. I have read copy and have said to myself "This person must have been angry when they wrote it."

So, I say, have fun with your LinkedIn profile and let your smile shine through your headshot photo and your promotional copy.

As originally answered on [quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**26.QUESTION: DO YOU ACCEPT CONNECTION INVITATIONS FROM STRANGERS ON LINKEDIN? WHY OR WHY NOT?**

**A** **nswer Provided:**

I evaluate every invitation I get to connect. The first criteria I look for is 'do I actually know the person?'

If not, the second criteria is 'are they connected to one of my connections?'

Failing those two, I look to see if we share any common interests.

If they pique my curiosity, I will often connect with them. If I don't see any possible connection or I foresee a barrage of spam from my 'new best friend', I will decline the invite.

I suspect many of the invitations to connect we receive have been instigated by the LinkedIn system posting it on the other person's account as someone they might want to connect with.

I often wonder about invites to connect I get from strangers who only have single digit connections and we have nothing in common.

Networking opportunities can certainly be enhanced by leveraging your LinkedIn connections however, having potential receptors for any content you are trying to promote through your network can be beneficial.

I've never worried about being watched by 'malicious' people. If they truly are malicious, I have a large enough digital footprint that they could easily find ammo somewhere else besides LinkedIn.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**27.QUESTION: "IT'S NOT WHAT YOU KNOW... IT'S WHO YOU KNOW". IS NETWORKING MORE IMPORTANT THAN EDUCATION, AS NETWORKING SAVES THE LONG, LEARNING PROCESS 'TILL LATER?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

I would challenge your opening statement. I don't believe that "It's not what you know. it's who you know" to be true.

I BELIEVE "IT'S NOT WHAT YOU KNOW OR WHO YOU KNOW... BUT who knows you know!" to be more apt.

From a personal and/or business promotion perspective, it is important to become a content expert i.e. the 'go to person' among your web of connections. You need to tell them what you know. This can be challenging of course. You don't want to come across as being a braggart.

Networking and earning an education are two separate, yet interconnected activities. Both have their merits. One shouldn't be sacrificed at the expense of others.

I don't believe there is evidence supporting your assertion that 'networking saves the long, learning process 'till

later?' I think you may actually be referring to the process of mentoring.

An effective mentorship, with somebody who can show you the ropes, so to speak, can speed up the process and help flatten your learning curve.

A mentor can help you with your education. Sage advice can be every bit as important as academic filler.

Networking, on the other hand, can expose you to people who may be able to mentor you in many different areas. It takes cultivating the relationship, bearing in mind the Mentor has to get something out of the relationship from the mentee as well.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).





**28.QUESTION: HOW SHOULD YOU  
INTRODUCE YOURSELF IN A WAY THAT'LL  
MAKE PEOPLE CARE WHO YOU ARE?**

**A** **nswer Provided:**

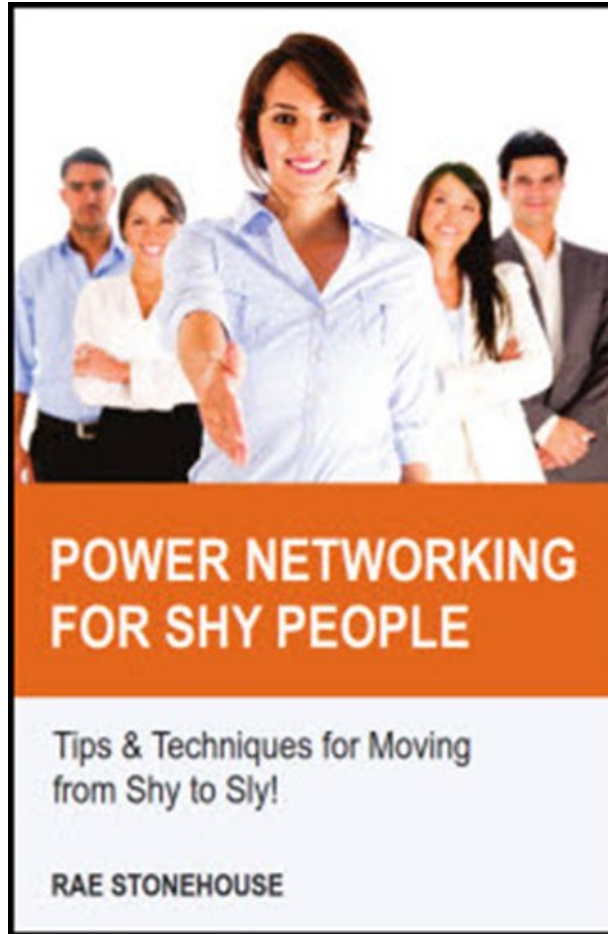
I'm going to start off in a negative fashion. I don't think it is important you spend your time on ways to introduce yourself to people, so they care. You can't force them to do so.

I believe it's far more important to introduce yourself in a manner that piques the other person's curiosity, so they want to learn more about you.

People will only care who you are when they feel you are not a threat to them or they find they share common interests with you.

This is where crafting a good elevator pitch comes in. I also believe you should have multiple elevator pitches practiced so you can use an appropriate one at any given time.

HERE IS AN EXCERPT FROM MY BOOK [POWER NETWORKING FOR Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!](#)



### **DEVELOPING YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH:**

You need to develop your elevator pitch like you would a formal presentation. Just because you are introducing yourself conversationally in a 1 to 1 or a small group doesn't mean you should wing it.

Preparation is the key to your success. Remember you should be prepared for different lengths of elevator rides and different situations.

Follow these steps to develop your unique pitch.

## **Describe yourself as a solution to a problem:**

The most important part of your elevator pitch is your opening sentence. You need to grab your audience's attention by telling what is unique about what you do.

In your very first sentence you need to say your name, your business' name and describe yourself as a solution to the problems your clients, customers or business associates face. Listeners don't usually care about your job title as much as what you can do for them.

When creating the first line of your elevator pitch, put yourself in the audience's shoes and answer the age-old question "What's in it for me?"

A superior elevator pitch increases your heart rate. It speaks to who you really are and what excites you about your business. If you don't get excited about it, who will?

## **Your pitch needs to address the five Ws.**

The first step is to develop answers to the following questions:

1. What does your business do? (For example, begin your answer with "We provide.")
2. Whom does your business do it for? (For example, begin your answer with "For small and midsized healthcare providers.")
3. Why do they care? Or, What's in it for them? (For example, include in your answer "so they can ...,"

“who can no longer afford ...,” or “who are tired of ...”)

4. Why is your business different? (For example, begin your answer with “As opposed to ...” or “Unlike...”)
5. What is your business? (For example, begin your answer with “My business is an insurance against ...”)

Don't forget to include your **USP**, your hook. It is a good way to close off your elevator pitch. For example, using my business... Mr. Emcee Your Okanagan Event Planner of Choice. From start to finish... we do it all!



YOU MAY NOT BE IN BUSINESS HOWEVER THE ELEVATOR PITCH IDEA is still a good one to facilitate introducing yourself to someone new.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

**29.QUESTION: HOW CAN I GET OVER MY  
EXTREME FEAR OF TALKING TO NEW  
PEOPLE?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

Sounds like you are caught up in what's called a 'self-fulfilling prophesy.'

You expect to be afraid of talking to new people, therefore you will act in that way.

First jobs are often identified as opportunities to develop one's social skills, reduce one's shyness and build confidence. As you journey through life, every job you take on from the very first one will add to your skills and experience.

Don't let your current fear prevent you from taking on your first job. FEAR is often defined as False Expectations Appearing Real. They aren't real! We make them that way.

The only way to conquer a fear is to hit it head on and not let it control you.

I've been fearful of many things throughout my life. I was terrified of public speaking. I got tired of being afraid and

decided to do something about it. Now I speak regularly and teach others how to public speak.

Your first job, which sounds like it will be an entry level, customer service one, will present you with challenges to overcome. Just because you are currently afraid, doesn't mean you will continue to be. You may open a whole set of opportunities that could lead to a career path.

You never know what will happen when you conquer a fear. A common response to conquering a fear is in wondering why it was so over-powering in the first place.

Go for it!

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**30.QUESTION: WHAT DO YOU TALK ABOUT OVER COFFEE?**

**W**hen meeting someone for coffee professionally, what do you talk about or try to accomplish? (Particularly if you are in academia and not business)?

**Answer Provided:**

THERE IS LIKELY A LOT LESS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOING FOR coffee whether you are in academia or business, then you think there is. Your approach should be professional in either instance.

Going for coffee is an opportunity to get to know the other person. The objective is to find if you share common interests and if there is any opportunity to collaborate on a project or serve as a resource for each other. If you were in business, it may lead to a joint venture.

Come prepared to talk about subjects that interest you, both in your career and your private life.

I've been on a lot of 'coffee chats.' A lot of business is conducted in local coffee shops in my community.

From my personal experience, plan for 60 minutes for your coffee meeting. I find in that time both of you should have a better understanding of each other. If you resonate with each other, plan for a follow-up coffee meeting.

At the 75 to 90-minute marks, I find the conversation tending to drag and get uncomfortable.

If you want to be considered an exceptional conversationalist, ask meaningful questions of the other person and listen twice as much as you talk. When you give your conversational partner your undivided attention to listening to their favourite topic i.e. themselves, they will think you are a good listener and are likely to be very open to you.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).





**31. QUESTION: IN WHAT WAY IS CAREER OR BUSINESS NETWORKING THE SAME AS MAKING GOOD FRIENDS?**

**A** nswer Provided:

I'm going to take a contrary position and say it isn't, in my opinion.

Good friendships develop over time, based on many factors. Bill Doerr provided some excellent factors that foster development of a friendship i.e. trust, reciprocity, longevity, fragility and maintenance.

Where I take exception is the use of the term 'good' when it comes to describing friends.

In our web of connections, we have what can be called our Crisis Circle. These are the people we can really count on. You should have at least four people who will be supportive in the event of death, illness, divorce or bankruptcy. They can include family, friends, your doctor or lawyer.

Then there's your Buddy Circle. Friends you have fun with, the people who accept you for who you are. There should be at least three people in this circle.

Next, the third circle, is your Professional Circle. These are people who know you professionally, can provide reference letters and can speak about the quality of your work and character. You need at least 12 people in this category.

The Fourth Circle is your casual friends circle. These are people you share ideas with. You may work with them or know them through organizations or volunteer work. Some may become closer friends and eventually form part of the more inner and intimate circles.

For those of us who have been active on LinkedIn, our network of connections would likely fit into the Professional Circle. And many of our Facebook connections would fit into the Fourth Circle of casual friends.

The point I want to make here is we go through life we connect with countless numbers of people we either maintain contact with or not.

When we network for career or business purposes, it shouldn't be a numbers game. Think quality over quantity. With the right nurturing of the developing relationships, in time, some of these new connections may develop into good friends.

I believe the term 'friends' has been watered down as of late with the terminology becoming ensconced in Facebook practice. Having hundreds or thousands of 'friends' in Facebook does not mean you are well loved or even known for that matter. Try asking some of your distant Facebook friends for a loan of money and see what happens.

When it comes to business and career networking, I think one would be well advised to consider the possibilities. We will develop strong relationships and some weak ones. Weak ones can be nurtured if there is the possibility of mutual advantage. Perhaps not.

Some will develop into good friends, most won't. Probably the best way to make new friends is to be one yourself.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**32.QUESTION: WHAT ARE SOME TIPS WHEN COLLECTING BUSINESS CARDS?**

**A** **nswer Provided:**

First tip... don't collect business cards.

A collection of business cards takes up room and doesn't serve a purpose. Think quality over quantity.

A collection of business cards merely indicates at some point in time, you may or may not have spoken to someone who gave you their business card.

It doesn't necessarily mean you connected with them. If you haven't, I would suspect if you were to contact them a few months past your initial meeting, they may not even remember you.

Your business card is a tool. It is a way to introduce yourself to another individual with the expectation you will mutually decide if you share common interests that may be leveraged into opportunities.

If I collect a business card and I see there is a possibility of opportunity, I will reach out to the individual. Perhaps it

may be sending them some info that may be of interest to them, or perhaps invite them out for coffee.

I will also send them an invitation to connect on LinkedIn, explaining where and when we met, in my invitation. Some will accept the invitation, others may not.

If I believe there is value in the connection i.e. that we really did connect, I will add their contact info to my Outlook Contacts for future reference.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**33.QUESTION: HOW DO YOU BECOME  
CONFIDENT IF YOU ARE A VERY SHY  
PERSON?**

**A** **nswer Provided:**

You ask a short simple question requiring a complex answer to do it justice.

It's far too easy for people who don't experience being shy and quiet to say 'just stop doing it.'

Life doesn't work that way.

Being shy and quiet is merely a manifestation of having a deficit of social skills and a lack of self-confidence in the area of socializing.

If you experience severe anxiety over the thought of getting out there and socializing, it would be a different matter.

Being shy and quiet is a temporary state. You can change it.

The first step of course is being open to making changes in your life. Learning to socialize better does require socializing more.

It can be helpful to go to social events with a more outgoing person. They can introduce you to people and you

might be able to emulate the skills they possess when it comes to socializing.

Think of improving your social skills as a series of incremental steps. Each step you take should be evaluated and adjusted as needed.

I would suggest creating your own plan for socialization. It could be something as simple as talking to a stranger at the bus stop or while in line at a store.

It could be in participating in a 1 to 1 conversation at a networking session when somebody asks you a question. It could work up to your initiating the conversation.

One cure for being quiet, is actually having something to say. It can be helpful to be up-to-date on what is happening in your community or even the larger picture of your country.

As well as speaking or talking about a topic you know about, it can be equally as valuable in being a good listener. Asking questions to a person who is telling you a story can make you a great conversationalist in the eyes of the storyteller.

Assuming you are over the age of 18, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the value of joining a Toastmasters club in your community. As a member you will help develop your communication skills, which in turn develops your self-confidence. It can be a great way to overcome your quiet, shy ways. It has worked for me.

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**34.QUESTION: WHAT IS THE MOST  
DIFFICULT THING ABOUT NETWORKING?**

**A** **answer Provided:** There likely isn't a definitive answer to this question.

Each and everyone of us is different. While there are difficulties that many networkers face, it isn't universal.

One person may have no problem with walking up to a stranger and introducing themselves, another person may be crippled with fear of having to undertake the same task.

Some people seem to have the gift of the gab. Others are perpetually tongue-tied.

Some can handle their liquor, others can't.

As for me, I have researched the fundamentals of business networking and put them in practice, I still find it difficult to walk up to a group of strangers and insert myself into their conversation. I know *how to* do it, but would prefer not to.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**35.QUESTION: HOW DO I OVERCOME SOCIAL ANXIETY?**

**A** nswer Provided:

Calling it 'social anxiety' is great for mental health clinicians. We've always known it as *shyness*.

Shyness is a learned behaviour. We are conditioned to be shy by our circumstances in life. We aren't born with it. Experiences that have been unpleasant to us have a way of repeating themselves when we least expect it. Odds are, when we respond with shyness in a social situation, we wouldn't recognize that our response is conditioned or a reflex related to the original incident. Our conscious mind won't give us access to that memory. Yet we respond almost in the exact same way as we originally did.

The big pharmaceutical companies would have us believe that shyness is an illness i.e. social phobia (social anxiety) and they just happen to have a high priced pill to cure you of your illness. You don't cure shyness. It isn't an illness. You can however reduce the impact that it has upon your life and the limitations that it creates for you.

You also can't generalize the symptoms of shyness. Situations that cause you distress may not bother me or someone else at all and vice versa.

I've been plagued with shyness throughout my life. Many people who know me would find that hard to believe and often consider me to be an outgoing person. I'm not. My default mode is to be shy. What makes the difference for me is that I have worked hard at overcoming my shyness, in those social situations that have caused me problems. I have learned strategies that have helped. Not all the time though. I still feel anxiety when I walk into a crowded room and don't recognize anyone.

I liken my social awkwardness, i.e. shyness, to the way I am with parallel parking my pickup truck. I have been driving for over forty years and had to be proficient with parallel parking to pass my driving test to get my license. In the following years, I probably haven't used that skill more than a few times. Stopping in traffic, while everyone is watching me and getting angry at me while I make what seems like a hundred-wheel turns, is quite anxiety-producing. I also have a short neck and continuously looking over my shoulder to see where I am backing up can be quite painful. I tend to back up by sound and feel. When I hear or feel a bump, I stop! Probably not a good way to be. I certainly wouldn't appreciate it if someone else did that to my vehicle.

My solution to parking in a spot that requires the advanced skill of parallel parking... is to drive around the block to

locate a parking spot that I can drive directly into, parallel with the curb. Problem solved!

Avoidance of a social situation, like avoiding parallel parking, can solve the immediate problem i.e. reduce the anxiety but it is not an effective coping skill.

Shyness can affect people differently. In my 40-year professional career as a registered nurse working in psychiatry/mental health, I am confident in the social interactions that I encounter, while at work. Daily, I work with people that are displaying a range of emotions and interpersonal conflict is commonplace.

On the other hand, my business life is quite a bit different. I don't have a business degree. I am self-taught in skills and processes that are necessary to operate a business. I don't have a proven track record of successful businesses to bounce off. As you might expect these self-imposed limitations can be problematic for me.

On the other, other hand... I have learned to take the skills that have served me well in one area of my life and applied them to other areas. I think this is the root of how to overcome social anxiety. As you increase your self-confidence, your social anxiety *should* reduce. I say should, because everyone is different.

*Self-confidence* can be another of those blanket-terms i.e. one-size-fits-all. Self-confidence doesn't work that way. We can be very confident in skills that we have in one area and not at all with others. I believe that to reduce our shyness we have to use those skills that we are confident in and

build upon them to increase our self-confidence, targeted at reducing our shyness. You don't do this by osmosis. You have to actively take steps toward increasing your self-confidence. This isn't always easy or comfortable. It is often said that your real growth begins once you are out of your comfort zone.

It seems a simple enough concept, right? We'll see! Self-confidence isn't a final destination, for lack of a better word. You don't achieve self-confidence and then maintain it for the rest of your life without continuous practice.

“There isn't a ruler, a yard stick or a measuring tape in the entire world long enough to compute the STRENGTH and capabilities inside you.” --- Paul Meyer

Self-confidence or more precisely ***gaining*** self-confidence, is an active process. It is necessary to continually challenge yourself with achieving a series of achievable goals. They may be extremely small goals and seemingly inconsequential, or they may be major goals. The trick is to celebrate our successes, big and small, then move forward to even more challenging ones.

As a shy networker myself, often crippled with fear in social gatherings, I decided to do something about it. The result was my book, [Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!](#) (**PNSP**) In it I outline a system for introverts and shy introverts to level the playing field when it comes to networking for business. The often dreaded meeting and talking to another person,

face-to-face, is only a small part of the process. Yet it is likely the part that gives us the most stress.

As writing **PNSP** unfolded, I realized that providing practical strategies for what I coined ***power networking*** specifically targeted at shy networkers, as well as providing strategies to reduce the actual social anxiety was beyond the scope of one manual. Those specific techniques will be covered in my upcoming book *Shy to Sly!* (working title).

I'm not going to elaborate here on all of the steps required to increase your self-confidence and become a better networker. I have outlined a systematic approach in the book. Other contributors to answering this question have provided some good suggestions. The problem is that the suggestions can be overwhelming to a shy networker. The old adage comes to mind "How do you eat an elephant?" The answer being "one bite at a time." If you are going to change your life-long behaviours you need to do it in a systematic approach to be successful in the long run.

I would be remiss in not suggesting that membership in a Toastmasters club would go a long way in reducing one's shyness. It's not an automatic process though.

Toastmasters provides ample opportunity to practice the skills you require to build your self-confidence as well as practical interactions where you can practice your 1-1 communication skills. Working with a fellow club member as a mentor that demonstrates skills in socializing can go a long way in building your own expertise in socializing.

My research into the subject of shyness aka social anxiety, is that it is a condition that can be reduced and effect a subsequent increase in self-confidence, with a step-by-step strategic plan in place. It is well within the reach of most of us.

The downside to this is that I have also confirmed that if you are actually crippled by social anxiety, a self-directed strategic approach may be limited in its success. If you can afford it, a professional psychologist specializing in reducing fears such as social anxiety may be a better option. Support groups run by mental health professionals, assuming you can find one, would be another good option. Overcoming shyness isn't a quick process but the debilitating anxiety and fears can be crippling to some people. I vote for change! Good luck!



**36.QUESTION: WHAT'S THE BEST APPROACH TO NETWORK AS A JOB SEEKER?**

**A** **answer Provided:** I wouldn't consider any of your suggestions as 'best' approaches to network as a job seeker, including your 'besides leveraging existing comments'.

Your suggestions are all passive in nature. As a job-seeker, you really do need to get out there and market yourself via business networking i.e. face to face, belly to belly as the saying goes.

You didn't expand upon what you mean by leveraging your existing contacts. There is a lot more involved in the activity of 'leveraging' contacts than one might consider.

It involves some work and brain power. What you really need to do is leverage your connections, connections. These are your 2nd & 3rd degree connections.

You may think that you don't know anyone who can help you with your job search.

But you know more people than you think, and there's a very good chance that at least a few of these people know



someone who can give you career advice or point you to a job opening.

You'll never know if you don't ask!

Some Job Search Coaches will tell you that leveraging your network is the most effective strategy you can use to find your ideal job.

The first step is to create a network web of connections. A **Network Web** is a tool that helps you draw upon your personal network to find the ideal job that you are looking for.

Your ideal job may not be posted yet, in fact, it may not even be created yet.

Your Network Web can help put you in front of decision makers and key people that are in the position to hire you.

**Step One** is to make a list of your personal categories.

These are your interests and the organizations, formal and informal that you belong to.

These may include hobbies, family, church, professional organizations, sports teams, current and past employment.

Create a page for each of the above categories as well as any others that you can think of.

**Step Two** is to make a list of people you know in each category, start with a list of 10 names for each organization or interest category and then add 10 more if possible.

Then you would create a diagram with four circles. Each one larger than the previous one and wrapped around the others. There should be enough room to add the names of your connections.

**First Circle:** The crisis circle is closest to the center of the Web.

These are the people you can really count on.

You should have at least four people who will be supportive in the event of death, illness, divorce or bankruptcy. They can include family, friends, your doctor or lawyer.

**The Second Circle:** This is your buddy circle. Friends you have fun with, the people who accept you for who you are.

There should be at least three people in this circle.

**The Third Circle:** This is your professional circle. People who you know professionally, can provide reference letters and can speak about the quality of your work and character.

You need at least 12 people in this category.

**The Fourth Circle:** This is your casual friends circle. People you can share ideas with. You may work with them or know them through organizations or volunteer work.

Some may become closer friends and eventually form part of the more inner and intimate circles.

Create a list of people under the four circle's headings e.g. My Crisis Circle... My Buddies Circle...

Likely, many of your LinkedIn connections will fit into your Third Circle, your professional circle.

The Network Web is a powerful tool. You'll be amazed at all the contacts you do have, and can identify the gaps in the network.

With your goal of finding suitable employment in mind you can ask:

- Who do I need to know?
- Who do I need to bring into my circle?
- And who do I know that can introduce them to me?

All the connections in the world won't help you find a job if no one knows about your situation.

Once you've drawn up your list, start making contact with the people in your network.

Let them know that you're looking for a job.

Be specific about what kind of work you're looking for and ask them if they have any information or know anyone in a relevant field.

Don't assume that certain people won't be able to help.

You may be surprised by who they know.

Almost everyone knows what it's like to be out of work or looking for a job.

They'll sympathize with your situation.

Unemployment can be isolating and stressful.

By connecting with others, you're sure to get some much-needed encouragement, fellowship, and moral support.

Reconnecting with the people in your network can be fun—even if you have an agenda. The more this feels like a chore the more tedious and anxiety-ridden the process will be.

Focus on building relationships. Networking is a give-and-take process that involves making connections, sharing information, and asking questions.

It's a way of relating to others, not a technique for getting a job or a favour.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**37.QUESTION: WHY IS NETWORKING IMPORTANT IN THE WORKPLACE?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

Is it important? That depends! It may not be important to everybody.

If you are a 'go to work' and 'keep your nose to the grindstone' type of person, it may not be. There are many shy introverts that don't see the value of networking or possess the skills to do so.

Then there are many others who can benefit from networking in the workplace. It can be helpful to be connected to the 'grapevine.' Networking can provide unexpected opportunities.

My professional career is as a Registered Nurse. I work in a small facility and usually work with the same people most of the time. We have worked together for some 15 to 20 years.

I work mostly days on the weekends and nights during the weekdays. I have little exposure to others that work in my system. That doesn't cause me any problems as in my stage of my career, I have little to be gained by networking.

My business life is a completely different story. It is necessary that I network and continue to develop my connections. In the business world its not who you know, but who knows that you know!

My intention is to become the 'go-to-person' when it comes to business networking. It is an ongoing process.

John Jantsch, from Duct Tape Marketing is often quoted as saying "If you aren't networking ... you aren't working."

I'm fond of another quote, not sure of where it originated "Networking isn't something you do before work, or after work... it is work!"



**38. QUESTION: HOW DOES ONE NETWORK EFFECTIVELY WITHOUT SEEMING OR SOUNDING LIKE YOU'RE BRAGGING?**



**A** **answer Provided:** If you are bragging when you are networking, you aren't doing it right.

If you are not self-promoting when networking... you aren't doing it right either.

Bragging and self-promoting are not the same thing.

American Cowboy Poet Walt Whitman is quoted as saying 'if you done it, it ain't bragging!'

The main purpose of networking is to expand your sphere of connections with contacts that share mutual interests and can mutually help each other.

To be able to support and refer someone to another, you have to know what they have to offer. They in turn should know what you have to offer.

To be able to learn about common interests, you need to spend some time with another person. Likely there won't

be enough time at a networking event, so you need to see about meeting them for a coffee chat.

Back to the effectiveness of networking. One suggestion is that you have your elevator pitch fine-tuned. You need a version to introduce yourself to a group and you need one that is more personal to introduce yourself to one person at a time.

You also need to become skilled at ferreting out those areas of common interest to move the conversation forward quicker.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).





**39. QUESTION: HOW DO YOU BUILD STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH CONTACTS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR NETWORK?**

**A** nswer Provided:

Teddy Burriss offers some excellent tips on how to strengthen your network. I had to agitate my wee gray cells to come up with some suggestions that would add to the discussion.

One of the things that I have found when it comes to building and strengthening business relationships is to actively discover the common interests that you and the other person have.

Once you discover commonalities you can leverage it for mutual advantage. Note that I didn't say 'exploit' for your advantage.

I belong to a morning breakfast referral networking group i.e. [iNetwork Kelowna](#). One of our beliefs is that people do business with people that they know and trust. Trust comes from getting to know each other, what the other's business is all about and who would make a good referral for them. We do this by going out for business coffee meetings and getting to know each other.

Spending time with and getting to know your connection is the secret to strengthening the relationship bond.

Mr. Burriss talks about ‘lead with give, not need.’ Dr. Ivan Misner Founder of BNI (Business Networking International) takes a little different tact of ‘givers gain!’

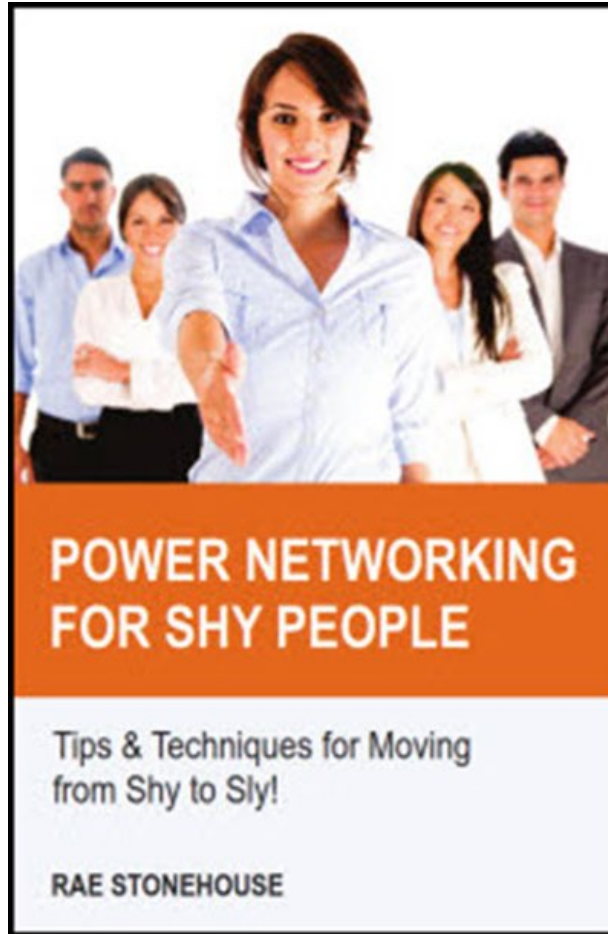
Both are variations on a theme. When you do something favourable for another person i.e. your connection, a principal called the Law of Reciprocity kicks in.

What happens is that subconsciously the other person feels the need to repay your generosity. They feel the tension until they act upon it. Once they have repaid the perceived debt, they in turn are more likely to want to do something else for you.

You are not really exploiting them in this case either. A general contractor colleague of mine says that he only does business belly to belly. This addresses the earlier statement of doing business with people you know and trust.

I WOULD BE REMISS IF I DIDN'T RECOMMEND A BOOK THAT I HAVE written on the subject of building your business network.

**Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!** outlines a strategy for effective networking whether you are shy or not.



As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**40.QUESTION: CAN YOU DO TOO MUCH NETWORKING?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

This question appears to be looking for a definitive answer, where only subjective responses will be provided.

If one defines 'networking' as the face-to-face or online interaction with another person, for business purposes and they spend all their time meeting people, at the expense of doing other activities involved in running a business, then perhaps you can do too much networking.

However, if you look at the process of networking as being composed of a series of activities, then perhaps not.

Effective networking is composed of the following activities [and likely even more!]:

- Face to face meeting and interaction
- Researching online the other person (before and after meeting them)
- Looking for areas of common interests

- Providing something of value to the other person (product/service) without expectation of something in return
- Keeping up to date with your connection's developments
- Providing public and personal recognition to your connections
- Connecting your connections with other connections for mutual benefits
- Providing referrals to connections that you trust

John Jantsch of Duct Tape Marketing is quoted as saying 'If you're not networking... you're not working!'

Networking needs to be part of your daily activities but not at the expense of running your business.

Thanks for your question.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**41. QUESTION: ARE MOST BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS GOOD AT NETWORKING?**

**A** nswer Provided:

This question raises subjective responses.

From my perspective, of those business professionals that I know, I would say that they don't.

A comprehensive answer requires exploration of the terms 'good' and 'networking.' And 'business professionals' for that matter.

***Business professionals*** isn't a one-size-fits-all category. There are introverts, extraverts, shy people and outgoing ones. The outgoing ones and the extraverts tend to enjoy networking more than the shy and introverted.

But just because a person is outgoing, that doesn't necessarily mean that they are 'good' at networking. Being a social butterfly or a chatterbox, doesn't necessarily mean that you are a good networker.

Effective *networking* requires strategy i.e. some thought behind what you are doing. It also involves having a purpose and a goal.

A COUPLE YEARS AGO, I WROTE A BOOK ENTITLED **POWER**  
**Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for**  
**Moving from Shy to Sly!** It provides strategies for both  
shy and outgoing business networkers.

AS A BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL, NETWORKING IS A TRIED AND TRUE  
method of not only increasing your connectedness but your  
earning potential.

I wasn't a good business networker. I'm not perfect yet but  
I'm a lot better than many and continually work on  
improving my effectiveness.

Thanks for your question!

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**42. QUESTION: WHAT ARE YOUR MOST EFFECTIVE CONVERSATION OPENERS IN NETWORKING SITUATIONS?**

**A** nswer Provided:

Effective? The risk is in not coming off like you're using a pick-up line.

I tend to use situational comments.

I'm not adverse to using "come here often?" It can elicit a chuckle or two and open the door to conversation.

Others:

"Is this your first time here?"

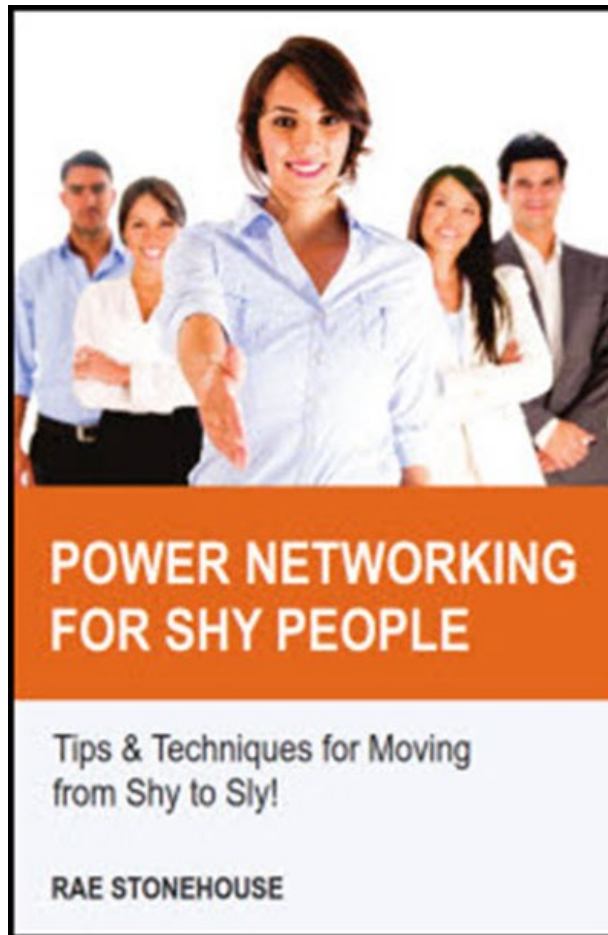
"Have you ever heard this fellow/woman speak before?"

"I don't think we've ever met. I'm Rae. Ray of sunshine!"  
also good for a laugh... sometimes.

"Gee, this weather sure sucks!"

I'm not so sure the conversational opener is the most important part. Perhaps the follow-up question to whatever their response is more important. You would want to go with an open-ended follow-up question to get them talking.





In my book ***Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!*** I describe having a *Questions Toolbox*. The idea is that you prepare in advance for questions that can move a conversation forward. It also prepares you for questions that you don't want to answer.

Most people like to talk about themselves and their business. And they can easily resonate with you if you are a good listener.

I enjoy a good conversation. Even though my default mode is a shy, introvert, I'm far more outgoing than most people.

I find that if I take the lead in the conversation it usually goes well, as I have training in communications.

Thanks for your question.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**43. QUESTION: HOW DO I MEET LOCAL PEOPLE WITH COMMON INTERESTS?**

**A** **answer Provided:** A couple quick suggestions would be to check out [Eventbrite](#) & [Meetup](#).

I don't know where you live of course, but both of these, offer access to special interest communities and may very well be local for you.

Another suggestion might be to see if you have any community recreation programs e.g. YMCA/YWCA, as they often have non-academic programs.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention Toastmasters International. Assuming you are over the age of 18, Toastmasters will likely provide everything you are looking for and more! Check out [Toastmasters.org](#).

I have been a member for 23 years so far and it has changed my life for the better.

Thanks for your question and good luck in your personal journey!

As answered on [Quora.com](#).

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#### **44. WHAT ARE GOOD NETWORKING EVENTS?**



**T**hat really depends on what benchmarks you use to determine what is good or not.

I have heard of some business people that say if you get more than two free drink tickets with your admission, then it is a good networking event. Some use the food as a measuring stick, assuming there is any food served.

If you are actively looking for prospects, a networking event that provides lots of people to work through, i.e. by

sheer numbers, a larger event is more likely to be beneficial to you.

If you are an outgoing person and confident in your schmoozing and networking, any size of networking event will probably work for you.

If you are actively looking to expand your connectivity, without regard to amassing prospects, any size of a networking event would work. Chambers of Commerce, business associations, entrepreneur societies, can all be a source of networking opportunities.

Another couple good sources of local networking opportunities are Meetup & Eventbrite. Just search for Business or Networking.

If you are a shy networker, smaller, more organized events may be more to your liking. I don't like the larger events. I don't like being hit on by the *sharks* who are out to make a quick sale, not into developing a relationship. I have better luck in connecting with smaller networking opportunities.

If you would like to learn more about networking, whether shy or not, I would recommend by book **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!**

Thanks for your question!

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**45. QUESTION: WHAT RESEARCH EXISTS ABOUT PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING GROUPS?**

I 'm trying to understand the entire market of "professional networking groups" including what are the largest groups, how many people attend, what professions utilize professional networking etc. Thanks in advance for your help.

**Answer Provided:**

From my experience, there is very little research, if any on the subject of professional networking groups. Just to clarify the question a little I would expect that you are asking about groups where professionals network, rather than networking groups that are professional in nature. Professional Associations, might meet that criteria.

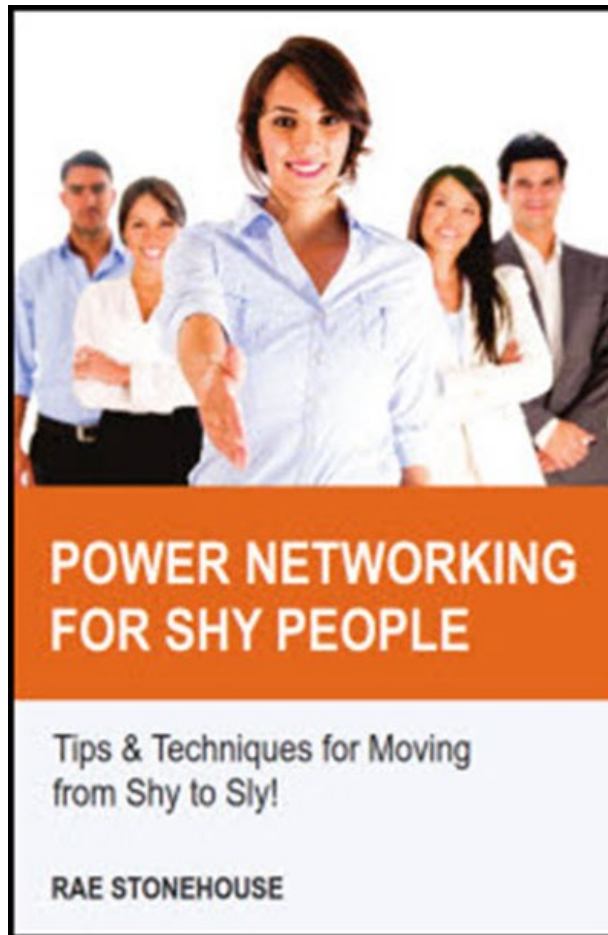
A couple years ago I decided to research the topic of networking for business purposes. I found that there were a few books that were of value, but I didn't really find anything that offered sage advice i.e. from somebody that was speaking to me. My challenges with networking aren't generic, they are specific to me.

In a search of the internet I found literally hundreds of articles on the subject of business networking and since then I have collected hundreds more. In reading these articles a theme became apparent to me.

There is a saying in the comedy business, apparently only ever heard by me as nobody else has, that there are only seven original jokes in the world and that every joke is actually a version of these seven. We have our knock-knock jokes, which arguably aren't even jokes. We have the travelling salesman. We have two or three walking into a bar... that would hurt! We have puns, the lowest form of humour... unless it's your own!

I found this to be evident in reviewing the articles. There seem to be a limited number of themes based on the subject of business networking and each writer seemed to be basing their content on what they read in someone else's article. I wasn't seeing anything new or any original ideas.





So I created my own book on business networking [Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!](#) In it I provide sage advice i.e. practical advice that works. I outline a strategy that levels the networking playing field for introverts and extraverts. I have given a couple dozen workshops/seminars on the techniques that I have developed and have received favourable feedback.

If I was looking for specific research on the effectiveness of business networking I would check out BNI (Business Networking International). I believe they are the recognized leaders in referral networking groups. Their

data may be more anecdotal in nature but I believe there would be value to it.

Here is an article that I have written that may help you with an overview of these types of professional networking groups. From my ***How's Your Net Working? Blog*** ...

***Strategies to Get the Most out of your Business Networking Referral Group***

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com/).

**46.QUESTION: WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO NETWORK?**

**A** nswer Provided:



I don't think that there is an absolute answer to this question. The answer probably lies in one's ability to take advantage of different networking models.

If you are a shy introvert, utilizing the internet in advance to learn more about the people you are going to be networking with, reducing your anxiety and building your self-confidence, then Linked in can be of use. I outline a system I created in my book ***Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!***

There is on-line networking and face-to-face networking. While there are many venue types for networking e.g., Chamber of Commerce After Hours, Meetups, BNIs, breakfast networking groups etc., each has its advantages and disadvantages. In most cases they are good for lead generation as in setting up coffee chats with people to get to know them better and explore possible mutual benefits. They are not really designed for doing business or making the sale.

I think the best way to network is to develop a system that works for you, generates good connections/leads and provides a win-win scenario for whoever you are networking with.

Good luck in your networking! If you are on LinkedIn, send me an invite to connect reminding me of our connection.



**47.QUESTION: HOW DO YOU BECOME  
CONFIDENT IF YOU ARE A VERY SHY  
PERSON?**

**A** **nswer Provided:**

You ask a short simple question that requires a complex answer to do it justice.

It's far too easy for people that don't experience being shy and quiet to say 'just stop doing it.'

Life doesn't work that way.

Being shy and quiet is merely a manifestation of having a deficit of social skills and a lack of self-confidence in the area of socializing.

If you experience severe anxiety over the thought of getting out there and socializing, it would be a different matter.

Being shy and quiet is a temporary state. You can change it.

The first step of course is being open to making changes in your life. Learning to socialize better does require socializing more.

It can be helpful to go to social events with a more outgoing person. They can introduce you to people and you

might be able to emulate the skills that they possess when it comes to socializing.

Think of improving your social skills as a series of incremental steps. Each step that you take should be evaluated and adjusted as needed.

I would suggest creating your own plan for socialization. It could be something as simple as talking to a stranger at the bus stop or while in line at a store.

It could be in participating in a 1 to 1 conversation at a networking session when somebody asks you a question. It could work up to your initiating the conversation.

One cure for being quiet, is actually having something to say. It can be helpful to be up-to-date on what is happening in your community or even the larger picture of your country.

As well as speaking or talking about a topic you know about, it can be equally as valuable in being a good listener. Asking questions to a person who is telling you a story can make you a great conversationalist in the eyes of the storyteller.

Assuming you are over the age of 18, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the value of joining a Toastmasters club in your community. As a member you will help develop your communication skills, which in turn develops your self-confidence. It can be a great way to overcome your quiet, shy ways. It has worked for me.

Originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

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**48.QUESTION: WHAT ARE SOME SPEED NETWORKING TIPS?**

**A** nswer provided:

I'm not sure how to interpret this question. One way would be that the question is looking for tips from professional speed networkers. This would presume that there is a subsector of elite networkers that consider themselves professionals. If so, I would expect that they are self-proclaimed professionals. That leads me to wonder that if they are so good, why do they have to keep producing more connections? Wouldn't it be better to build quality relationships with the number of connections they already have i.e. quality over quantity?

Another perspective is that the question is asking for speed networking tips from business professionals that are successful using the format of speed networking. I'll go with the latter.

Speed networking is an organized event where the expectation is that all of the participants will have access to a greater number of personal interactions than they would on their own or at a typical, non-organized meet and greet.



This question is asking for tips i.e. what works and perhaps what doesn't. Here are some to consider based on my experience and opinion.

1. While meeting a large number of people and collecting an equal amount of business cards can look like a measure of success, when it comes to networking and developing relationships, quality is better than quantity. Despite their being a large number of people to meet, you may be more productive with deciding on a number in advance as to how many new people you want to meet. Perhaps 5 to 8 might be a workable number. I find that too high as I tend to forget who was who.
2. In a formalized speed networking event, where you are matched with somebody you already know, there may be advantage to finding more about them and re-establishing your existing relationship.
3. In a less formalized networking event, where you meet someone you already know, there is value in touching base with them. Some so-called networking experts will say that you should never talk to someone you already know as it is a waste of time and they aren't bringing you any new connections and subsequent sales. I totally disagree with that concept. I wouldn't spend a lot of time with a contact or friend but I would touch base to see what is new in their business or personal world and provide them with a brief glance into mine. I would also ask them if they know of anybody at the event

that I really should meet and if they would be able to introduce me.

4. Be aware of whether the event that is being billed as a speed networking event actually is one. I am aware of some business association events that while they purport to be a business event, the members themselves view it as a meat market. No I don't mean 'meet.' Many of the participants are hoping to score at the event.
5. Don't spend too much time with any individual participant. Once the formalities are out of the way don't be afraid of being forward and saying something to the effect of "I think we may have something in common or perhaps we can be of help to each other. Are you interested in going out for coffee to talk some more about it?"
6. Be ready with an exit plan should you meet up with someone who is dominating the conversation or you are receiving bad vibes from. It is a fact of life that we will not get along with everyone that we encounter. If you have a sense that something is not right, odds are that they aren't.
7. Be assertive when it comes to sharing information. "Show me yours and I'll show you mine" comes to mind. If the other person is dominating the conversation either be prepared to steer it in your direction or have an exit strategy.

I could fill pages on this topic and actually have. I expand upon these tips and many more in my book [Power](#)

**Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!**. The book isn't just for shy people, it is for anyone who wants to be more effective with their networking measures.

If you are interested in learning more about networking, visit my website at <http://powernetworkingnow.com> for my series of articles called "Is Your Net Working?"

Or on **Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/PowerNetworkingNow/>

**Twitter** <https://twitter.com/powernetworkr>

**Youtube:** <https://www.youtube.com/user/ShytoSly>

**Linkedin:** Power Networking Now

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/4967132>

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**49.QUESTION: WHAT IS THE BEST SELF-INTRODUCTION?**

**A** nswer Provided:



A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL RESPONSE DOESN'T WORK WITH THIS question. The best self-introduction is the one that you are comfortable delivering and that serves your purpose.

In my article **How High Does Your Elevator Go?**, I suggest that you prepare several different versions of your elevator pitch i.e. self-introduction, as well as different time lengths.

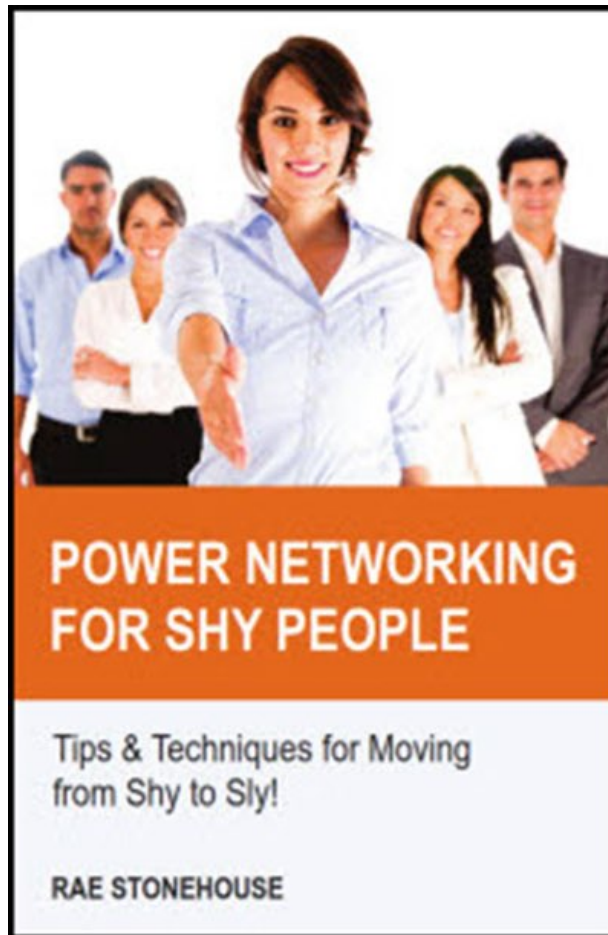
How long should your elevator pitch be? Good question! Answer... It depends. Not much of an answer at first glance, but it really depends on the norms or the culture for location or venue of the networking session. Presenting your 30 minute curriculum vitae wouldn't likely go over very well in a round-robin style of group introduction where the expectation is 30 seconds, not 30 minutes.

Many referral networking breakfast/luncheon groups based on the BNI (Business Networking International) model, limit their members to 30 second elevator pitches. The more members, the longer the activity takes, but at least it gives everyone an opportunity to speak.

The problem is that many people get so used to delivering a 30 second infomercial about themselves that they can't adapt to being given a longer time allotment. Another problem that I see often is that many people create their elevator pitch around their business or what they do for a living. While that may be great for a business or workplace networking opportunity, not so in a social gathering or perhaps an event that has no connection to their career or profession.

I'm of the belief that you should have multiple versions of your self-introduction that you can pull out of your networking toolbox at a moment's notice.

Let's differentiate self-introductions based on large group settings vs one-to-one.



Here is a short excerpt from my book **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!** on the subject of personal branding and developing your unique elevator pitch. You want to be memorable. The advice provided is in relation to self-introducing to a large group.

**Power Networking Logistics:**

1. Answer the question... “Who am I?”
2. Develop a personal brand. What do you want the public to know about you?

## **What do you stand for?**

If you were asked to describe yourself in one word or perhaps a few, what would they be? If I were to ask a colleague or friend of yours the same question, would they offer the same words that you do?

## **Power Networking Logistics:**

1. What words would you use to describe yourself?
2. Answer the question... "What do I stand for?"
3. Ask friends and colleagues in your existing network what words they would use to describe you.
4. Ask your friends and colleagues if they believe that you "walk your talk."
5. If they reply "No, you don't", what will you now do with this information?

## **Your USP:**

Your **unique selling proposition** (a.k.a. **unique selling point**, universal selling point or **USP**) is a marketing concept used to differentiate yourself from your competitors or others in the market place.

Some good current examples of products with a clear USP are:

- Head & Shoulders: "You get rid of dandruff"

Some unique propositions that were pioneers when they were introduced:

- Domino's Pizza: "You get fresh, hot pizza delivered to your door in 30 minutes or less—or it's free."
- FedEx: "When your package absolutely, positively has to get there overnight"
- M&M's: "Melts in your mouth, not in your hand"
- Metropolitan Life: "Get Met, It Pays"

Your challenge is to develop a USP that on one hand is short and to the point, yet is clear enough that it captures the essence of your business and will stick in the mind of whoever you are sharing it with. Having it prepared in advance, believing in it and being able to recite it with a moment's notice will go a long way in reducing your anxiety and fear which are all part of shyness.

I would also suggest researching your competitors or others that are in a similar business that are not necessarily your competitors to see if they have chosen a similar USP as you have. I am aware of two business coaches that chose a USP that had only one word that was different. That one word totally changed the context of the USP but it really upset one of the coaches accusing the other of stealing her idea, even though they had been developed independent of each other.

Then there is the one-to-one self-introduction that is commonplace in any networking event. I have seen many people deliver their elevator pitch as described above. And I have done so myself many times. I've decided though, that it comes across as rather stilted.



I believe it is much better to develop yet another version of your elevator pitch, a more personal one. This would be used when you are meeting someone for the first time at a networking opportunity. It should be short and sweet and provide enough information for the other person to get curious and ask you questions. Once again, your introduction should be consistent with the event or situation that you are networking in. I like to conclude my intro with a quick question. That allows me to provide further info without sounding like I'm a walking, talking infomercial.

### **Examples:**

**At a Toastmasters function:** “Hi there, I’m Rae Stonehouse. I’m a DTM (Distinguished Toastmaster) and a Past District Governor. I’m from [Flying Solo Toastmasters](#) in Kelowna, British Columbia. How about you?”

**At a local business networking event:** “Hi there, I’m Rae Stonehouse. My business is [Okanagan Help4Biz](#) and I provide solutions to problems that many small businesses face. How’s your business going?”

**At a different local business networking event:** “Hi there, I’m Rae Stonehouse aka Mr. Emcee. I’m a professional cat juggler. Metaphorically speaking of course! As an event organizer I take the hundreds of ideas that are flying through the air when organizing an event and I make sense of them.”

**At yet another local networking event:** “Hi there, I’m Rae Stonehouse and I’m an author, speaker and speech coach. Do you do any public speaking?”

In conclusion, I would suggest creating several versions of your self-introductions. Try them out. Practice saying them out loud in advance so that you are comfortable saying your intro. If it works, use it again. If it is uncomfortable, try changing it a little. Go forth and introduce yourself...



**50.QUESTION: WHICH TOOLS OR APPS DO YOU USE TO NETWORK EFFECTIVELY AT EVENTS?**

**A** **answer Provided:** I'm not a person who would put the words 'tools or apps' in the same sentence as "networking effectively."

Networking effectively is belly to belly, face to face. Forget the electronic gadgets.

Talk to people. Get to know them. Allow them to get to know you. Build relationships.

Use the gadgetry before an event to research people that it could be advantageous to meet at the event. LinkedIn is good for that.

Follow-up with people you meet at an event via phone call or e-mail. Sending an invitation to connect via LinkedIn can be helpful.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**51. QUESTION: WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO NETWORK AT 27 WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW MANY PEOPLE AND IT SEEMS LIKE MOST PEOPLE ALREADY HAVE A NETWORK?**

**A n s w e r P r o v i d e d :**

27 or 67, it doesn't really matter, the same principals and strategies apply when it comes to networking.

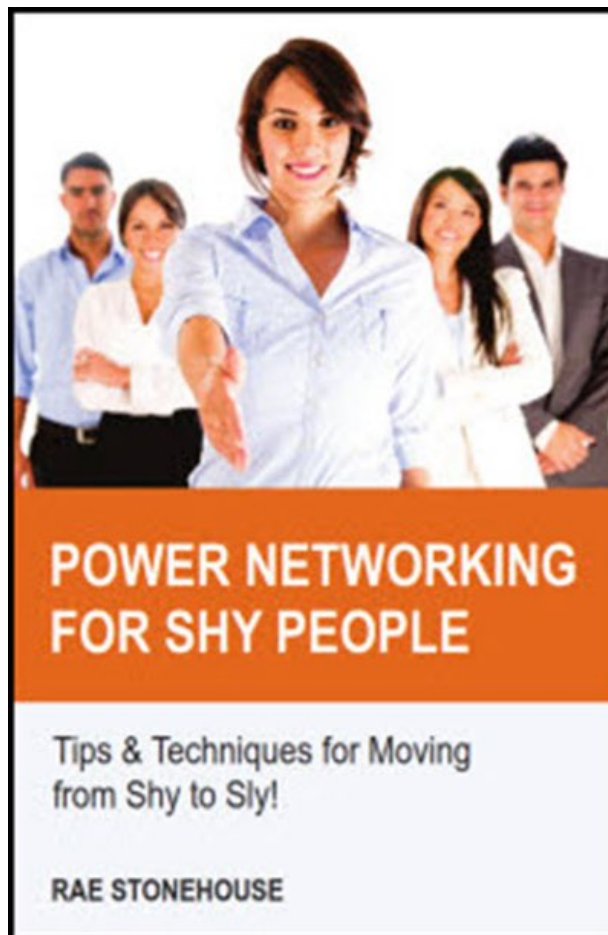
You ask what the best way to network 'when you don't know many people.' You have identified the gist of the problem i.e. you don't know many people. The short and simplistic answer to would be to get to know more people.

Everybody has to start from somewhere. The purpose of networking is to expand your reach of connections. Its not just a matter of meeting someone and adding them to your list of people you know, it's a matter of connecting with them. Connecting takes place when you spend some time getting to know the other person, learning what their interests in life are and seeing if you have any common interests. Once you do that, the next step is likely to be of service to your connection. Doing so helps cement the connection.

So how do you get to meet these people? On-line, via social media is one way but the best way is face to face. Belly to

belly as some of my business colleagues would say.

I would suggest looking for events in your community that interest you and would likely be attractive to individuals that you want to connect with. Check out <http://meetup.com> and <http://eventbrite.com> to see if there are any events in your area that you can attend.



A few years ago I decided to do something about increasing my networking and increasing my connections. It resulted in me writing a book on the strategies that I created and tried out. I would recommend it to you. **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for**

**Moving from Shy to Sly!** outlines strategies that will help you develop your network. It's available as a downloadable e-book.

Linkedin is a powerful tool for building your network. It is described in length in the book.

Good luck with your networking and building your connections.

As answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**52.QUESTION: HOW DO I GET BETTER AT NETWORKING?**

**A** nswer Provided:



A FEW YEARS AGO, I ASKED MYSELF THE VERY SAME QUESTION. There are some people that will tell you that they ***absolutely*** love networking. They will say something like “It’s so much fun!” Yet, others, will tell you that they would rather have a ***root canal*** than attend a business networking event. As a shy introvert, networking was a painful activity for me. I’ve recently experienced a root canal and believe me... networking is much less painful.

John Jantsch from Duct Tape Marketing says that “networking isn’t something that you do before work or after work... it is work!” You don’t *need* to network to be in business but *you do* if you want to stay in business!

Networking is not a normal and easy activity for many people, especially if you are shy. It is a skill that must be learned and practiced. In business and in life, a majority of our success comes from talking to people and involving them in your ideas, plans, or projects.

Some people equate being an introvert to being shy. Not all shy people are introverts. Introversion is a description of where you draw your energy from. Introverts draw their energy from within. They often feel drained by being around people. It is an over-sensitivity to stimulation. Shyness is a fear and is a **learned** behaviour. It is a **conditioned** response. We weren’t born with it. It can be a fear of the judgement of others or even the fear of judging yourself.

We can learn to change our behaviour. I know what it is like to be shy. I know how **avoidance** and **denial** can be a good friend. I know how **uncomfortable** it can be to attend a networking event and not know a **single person**.

I also got sick and tired of my inhibitions getting in the way of opportunity and decided to do something about it.

William Feathers, is often quoted as saying “knowledge is power.” I’m not sure how Mr. Feathers was at networking but his statement wasn’t true then and still isn’t.

Knowledge is only power when you do something with it.



In my book I share tips and techniques that I have learned to help you gain your power in networking and move you from ***shy to sly***. If I can do it, you can do it too!

There is an old question that goes “How do you eat an elephant?” The profound yet simple answer is “one bite at a time.” This Quora question and subsequent answers seems to provide a shotgun approach to becoming better at networking. I prefer a systems approach. With that in mind I will provide this article focussing on maximizing a networker’s elevator pitch.

### **How High Does Your Elevator Go?**

- 30 seconds? 60 seconds ... 10 minutes?
- Different buildings?

**Note:** The following is an excerpt from **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!** By Rae Stonehouse.

The buzzword for conducting business effectively in the new millennium may very well prove to be “networking.” In turn, the key element of a networking interaction is the *elevator pitch* or *elevator speech* as some would call it. We used them as children... “you show me yours and I’ll show you mine!”

Well perhaps not quite the same but at its essence it’s an opportunity to show your stuff and to learn about the other person. Assuming they follow the rules of course.

The basic premise is to imagine that you are sharing an elevator ride with a person who could be influential in advancing your business or career. You have the duration of the elevator ride to impress upon this individual why they should buy into your cause or at least agree to talk to you some more about it.

How long should my elevator pitch be? Good question! Answer... It depends. Not much of an answer at first glance, but it really depends on the norms or the culture for location or venue of the networking session. Presenting your 30-minute curriculum vitae wouldn't likely go over very well in a round-robin style of group introduction where the expectation is 30 seconds, not 30 minutes.

Many referral networking breakfast/luncheon groups based on the BNI (Business Networking International) model, limit their members to 30 second elevator pitches. The more members, the longer the activity takes, but at least it gives everyone an opportunity to speak.

Recently I organized a series of Power Networking Breakfasts. It was speed networking at its best, very much like a speed dating concept. Participants were allowed two minutes and thirty seconds to deliver their pitch. Time limits were rigidly followed with Toastmasters style speech timing lights, green, amber and red and a bell to signal the speaker to stop their pitch, then on to the next pitcher. The promotional material advised the participant to come prepared with a two-minute elevator pitch and to be prepared to answer a question or two about their pitch.

It was amazing to find that many of the participants faced challenges in trying to fill the two minutes. They had been programmed to speak and sit down within the restriction of 30 seconds. I believe that one of the challenges that many of us face is that we have been taught from an early age not to brag about ourselves. When it comes to business, if we don't promote ourselves or our business i.e. blow our own horn, then who will? We should be passionate about our businesses and be able to talk at length about what we do, why we do it and why you should do business with us. In fact, I would challenge you to be prepared to deliver a 30-minute presentation about yourself and/or your business. Arguably that would likely be one of the slowest elevator rides ever, but if you have ever found yourself stuck in one for an extended period of time, you will know that it could very well happen.

A challenge that I face is that with having multiple business ventures, volunteer roles, my professional career & pursuits, I could easily take the full thirty minutes for my 30 second pitch allotment. That doesn't leave any room for the others. If you find yourself in a similar situation I think that the answer lays in referring back to our analogy of the elevator ride. Many larger high rises have more than one elevator. I would challenge you to create multiple elevator pitches that you can use to match with the appropriate venue and situation. A social setting may be a good place to talk about some of the activities you are involved with and touching upon, but not going heavily into what you do for a living.

At a Toastmasters conference I would likely introduce myself as ...

“Good morning everyone, I’m Rae Stonehouse. I’m a Distinguished Toastmaster and have been a member for over twenty-four years. So far! I’ve served as our District 21 Governor a few years back and continue to serve our leaders in multiple roles. My passion is organizing and creating something from nothing. I’d love to hear how your Toastmasters experience has been. Rae Stonehouse.” I’ve kept it short and sweet and hopefully have piqued someone’s interest that they would want to talk to me some more. I haven’t mentioned my profession or my business ventures at all. I will likely fit that into the follow-up conversation as the opportunity arises.

Here’s an example of an elevator pitch that wouldn’t be such a good idea. Let’s say that I was in a meeting of the senior managers in my organization. It would probably not be well received if I were to give an introductory pitch highlighting my experience as a union activist. It would be much better to identify my name, my professional designation, where I work, how long and what I bring to the table.

I’m a firm believer in the adage “If the only tool you have in your toolbox is a hammer, than every problem will be a nail.” I believe that to be an effective networker you need to have a selection of tools in your metaphorical toolbox. Having a selection of elevator pitches to be able to rely on for any situation is one such tool. Don’t throw away that

hammer though. Sometimes a hammer is exactly what is needed!

You can learn more power networking techniques in **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!** Available right now as a downloadable e-book.



**53. QUESTION: WHAT IS THE MOST  
DIFFICULT THING ABOUT NETWORKING?**

**A** **answer Provided:** There likely isn't a definitive answer to this question.

Each and everyone of us, is different. While there are difficulties that many networkers face, it isn't universal.

One person may have no problem with walking up to a stranger and introducing themselves, another person may be crippled with fear of having to undertake the same task.

Some people seem to have the gift of the gab. Others are perpetually tongue-tied.

Some can handle their liquor, others can't.

As for me, I have researched the fundamentals of business networking and put them in practice, I still find it difficult to walk up to a group of strangers and insert myself into their conversation. I know *how to* do it, but would prefer not to.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**54. QUESTION: WHAT ADVICE CAN YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WITH SOCIAL ANXIETY IN REGARDS TO JOB SEARCHING PROSPECTS?**

**A** nswer Provided:

Your question touches on two areas that I have personally experienced and have spent a great deal of time researching strategies to overcome.

In my e-book **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!** I outline strategies for shy networkers to level the playing field with those that are more outgoing.

Shyness and social anxiety are the same thing. We weren't born with it, we learned it. If we learned it, we can learn other techniques of overcoming or at least working within our anxiety and making it manageable.

A big part of how we experience social anxiety is what is called a 'self-fulfilling prophesy.'

We are expecting to be anxious, as we have in the past. So what happens? We become anxious because we always have in the past. We are talking about fear.

A commonly used acronym for FEAR is false expectations appearing real. That is the self-fulfilling prophecy in action.

When it comes to job searching and interviewing, it can often play havoc with our insecurities and increasing our social anxieties.

Many people believe that the employer holds all the power in a hiring situation and it is an unfair balance of power. This in turn increases our insecurities.

I believe that knowledge is power and that if you have it, you can increase your success rate.

That lead me to write and publish **You're Hired! Job Search Strategies That Work**. As the title says, I provide strategies to increase your personal power in the job searching process. The knowledge will help you gain the power to be effective in your job search.

Both increasing your knowledge of job searching and becoming more comfortable in social situations takes time.

When it comes to social anxiety specific to job searching it is likely related to the prospect of having to do cold calling i.e. to people you don't know, obtaining references and/or worrying about the idea of having to answer interview questions. At least that is how it was for me.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that one of the best ways to reduce your social anxiety and in turn increase your self-confidence and the likelihood of landing a job, is to join Toastmasters.



As a 24-year member, I can't speak highly enough of the benefits and person growth that I have seen in myself and countless others. Check to see if there is a club in your community.

Question originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**55. QUESTION: HOW DO I NETWORK WITH OTHER PEOPLE IN MY INDUSTRY?**

**A** nswer Provided:

I don't think anyone so far is actually answering your question. You are not enquiring about business networking events in general. You are asking about your industry, without providing what your industry is.

If I look at your situation strategically, I see several key areas for you to focus on.

Firstly, is the people you work with on a daily basis. Get to know them better. Find out how you can help them. Being of service to another without expectations of something in return can be one of the best ways to grow your network. This includes getting to know your supervisors and managers.

Secondly, expand your circle of contacts. Who are your customers, clients and people you deal with on a regular basis that aren't fellow employees?

Thirdly, is to think of a bigger picture. What industry do you work in? Do they have professional development or training

opportunities? This can put you in contact with people in the same industry, yet working for a different company.

Does your industry have an Association? Associations often have annual or more often meetings where you can attend and get a larger and more diverse group of potential contacts.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**56. QUESTION: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE  
BEST NETWORKING TIPS YOU'VE HEARD?**

**A** nswer Provided:

Here is a tongue-in-cheek excerpt from my book **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!**

**Top 15 Networking No- Nos**

Throughout my publications I have provided tips & techniques to help improve your networking effectiveness. I thought it would be interesting and perhaps entertaining to take a look at the subject from a different perspective i.e. what you really shouldn't do.

These aren't provided in any order of priority. See if you recognize any of them from your adventures in networking land.

**1. No Show:** (Not showing up for an appointment) When all is said and done it can be argued that all you really own in life is your reputation. There are some people that don't respect other people's time. They make appointments that they don't intend to keep, or they pre-empt the appointment for something that is more important than

meeting with you. Soon they get the reputation of not being reliable or keeping commitments. Is this the reputation that you want to develop?

**2. No Follow-up:** (Not following up on something that you said that you would do) BNI (Business Network International) founder Dr. Ivan Misner promotes the concept of "givers gain." Offering to help someone with something or providing information that can help an individual move their business forward without expecting compensation is a good way to develop a network connection. Not following-up on what you said you were going to do takes away from your credibility and your reputation.

**3. No Follow-up:** (Not following through with contacting a connection) If you say that you are going to follow-up with someone ... do so. If you don't at the least, you have missed an opportunity to develop a potential profitable connection. At the worst, well who knows! See previous article **Follow-up is Everything!** for an expanded version of why you should follow-up.

**4. Not focusing on your conversation partner** i.e. looking around the room for a better offer. I think that we are guilty of this at one time or another. Let's face it, not everybody is all that interesting to listen to. And you know what ... our conversation partner might be thinking the same thing about us! Listening is a skill. You will find that the more that you listen to people, the more that they think that you are interested in them, the more that they will

reveal about themselves and they will think that you are a fantastic conversationalist.

**5. Sexist or racist language.** I hear this far too often in conversations with people that should know better. It isn't acceptable and I don't want to hear it.

**6. Fly undone!** Gents for heaven's sake check your fly when you leave the restroom. It might be a great conversation starter "So the bull's ready to get out is it?" But is this where you want the conversation to go? It can be challenging to recover from a position of embarrassment. Trust me I know. I was on stage for two hours once as an emcee with my fly undone :-)

**7. I'm so wonderful!** (Going on and on about yourself and not giving the other person a chance to talk) If you have been on the receiving end of listening to one of these types you will know that it is not fun. I would suggest hitting the Pause button and move on to the next opportunity.

**8. Talking about someone else** i.e. a third party who isn't part of the conversation in a derogatory manner. Some people are happiest when they are putting somebody else down. If you participate with someone like this, you are validating their behaviour and you will likely soon be labelled the same way. This is basically gossip.

**9. Dump job:** (Using your conversational partner as a sounding board without asking their permission to do so) We all have challenges in life, problems that are bothering us right now. It won't help your networking success rate if

you become known as a whiner. That's what counsellors are for.

**10. Monopolizing the Other Person's Time.** This is a little different than what is outlined in #7 I'm so Wonderful! If you are shy or uncomfortable with networking it can be easy to stay with one person longer than you should. You are depriving both of you the opportunity to meet other people.

**11. Disrespecting a Business Card:** People tend to take their business card quite seriously. It is an extension of who they are. We aren't as serious about it as say the Japanese however, picking your teeth with someone's business card is a not a great way to make friends and influence people.

**12. Hit & Run:** (Acting like a Shark) Sharks are a type of networker that go to a business networking event with the intent of making a sale right there, right now. They don't care about you or your business. They are only interested in what they can get from you. Don't be one! And don't allow yourself to be attacked by one either!

**13. Not having Your Own Business Cards:** This portrays the image that you are not a serious networker. If you haven't even taken the time to develop and produce business cards to promote yourself, then why would I want to do business with you? I have heard it said "Oh I don't do business cards. I take the time to write their name down on a piece of paper with their contact information. It's more personal, and then I contact them with "hey remember

me?" "Lame, lame, lame." That's all I can say about that comment.

**14. Eating Food While Conversing:** Many networking events offer food & beverage. Balancing a paper plate in one hand and a drink in the other can be challenging when reaching your hand out to shake another's. My personal belief is that if I am eating, I will stand to the side and chow down, then when finished I will resume networking. I have had to stand an awfully long time with a plate of food in my hand, while listening to another to avoid appearing rude. Be careful of spinach dips. Spinach stuck to your teeth can take your conversational partner's focus to different directions than what you intended.

**15. Networking While Inebriated:** You are your own liquor control board. If you can't handle your liquor without getting mouthy, don't drink! What you say and do may come back to haunt you.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).





**57. QUESTION: HOW DO I GET BETTER AT NETWORKING IN CONFERENCES AND EVENTS?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

At the risk of starting off by stating the obvious, to get better at networking at conferences and events you have to actually attend them.

And then it isn't a matter of attending any conference or event. There needs to be a purpose to attending. What is your goal? What do you hope to achieve?

In my book **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!** I outline a series of steps that a networker can take to be a more effective networker.

Strategies include researching the event on-line. Learn all you can about the organization and what they are all about. Who are the leaders or the people of influence? What type of people go to their events and could there be anyone that would be worth your while meeting?

It isn't a matter of going in for the sale. It is more important to build relationships. You won't build the relationship at the event. You need to follow-up after the

event. Invite your new connection out for coffee. Get to know them!

While it is great to meet and listen to other people's stories, you have to be prepared to promote yourself. This is where your elevator pitch and your USP [Universal Sales Proposition] comes into play. What makes you different from everybody else?

You only improve your skills by practicing them. After a networking event, debrief yourself. What worked? What didn't? What will you do differently next time?

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**SECTION FOUR: BONUS MATERIAL**

**Originally published by Rae Stonehouse under the heading Is Your Net Working?**

## 58. TOO SHY TO NETWORK? POWER NETWORKING TIPS & TECHNIQUES

### **S**ound familiar?

- “Do your hands start ***sweating*** and your legs ***shake*** with the thought of having to not only attend a business networking session but ***actually talk to people?***”
- “Do you feel paralyzed by the fear of rejection when you are at a business networking event?”
- “Would you rather have a root canal than attend a business networking event?”
- “Would you rather send an e-mail to a business lead than meet them in person?”

**Well if any of these apply... you may be shy!**

“Get over it!” That’s what our extroverted friends would say. “Just do what we do!”

Life isn't that simple. We aren't all extroverts and it would probably be a noisy world if we were. **Being shy isn't a personal defect.**

You aren't the only one out there, even if it feels like it sometimes. The world is full of shy people and that *doesn't* prevent you from being an *effective* networker and *reaping the benefits* that networking can bring to your business.

Shyness can be defined as a reticence and self-consciousness, not just in stressful social situations but over all.

Studies in shyness back in 1972 at Stanford University's Shyness Clinic indicated that 40% of Americans considered themselves to be shy. Nowadays, closer to 50% are likely to say that they are shy. You would think that with all of the advancements in modern sciences and the humanities that we would become more outgoing. Perhaps all those advances are what are causing us to become shyer.

It has been said that it started with ATMs and Walkmans. We are no longer obligated to stand in line at our financial institutions to do our banking. We can do it with a machine. The opportunity to talk to your neighbour while standing in line is lost as well as small talk with the teller. Grocery stores and many other ones now have self-checkouts. No need to interact with a check-out clerk anymore. Walkmans allowed us to walk and listen to our music, for our ears only, a great way to escape unwanted conversations. The Walkman developed into MP3 players and smart phones

that while getting smaller in size have offered us more ways to escape the real world.

The traditional family is no longer traditional. The days where the father went to work, the mother stayed home and the children went to school, all to come home at the end of the day to share a meal and their adventures of the day only exists in reruns of Leave it to Beaver. Traditional meals were replaced by TV dinners, then microwaveable ones. Fast food has become even faster and arguably not even food anymore. The opportunity to develop one's communication and conversing skills around the family dinner table may be lost forever.

I believe that you can place the condition of shyness on a continuum. On one end you would have an individual who is painfully shy. The mere thought of having to go to a networking event and conversing with people could be enough to cause them to have a panic attack. Any situation where one feels that they are likely to die is to be avoided at all costs.

At the other end of continuum would be someone who experiences some mild apprehension about participating in networking events. They feel the apprehension but go ahead and do it anyways.

So how do we move upwards on the continuum to the point where we are less apprehensive about meeting and socializing with people, even to the point of enjoying it?

As a registered nurse working most of my career in mental health I realize that there will be some individuals that will

only be able to move forward by taking an anti-anxiety medication such as lorazepam to reduce their anxiety. This is only recommended for those that have severe difficulty and only for short term. Despite what some physicians will say, these medications are only to be used for short durations. Coming off of the medication can be as stressful for the person as the situation that the medication was taken for in the first place.

I believe that the secret to becoming more social i.e. moving away from shy is a cognitive behavioural one combined with skill development. There are a few clinical modalities that might be of use. Some might say that it is not important to know why you are shy or what causes your symptoms. "Forget about it, move forward, do it anyways!" A *Reality Therapy* approach might be "You are shy because you choose to be. What are you going to do to change it and become more social?"

A *Solutions Focused* approach would likely say something like "Tell me what it would look like if you were no longer shy. What would you be doing? Who would you be talking to? What would you be saying to them? How would you be feeling?" They wouldn't be focusing on the past, only on how the future *could* be.

I'm a proponent of the Solutions Focused Method combined with education and experience.

There are many parallels with the fear of public speaking and shyness in social situations. Over the past 20 years I have been honing my public speaking skills by studying

public speaking as a member of Toastmasters. Both within my club with fellow members and out in the public I regularly challenge myself by delivering presentations and speeches.

Darren Lacroix, the 2001 World Champion of Public Speaking describes the secret to becoming a better public speaker as being “Stage time, stage time, stage time.” I believe that the secret to becoming less shy and more self-confident is similar. You need to face your fear of networking by getting out there and doing it, over and over again.

Within the Toastmasters program we develop our skills by continually moving forward in our educational program and raising the bar as they say in increasing the challenges that we face. The more that we speak in public, the more that we desensitize ourselves and reduce the power that anxiety has over us. The Toastmaster’s program also offers constructive feedback as a way to maximize our self-development.

An overall plan to reduce shyness and increase self-confidence would be wise to include joining Toastmasters. Membership will provide you plenty of opportunities to both develop your communication and leadership skills but also plenty of opportunities to network in social situations.

Research the topic of business networking. You will find that while there is lots written about the subject, finding practical tips and techniques can be challenging to find.



Look for networking events in your community. Don't expect to be a power networker from the beginning. As they say you can't expect to run before you can walk. Learn what you can about the organization facilitating the event. What type of people attend the events? Is it purely social in nature or are people expecting to network for business opportunities?

If you are shy and it is important that you network, accompany a friend to the next business networking event, preferably someone who is a little more outgoing than you are. Ask them to introduce you to some people that they know that may be of benefit for you to meet.

As I said in the introduction, if almost 50% of people are saying that they are shy, then odds are there will be a high number of shy people at any event. You won't be alone!



## **59. YOU GET BACK WHAT YOU GIVE: POWER NETWORKING TIPS & TECHNIQUES**

**I** recently noticed the often used saying “You Get Back What You Give” written in large letters on a roadside display board at a local church. Perhaps they are stating the obvious but then one’s base personality of being an optimist or a pessimist might come into play. Do you see the world as one of opportunity or as one of danger and threats?

If you are a believer in the law of attraction you have likely also heard the sayings “you reap what you sew” or “what you think about comes about.” Dr. Ivan Misner, Founder of BNI describes this as the “Givers Gain” principal. The law of reciprocity says that if you provide a service or favour for another they will likely feel obligated to return the favour. I have read somewhere that it creates a tension in the individual who has received a favour to the extent that they feel a discomfort until they have returned the favour and evened the score. This may be at a subconscious level and they wouldn’t even be aware of why they are doing it.

The example above refers to the results that can occur for helping another individual. Sometimes, cause and effect

aren't related in time. Meaning that you can't always see your results nor can they always be attributed to your actions. The law of attraction would have you believe that if you put out something good to the Universe it will respond by having something good return to you. The results that you obtain aren't always related to the good that you put out though. It could come back to you from a different, perhaps unexpected source.

So what does this have to do with business networking? When you provide assistance or a favour for another individual without the expectation of gain, the Universe will balance it out and you will receive something in return. Providing a business referral to someone in your network could result in multiple referrals back to you.

An easy way to start this in motion is to create and submit a testimonial for someone in your network and submit it to their LinkedIn profile under the appropriate heading i.e. where you have worked with them or know of their work. Odds are that they will become motivated to submit one in return on your behalf. This action has an added benefit of displaying your name in their profile which is linked to yours. People are curious and frequently read the LinkedIn testimonials. A well written one will reflect well on you.

Another easy favour that you can do for someone is to Like their Facebook page or a specific entry that they have made. It helps to give them credibility as well highlights your name somewhat. The same applies to LinkedIn. Post a favourable comment on something an individual has written or click on the Like button.

We all have skills and expertise that we use everyday in our jobs and businesses. What we take for granted might be awe-inspiring in others. Consider doing some pro bono work for others. Doing so can significantly help someone in need and can also give you that warm fuzzy feeling that we sometimes crave. You never know what you will receive in return once you set this action in place.

If you know the person well enough and you are comfortable doing so, offer their name as a referral if someone is looking for a service or product that they provide.

Whether you believe in the law of attraction or not there is enough anecdotal evidence out there that indicates that the principal of “Givers Gain” actually works. I would challenge you to test it out and see for yourself. Try it and see what happens. Let me know how your net’s working.



## **60. BE THE RED CAR: POWER NETWORKING TIPS & TECHNIQUES**

**A**t a recent networking event I made comment to a woman that since having met her within the past year I was starting to see her at a lot of different events. She replied “Yeah me to. You are the red car!”

I immediately recognized the red car reference from the Law of Attraction. The idea being that if you were to buy a red car or even were thinking about buying one, then you would start noticing red cars everywhere. The Universe recreates itself for you. Up until that point red cars were not in your range of focus.

Now when it comes to business networking it would be advantageous for you to become that red car i.e. someone that others recognize easily.

One way to become more visible would be to attend local events that provide networking opportunities and working the room so that you “touch” many people i.e. interact with them. If you attend an event regularly, people will get used to seeing you there. It could get to the point that if you aren't in attendance someone might say “I wonder where .... is?”

If you are not overly comfortable with interacting in a face-to-face situation, cyberspace can be a good resource for you. Social media venues such as Twitter, Facebook & LinkedIn offer plenty of opportunities to create an on-line persona. By joining on-line groups that are locally based you can easily interact with business people that you might not meet at a networking event or in the normal course of operating your business. Both LinkedIn and Facebook allow you to post updates which can help to keep your name front and centre. So when you actually do meet them in person you already have something in common to talk about.

I am very active on-line promoting my articles such as this one as well as my business and events that I am organizing. I also have quite a few websites that I have created and maintain. This tends to provide lots of entries in Google. If for whatever reason somebody was researching me, they would have lots of info to sift through. This works as a promotional tool for me.

I was at a Chamber of Commerce event and a young woman came up to me and said "I just had to meet you. You are everywhere!" She was referring to my presence on local social media venues. To her I had become the "red car." She was actively visiting local sites and my name and photo were popping up everywhere.

I believe that there is an accompanying assumption. If you are seen everywhere i.e. being the red car, you are obviously well-connected, that you have something of value to share and it would be worthwhile getting to know you.

How do you become the red car? It could be blue or any other colour if you don't care for red. If I had my way it would be a bright school bus-yellow pickup truck. But since I don't own one and it's on my wish list, perhaps seeing someone else driving one might not be so appreciated. I am a little leery about putting my thoughts about a new pickup truck out to the universe. The last time I did I had a new truck within a week. All I had to do was hit some black ice, do a 360 degree turnaround, land in a ditch, have the wheels fall off and have the truck written off.

So if you do become someone's "red truck" use your power wisely!



## **61. JOHNNY APPLESEED KNEW WHAT HE WAS DOING: POWER NETWORKING TIPS & TECHNIQUES**

**L**egend has it that Johnny Appleseed traveled the American countryside spreading apple seeds randomly, everywhere he went.

In fact, according to Wikipedia, he planted nurseries rather than orchards, built fences around them to protect them from livestock, left the nurseries in the care of a neighbour who sold trees on shares, and returned every year or two to tend the nursery.

Many people's business networking activities can be a lot like randomly spreading those apple seeds. Some might grow but most likely left to their own, they will fail to develop and eventually die off.

Relationships need to be *nurtured*. Often the word *cultivated* is used to describe what needs to take place for a relationship to grow. Both words are really describing an active interest, desire and taking action oriented steps to develop a relationship with another individual.

So how does one *cultivate* a relationship? I have some cynical colleagues who would say that would treat them the



same way as you would cultivate mushrooms. You keep them in the dark and feed them BS [male cow manure.] I would suspect that they have few quality connections. I certainly wouldn't want to be connected to them with that attitude.

Let's leave the agriculture analogy for a while and go to back to the question of how does one cultivate a relationship?

**Consider these following steps or actions:** (They aren't necessarily in the order that you would take. Relationship building can be more of a circuitous journey rather than a lineal one.)

- Research the individual. Check them out on LinkedIn. Find out what their vocation and background is.
- Invite them out for coffee. Look for common interests.
- Be on the lookout for resource materials related to their interests and forward it on to them.
- Send them thank you notes or appropriate gifts to recognize help that they have provided to you.
- Send congratulatory messages e.g. cards/notes by snail mail or perhaps by e-mail for important milestones both personal and business. Seeing their name in the paper can be a great opportunity to drop them a note and congratulate them, assuming it wasn't in Crime Stoppers or the Most Wanted List of course.

- If you are comfortable in doing so, send them business referrals. The law of reciprocity says that if you do something good for somebody else they in turn will do something good for you.
- Perhaps you have heard of the concept of “unconditional love?” To successfully cultivate a relationship, you can’t put terms in place. Doing so could jeopardize the relationship.
- Don’t appear to be a stalker with your focused interest.

So far we have been looking at *active* steps that you can take. For a relationship to develop you have to be open to sharing of yourself. It can’t be a one-way transaction. There has to be a payoff for you as well.

Getting back to that agricultural analogy of cultivating, sometimes you have to do some pruning to help strengthen your plantings. The same thing applies to your network. There will always be people that are suspicious of your motives or intentions. Perhaps this isn’t somebody that you want in your network.

There will also be people that once you get to know them, you find that you really don’t want to associate with them. It might be necessary to sever all ties with the individual. If you aren’t comfortable dealing with or relating to an individual you are unlikely to want to refer them to another connection. Their behaviour could have the undesirable affect of reflecting on you and your business.

An interesting side note mentioned in the Wikipedia article stated that apple trees grown from seed are rarely sweet or tasty, more on the sour side, which was apparently perfect for producing hard cider and applejack back in those days. Modern day orchardists plant strains of trees that consistently produce a fruit that is desirable and marketable. There is no use in providing all the labour in cultivating a crop if you aren't able to realize a bountiful harvest.

So, when it comes to business networking will you randomly toss out those seeds or will you take your time and cultivate a manageable amount of productive connections? Your choice... sweet or sour?



## 62. POWER NETWORKING SECRET REVEALED!

Okay, if you are thinking that is a pretty bold statement to make, I would agree with you.

Any time that you see the words “secret” and “revealed” together in the same sentence, I would advise caution. It is usually followed by a request for payment for the content of the secret to be revealed to you. I am going to reveal the secret to you for free, after all, it was given to me at no charge.

The secret to being a power networker is ... [drum roll please] **ACTASIF**. Say what?

Simply put, to be a *power networker* i.e. one who is effective in their networking activities, ***act as if you already are successful***. You may find it somewhat anticlimactic to hear this one word secret if you haven't heard the expression before. Another way of saying it would be “fake it until you make it.” Or with a bit of a stretch it could be “mind over matter.”

**“Act as if it were impossible to fail.” — Dorothea Brande**

Apparently your mind doesn't know the difference between imagining and reality. You would think it would. I'm sure if I acted upon some of my imaginings as though they were real, I could find myself in a lot of trouble. So if your mind doesn't know the difference and you have the idea that you are going to be fearful or perhaps you expect the networking event to be extremely stressful, then guess what? It will be stressful and cause you to be afraid. On the other hand if you go to the event feeling confident, perhaps with the attitude of whatever happens ... happens, then you might achieve different results.

**“The antidotes to fear and ignorance are desire and knowledge. Propel yourself forward by learning what you need to learn to do what you want to do.” --- Brian Tracy**

Any effective sports coach is using this technique extensively. They spend a lot of their time working with the athlete in having them envision every aspect of their performance in their minds long before the actual live event.

**“Never let the fear of striking out get in your way”. - Babe Ruth, 1895-1948, American Baseball Player**

If you are a Law of Attraction believer this is an example of a self-fulfilling prophecy, or even an example of the adage “You create your own reality.”

My first experience with the **ACTASIF** philosophy was in my early years in Toastmasters. Toastmasters International is the world's leading provider of inexpensive communication & leadership skills training. As a new speaker I found it stressful to stand at the front of the room, with everybody staring at me and being acutely aware of my own nervousness. It surprised me to learn that even though I was shaking and fearful inside while delivering my presentation, it was not noticed by those watching and listening to me. There is a difference between inner & outer states. Yet, I am sure that we can all think of an example of a speaker that their outward appearance was one of terror, which would likely be a magnification of their interior state at the time.

What I learned was the power of imagery. Before my presentations I would stand at the front of the room or wherever my delivery area would be and I would envision myself being successful. In my mind I would see an audience that was hanging on every word that I said. They were nodding in appreciation of the content that I was delivering and they were laughing profusely at all of my jokes. I was a success ... even before I delivered the presentation. When it came time to deliver my presentation live, it wasn't stressful because I had already delivered the presentation in my mind and was successful. I will admit that quite often the live presentations didn't go quite as wonderful as in my imagination or some of the humour fell flat, but it didn't create any undue stress for me.

**“If you do not do the thing you fear, the fear controls your life.” --- Brian Tracy**

Every time that you make a presentation, and survive it, which you are likely to do so, you incrementally build your self-confidence. Self-confidence is somewhat like a bank account --- the more successes that you have in life the more that is added to your self-confidence balance.

When you undertake an endeavour that requires self-confidence, you dig into that balance and you use some of it. Unlike a bank account, using up some of your balance actually causes your balance to increase. The more risks that you take and successfully overcome, the more your self-confidence will increase. Unlike a bank account though, if you don't use it, you will lose it. Maintaining a healthy self-confidence level requires practice.

I have found this very same imagery technique i.e. ACTASIF to be successful when I attend networking events. Before going to the event, perhaps while I am driving there, I envision myself having good quality conversations with the people that I meet where I am not the least bit nervous. I see myself making some new connections that I can both provide value to and receive value in return.

I would challenge you to test this method. When preparing to attend a networking event that you usually would experience anxiety over try imagining yourself being successful with your networking. Envision yourself having successful and rewarding conversations. Then when you are actually at the event act as if you are successful. Don't

forget, you already were successful in your mind. As Captain Jean Luc Picard from Star Trek Next Generation would say "Make it so!"

**"Most people are paralyzed by fear. Overcome it and you take charge of your life and your world."  
--- Mark Victor Hansen**





### **63. SO WHAT'S YOUR STORY? POWER NETWORKING TIPS & TECHNIQUES**

“**N**ice day eh?”  
“To bad about the Canucks!”

“Isn’t this weather something?”

We have heard them all before... meaningless comments that are more likely to end a conversation than to advance it.

For the many people that we encounter during our daily travels perhaps this is all that is needed. If we had long drawn out conversations with everyone, we likely wouldn’t accomplish everything that we need to in a day.

However, attending and getting the most out of a business networking session is another story [pun intended]. This is the perfect opportunity for you to share your success stories. A success story is a short, punchy anecdote. It teaches your conversation partner about your business, what you are interested in and hopefully gives the listener a reason to get to know you better. All that in about 2 to 3 minutes!

This concept was reinforced to me recently when I attended a local Chamber of Commerce event. A fellow networker asked me how my society was going. At the time I was the Chairman for a local entrepreneur society. I went into my spiel of the challenges that we were facing in moving forward. One step forward, two steps backwards. I realized later that I had missed a perfect opportunity to promote the volunteer opportunities available within the society as well as the opportunity to share my vision for the future of the society. I have invested a lot of time and energy in moving the society forward and I should be prepared to share the story with whoever is willing to hear it.

It is often said that misery loves company. Does your present conversational companion really want to share your misery? I have met far too many people over the years that their default mode is what I call "poor pitiful me." I recognize it readily having used it myself in my early years. Many people find it easier to share with others how awful life is treating them rather than sharing success stories. The logical conclusion would be that if you were coming from a position of self-pity then you are unlikely to have a collection of success stories.

Many of our mothers have taught us not to talk about ourselves. "Nobody likes braggers!" Walt Whitman is quoted as saying "If you done it, it ain't bragging." While not grammatically correct, it is the essence of sharing your story.

Each of us has multiple personas based on the different roles that we have in life. Some describe it “as wearing many hats.” We may be at a business networking session to market our business but we still have our different personas with us at all times and we should be prepared to share a success story related to any of those personas if the opportunity arises.

As in many endeavours, the key to success is advance preparation. Take stock of what is new and exciting in your life that others would appreciate hearing about. Share your enthusiasm!

So how does one create a good story? You would think that the answer would be to start at the beginning but you would be wrong. I would suggest that start creating your story by developing the ending first.

What do you hope to achieve by sharing a story? Are you hoping that someone will follow you in your cause? Will you be educating somebody on a topic or issue that is of importance to you or is your intention merely to entertain? The most important part to remember with developing your conclusion to your story is “What do you want the listener to take away from your story?”

With your “take away” clearly in your mind you can now carry on to developing your opening for your story. This is the part where you want to grab your listener’s attention so that they are eager to listen to the rest of the story.

Using fishing with a rod as an analogy, your story’s opening is the bait that you are using to attract the fish to bite. The

content of your story being the moving the rod up and down praying for a bite. Setting the hook and landing the fish being the conclusion of your story.

I left out the part about drinking a lot of beer as I recall from my long ago days of fishing. Your story's opening should be short and to the point, yet be teasing enough for the listener to want to hear more.

A: "So what's new?"

B: "Not much, same ole, same ole. How about you?"

A: "The same. Business sucks. Can't make a decent living in this economy."

B: "We'll catch you later on the flip side."

A: "Okay, see ya."

Does this sound familiar? "A" set up the discussion with "So what's new?" "B" missed the opportunity to share a story about what is new and exciting in their life. Neither gained anything from this interaction.

You are at a business networking event and you are asked the very same question "So what's new?" Now what do you do? It's story time! If you have had previous conversations with this individual on a particular subject I would suggest updating them on anything new with the same subject.

If you haven't had previous conversation with your fellow networker, the field is wide open. You can talk about what's new and exciting about your business. Often there is an awkward period of time just after two networkers have

introduced themselves to each other and delivered their elevator pitches. If they haven't found common areas of interest there can be a lull while each rapidly thinks of where to take the conversation. Instead of waiting for the "What's new" question, you could interject into the conversation and take it in a different direction. Yours!

So what's new? Go ahead ... ask me!

"I've been working as a registered nurse for over 35 years and having worked with thousands of people over the years I thought I had seen everything. The other day I ..."

"As a master organizer I help organizations create events that raise attention for their cause as well as much needed funds. One of my clients was pleasantly surprised when I..."

"Our entrepreneurs society helps create entrepreneurial leaders. We have a young woman working with us that has done some amazing things for us..."

"One of the things in life that I am passionate about is in honing my communication and leadership skills. I've been a member of Toastmasters for almost 20 years and continue to learn something new. The other day I learned..."

"I've been doing a lot of writing lately. One project is a series of articles related to business networking entitled "Is Your Net Working." My latest one is about..."

So... what's your story?



## 64. BECOME A THOUGHT LEADER: POWER NETWORKING TIPS & TECHNIQUES

**W**ikipedia defines a **thought leader** as being an individual or firm that is recognized as an authority in a specialized field and whose expertise is sought and often rewarded.

Would being recognized as a leader in your field or in your business make a difference to your bottom line? Is it possible for mere mortals, average people like you and I to become thought leaders?

I believe that it is not only possible to become a leader in your specific field but that it is in the reach of most of us to do so. With my keen interest in developing my business networking skills I am working towards becoming one of those thought leaders. I write about practical networking skills development for shy people as well as those that have some networking skills and want to improve their success rate.

Am I an expert at networking? In theory yes, in practice, not as much. I write about the subject of networking and shyness because they have caused me problems throughout my life. I've tested the tips & techniques that I offer and I

know from first hand experience that they work. I also know that the lessons that I have learned can be very beneficial to others that are experiencing similar difficulties. Recent studies have indicated that over 50% of Americans consider themselves to be shy. That is a huge market awaiting me to become an expert.

My researching the topic of networking has been educational for me in several ways. I have learned that I know more than a lot of people on the subject yet not as much as I could. My anxiety in networking situations has been steadily reducing as I become more educated on the subject and my effectiveness is increasing.

My goal is to become a thought leader on the subject of business networking. I am open to the fame and fortune that will come my way when I do so. It would be nice though if this happened a little sooner rather than later.

Is it really possible to become the thought leader on a subject that you are experienced with? Perhaps it might be helpful to replace the word "the" in the previous sentence with "a." You don't have to be *the* top expert on your subject. You can become one of many and still be an effective thought leader. You also don't have to compete on the world stage. Odds are that your local community and its surrounding geography could support you being its top thought leader on a specific subject.

So how does one become a thought leader? I will offer a few suggestions that you might want to consider.

To be a thought leader you actually have to give some thought to the subject that you want to be an expert in. That sounds rather obvious at first but I don't believe that it is. Many entrepreneurs and business people are caught up in working *in* their business rather than working *on* their business. Day to day they provide a service or a product in their business without taking the time to think about how to grow their business so that they can realize even greater revenue. Becoming a thought leader involves investing in yourself.

I believe that it was Brian Tracy who said that if you read about a specific subject for one hour a day, in five years you will become a world leading expert on your subject. In essence, he is referring to becoming a thought leader. Thought leaders are well read.

Thought leaders are also well spoken. Many people believe that you are born with good public speaking skills or that it is a gift. There is no truth to that belief. Public speaking skills are no different than any other skills. You get better with practice and feedback providing corrective action. If you don't, you won't. It is also a matter of using it or losing it. To continually develop your public speaking skills you need to consistently work at it. I have been working on honing my communication skills over the past 20 years as a member of Toastmasters International, the world's leading inexpensive provider of communication and leadership skills development. Whether you are an experienced speaker looking for opportunities to speak or a beginning



speaker wanting to get over your stage fright, Toastmasters is the place to do so.

Speak well, speak often!

Thought leaders are good writers. The old saying that “the pen is mightier than the sword” readily comes to mind. To be able to influence people and in turn lead them you need to be able to write in a manner that not only grabs the reader’s attention it spurs them into taking action. The challenge is in writing so that your message is understood by the reader. The average North American reads at a grade seven level. Your challenge is to write so that they can understand it yet not have your material so dumbed down that you insult those with higher literacy skills.

On-line bulletin boards, chat rooms and social media venues such as LinkedIn have helped level the playing field for those that tend to be on the shy side. You can be as bold as you want to be with your on-line persona.

LinkedIn has a relatively new feature where you can follow Thought Leaders from around the world. Some of them like Sir Richard Branson have a couple million followers. I don’t follow him but I guess a lot of people are interested in what he has to say. Others on the list have a mere 30000 followers. Wouldn’t that be nice? It helps to look at that 30000 or so as being a number that could be achievable, assuming of course that it is something that you desired.

I’m guessing but I believe that LinkedIn likely has a group dedicated to almost any subject that you can think of. You are allowed to follow and be a member of up to 50 groups

at a time. To help gain exposure for yourself you can post questions or submit an article of interest to share with others. You can also provide answers or commentary on questions or discussions that others have posted. This can be a great way to create credibility for yourself and develop a reputation as being one who gives thought to a particular subject. It is also okay to disagree with what is written as long as you follow the rule of thumb of disagreeing with the opinion of the person rather than the person. There are ways to soften a response that differs from the writer such as “My experience has been a little different...”

To be a thought leader, or a leader of any type, you have to have followers. I am fond of a saying that goes “If you think that you are leading and you turn around and see that no one is following you, then you are really just out for a walk.” I think that we all need to turn around every so often and see if anyone is following us.

We haven't answered the question yet of why we would even want to become a thought leader? Fame and fortune certainly would be nice but on a smaller scale there is great value in becoming the “go to” person if a problem arises that you have the expertise to resolve.

I have been lead to believe that the media is always looking for experts on a specific subject. It would be great to be on a short list of experts that the media reaches out to when they need a quote or sound byte on a topical subject. This is not only great attention for you but it also raises attention for your business. It can be a great conversation starter. Can you imagine being able to respond to the question of

“so... what’s new?” with “Oh, I was on the Oprah show last week.” We might have to settle with an interview by the local AM radio station but you never know who is listening or what it might lead to.

Followers need leaders. If you lead, people will likely follow you. This can be an effective way to develop your business network. Get to know with your followers. Connect with them. Try it and see what happens. Let me know how your net’s working.



## 65. FOR A GOOD TIME CALL ...

I am sure that most of us have heard of the practice of reading a message scrawled on a public restroom wall of “For a good time call...”

There is usually a phone number accompanying the message. In all likelihood the individual mentioned is not aware of the advertising being done on their behalf nor would they likely agree with it. More than likely it was scrawled by an adolescent male, driven by testosterone and thinking it was pretty funny. Having not spent any time in the women’s restroom I can only assume that this practice only happens in the men’s.

If the individual named actually wrote the message in question well I guess it could be attributed to some savvy targeted marketing.

I am not suggesting that you add this to your networking skills repertoire. In my example the call for action is “**for a good time call...**” Each and everyone of us has something that we are offering, whether it be a skill or our expertise. When we are networking for business we need to get the

message out there as to what we do and what we have to offer.

Now , using a plumber as an example, what if we changed the message to something like for “For No More Leaky Pipes call...” A financial planner might say “We are your financial health experts. Will your money live as long as you do?” An entertainer could get away with “for a good time call...”

This in essence is your USP, which is often defined as Universal Sale Pitch or Unique Selling Proposition. Your USP is a short statement that summarizes who you are, what you do, why you are passionate about it and how you are different or better than anyone else who does it. All this in a short sentence. Yes it is definitely challenging. You may not want to do it but your competition likely is.

A memorable USP has a way of connecting you, your business and what you have to offer in a person’s mind. You want your potential customer to automatically think of you when they have a problem to solve and that you are likely the solution to it. The only way that will happen is that you have to get in the habit of using your USP regularly, perhaps as part of your elevator pitch. You have to become known by your USP.

At the risk of self-promoting, after all I am an entrepreneur, I would offer one of my USPs. “Hi, I’m Rae Stonehouse also known as Mr. Emcee. I am an Okanagan-based full service master of ceremonies and event planner. From start to finish... we do it all!”

Or... for a good time call Rae... just not too early in the morning, too late in the evening, on weekends or in the afternoon as it cuts into my nap. But other than that...



## 66.HOW HIGH DOES YOUR ELEVATOR GO?

- 30 seconds? 60 seconds ... 10 minutes?
- Different buildings?

**N**ote: The following is an excerpt from **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!** By Rae Stonehouse.

The buzzword for conducting business effectively in the new millennium may very well prove to be “networking.” In turn, the key element of a networking interaction is the *elevator pitch* or *elevator speech* as some would call it. We used them as children... “you show me yours and I’ll show you mine!”

Well perhaps not quite the same but at its essence it’s an opportunity to show your stuff and to learn about the other person. Assuming they follow the rules of course.

The basic premise is to imagine that you are sharing an elevator ride with a person who could be influential in advancing your business or career. You have the duration of the elevator ride to impress upon this individual why they

should buy into your cause or at least agree to talk to you some more about it.

How long should my elevator pitch be? Good question! Answer... It depends. Not much of an answer at first glance, but it really depends on the norms or the culture for location or venue of the networking session. Presenting your 30 minute curriculum vitae wouldn't likely go over very well in a round-robin style of group introduction where the expectation is 30 seconds, not 30 minutes.

Many referral networking breakfast/luncheon groups based on the BNI (Business Networking International) model, limit their members to 30 second elevator pitches. The more members, the longer the activity takes, but at least it gives everyone an opportunity to speak.

Recently I organized a series of Power Networking Breakfasts. It was speed networking at its best, very much like a speed dating concept. Participants were allowed two minutes and thirty seconds to deliver their pitch. Time limits were rigidly followed with Toastmasters style speech timing lights, green, amber and red and a bell to signal the speaker to stop their pitch, then on to the next pitcher. The promotional material advised the participant to come prepared with a two minute elevator pitch and to be prepared to answer a question or two about their pitch.

It was amazing to find that many of the participants faced challenges in trying to fill the two minutes. They had been programmed to speak and sit down within the restriction of 30 seconds. I believe that one of the challenges that many



of us face is that we have been taught from an early age not to brag about ourselves. When it comes to business, if we don't promote ourselves or our business i.e. blow our own horn, then who will? We should be passionate about our businesses and be able to talk at length about what we do, why we do it and why you should do business with us. In fact, I would challenge you to be prepared to deliver a 30 minute presentation about yourself and/or your business. Arguably that would likely be one of the slowest elevator rides ever, but if you have ever found yourself stuck in one for an extended period of time, you will know that it could very well happen.

A challenge that I face is that with having multiple business ventures, volunteer roles, my professional career & pursuits, I could easily take the full thirty minutes for my 30 second pitch allotment. That doesn't leave any room for the others. If you find yourself in a similar situation I think that the answer lays in referring back to our analogy of the elevator ride. Many larger high rises have more than one elevator. I would challenge you to create multiple elevator pitches that you can use to match with the appropriate venue and situation. A social setting may be a good place to talk about some of the activities you are involved with and touching upon, but not going heavily into what you do for a living.

At a Toastmasters conference I would likely introduce myself as...

"Good morning everyone, I'm Rae Stonehouse. I'm a Distinguished Toastmaster and have been a member for

over nineteen years. So far! I've served as our District 21 Governor a few years back and continue to serve our leaders in multiple roles. My passion is organizing and creating something from nothing. I'd love to hear how your Toastmasters experience has been. Rae Stonehouse." I've kept it short and sweet and hopefully have piqued someone's interest that they would want to talk to me some more. I haven't mentioned my profession or my business ventures at all. I will likely fit that into the follow-up conversation as the opportunity arises.

Here's an example of an elevator pitch that wouldn't be such a good idea. Let's say that I was in a meeting of the senior managers in my organization. It would probably not be well received if I were to give an introductory pitch highlighting my experience as a union activist. It would be much better to identify my name, my professional designation, where I work, how long and what I bring to the table.

I'm a firm believer in the adage "If the only tool you have in your toolbox is a hammer, than every problem will be a nail." I believe that to be an effective networker you need to have a selection of tools in your metaphorical toolbox. Having a selection of elevator pitches to be able to rely on for any situation is one such tool. Don't throw away that hammer though. Sometimes a hammer is exactly what is needed!

You can learn more power networking techniques in **[Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for](#)**

**Moving from Shy to Sly!** Available right now as a downloadable e-book.



## **67. SERENDIPITY ISN'T A PLAN! POWER NETWORKING TIPS & TECHNIQUES**

I've often heard it said in reference to "self-help" books... "If you get only one gem or a useful tip from a book it makes all of your reading time worthwhile." While that may be true, it can have you spending a lot of time with your nose in a book.

The same principal can be applied... inefficiently... to your networking activities... "One contact can make a world of difference in your business ..." In essence you are leaving your success to serendipity.

Serendipity, or leaving everything to chance, while awe-inspiring when it works, is not something that you can control or count on.

Does the following scenario sound familiar? You attend a large event touted as the best networking event in town. You meet a dozen or so "new" people, new to you that is, not new to everyone else, or so it would seem. You deliver your 30 second or longer elevator pitch over the ever-increasing din in the packed room. You go home with a handful of business cards. The next day or so you face the challenge of contacting all of your warm leads. If this is an

activity that you aren't fond of, that 200 pound phone handset can be quite daunting. "Hi, this is Rae. We met the other night at..." "Who?"

Okay, perhaps I am injecting my own inadequacies into this article but I really have heard people agree.

Here is a power networking technique to maximize your effectiveness. If your main purpose in attending a networking event is to get that handful of business cards, then go for it! An alternative option would be meet a business colleague or friend that you are comfortable with, in a setting that is conducive to conducting business and compare personal networks. "I'll show you mine... if you show me your's", so to speak. For those that are old enough to recall trading baseball or hockey player cards, this isn't what I am suggesting.

A planned approach is best. For example, I am looking for a bookkeeper/accountant to take on a volunteer role in a society that I lead. I would meet with somebody that I know has a background in finances and I could specifically ask them who they would know in their network that might meet my search parameters. At this preliminary stage it is a matter of brainstorming contact's names. Write them down on a piece of paper. This isn't the time to be evaluating each name as to whether they might be interested in participating, your only task at this point is to generate a list of names.

The idea is to leverage your colleague's network. With social media being so prevalent nowadays, many of us are

well connected. Well-connected doesn't mean that we actually know or have even met the contact though. More of an e-contact if you will. It probably wouldn't be much of a surprise to find that you already know some of the names generated and they are part of your network.

Our next step is to rate each of the names that we have generated as to how well your colleague knows the individual. Would the individual be surprised if you contacted them saying that they were referred by your colleague? Or would your contacting the individual trigger a "Who?" response.

Generating a list of names isn't of much use unless you get their accompanying contact info. Now is the time to leverage your connections and make that net work. Make those phone calls.

PS: Don't forget to spend some time helping your colleague with their networking measures. While it can be said "It's not who you know... it's who knows you!", perhaps we need to amend it to "It's not who you know, it's who knows you know who you know!"



## 68. OVERCOMING SHYNESS IN NETWORKING: A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH

The following is an excerpt from [Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!](#) written by Rae Stonehouse aka the “Shy Guy.”



AS THIS IS A BOOK ON NETWORKING FOR SHY PEOPLE, I’M assuming that you experience shyness to a certain degree. There isn’t a standard measurement that applies to everyone. We all experience it in a different way. What might intimidate me may not cause any distress to you at all.

For some people it is the large groups of people that cause their anxiety. For others, it can be the inevitable 1 to 1 conversation, where they fear that they may appear to be stupid.

For me, I find the approaching of somebody that I don’t know to be challenging. I would suspect that I have a deep-seated fear of rejection that triggers my anxiety. Yet, I have

developed an advanced skill at public speaking, an area that many would find to be even more stressful.

Darren Lacroix, a former Toastmasters International World Champion of Public Speaking Winner says that one of the secrets to becoming an effective public speaker is “stage time, stage time, stage time.” Translation: you just have to do it over and over again.

I believe that the same principal applies to becoming a better networker. The more that you network, the more likely that you will become more comfortable with doing so. There is an expression that says “practice makes perfect.” It isn’t true! If you keep making the same mistakes over and over again, you just become better at making mistakes. Conversely, practice with constructive feedback can lead towards perfection. The Toastmasters International Communications Program is based on that very principal. I have been a member for over 21 years at the time of writing this and I experienced first-hand the benefits of constructive feedback. When you are networking there isn’t somebody watching you so you will have to evaluate yourself as to how you did. This can be challenging as we tend to be self-critical especially in areas that we experience anxiety.

### **Networking Skills Self-Assessment**

I would suggest developing some benchmark performance standards so that you can compare each new meeting or interaction. You would conduct this exercise later on after the event was finished. Some answers lead to yes or no



answers. Others may be better answered on a sliding scale. If you keep records of your results you are better able to track your progress.

Some examples might be:

- I approached someone that I didn't know and made the first comment. Yes No
- I listened intently while the other person delivered their elevator pitch before starting mine.
- I was able to deliver my elevator speech comfortably.
- I was able to maintain eye contact for much of our discussion.
- I initiated an invitation to go out at a later date for coffee.
- I was comfortable/nervous in presenting my business card.
- I was comfortable in ending the conversation and moving on to another.
- I was able to ask some questions that moved the conversation forward.
- Overall I felt less or more nervous in comparison to other networking events.
- What did I learn about myself in this networking situation?



USING DEVELOPING BETTER PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS AS AN example, we find that new speakers tend to focus on what they see as their shortcomings. Their shortcomings take on

a life of their own and minimize the skills and talents that the speaker already has. Research has shown that it is more effective to focus on the skills that you already have and strengthen them rather than focus on your own self-defined deficiencies. I believe that the same thing applies to networking and conducting 1 to 1 conversations. Find out where your skills are and use them more.

Use the benchmark assessment after each event and reward yourself for areas that you have shown improvement, especially those ones that have caused you considerable anxiety in the past.

So, what if I do the assessment and I am still having a lot of anxiety? I am really nervous around people.

As I mentioned earlier, shyness can be present in different degrees. Social anxiety can be a problem. I believe that managing social situations is a skill that needs to be developed. Like shyness or social anxiety, we are not likely born with well-developed social skills.

Your challenge is to reduce your anxiety to a manageable level. Having worked in the mental health field for over 30 years, often as nurse therapist, I'm not going to make a blanket statement to the effect of "get over it." There can be many causes of anxiety.

While I don't believe in Big Pharma's creating diagnoses such as "social anxiety" as a new market to sell their medications as a treatment, I do believe that if your anxiety appears to be excessive, you really should have a talk with your doctor. There may be other reasons for your anxiety

that your doctor could help you with. Perhaps a mild antianxiety agent taken before you attend a networking session may help.

If your anxiety is excessive there may be an advantage to you if you were to seek out some help from someone with a psychological background i.e. a psychologist. Sometimes we can use a little help in getting past some obstacles that we have in life.

I had considered doing so at one point in my life to help me with interpersonal relationships but I chose a self-directed educational program instead. I found that one of my challenges was that I hadn't developed many of the interpersonal skills at an early age. As an adult I had to go back and learn the basics. My research exposed me to assertiveness training and communications, conflict and crisis management and systems thinking. As I mentioned earlier about having a tool box, the more skills & techniques that you have in your repertoire the less likely you are to become overwhelmed in a situation. If I had to make a single recommendation to anyone as to the secret of leading a successful life I would have to recommend the different areas that I researched. It certainly made my life easier.

Another technique that I have used in developing my public speaking skills is that of using imagery. Before delivering a presentation to a group or a venue that I'm not used to, I will go up to the front of the room i.e. where I will be delivering the speech from and I will imagine that I am speaking. I will imagine where everyone is seated. I will see

their smiling faces and appreciation as to what I am saying. I see myself as being successful. So when I actually deliver my speech, I have already been successful in my mind. This helps reduce the anxiety that I might otherwise experience and allows me to focus on my delivery. The audience quite often doesn't react the same way in reality as they do in my imagination though. Five encores can be a little tiresome!

I believe that the same technique can be used prior to participating in a networking event. Imagine yourself being successful, talking to different people and feeling confident. There is a law of attraction principal that addresses creating your own reality. So conversely, if you go to the event with the expectation that you are going to have a stressful time, well then, guess what will happen?

### **Power Networking Logistics:**

1. Practice announcing your name out loud.
2. Practice introducing someone else and deliver your introduction out loud.
3. Practice asking questions to another person while you are sharing elevator pitches.
4. During a 1 to 1 conversation with someone, invite them out to coffee.
5. Follow-up with them to set a date & time for the coffee meeting.
6. Ask some colleagues for feedback as to your attire that you are wearing to business networking functions. Is it appropriate and/or how could it be improved?

7. If you don't have a business card, have some printed.
8. Practice presenting and receiving business cards.
9. Purchase and start wearing a nametag to business networking events.
10. Practice your handshake at home and put it into practice at business networking events.
11. Practice maintaining eye contact in 1 to 1 discussions.
12. Complete the Networking Skills Self-Assessment.



## **69.FOLLOW-UP IS EVERYTHING! POWER NETWORKING TIPS & TECHNIQUES**

**I**t can be a great feeling when coming home from a networking event and looking at the stack of business cards you have collected. You even spoke at length to many of the card-donators. Some, it can be a little difficult to recall who they actually were. “Now was he the tall fellow with the bad hair piece... or was he...?” You’ve probably experienced that scenario more than once. And you know what... perhaps some of the business people that you gave your precious business card to have been thinking something similar. Hopefully not about your bad hair though.

For effective business networking I recommend the quality over quantity method of networking. Some would say that networking is a numbers game, the more that you meet the higher the chances of your meeting someone that can benefit you. Take for example that you are meeting someone for the first time and if the setting and conditions permit, they deliver their elevator pitch and you return with yours. Then comes the awkward moment, what to say next. You can either carry on conversing about something of no consequence “Nice day, eh?” until one of you tires of

it or you can explore common interests. Assuming that you have a common interest I would suggest that you take the lead in the conversation in getting the other to expand upon the commonality or something that they had previously said.

Many networkers make the mistake of trying to sell their product or themselves at this juncture. Your goal should be to arrange to meet them at another time, perhaps for coffee, to discuss those common areas further. Even though many of us are electronically connected to our offices by our smart phones and can likely check to see if we are available at a certain date and time to make a coffee date, we likely won't. When you suggest meeting for coffee, later, if the person is willing to set up a date and time, on the spot, I would go with it. Location can always be determined later by e-mail.

If they aren't willing to set a time and date, I would refer to their business card and say something to the effect of "Can I reach you at this e-mail? I'll contact you next week and see if we can set up a time to get together for a quick coffee." Unfortunately, for many networkers, this is as far as they go. They don't do the follow-up. Life gets busy, there is always one more thing to do with your business and before you know it you have lost the window of opportunity. There is a strong possibility that the individual that you were networking with also has a list of people they are following up with and other commitments. It is far too easy to get left by the wayside if you don't take action to stand out from the others.

At a recent morning meeting of a Business Referral Group that I belonged to we discussed the issue of follow up. A fellow member related that in his experience, if you actually follow-up with a lead, it puts you way ahead of those that don't. He makes a practice of following up with a networking connection within three days of the original meeting and says that it is amazing how many people have said "You know, you are one of the few that actually follows up." Yes, following up can help you stand out from the competition.

The coffee get together is the opportunity for each of you to share your business details and determine if there is enough reason to continue at another time to develop your relationship further and ideally to do business together.

You might ask "I've contacted them three times by e-mail and even left a couple voice mails but they haven't gotten back to me. What do I do next?" There could be a legitimate reason for them not getting back to you. Life happens! But they could be acting non-assertively and are actively avoiding you. I would have to respond with "If that was true, is that someone that you really want to network with or to do business with?" If you are to continue it could easily label you as a stalker.

One suggestion may be to add them to your tickler file. A couple weeks down the road, ignoring the fact that they haven't acknowledged you yet, you would be justified in sending them a message something like "I just noticed that we didn't get together a few weeks ago like we said we would. Where did the time go? It seems to be picking up



speed. Last time we met we were discussing our common interests of... Are you still interested in getting together?" If you still don't receive a response, I would put them in the "inactive" file.

When it comes to networking, to stand out from your competition, remember to follow-up.



## 70. I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE ...

**A** common anxiety-producing situation in a shy networker is when a third or more persons join the conversation and it falls upon them to introduce everyone.

Who do you introduce first? Do you use first and last names? Are you required to provide collateral information about each of the people that you introduce?

Life is getting a lot more casual these days, at least in North America but I am sure that my etiquette expert friends would agree that there is basic protocol that should be followed when making introductions.

**Shaking hands upon meeting:** Shaking hands upon meeting someone for the first time has become commonplace and is to be expected. Even if the other person is well known to you it is quite acceptable to shake hands in greeting if you haven't seen them for a while. Gender and age used to determine who reached out first but that has gone by the wayside. If you are sitting when introduced to someone for the first time it is appropriate to stand first unless you are in a restaurant or another setting that would make it difficult to do so.

**Introducing peers to each other:** As they are on the same social level it really doesn't matter who you introduce first. Use both their first and last names when introducing them unless you don't know the last name. "John Smith this is Jane Walker. Jane works in our marketing division. And if I'm not mistaken John you used to work in marketing didn't you?" Pronounce the names clearly so that it is easily understood and if you can provide a little collateral information about each of them do so. If you are aware of some common areas that the two individuals share it can be a great way to seed a conversation i.e. get it going.

**Introducing a Superior to a Subordinate:** I have some personal difficulties with the term *superior* if it means that they are better than me, my personal baggage. On the other hand, if it refers to the fact that they are higher up on the organizational chart than I am or perhaps more prominent in government, I can accept that. Rule of thumb is that you say the name of the superior first. "Mr. Smith I would like you to meet James Jones. He works in our Refreshments Division." The same idea applies where you would supply some additional information to seed a future conversation or to help create a point of reference to the one that is receiving the introduction.

**Introducing a customer to people in your business:** The old adage of "the customer always comes first" holds true in this situation. It is a good way to respect your customer. As in other introductions it is helpful to provide some collateral information about the customer or even your business member that you are introducing. It can also

be a good time to do a quick testimonial about some aspect of your business dealings with your customer.

**Introducing Women:** The old way of doing so was to introduce a man to a woman. “Mary I would like you to meet John.” You won’t create an international incident if you were to do so but nowadays the trend seems to be to use rank as your rule. If you don’t know who holds the so-called superiority, I would revert back to the old rule of man to woman. If anybody questions you, you could always say that you didn’t get the memo about the changes.

**Introducing Older People:** The old rule was to introduce the younger person to the older one, saying the name of the older person first. Now it is not so important.



## **71.FINDING COMMON INTERESTS: POWER NETWORKING TIPS & TECHNIQUES**

**M**eeting somebody for the first time as in a networking situation can often leave you stuck for words. Your counterpart delivers their elevator pitch and then as they pause to catch their breath they utter “so what do you do?” You go on to deliver your well rehearsed pitch for your business. But did the two of you really communicate?

Communication is a two way process. While the other person is sharing their story, you need to be listening closely to them. This isn't the time to be practicing your own story in your head. This is the time to listen. Imagine that there will be a test after your partner delivers their personal story. Besides trying to figure out what their business is about, you should be listening for statements or beliefs that are similar to yours. Perhaps you have had similar experiences as they have described.

Research has shown that people like to do business with people that are similar to themselves. It is also often said that people will do business with friends before strangers.

So how do you rapidly turn an impromptu exchange of elevator pitches into a “best buddies” scenario?

Well, sometimes it does happen by accident. You will meet somebody and very rapidly find that you hit it off as the saying goes. If you are a law of attraction follower, you would say that you are resonating. You are on the same wave length. But more often than naught it doesn't go that way and can be awkward at best.

The solution lays in you taking charge of the conversation. By charge, I don't mean to take control and dominate it at the others expense. I mean to be proactive and direct the conversation in the way that you want it to go. Research has also shown that people respond well when you ask them questions about something that they have just said, asking them to expand upon a point perhaps. The usual questions of who, how, why, when and where can be used to elicit further info effectively as long as you don't come across as giving them the third degree. “Where were you on the night of ...? Can anybody vouch for your whereabouts” may not be the way to win friends and influence people.

Asking more questions of the person is also a highly recommended traditional sales communication method i.e. that you use the information that you have just gathered to tailor your sales pitch for the individual. While that may be okay if you are actually in a sales situation I wouldn't recommend it in first-contact networking encounter. As I said *most* people will respond well to probing questions as long as they feel that you are eager to learn more from

them. You will know fairly quickly if you are dealing with a paranoid individual. They are out there.

Once you determine whether you have common interests, don't forget to talk about the possibility of doing business together or helping each other with referrals.

Who knows, you may start off business networking and end up with a new best friend.



**72.NAME DROPPING FOR FUN & PROFIT:  
POWER NETWORKING TIPS &  
TECHNIQUES**

**D**oes this sound familiar? You are at a business networking session and you are captivated by a speaker who wants to regale you with a litany of important people that they have supposedly recently spent time with. “Oh, the other day I had coffee with the Mayor...” “I was just saying the very same thing to my good friend XXX, you know that he owns half the town.” “Yeah, my best friend is the Crown Attorney and she was telling me...”

To coin a phrase... “blah, blah, blah, yaddey, yaddey, yaddey!”

I suppose that it is a fact of life that we need to accept. There are some people in life that need to name drop to build up their ego or their sense of importance. On the other hand, I have met some people that are so narcissistic that it would never occur to them that their listener doesn't know the individuals that have been offered as proof of something, nor would even care if they did know them.

Having worked in mental health/psychiatry for 35+ years I have learned at least one concept that has served me well and that is “all behaviour has meaning.” The challenge is



that we don't often know what the meaning is or what purpose it is serving and likely the other individual doesn't either.

A person who has a tendency to drop names of important people into conversation, and the term "important" is subjective, could be nervous or lack self-confidence in a 1-1 conversation. Talking about "important" people could be a maladaptive coping mechanism, one to relieve the individual's anxiety. If the person they are talking about is well known or popular the concept seems to be that some of that popularity will rub off on them. It is probably similar to bragging about one's self.

Once you recognize that the individual is monopolizing the conversation and playing a game of "look who I know!" what do you do about it?

Not taking action is one choice. You could continue to listen to the one-sided conversation. Odds are if they have dropped some names into conversation they likely have quite a few more to offer. It would probably be a good idea to extricate yourself by excusing yourself before you doze off.

Another option could be to derail the conversation i.e. take it off its likely track by saying something to the effect of "Oh you know XXX. I have been wanting to meet them for a while. Could you introduce us or arrange a meeting?" This action on your part could have a positive outcome if the individual actually does know the V.I.P. and can introduce you to them. Or if they don't really know them, they may

start to back paddle i.e. change the topic or avoid the request made of them and keep the conversation going in a direction where they continue to own it.

A third option could be a variation of the old “See you later alligator!” At a business networking function odds are high that you can leave this one-sided conversation and move on to a more productive one.

Is there a time when it is appropriate for *you* to name drop? Yes, I believe so. Name dropping or inserting another person’s name into the conversation can help build your credibility as someone who is well-connected, one who has a good understanding on a particular topic and it can even develop your personal influence.

Some examples might be:

- When having a conversation about a particular topic, issue or problem and you know someone who has faced a similar situation, you could mention their name and describe the lessons that they learned as they dealt with the subject.
- You could offer your services as an intermediary and propose to introduce the person that you are speaking with to someone that you know that could be in a position to assist them.
- At a later date, perhaps at a “getting to know you” coffee meeting you could explore with each other who each of you knows and if there is a possibility that any of these connections could be of value in helping with a current need.

I hope that through this article I have been able to raise your awareness to the “name-dropper” style of networker and offer you some ideas on how to deal with them. But then again ... name dropping can be an effective networking tool if used effectively. Try it out and see how it works for you. Even better still ... become one of those people that other people fit into their conversations.



### **73. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE NETWORKING KIND: POWER NETWORKING TIPS & TECHNIQUES**

**H**ave you ever wondered how close to stand to another person when conversing in a 1 to 1 at a business networking session? Okay, maybe I do have too much spare time as they say but I am sure that this is a question that many people have asked.

While I don't have a definitive answer, I do have some thoughts on the matter. Many factors including gender, culture, trust, past experiences and self-confidence come into play.

Looking at it from a self-defence, self-preservation perspective, it is helpful to think of each of us having an invisible circle or a safety zone around us. As a preservation measure we tend to keep strangers outside of our safety zone and only let people we trust or are comfortable with into our comfort zone.

In North America our personal safety zone tends to be about three feet in diameter around us. The same distance as our outstretched arm and fist or our outstretched leg if we were intending to strike or kick someone in self-defence. Our comfort zone i.e. the area where we will let

those that we trust into tends to be about 18 to 30 inches in diameter.

In a business networking session I'm sure that we don't attend with the idea that we are going to have to physically defend ourselves. I believe that this is a situation that can cause stress in some people in networking situations. To have an effective discussion with someone who you are meeting for the first time as in a business networking session often means that you are permitting a stranger to enter your comfort zone. Crowded, noisy rooms tend to necessitate drawing in closer to the other person just to be able to hear them well.

While it is socially acceptable for women to hold or touch each other while in conversation, even in a first meeting encounter, the same cannot be said about two men conversing.

You may not even be aware that you have a comfort zone until someone invades it. That feeling of anxiousness, uneasiness may be your subconscious calling to your attention that something isn't right. Perhaps that is the time to take a step backwards to continue your conversation.

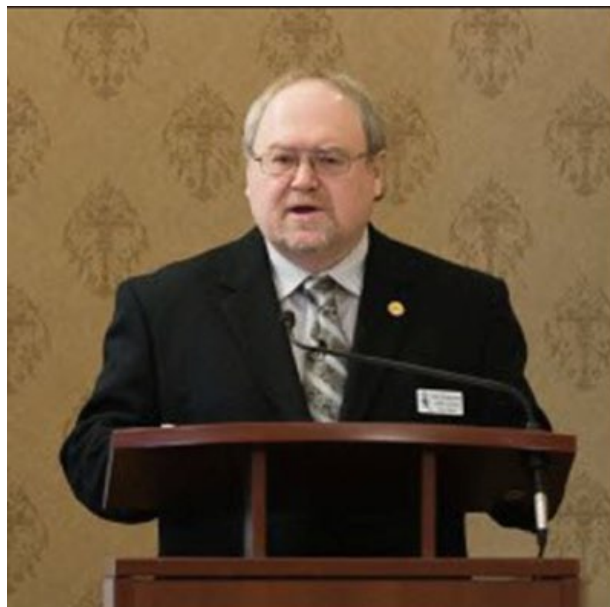
If you are confident in your networking conversations, allowing others into your comfort zone and paying close attention to the conversation by actively participating in it can go a long way in building your reputation as an effective networker and somebody worth meeting and getting to know.

Many networkers have challenges of inserting themselves into groups that have already formed and are actively discussing a topic. A group that the members are standing close enough to converse with each other, yet not within each other's comfort zones, would likely be a group that would be open to having someone else join them. On the other hand, two people standing very close together, perhaps a little ways away from the rest of the group would seem to be having an intimate conversation and would not likely be open to someone joining them. If they were to separate from each other that could indicate that the private or intimate stage of their conversation has concluded and they were now open to be joined by others.

You can learn a lot by observing others. In your next networking session observe how people are standing. Are they close together or far apart? Does an individual networker use the same technique with everyone they meet or do they vary their closeness in conversation. Try out some different distances to your conversational partner and see how it feels to you.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Rae A. Stonehouse is a Canadian born author & speaker.

His professional career as a Registered Nurse working predominantly in psychiatry/mental health, has spanned four decades.

Rae has embraced the principal of CANI (Constant and Never-ending Improvement) as promoted by thought leaders such as Tony Robbins and brings that philosophy to each of his publications and presentations.

Rae has dedicated the latter segment of his journey through life to overcoming his personal inhibitions. As a 25+ year member of Toastmasters International he has systematically built his self-confidence and communicating ability. He is passionate about sharing his lessons with his readers and listeners.

His publications thus far are of the self-help, self-improvement genre and systematically offer valuable sage advice on a specific topic.

His writing style can be described as being conversational. As an author, Rae strives to have a one-to-one conversation with each of his readers, very much

like having your own personal self-development coach.

Rae is known for having a wry sense of humour that features in his publications. To learn more about Rae A. Stonehouse, visit the Wonderful World of Rae Stonehouse at <http://raestonehouse.com>.





**ALSO BY RAE A. STONEHOUSE**

**Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!** <http://powernetworkingforshypeople.com>



**PROtect Yourself! Empowering Tips & Techniques for Personal Safety: A Practical Violence Prevention Manual for Healthcare Workers**  
<http://protectyourselfnow.ca/>



**E= Emcee Squared: Tips & Techniques to Becoming a Dynamic Master of Ceremonies** <http://emceesquared.mremcee.com/>



**Power of Promotion: On-line Marketing for Toastmasters Club Growth**  
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# **YOU'RE HIRED! JOB INTERVIEW PREPARATION**

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JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES THAT WORK

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## 1. WELCOME!



**H**i there! Welcome to **You're Hired! Job Interview Preparation - Job Search Strategies That Work.**

Make no mistake. Searching for work... is work!

It takes time, effort and a lot of self-motivation to succeed in your search.

While you have your skills and experience in place to apply for and land your dream job, or one that leads you to it, searching for a job requires a whole different set of skills.

In many job markets being invited for an interview can be like winning a lottery. Your resume likely got you in the door, now you need to wow the Interviewer and do your best in the interview to land the job.

This book focuses on ***job interview preparation strategies*** to maximize your job searching effectiveness and is excerpted and expanded upon, from my book **You're Hired! Job Search Strategies That Work.**

Nobody can make a promise if you follow their program, you will be guaranteed the results you are looking for and I

won't either.

However, I'm confident if you follow the strategies outlined in this book, your chances of being successful in landing a job are increased.

From my experience, one of the biggest problems job seekers often face is they feel they are coming from an inferior position and they don't have a lot of personal power. The belief being the Employer has the superior position and has all the power.

Yes, they have the job and they have the power to give you the job ... or not.

What you may not realize is many Hiring Managers are under similar pressures as you, the job seeker. They have the pressure of finding the right candidate for the vacancy they need to fill.

They are accountable to their superiors should the person they hire not work out. It has been said an inappropriate hire can cost the organization an additional 30 to 50 percent over the job position's annual wage. This would include lost productivity incurred when the new hire is oriented, the cost of advertising for new applicants and the time taken to interview and follow up with applicants.

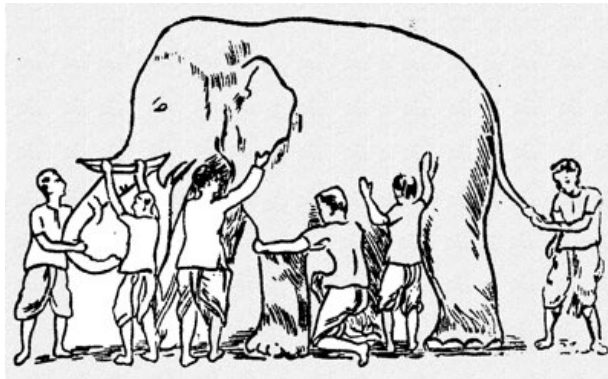
Hiring managers are under pressure to hire the right candidate.

Your task is to become the **only** choice. The **right** choice!

As I mentioned earlier, we are likely not experts at searching for jobs and landing one. It isn't something we do on a regular basis.

As I researched the content for my book **You're Hired! Job Search Strategies That Work**, I found the problem is compounded by a lack of hard facts on what are the best-practices for job searching.

I'm reminded of an old parable about a group of blind men who were required to touch an elephant and to describe their observations.



Each one felt a different part, but only one part, such as a tusk or the trunk. When they compared notes, they learned they were in complete disagreement.

I found the same to be true when researching strategic job searching skills.

Each webpage from my search results on the internet spoke from the perspective of the writer whether they were a resume writer, an Employer Hiring Manager, recruiter, etc.



Much the same as the blind men describing what an elephant looks like, their advice is from their perspective. That makes sense to me. We all create our own reality. My reality is completely different from anyone else's.

The problem is the job search 'experts' state their observations as hard facts. They believe what they write is true. And then the next article you read, will dispute what the first expert had said and they will present their truths.

How can something be both true and false at the same time? You must never do this. You must always do this.

Same advice. Can something be both yes and no?

I don't consider myself an expert at job searching.

What I am very good at though is taking subjects people struggle with, finding better, easier ways to do things and breaking it down to basic strategies that work.

I create *systems* to solve *problems*.

Years ago, I moved my family across Canada to a city where I didn't know anyone.

I had a brand-new home built for me, but I didn't have a job waiting for me when I got there.

At the time, the new location was very hostile towards people who had moved from the east to the west coast.

I often heard "you Easterners come out here and steal our jobs..."

I found jobs were limited. I found getting an interview for a position I had applied for was like winning a lottery.

I also found my new geographical area had what they called a 'Sunshine Tax.'

As a desirable place to live, the cost of living is higher and employers believe they can get away with paying their employees lower wages. The idea being you the worker should be grateful to have a job and the employer can get away with paying you less.

'If you don't want the job, somebody else will! "

I got so tired of hearing about stealing local jobs I started to change my story when I attended local business networking events.

Instead of saying I was *unemployed*, I would say I had *retired* early.

I was 39 years old and the illusion I had retired early seem to resolve the 'you Easterners' complaint.

However, I used to add "if the right job came along, I would likely consider going back to work."

It was offered somewhat tongue in cheek.

It took me a good six months to land a job. It wasn't as good a job as I had hoped.

It was a compromise until something better came along.

I describe my employment experience at my new location as being like a roller coaster ride.

I went from being unemployed, to employed. I went from not getting enough hours to getting too many.

I went from being employed to being laid off.

I went from being employed to being self-employed.

Self-employment ended when I came back from a vacation to find my only client had sold their business i.e. a vocational school and the new owners had no idea who I was or had need of my services.

Back to being unemployed.

Then I got a job in another city. It was a 90-mile round trip, daily.

I went from being at the employer's beck and call for three years working as many hours as I could as a casual staff. Then I got fired!

Then I got *unfired* and a new job, same company, a few blocks away.

I went from full time to no time to part time to even more part time. Then less time and even less time.

I had to tell my manager I couldn't afford to stay and I couldn't afford to go.

We solved the problem by me picking up hours from another worker who wanted to work less.

The downside is I work a lot of night shifts and it is still a 90 mile, 150-kilometre round trip for work.

I think you can see why I call it a roller coaster ride.

Over the years, I have been invited to numerous job search training programs as a guest speaker, promoting the value of public speaking skills to the job search and interviewing process as well as networking skills.



Throughout this book, I will be providing you with what I consider to be best practices for preparing for a job interview.

Some content may disagree with what the so-called experts would say but then again... the next one would likely agree with me.

If you are a sports fan, you will recognize that any sport has a set of rules and varying degrees of competition.

Searching for a job, your job, is a competitive situation.

It could come down to two or more possible candidates, hopefully you, being one of them, having very similar credentials and qualifications.

If there was ever a time self-promotional skills and self-confidence would come into play, it would be in the job searching and interviewing process.

Being able to effectively promote yourself can make the difference between landing the job and a “thank you very much, but we won’t be hiring you at this time.”

WELCOME ABOARD AND I HOPE YOU ENJOY OUR JOURNEY together!



**IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO REALIZE YOUR AMBITIONS. TAKE THE first step by daring to dream big dreams. Then have the confidence to take a few risks and make those dreams a reality. You'll be glad you did. -- Don MacRae, President of the Lachlan Group**

**SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION TO JOB INTERVIEWING**



## 2. THE INITIAL PHONE CALL



**Y**our resume wowed them! They want to speak with you in person. Now what?

The interview process starts from the *very first* phone call the prospective employer makes to you to arrange for an interview.

***Be prepared! You are being judged!***

If you aren't available to take a phone call *live and in person*, your telephone answering machine, yes, some people still do have them or your voice mail, should have an *appropriate, professional* sounding greeting. When you are

job searching, it isn't the time to have a catchy novelty telephone greeting.

Have pen & paper at the ready.

Have easy access to your personal agenda or commitments so you can readily arrange for an interview appointment. Be prepared to ask them some quick questions in return.

### **Questions You Need to Ask:**

Here are some questions to ask while you have them on the phone or in an e-mail if that was their initial contact method:

- time & location?
- who will be conducting the interview?
- what format will the interview be?
- are there other people being interviewed for the job?  
[you might want to be careful with this question though]
- is there anything you need to bring with you?



IN OUR NEXT CHAPTER WE LOOK AT *PREPARING* FOR YOUR FIRST interview.



### 3. INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST INTERVIEW



**I**n an Employer's attempt to fill a staffing vacancy, they may interview *any number* of people and they may interview an individual *a number* of times before they make their mind up as to who they will hire.

This chapter addresses your first interview for a *specific* job application.

We look at some things you ***should*** do and some you ***shouldn't***.

We look at what you should *expect* in this first interview and some suggestions on how to answer interview questions.

In *later* sections of the program, we dig even deeper into interviewing tactics and strategies.

While this chapter focuses on it being your *first* interview, you need to be aware it might be the only one the Employer plans on conducting. So, you need to do your best at every step of the interview process.

**Here are some interview formats you may encounter:**

**Individual Interviewer** - You may find yourself being interviewed by only one person.

**Team Interview (panel)** - In a panel interview you may face 3 or more interviewers. They will have prepared in advance a series of interview questions to ask you. As one asks you a question, the others will be scoring you on how you answer.

They will likely take turns asking you the questions. And they will have assigned a rating to each question. Upon completion of the interview they will compare scores and then *rate* you against others competing for the same job.

**Team with other applicants** - Team interviews can be quite challenging. You will likely be interviewed at the same time as a number of other potential candidates. You could find yourself sitting on chairs placed in a circle.

THE INTERVIEWERS WILL HAVE CREATED A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS in advance. They likely have other criteria in mind as well as a way to determine your suitability for hire. They could be looking for how you get along with the others in the interview group.

They could be looking for *natural* leadership abilities to emerge from this group interview or even *how* you respond to pressure.

ON CAMERA - YOU COULD WALK INTO THE INTERVIEW ROOM TO find a camera facing you and perhaps a number of television/monitor screens with interviewers located at remote locations.

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED ON SKYPE OR BY CONFERENCE CALLS ARE becoming more mainstream these days.



**“IT'S THE ACTION, NOT THE FRUIT OF THE ACTION THAT'S important. You have to do the right thing. It may not be in your power, may not be in your time, that there'll be any fruit. But that does not mean you stop doing the right thing. You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no results.” -- Mahatma Gandhi**

#### 4. DRESS FOR SUCCESS



**W**ill Rogers said, “I never met a man I didn’t like.”  
An employment interview is a place to be liked.  
Unless you’re likeable, you won’t be hireable.

## **When job hunting, dress for success.**

In job-hunting, first impressions are critical.

Remember, you are marketing a product -- *yourself* -- to a potential employer. And the first thing the employer sees when greeting you is your attire.

Therefore, you must make every effort to have the proper dress for the type of job you are seeking.

The old saying 'never judge a book by its cover' may be a good one, but interviewers are human like everybody else and likely to act upon their *first* impressions. So, you want to make sure you are giving a good one.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR presentation or responses in your upcoming interview.

## 5. ORGANIZING YOUR PRESENTATION



**T**his chapter is on **Organizing Your Presentation** and offers tips on how to answer job interview questions.

You might be wondering why I'm using the term '*presentation*' at all.

I think it is helpful to think of each of your interview questions as being mini speeches or presentations.

It might seem a little out of order with this section, but the idea is you give it some thought and practice before the interview process is upon you.

Here are some sure-fire formulas of organizing your responses to the interviewer's questions.

**PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE** HERE IS AN EXAMPLE ... "IN THE *PAST* I would have handled the situation this way...

*Recently* I experienced a similar situation and this is how I handled it.

I learned from it and here is *how* I would handle it should I encounter it again."

**HERE'S ANOTHER POSSIBLE OUTLINE ...**

**Problem/Cause/Solution**

- The problem is
- The problem is caused by
- Some solutions are
- The best solution is

LET'S LOOK AT AN EXAMPLE OF USING THE **PROBLEM CAUSE solution** outline: "From my *perspective*, the problem seems to be blah, blah, blah."

"I *believe* it is caused by blah, blah, blah."

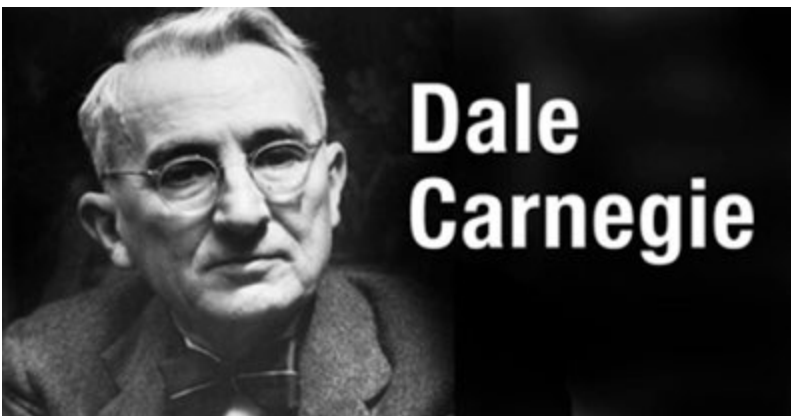
"From my *experience*, there are several different solutions to this problem. We could blah, blah, blah or another way might be to blah, blah, blah."

"I believe the *best* solution is to blah, blah, blah."

That last one is a different blah, blah, blah from the previous ones of course.

The idea with using this outline is you want to showcase yourself as an *expert* and you are *capable of independent, strategic* thinking.

### DALE CARNEGIE'S MAGIC FORMULA



Before we look at his formula, some of you might be wondering who he is.



He wrote a book titled ***How to Win Friends and Influence People*** that was first published in 1936, it has sold over ***30 million copies world-wide*** and went on to be named #19 on *Time Magazine's* list of ***100 most*** influential books in 2011.

His formula is **Example, Point, Reason.**

Let's look at how the formula would work.

**Example:** Give details of an incident that graphically illustrates your main idea.

**Example:** "This company has had some challenges with the people they are hiring. They keep leaving."

**Point:** Tell exactly what you want your audience to do.

**Example:** "You should hire me now and pay me a good salary so I will stay longer than the others."

**Reason:** Highlight the advantage or benefit to be gained when they do what you ask them to do.

**Example:** "I am a proven dedicated and loyal employee, with a long history of quality service and you would be stupid if you didn't hire me."

Okay, that example is quite tongue and cheek. While it is something you might love to do in an interview, I wouldn't suggest it.

However, it does illustrate example, point, reason.

**Every presentation regardless of its length, should have these three components:**

- Opening
- Body
- Closing

YOUR OPENING AND YOUR CLOSING SHOULD TAKE ABOUT 15% OF your time, so a total of 30%.

The remaining of your time, 70% is the body, where you expand upon your content.

If you were delivering a speech, the opening is where you would grab your audience's attention. I call it 'wake em, up... shake em up!'

You can't quite do that when answering an interview question.

Your interviewer would probably think you are crazy if you started yelling at them. But what you can do in your opening when answering an interview question is to set the stage for the fact you actually know something about this question and you are prepared to speak about it.

As for the **body** of your answer, this is where you provide the *details* of your answer.

An effective **conclusion** to an interview question can be to do a *quick summary* of your response and something to the effect your response is over and you are ready for the next question.



OUR NEXT CHAPTER PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE INTERVIEWING process.

**“DON’T GET COMPLACENT. PUSH YOURSELF OUT OF YOUR comfort zone and set higher standards of achievement for yourself. Once you’ve achieved a standard of excellence, never let it rest... push yourself even higher.” -- Dave Anderson**

## 6. YOU GOT AN INTERVIEW. NOW WHAT?



**L**et's look at the job interview process, starting off with your first interview.

In my part of the world where we have a tight job market, just getting to the interview stage can be like winning a lottery.

Your resume likely got you to the interview stage. So, what happens now?

The goal for this first face-to-face encounter is to win a second one.

Tell yourself *beforehand* that you need to come away with a good sense of the most effective techniques and timing for

this target.

Then when you are inside the prospective employer's office: ***Be Observant***

Throughout the interview, *look and listen* to gather information that will help you.

A successful interview requires the ability to think on your feet, metaphorically of course. You will more than likely be sitting down for your interview.

Your undivided attention is necessary to seize opportunities as they arise.

***Take Out Your Well-Organized Notebook and Jot Down Notes***

It makes you look professional. Write names, titles, buzzwords, products, and other items you can use in the follow up stage.

Don't reduce your eye contact with the interviewer; don't ask him or her to repeat anything or how to spell something.

You *can* and *should* ask questions. Not only do the right questions help you control the interview, but by asking them, you elicit information to fuel your follow up.

Ask the right questions. Don't ask personal controversial or negative questions of any kind. Stay away from asking anything that will lead into sensitive areas.

Invariably, salary and benefits should be avoided.

Nowadays, you can often gather quite a bit of information about the organization you are applying to by doing a search on the internet. It will be expected you have *some* understanding of their business.

While some knowledge will certainly be helpful, a *lack* of knowledge or asking questions you should already know the answers to, could work against you.

Here are examples of benign questions that may have a favorable impact: How many employees does the company have?

What are the company's plans for expansion?

Is the business operated as a proprietorship or a non-profit?

What is the supervisor's management style?

What is the supervisor's title?

Who does the supervisor report to?

Are you ready and able to hire now?

How long will it take to make a hiring decision?

How long has the position been open?

How many employees have held the position in the past five years?

Why are the former employees no longer in the position?

What does the company consider the five most important duties of the position to be?

What do you expect the employee you hire to accomplish?

Jot some keywords and concepts from these questions and answers into a page of a small notebook.

WE GO INTO GREATER DETAIL ON QUESTIONS YOU COULD/SHOULD ask your interviewer in an upcoming chapter.



IN OUR NEXT CHAPTER, WE WILL PREPARE TO USE SOME TACTICS that will turn the interview in your favour.

## 7. JOB INTERVIEW DOS



**I**n this chapter, we will look at a job interview checklist that aims at helping you with turning the job interview to your *advantage*.

### **JOB INTERVIEW CHECKLIST**

#### **Interview “Dos”**



**SCHEDULE FOR SUCCESS:** QUITE OFTEN YOU ARE PROVIDED WITH a time for your interview. The interviewers have scheduled it for their convenience that is to fit into their schedule.

If it works for you *good*, go for it. Just make sure you leave enough time for you to travel to the interview allowing time for any problems or obstacles that arise.

**AVOID MEAL INTERVIEWS:** MEAL INTERVIEWS TEND TO BE awkward affairs. You need to be on your best behavior if you must have one. You are likely being *judged* on your social behavior as much as your job skills.

It is also difficult to answer questions at the same time as you are trying to eat your meal. A busy restaurant can make it very difficult to participate in an interview.

Having said all that ... there are some business owners who want to 'break bread' with a potential job applicant, so they can see what they are like in an informal setting.

**ARRIVE ALONE AND ON TIME. DON'T ARRIVE EARLY.**

**Acclimate to your environment.** A job interview isn't the time to bring your mother, father or significant other.

You are the one being interviewed, not them!

Plan to arrive at the interview meeting's location no more than 5 to 10 minutes before your meeting is scheduled. It could be awkward for you if the interviewers have

scheduled their interviews to close together and you find yourself sitting beside another applicant.

Acclimating to your environment means getting comfortable before you get called in for the interview. If you are wearing a coat and/or a hat, remove them. Be ready to start your interview as soon as you are invited in.

Remember the concept of ***first impressions***.

**CARRY AN ATTACHÉ CASE.** THE TIME OF THE ATTACHÉ CASE HAS likely come and gone unless you are a secret agent or a financial courier where you will likely be handcuffed to one.

Nowadays, there are inexpensive, small soft-shelled file/notebook computer bags that work quite well for carrying a notebook, pens and whatever else you might need for your interview.

**ELIMINATE FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN.** THIS TAKES SOME WORK ON your part. You should research the company you are applying for work at so you won't be caught off guard with a question about their company.

The old saying of 'knowledge is power' comes into play here. The more you know about the company ***the better***.

Talking to current or former employees can be helpful to learn what type of interview questions might be asked.

**MAKE THE FIRST IMPRESSION THE BEST.** THIS IS THE TIME TO muster up your courage and project a sense of power, self-control and self-confidence. As we have said before, dress for success.

Make this first impression a *memorable* one, in the right way of course!

**GREET THE INTERVIEWER PROPERLY.** WHEN MEETING SOMEBODY for the first time, the *expectation* is to shake their hand. If the interviewer doesn't offer their hand first, *go for it!* Offer yours!

It might help that *positive* first impression you are aiming at.

Depending on the time of day a greeting such as 'Good morning ...' 'Good afternoon' followed by something to the effect of 'I'm pleased to meet you' is acceptable.'

**HONE YOUR HANDSHAKE.** WE TALK ABOUT HANDSHAKES IN AN upcoming chapter. You can locate **Whole Lotta Shaking Going On** in the **Additional Resources** section of this book. Hopefully you have been practicing and are comfortable shaking someone's hand.

**AVOID ASSUMING A SUBORDINATE ROLE.** BY SOME PEOPLE'S estimation, you *are* in a subordinate role.

They have the *job*, you *want* the job. They have the *power*, you *don't* have the power. That likely works for them, it's their rules. It's time to change the rules, in your favour. You wouldn't have been invited in for the interview if they hadn't thought you were a *worthy* applicant.

That *gives* you power. They have a *problem* to solve. They need to hire somebody who will make them look good. You are a possible *solution*. More *power* for you.

While you are being interviewed and asked questions, if you are able to, use a part of your mind to take a look at what is happening in the interview. Monitor yourself.

Ask yourself if you are being passive or actively engaged in the questions?

In the next chapter, we look at Interviewer personalities. Some will *want* you to be subordinate to them, others *won't* appreciate it.

**HAVE YOUR SCRIPT WELL-REHEARSED.** WHEN YOU THINK OF A script you might be thinking about an actor's lines for a play they are in. In this case, your script would be your answers you have practiced in advance for questions you expect to answer.

**ATTEMPT TO SIT NEXT TO OR NEAR THE INTERVIEWER.** GIVEN A choice of seating, it is probably better to sit nearer to your Interviewer rather than further.

Hopefully, the Interviewer isn't sitting behind a big desk, serving as a tool to make them feel important. Some interviews are held at a table. Sitting across from your Interviewer would be better than sitting beside them.

### **TAKE NOTES.**

The idea here is to take some notes to jog your memory after the interview. The challenge of course is to have your note recording, not take away from your being asked questions and you answering them.

It could work against you if the Interviewer believes you are easily distractible.

### **HAVE AN EXTRA COPY OF YOUR RESUME WITH YOU IN CASE THE Interviewer doesn't have it.**

It can also come in handy if you need to refer to it to answer an interview question.

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND QUESTIONS: SHOW WHAT YOU know!** Each of us has different educational backgrounds. Make use of yours in answering your interview questions. *Show them you know you know.*

**CHARACTER QUESTIONS: BE CAREFUL!** WE DISCUSS THESE AT length in an upcoming section.

You will want to answer these types of questions carefully so you look good.

**INITIATIVE AND CREATIVITY QUESTIONS: FOCUS ON WHAT AND why.** I'm reminded of an interview question used by an HR colleague of mine who used to work in the aeronautical field. "How many ping pong balls does it take to fill a 747?

How could anybody possibly know the answer? But a close one would be "I suppose it would depend if you took the seats out or not."

The business she worked for was refitting used 747 airliners and turning them into mail delivery planes. So, the comment about taking the seats out to fit in more, was a valid one.

In this case the HR Manager was looking for *creative thinking* and to see if a *thought-provoking* challenge caused any problems for the applicant.

This would be an example of a thinking *out of the box* answer we hear about so often.

There was no right or wrong answer.

**CAREER AND OBJECTIVE QUESTIONS: MAKE IT CLEAR WHAT they hear.** Since the *career and objective statements* have been dropped from usage on our resumes, in favour of *positioning statements*, we need to make it clear to our interviewers, what our plans are.

In an upcoming chapter, we will discuss **career** and **objective** questions. You might hear them in the form of “where do you see yourself in five years?”

**ADMIRE SOMETHING IN THE INTERVIEWER’S OFFICE.** YOU CAN use this technique to bond with your interviewer. You have to be genuine in doing so though.

If you see something that resonates with you, go for it. If you don’t, don’t force it. You will come across as phony and it will take away from your interview.

**ASSESS THE INTERVIEWER’S STYLE.** IN THE NEXT SECTION, WE look at four different styles of Interviewer’s personalities. They aren’t the only four and what we talk about may not always hold true, but it does help you in advance to be prepared for whatever you encounter.

**“MIRROR” THE INTERVIEWER’S BODY LANGUAGE, FACIAL expressions, eye movement, rate of speech, tone of voice and rate of breathing.** This is a good technique to master whether you use it in your interview or interactions with other people. It will only work when dealing with an individual, not a group.

The idea behind the technique is if you use the same or similar style of communication as the other person does,

they in turn will feel you are resonating with them. As the saying goes, they feel you are on the same wave length.

As mental health therapist, I have good response using the technique when interacting with people who would likely otherwise be hostile to me. The challenge is you don't want to come across as being patronizing or condescending as it will work against you.

**ALIGN WITH THE INTERVIEWER.** A JOB INTERVIEW *ISN'T* THE place to get into a philosophical argument with your Interviewer. *Agreeing* with their perspective, assuming you do, can help position you in their mind higher than someone who disagrees with them or is argumentative.

**USE "INSIDER" LANGUAGE.** IF YOU ARE APPLYING FOR A position, you have previously worked in, you likely have gathered a lot of insider language you can use in your answers. If you haven't worked in the specific field you are applying for, you can help yourself by doing on-line research on the industry.

Using *insider language* helps position you as an *experienced* applicant or at least *knowledgeable* about the field you are applying. You want to be able to score every point you possibly can in your interview. Insider language can help to do so.



**FIND AN AREA OF AGREEMENT AND LEAD SLOWLY AND carefully to the offer.** When you are being asked questions by the Interviewer, this may be difficult to do as you are on the defence.

When it comes to *your* turn to ask questions it might be a little easier. The areas of agreement hopefully would be you are the *suitable candidate* for the job vacancy. If you are able to pull it off, they may offer you the job on the spot, pending their following up with checking your references.

**BE HONEST, NOT MODEST.** IF YOU DONE IT, IT AIN'T BRAGGING. Give yourself credit for what you have done and use that experience for *leverage* to solve the employer's problem.

**SAY POSITIVE THINGS ABOUT YOUR PRESENT (FORMER) employer.** You can almost guarantee your Interviewer will be on high alert for anything you say about your former or current employer. The belief is if you are eager to bad-mouth them, you would likely do so with your new employer and certainly wouldn't make you a good hire.

**ADMIRE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER.** This is where your pre-interview research can come in handy. If you come up with a gem, fit it in at the appropriate time. Just be sure you come across as being genuine.

**BE OBSERVANT.** IN ANY DISCUSSION, THERE CAN BE MULTIPLE levels taking place. You might not know what is going on behind the scene, but perhaps the Interviewer might drop hints you should be attuned to. It's kind of like using insider knowledge to your advantage.

**REVIEW YOUR NOTES.** THIS WOULD BE AFTER THE INTERVIEW OF course.

**LIMIT INTERVIEW TO TWO HOURS.** HMMM, WHILE IT IS suggested here, I'm not so sure how much control you have over the timing. Perhaps a more complex or demanding job may require a longer interview meeting but it is often divided up into several meetings with different people doing the interviewing.

**AT THE END OF THE INTERVIEW THANK THEM FOR THEIR TIME, shake hands again, and tell them you hope to hear from them soon.** Politeness and manners go a long way in life. Ending the interview and leaving on a *positive note* may make the difference in hiring you or not, if they are undecided.

AS WE SAID EARLIER ABOUT NOT GETTING A *SECOND* CHANCE about a *first* impression, in this case we are getting a second chance to make an impression. Make it count!

THESE ARE ALL FACTORS TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION TO HELP you become the *successful job* applicant.

Of course, you still need to wow them with your interview question answers.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE EXPLORE SOME THINGS YOU REALLY *don't want to do* during your job interview.

## 8. JOB INTERVIEW DON'TS



**W**e just looked at some strategies we *should* do in preparation and during the interview. Now let's look at some interview **Don'ts**.

### **Interview "Don'ts"**

**DON'T WEAR A COAT, HAT, OR OTHER OUTDOOR CLOTHING into the interview.** There is usually an outer office area where you can remove your outdoor clothing *prior* to going into the interview room.

Taking off your outdoor clothing once invited into the interview room would likely be awkward but it also takes

away those vital first few minutes you have to make a good first impression.

**DON'T WAIT MORE THAN HALF AN HOUR FOR THE Interviewer.** While this might be proactive advice, I would say it depends on the situation. If I were told the Interviewer is delayed by unavoidable circumstances, but *really wants* to interview me, I would likely stay.

If I was under the impression, it *didn't seem* there was much priority in the interviewer showing up in time, I might hit the road. I would advise the receptionist or administrative assistant to reschedule the interview if I did decide to leave.

The reality of this situation is it depends on how much personal power you have. If you truly believe you are in a power situation, it may be worth your while to leave.

If you aren't in a position of power and really, really need the job, you might want to be a little more tolerant and stick around for a while.

**DON'T ADDRESS THE INTERVIEWER BY HIS OR HER FIRST name.** At least, not at first.

If they offer and invite you to call them by their first name, feel free to do so.

Otherwise, stick with a formal address Mr. or Ms. \_\_\_ whatever their surname is.

**DON'T USE TRITE PHRASES AND/OR TIRED CLICHÉS.** MANY phrases tend to be tied into the area of the country you live in.

A tired cliché is a saying that may have had some meaning in the past, but has lost its meaning and has become meaningless words.

Some that come to mind are:

... and Bob's your uncle.

... you know what I mean...

... and so on and so forth...

I'm sure you can think of some you have heard many times. The word **Like** has taken on a life of its own for at least one generation.

**DON'T SMOKE.** I'M SURE IN THE SO-CALLED OLDEN DAYS, THE Interviewer might even offer you a smoke, but those days are long gone.

If you do smoke, try not to smoke before coming in for the interview. A non-smoker can easily smell if you have and you may have blown the interview even before you have started.

**DON'T CHEW GUM.** SHORT VERSION ... IT IS CONSIDERED BEING unprofessional.

**DON'T INTERRUPT.** THERE IS AN OLD JOKE THAT GOES... **THE Boss's Rules:** Rule One, the Boss is always right. Rule Two... see Rule One.

It's the Interviewer's show. Like the boss, you need to *let* them think they are right. That doesn't mean you can't correct them if they are wrong, just don't cut them off when they are speaking. They will probably consider you to be rude and will work against you.

**DON'T OBJECT TO DISCRIMINATORY QUESTIONS.**

In an upcoming section, we look at questions that may be discriminatory in nature.

There may be proactive ways to answer the question without strongly objecting. Just because there may be laws to prevent discriminatory questions, doesn't mean it won't happen.

If you are of a particular group that may face discrimination and you actually do encounter it in a job interview, you may want to give some thought whether you really want to work for this organization.

You have to wonder, if they are discriminatory in a job interview, what would the working conditions be like on a

regular basis? You may change your mind about wanting to work for them.

**DON'T LOOK AT YOUR WATCH.** I HAVEN'T WORN A WATCH IN years since smart phones came out. I can't recall when I have seen anybody else wearing a watch lately.

If you happen to be a person that does wear a watch, looking at it during your interview can work against you. It looks like you have a time commitment to be somewhere else and are not present in the moment.

**DON'T READ ANY DOCUMENTS ON THE INTERVIEWER'S DESK.** This would seem to be one of those common-sense type suggestions, but as the saying goes "common sense isn't so common."

Unless invited to read documents on the Interviewer's desk ... don't!

It looks like there are a lot less things you *shouldn't* be doing than what you *should* be doing.



IN THE NEXT SECTION WE LOOK AT **FOUR BASIC INTERVIEWER Personality Types** and offer strategies to levelling the playing field.



**“DEFINE YOUR GOALS IN TERMS OF THE ACTIVITIES NECESSARY to achieve them, and concentrate on those activities.”**

**-- Brian Tracy**

**“DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN MOMENTUM BY WORKING continuously toward your sales goals every day.” --**

**Brian Tracy**

**START BY DOING WHAT'S NECESSARY; THEN DO WHAT'S possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible. -**

**- St. Francis of Assisi**

## **SECTION TWO - FOUR BASIC INTERVIEWER PERSONALITY TYPES: OVERVIEW**

In this section, we look at how to recognize Four Basic Personality Types you might encounter in a job interview.

There are likely several models out there, but this one seems to work well.

## 9. TYPE 1 ARE OUTGOING AND DIRECT



**T**hese people are called ‘socializers.’ They are energetic, friendly, and self assured.

**To spot this personality, look for the following characteristics:**

1. A flamboyant style of dress. Even in a conservative business suit, a brightly colored tie, scarf, or jewelry might be worn. Current fashion is preferred to classic styles.
2. They likely have many pictures and personal mementos in the office.

3. They will have a cluttered desk, or at least a covered one.

4. They aren't very time conscious, so you might be kept waiting. In most cases, the Interviewer is juggling a hundred things at once. These types gravitate toward personnel jobs because they're outgoing "people" people.

If you're a methodical, reserved type, you can get into trouble with Interviewers of this type. You'll have to smile, talk faster, and get to the point.

They have to like you before they'll listen to you. And listening isn't on their list.

If you're this type, be careful. You don't want to out talk, out smile or out interview the Interviewer!



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT THE SECOND INTERVIEWER personality type.

**10. TYPE 2 ARE SELF CONTAINED AND DIRECT**



**T**his type is referred to as the 'director.' 'Dictator' is more descriptive, though.

These people differ from socializers because they're far more reserved and conservative.

Before unconventional computer kids started running companies, it was believed you had to be like this to make top management. They're still among the high achievers in every field.

## **Clues to this personality are:**

1. They have a conservative, high quality, custom tailored wardrobe, impeccably worn.
2. They have a neat, organized work space. A few expensive personal desk accessories.

Perhaps one or two classic picture frames containing family photos. Nothing flashy. Everything is understated.

3. They have a firm handshake, but not much of a smile. Not as talkative as the first type. They'll size you up critically and wait for you to make your mistakes.

4. Time conscious and annoyed when others are not. They are Goal and bottom line oriented. They Believe all work and no play is the way to spend the day.

To get along with this type, be all business. Don't waste the Interviewer's time. Eliminate unnecessary words and be sincere.

This type itches around 'touchy feely' people. You won't find them saying, "Oh I just adore this." You shouldn't either.

Don't be intimidated, either. If you are, Director types will sense it and reject you immediately. Don't be defensive about weaknesses in your background. Just explain them by turning them into strengths.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT THE THIRD INTERVIEWER  
personality type.

## **11. TYPE 3 ARE SELF CONTAINED AND INDIRECT**



Such people are called ‘thinkers’ and might be found in analytical professions. They don’t speak up, socialize, or editorialize. They go about their work quietly, and they get it done properly.

Evidence of this personality includes:

1. Uninteresting, understated clothes. Gray and beige predominate. Style and looks aren’t a priority, function is. The person is nothing if not practical.
2. They have few personal items and ‘warm fuzzies.’
3. This Interviewer’s hand will probably dangle at the end of their wrist. Shake it anyway. It will confirm your



suspicious he or she is a 'thinker.'

4. They are time conscious and work oriented. Their work ethic is just as strong as the Directors', but Thinkers don't want to run things, they are loners.

5. They will probably have an organized desk, with neatly arranged work. Maybe even a 'to do' list with half the items crossed off.

This type of person is hard to draw out and may become annoyed if you try. If you're pushy and aggressive, the thinker gets withdrawn and your offer will be withheld.

Answer questions directly and succinctly. Volunteer as much information as the Interviewer needs to make a decision. Thinkers thrive on data, but they need time to analyze it, so don't rush.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT THE FOURTH INTERVIEWER personality type.

**YOUR VISION OF YOURSELF AND YOUR POSSIBILITIES IS A mental picture of what you will become. We must carve our own success in the same way that a sculptor chips away at a block of marble. Like the sculptor who creates a masterpiece from a mental model, we must begin our journey to success by visualizing what we want to become. The trouble with most people is that**

**they never dare to realize their highest possibilities. They misuse their imagination by daydreaming and wishing their lives away. Think positive and clearly visualize your possibilities. Positive visualizations will help you seize the opportunity for greatness within you. --- Anon**

## 12. TYPE 4 ARE OUTGOING AND INDIRECT



**T**he most common word for this personality type is 'helper.' They're friendly, like socializers, but without the aggressiveness.

Helpers tend to gravitate toward 'human resources'; they're the closest the business world gets to providing psychiatric social work for employees. Helpers take time to know you before the actual interview begins.

They're nice, but will do almost anything to avoid making a decision. In area, you need to help them.

You're probably talking to a helper when there is:

1. A nonthreatening appearance that matches their demeanour. They wear natural shades and soft fabrics.
2. They have a number of personal items on the desk, often handmade. Their office will reflect other people are important to them.
3. They have a friendly, expressive, and concerned approach. Helpers may apologize for keeping you waiting because they were busy solving everyone else's problems. They smile warmly, reach out to take your hand, and might never let it go.
4. They will probably have a phone ringing, work piling up, and many uncompleted projects. To a helper, 'people' are all that matters.

These people are the opposite of the 'director' type, and they rarely play opposite each other.

The helper never gives up trying to convince the director to "humanize," "personalize," and "realize".

To get hired, take time to establish rapport, become friends, and accentuate the importance of the 'person' in 'personnel.' But remember to limit interviews to two hours.

With helpers, it's your responsibility to get your job qualifications across. If you don't, you may leave the interview with a friend but not a job.

They won't ask you to give them a reason to hire you or even recommend you for a second interview. Emotionally, they don't realize that's why you're there. They think it's

because you're taking a hiring survey. A helper helps, but doesn't hire.

THIS IS A REMARKABLY ACCURATE WAY TO OUT STEREOTYPE THE stereotypers. Some will fit the description exactly, others will fit several.

No matter. Just know and play to your audience. Study the four profiles and practice typecasting a few of your friends, coworkers, and relatives.

Learn to pick up on the clues to someone's predominant personality style. Then practice playing to them. They're your audience too.

Picking up clues from a person's appearance, speech, and body language can serve you in many ways throughout your career. In short, while you are concentrating on making a good impression, you also need to be absorbing a clear impression of everybody and everything else.



IN THE NEXT SECTION, WE WILL DISCUSS COMMON INTERVIEW questions and strategies on how to answer them.

**SECTION THREE: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**



## 13.COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### O **verview**

IF YOU ARE APPLYING FOR A JOB, ANY JOB, YOU CAN EXPECT YOU will be asked to participate in an interview. It could be face-to-face or could be over the phone, internet or Skype.

THERE ARE LIKELY COUNTLESS QUESTIONS YOU COULD BE ASKED and some you *shouldn't* be asked due to equal rights legislation, etc.

Many employers have developed their own questions related to their specific field of business.

By practicing your responses to some of these questions, hopefully you will not be taken off guard if asked one of them.

Yes, there are lots of them provided here.

One of the best ways to deal with these questions, is to give some thought to how you would answer each of them. You will note the questions have been organized into categories to help you focus and some of them seem to be the same question, asked in different ways. They are!

You need to be able to think about each question your Interviewer asks you.

***What*** are they ***really*** asking you?

You may want to review **Chapter 5 Organizing Your Presentation** where we explored several methods of answering questions in general, but specifically interview questions.

If you are momentarily stumped by a question, don't panic. Ask the Interviewer if you could come back to the question later.

If the question truly does stump you, hopefully you will be able to think of a response while you are answering other questions.

I once went for a job interview and was peppered with 42 separate questions for over an hour and a half. My wife wasn't too thrilled as it was mid-February in Canada, and she was sitting in the car waiting for me, freezing.

When you are practicing your responses, you should have somebody help you by asking you questions randomly from the list.



There can be a significant difference in how you answer a question ***in your mind*** and how you say it orally. Practice saying your answers out loud.

It can be helpful to record yourself on a recording device such as a smart phone for the audio or a camera that records video. You can then play back the question and response to determine if you might have handled it differently.

Most importantly, relax, go with the flow, and before you know it, you'll be in your next job.

I have broken the content of this section into categories of questions to try to keep it manageable.

Each category of questions will have its own chapter for simplicity.

**Note:** Indicates some background information or industry advice has been provided for you to consider.

**“WATCH YOUR THOUGHTS, THEY BECOME WORDS;**

**watch your words, they become actions;**

**watch your actions, they become habits;**

**watch your habits, they become character;**

**watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.”**

**— Frank Outlaw**

#### **14. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO ASSESS YOUR EDUCATION**

- **How does your experience and education qualify you for this job?**

**S**elect four to five accomplishments or skills based on what you have learned from the job description and the information you provided on your resumé.

- **How does your education qualify you for this job?**

This is basically the same question as the last one except focusing on your ***education***, excluding your experience.

As the question asks, you should stay focused on your education that is *relevant* to the position you are applying for.

- **Why did you choose to attend the college you are attending?**

THIS ASSUMES OF COURSE YOU ARE STILL IN SCHOOL. BE prepared for a follow-up question about your availability if you are still in school.

- **What aspect of your education applies to this position?**

THIS IS ANOTHER VERSION OF HOW DOES YOUR EDUCATION QUALIFY you for this job?

1. **What training have you received that qualifies you for this job?**

**TRAINING** IS A LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM YOUR **EDUCATION**. IT usually involves a shorter course period and the 'training' content tends to be hands on.

You can include any *live* training, where you were *physically* present in the room with the trainer, or any on-line training you have taken such as with this course.

The idea remains that you need to be focused on the particular job you are applying for.

- **What have you done outside of formal education to improve yourself?**

THIS WOULD BE A PLACE TO MENTION YOUR TRAINING COURSES you have taken as in the previous question.

- **What training opportunities have you taken advantage of and why?**

THIS QUESTION ADDS A BIT OF A TWIST TO THE TRAINING question. It's asking for the courses but it is also asking you to *justify* why you took the courses.

Once again, you need to be focused on what training courses you mention as well as being able to provide your justification for taking them. 'It felt like a good idea at the time' probably wouldn't be a good answer.

- **What additional training will we have to provide for you if we hire you?**

THIS MIGHT BE A KIND OF TRICK QUESTION. IF YOU PROVIDE A LIST of areas you need training in, you might come across as needing too much investment in you to hire you.

If you don't provide any suggestions, they may interpret it as you *not* having a clear understanding of the job they are offering.

One solution may be to say something to the effect that you will require a new-hire orientation to the job.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE WILL LOOK AT **WORK EXPERIENCE Questions.**

## 15. WORK EXPERIENCE QUESTIONS

**I**n this chapter, we look at **Work Experience Questions**. Starting off with...

- **Tell us about yourself.**

FOCUS ON THE ASPECTS OF YOUR **WORK EXPERIENCE** THAT APPLY specifically to the position you're applying.

This can also take the form of, "if I asked one of your faculty members/previous supervisors to tell me about you, what would they say?"

Your answer should spotlight the education, experience, and work ethic that matches what the employer is seeking in an employee. End by saying you are *well prepared* for the position the interviewer is trying to fill.

- **What would you like me to know about you?**

KEEP THE ANSWER **SHORT** AND **POWER-PACKED**. IDENTIFY FOUR to five qualities that make you a strong candidate.

Highlight your academic achievements, ability to do the type of work you are interviewing for, and your work ethic.

- **How are you qualified for this job?**

I CAN'T LOCATE THE SOURCE OF THIS FACT BUT I HAD READ IF YOU have 75% of the qualifications required for any position, you will likely be eligible, at least for an interview.

This is your time to shine! Your response should be consistent with the info you have featured in your resume.

- **How does your current job qualify you for this position?**

IF YOU ARE APPLYING FOR AN *INTERNAL* JOB, MEANING YOU already work for the company, this may be easy to answer. The Interviewer may have knowledge of your current job's duties.

If you work elsewhere, you will need to provide solid examples of how it will qualify you. Be prepared for a follow-up question of why are you wanting to leave your current position.

- **How does your experience qualify you for this job?**

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE THAT PREPARES YOU FOR THE responsibilities of this job?

Review what the employer is looking for (job description and any information a recruiter or career service staff member may have given you) and develop examples of how your academic work directly relates to the job responsibilities.

- **Describe a typical day at your present position.**

YOU MAY WANT TO REVIEW YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION FOR YOUR current position in preparation for this question being asked.

If your current job bores you, you may want to ignore *that* fact and show yourself in an optimistic, enthusiastic manner. Don't make yourself the hero of your story.

- **What were your three greatest accomplishments on your last job?**



WHILE YOU LIKELY HAVE PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO mention, you would be better off giving examples of accomplishments that benefitted the employer.

You can take credit for the work you did and you should, but it likely puts you in a better light if you show you are willing to go the extra step to achieve an accomplishment that benefits the employer.

- **What are some things on your current job you have done well?**

THESE SHOULD BE FEATURED IN YOUR RESUME, ALLOWING YOU TO pull them from there.

- **What is the most difficult assignment you have had?**

THIS IS A QUESTION THAT ALLOWS YOU TO HIGHLIGHT YOUR SKILLS, however the Interviewer is likely looking at how you handled success or failure.

What did you learn from the assignment? What would you do differently?

- **What accomplishment on the job are you the most proud of?**

ONCE AGAIN, YOU SHOULD PROBABLY USE AN EXAMPLE THAT benefited the Employer in some way. You want to be seen as a team player, not a soloist.

- **What steps have you taken to improve your job skills?**

YOU COULD FOCUS ON YOUR CONTINUING EDUCATIONAL TRAINING as evidenced in the educational segment of your resume, assuming you have of course.

- **What significant contributions have you made to the operation of your work group?**

THIS QUESTION SETS YOU UP TO SHOW YOURSELF AS A TEAM player.

- **How has your current position prepared you to take on greater responsibilities?**

MAYBE YOUR CURRENT JOB HAS, OR MAYBE IT HASN'T. AS YOU GO forward to interviewing for a new job, give some

consideration to your current job.

What have been its advantages? What skills did you develop while in this job?

This should lead you to developing an answer relating to increased responsibility.

- **What makes you more qualified than the other candidates?**

THIS ISN'T THE TIME TO BE FLIPPANT AND RESPOND WITH "I'M smarter ... better looking ... desperate etc."

This is a difficult question to answer as you have no way of knowing the qualifications of the other candidates. The only real response you have available to you is to reinforce the qualifications and experience you have to bring to the job.

- **Why do you want to leave your current job?**

THIS IS A QUESTION TO BE CAUTIOUS OF. YOU NEED TO KEEP YOUR response positive in nature.

If your reason for leaving is due to interpersonal conflict with co-workers or supervisors, you need to avoid commenting on it. If you do, the Interviewer may jump to the conclusion you will likely do the same for them.

That doesn't make you a desirable hire.

THE FOLLOWING TWO QUESTIONS ARE VERSIONS OF ONES WE looked at earlier.

- **How has your job prepared you to take on greater responsibility?**
- **Tell us about your qualifications for this position.**

THE NEXT TWO QUESTIONS FOCUS ON YOUR EXPERIENCE AGAIN:

- **What actions have you taken in the past 10 years to prepare you for this position?**
- **What steps have you taken in the past two years to improve your qualifications?**

HOWEVER, THIS TIME THEY ARE LOOKING FOR WHAT *ACTIONS OR steps* you have taken.

Once again, you can refer to the ***Experience*** section of your resume and come up with a comment you are comfortable saying to the effect you believe in continually challenging yourself and building your skills.

- **In the areas where your experience falls short for this job, what steps will you take to make up for this shortfall?**

THIS QUESTION IS SIMILAR TO AN EARLIER ONE THAT ASKED WHAT training are we going to have to provide you if we hire you?

The *difference* with this question is they are looking for *you* to *analyze* your skill sets to see if you have shortcomings and how *you*, not them, are going to solve it.

- **Describe yourself.**

THIS WOULD BE A GOOD PLACE TO DELIVER AN EXPANDED VERSION of your Summary Statement.

There is a value in developing your elevator pitch that includes your USP (Universal Sales Pitch) so you could deliver it to respond to this question.

There is a chapter about developing your USP located in the Additional Resources Section of the book.

- **What skills and abilities do you have?**

ONCE AGAIN, REFER TO THE CONTENT OF YOUR RESUME.

You want to reinforce the fact you have the skills to take on the job and you want to come across from a position of strength.

- **Recall an incident where you made a major mistake. What did you do after the mistake was made? What did you learn from this mistake?**

THIS CAN BE CHALLENGING TO ANSWER IN IT STARTS OFF WITH having you look bad. Be careful what situation you use to answer this one.

You need one that has a *teachable moment* as its outcome. “Well I certainly won’t do that again!” isn’t a good response.

The Interviewer is looking to see you are capable of learning from your mistakes.

- **What is the greatest failure you've had? What would you have done differently?**

THIS IS ANOTHER VERSION OF THE PREVIOUS QUESTION.

- **What action on the job are you the least proud of?**

GIVE SOME SERIOUS THOUGHT AS TO HOW YOU WILL ANSWER THIS one. It can backfire on you and shed a negative light on you.

You don't want the Interviewer to think that is what your character is like, based on the one example you have given.

One way to answer it may be to provide a response that is fairly benign and then show how you *learned or grew* from the incident.

- **Tell us about a difficult situation that you encountered and how you resolved it.**

THIS QUESTION IS SIMILAR TO OTHERS BUT IS ASKING *HOW* YOU resolved it.

Your problem-solving skills are being assessed in this question. The Interviewer is looking to see if you used any kind of problem-solving process and/or took a leadership position in solving the problem.

- **Where do you see yourself in five years?**

THE EMPLOYER IS ASKING BECAUSE HE OR SHE WANTS TO KNOW IF you plan to go to work for one of their competitors after

you complete your initial training.

Respond by letting the Interviewer know if you plan to stay in the position for which you are interviewing or to move up in the organization.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER WE LOOK AT QUESTIONS RELATED TO YOUR resume.



## 16. RESUME RELATED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



**T**his chapter looks at resume-related questions.

- **Take us through your resume.**

THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF WHY YOU SHOULD HAVE AN EXTRA COPY OF your resume with you when you go for the interview.

Starting off with your Summary Statement, you could read it word for word. Or you could give an expanded elevator pitch style of response.

Then you work your way through your experience that should reflect upon the job description and duties for the job you are applying for. Continue on with outlining your education that qualifies you for the job.

- **What are you most proud of on your resume?**

THIS IS A QUESTION YOU WILL HAVE TO ANSWER ON YOUR OWN. Pride can get you in trouble and highlight you in a way that you don't want.

You would likely be better in choosing something that shares your pride with others as in your part of being a team member on a specific project or perhaps sharing an accomplishment with others.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT SOME GENERAL INTERVIEW questions.

**“WHATEVER YOUR TALENT IS, YOU SHOULD CRAFT IT, NOURISH it and build on it. It is the ‘niche talent’ that will take you to the top of your field.” -- Mark Victor Hansen**

**“IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP YOUR UNIQUE TALENTS AND abilities, the things that make you special.” -- Brian**

**Tracy**

## 17. GENERAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This chapter looks at interview questions I have given the classification of General as they don't seem to fit elsewhere.

- **Tell me a story.**

GEAR YOUR STORIES TO GIVE THE LISTENER A FEELING YOU COULD fit in... you could do the job here.

- **In what way do you think you can contribute to our company?**

PREPARING TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION REQUIRES A 2-STEP preparation: *assessing* your skills and *researching* the needs of the company.

An integral part of skill assessment (looking at your own experience, education and talents) is to 'skill-match'.

Considering the job opening, what are the skills needed?

Make a list of the requisite skills (in priority order) and then list concrete examples of your possession of the skill.

For example: a sales representative would need good interpersonal skills, the ability to deal with difficult people. For 'proof' of this skill, you could list experiences and examples of how you were *successful* in a difficult situation.

These matched skills are your *key selling points*.

Next, what appears to be the current problems at the organization, based upon your research? What are their needs you can meet?

In other words, given the specifics of the company, what value can you add?

After these two steps, you are in a great position to come up with concrete examples of what you can offer the company.

This question, by the way, is just another version of "Why should we hire you?"

In the interview, when asked this question, you could respond with: "In my experience in sales, I know having the ability to deal effectively with all types of people is not merely a positive element --- it is an essential one.

With your plans to expand into \_\_\_\_ market, a sales representative with a proven ability to meet with all types of people and to be able to assess and meet their immediate needs would be a great asset.

In the past \_\_ years, I have increased sales...”

**THE NEXT FEW QUESTIONS REFER TO YOUR CAREER.**

Just to be clear, a *career* refers to different jobs or positions you have taken within a specific field.

As an example, I’m a Registered Nurse and presumably would be looking for other positions within the healthcare field, specifically nursing.

I could very well change my career and go into something completely different from nursing. Many people do so.

I’m just going to go over them quickly as they seem to be fairly straightforward.

- **Where do you want to be 5 years from now in your career?**
- **What are your long-term career goals?**
- **What prompted you to take your current job?**
- **Where do you see yourself 10 years from now?**
- **Why did you make a career change?**
- **Why do you want to leave your current position?**
- **Five years ago, where did you see yourself today?**
- **What is your career goal?**

ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS ARE ASKING YOU TO ILLUSTRATE YOU actually have given some thought to our career path.

Your answer should show you have. It's not just a matter of job jumping, you need to be able to illustrate you have a lifelong career plan in place.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS THAT assess your analytic skills.

## **18. QUESTIONS TO ASSESS YOUR ANALYTIC SKILLS**

**T**hese next questions relate to the Interviewer assessing your analytic skills.

If you are applying for a job that relies on their worker's technical and problem-solving skills, you will need to be prepared for these types of questions.

- **Are you analytical? Give us one example of your analytical abilities.**
- **Tell us about your analytical skills.**
- **Tell us about a particularly difficult problem that you analyzed and what was your recommendation.**
- **What steps do you take when analyzing complex problems?**
- **How would you rate your analytical ability? Why?**
- **How would your manager rate your analytical ability?**



IF YOU HAVE RECENT PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL RESULTS, THIS would be a good place to use your supervisor's exact words.

- **Tell us about a situation where the analysis that you performed was incorrect. What would you have done differently?**

THIS IS ANOTHER VERSION OF A QUESTION ASKED EARLIER WHERE you were asked to come up with a situation that didn't go well and how you turned it around.

- **What do you know about our company?**

DO YOU KNOW THE COMPANY'S PRODUCTS/SERVICES, MISSION statement, headquarters location, and name of the CEO?

If not, do a 5-minute internet search on the company.

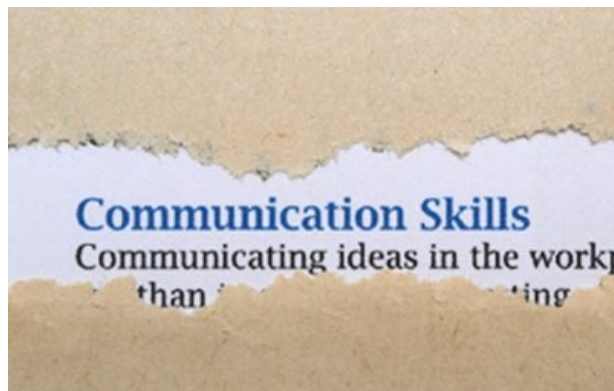
If you have this information, take the time to look up Interviewer(s) on LinkedIn and notice where they went to school and their history with the company.

**(Hint:** interviewers often like to reflect on their educational experience. Knowing where they went to school can be helpful.)



OUR NEXT CHAPTER FOCUSES ON **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**  
questions.

## 19. COMMUNICATION SKILLS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS



**T**his chapter focuses on questions that help the Interviewer *assess* your *communication* skills.

Communication skills fit into the category of *soft skills* and some may tell you they are every bit as important as your *hard* skills.

After-all, if you aren't able to get along with your co-workers and supervisors, you likely aren't a good hire.

I'm just going to list them and wait to comment at the end.

- **How do you effectively communicate with others?**

- **How important is listening to effective communications?**
- **What are some characteristics of a good listener?**
- **Tell us about a situation where you demonstrated good communications skills.**
- **Tell us about a situation where you demonstrated poor communications skills. What would you have done differently?**
- **How would you rate your communications skills? Why?**

IF YOU HAVE WELL-DEVELOPED COMMUNICATION SKILLS, GOOD FOR YOU.

If not, you may want to spend some time researching the topic and seeing if you can develop some specific skills in advance of your interview.

At the very least, learning some new communication skills will help you understand what the Interviewer is looking for in your responses and help you to develop some answers.

Good communication at every level of an organization is important.

You can pretty well expect there will be at least one question on the subject.

Being prepared for these questions may score you some points and answering them well, may illustrate you do indeed have good communication skills.

It's one thing to say you have them, but answering your questions as efficiently as you can, helps prove the point.



IN THIS NEXT SEGMENT, WE OFFER A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT communicating with your Co-workers.

- **What are some rules to follow to insure effective communications with your co-workers?**

THIS QUESTION WOULD SEEM TO FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CONSIDER to be rules.

Hopefully, the Interviewer will see them the same way as you do.

It would be worth your while to determine if there actually are any rules and what they might be.

Think *respect*. Think *assertive communication*.

- **What are some of the means of communication in the workplace?**

THIS QUESTION APPEARS TO BE DESIGNED TO TEST YOUR understanding of the communication process.

Your answer should include: 1 to 1 conversations, e-mail 1 to 1 discussions, mass e-mails through distribution lists, written memos on paper, they still exist and don't forget the grapevine.

It exists in every work-site and you will want to be tuned into it.

It wouldn't hurt to offer that gossip also exists, which is a little different from the grapevine and it has a negative effect in the workplace in many ways.

And you, of course, don't participate in it!

- **How would your co-workers rate your communications skills?**

YOU MAY WANT TO ASK SOME OF YOUR CO-WORKERS THIS question. You may not like the answers you get but it would help you to genuinely answer the question.

The secret to answering the question effectively may lay in you sharing what you learned about how your co-workers have commented about your communication skills and what you are doing about it.

IN THE NEXT SEGMENT, WE LOOK AT QUESTIONS RELATED TO communicating with your supervisor.



**COMMUNICATING WITH SUPERVISORS:**

- **Communicating with your supervisor is an important aspect of all of our jobs. In addition to being brief, what guidelines should you follow to communicate effectively with your supervisor?**

I would expect there isn't a definitive answer to this question but some things come to mind from my experience.

- choose your time. Supervisors can be busy people. Your communication will probably be better received if you speak to them at a time when they are not working on other activities and you have their undivided attention.

- for important discussions have multiple details, I would suggest sending a follow-up e-mail outlining the important points that were discussed.

- clarify the purpose of communicating with your supervisor in advance. Are you informing them of something, are you explaining your role or actions you took in a specific situation, are you asking for their assistance or additional resources, or are you merely updating them, what we call an FYI?

- **What are the reasons for communicating upwards to your superiors?**



HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES, BUT ONCE AGAIN, DEVELOP SOME OF our own.

- Sharing information as to your progress or lack of on a specific topic or project. Updating them on any resources you might need to complete your task.
- Advising them of potential risks or the opposite of sharing with them something that went really well.
- **How would your supervisor rate your communications skills?**

THEY'RE LIKELY LOOKING FOR SOMETHING MORE THAN A "GOOD!" as an answer to this question.

If your communication skills are good and you have evidence from a performance appraisal validating a supervisor has said that they are good, you may want to prepare to paraphrase what was said to your benefit.

If your communication skills *aren't* up to snuff and it has been recognized by a supervisor that they need improvement, you can likely turn this to your favour by *admitting* that they aren't as good as they should be *however*, you are *actively* working on steps to improve them.

- **How do you like to be managed/ supervised?**

THE EMPLOYER IS REALLY ASKING *HOW MUCH* SUPERVISION YOU need. Be honest, but understand employers select candidates who *know* when to ask questions and *when* to work independently.

This next segment offers some suggestions for questions that may be asked if you are applying for a supervisory position.

If you are not applying for a supervisory position, you may want to move forward in the program to the next segment.

These following questions are testing your knowledge of the supervisory process.

If you have supervisory experience to draw from, you will want to provide some answers based on your experience.

- **How can a supervisor establish effective communications with staff?**

SOME SUPERVISORS FEEL AN OPEN-DOOR POLICY IS BEST. THIS IS where the employees are told that your door is open all the time and they should feel free to come to you to talk about their problems.

The downside, for supervisors who have a tendency to micro-manage, is it can create a culture where the

employees get used to running to the boss to solve all problems.

It can also create a situation where individual employees are competing for attention from the supervisor and use dysfunctional interpersonal communication techniques to meet their needs.

On, the other hand, an open-door policy can foster good communications with your workers if you set up your expectations in the first place.

Some examples might be... if you have a problem with a co-worker, talk to them first to try to resolve the issue. If you are unable to resolve it, then come to me.

You could encourage a 'no-gossip' policy. If you are coming to complain about another and you haven't tried to resolve it, well then go back to them and try.

Don't accept unilateral complaining from employees about other employees.

- **What means of communication may be used to effectively establish a new policy?**

Over my career, I have been involved in all aspects of policy and procedures.

When I was in my younger rebel years, I found many policies & procedures were created to control me or stop me from doing something I shouldn't have been doing.

The simplest way to establish a new policy in the workplace is to post it to a Policy & Procedure Manual with the expectation all employees will read it.

Simple yes, effective no.

In most cases, it would be more effective to discuss the new policy with those it affects at a staff meeting.

Employees need to know the importance of the policy, assuming there really is importance.

Everyone needs to know the policy exists and the purpose it was designed for.

- **Are there additional considerations in communicating to groups of employees versus individual employees?**

A WISE RULE OF THUMB IS TO *PRAISE* IN PUBLIC AND TO *CRITICIZE* in private.

Too bad many supervisors don't know about it or choose not to.

- **What are some good rules to keep in mind when directing employees?**

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES. YOU SHOULD BE PREPARED TO SUPPLY YOUR OWN.

- Your expectations should be clearly outlined.
- What is the desired end result of the employee completing a task?
- Are you delegating any responsibility or authority to the specific employee?
- Are there any time constraints involved?
- That is, are you expecting partial or complete results by a certain time?
  
- **In what instances, is written communication better than verbal communications?**

IN AN EMPLOYEE CONTRACT OR WORK AGREEMENT, THE TERMS OF employment would be helpful.

Another example relates to employee performance standards, where a Letter of Expectation might be issued to the employee from the Employer, outlining performance expectations have not been met and the consequences should the expectations not be met by a certain date.

Yet another example would be the organization's policy and procedure manual that specifically outlines situations and actions the employee would need as a reference rather than going by memory of an oral conversation



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT DECISION MAKING QUESTIONS.

## 20.DECISION-MAKING PROCESS QUESTIONS



**T**his chapter looks at questions that assess your *decision-making* processes.

- **What type of decisions do you make in your current position?**

EVERY POSITION HAS ELEMENTS OF IT THAT REQUIRE YOU TO MAKE decisions whether they be minor ones or those that have a greater impact.

Choose some examples where your decisions have had a positive response and focus you in a favourable light.

- **What decisions are easiest for you to make and which ones are the most difficult? Why?**

IN ADDRESSING THE DECISIONS THAT ARE THE MOST DIFFICULT FOR you, don't cite decisions that are essential to the job you are interviewing for.

For the decisions that you do cite, expand your answer by telling what steps you're taking to improve your decision making.

- **What steps are involved in making a decision?**

THIS QUESTION MAY BE A LITTLE MORE COMPLICATED THAN IT seems. The interviewer is testing your decision-making processes.

You may want to do some research on this topic to be prepared.

Something to think about is many decisions are based on one's logical thoughts vs their emotional ones. In sales, many purchases are made on emotion, but justified by logic.



Many people use a pro vs con approach. What happens if I take this approach, what happens if I don't.

- **What items of information do *you* typically need before you make a decision?**

REMEMBER, THERE ARE NO PERFECT DECISIONS AND IN MANY situations, you will never have all the facts.

This question seems to be asking about your decision-making process so you will need to provide specifics, rather than generalities.

- **Give us an example of your ability to make decisions under pressure.**

ONCE AGAIN, YOU ARE BEING ASSESSED. SO, PROVIDE AN EXAMPLE or two with favourable results and that make you look good.

- **Tell us about the worst decision that you've made on the job.**

BE CAREFUL WITH THIS ONE!

You want to make it look like you are capable of learning from bad decisions and not that you regularly make bad decisions.

- **Tell us about the best decision that you've made on the job.**

HERE IS ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY FOR SHINING.

- **How would you rate a job that requires you to constantly make decisions?**

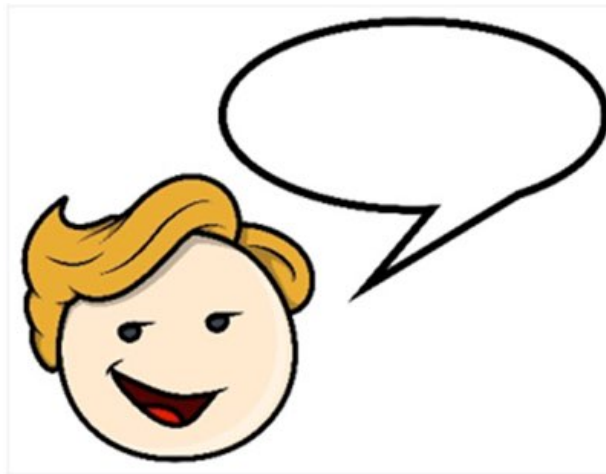
I'M NOT REALLY SURE WHAT IS BEING ASKED HERE.

I would suspect they are really asking “how would you do working in our job that requires you to constantly make decisions?”



OUR NEXT CHAPTER LOOKS AT **WHAT WOULD OTHERS SAY About You.**

## 21. WHAT WOULD OTHERS SAY ABOUT YOU INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



**T**his chapter addresses what you expect different people would say about you if they were asked. In this area of questioning you are likely better to appear *humble*, yet *self-confident*.

These following three questions can likely be answered well by referring to any recent performance appraisals.

That way you are using your supervisor's own words for your answer.

- **What do you think your supervisor would say about your work?**
- **What do you think your co-worker would say about your work?**
- **What would your boss say about you - both positive and negative?**
- **What would your subordinates say about - both positive and negative?**

THIS QUESTION PRESUMES YOU HAVE OTHER EMPLOYEES AND YOU oversee various aspects of their job performance.

This can be a challenging question to answer in that most of the time, we don't ask our subordinates what they think of us. Perhaps we are probably better off not knowing.

- **What would your co-workers say about you - both positive and negative?**

IT CAN BE EASY TO RESPOND TO THE POSITIVE THOUGHTS OUR CO-workers think but not so the negative.

Unless you are a mind-reader, this question can be difficult to answer. You may get by with acknowledging you aren't a mind-reader but then provide some examples of how you sense people respond to you.

It is a fact not everybody in the world will get along with you, so if you do have some you don't get along with, it *won't* necessarily work against you.

- **What three keywords would your peers use to describe you?**

THIS IS A CHALLENGING QUESTION. IF YOU DON'T KNOW, GO ahead and ask them.

You will probably get different answers from everyone, so see if there are any themes that come up consider them and choose three of them.

- **What one thing would your boss say that he or she has the greatest problem with you?**

HOPEFULLY, YOU WILL NEVER BE ASKED THIS QUESTION.

Choose something benign.

I once had a manager say in a performance appraisal the only negative thing she had to say about me was she wished she had more time to spend with me.

I've always taken it as she enjoyed her time with me.

Now I think about it... I'm hoping she didn't mean I needed a lot of help from her.

Hmm. No, I don't think so!

- **Describe a situation in which your work was criticized?**
- **Describe the situation and how you responded to the criticism.**

THIS QUESTION REFERS TO YOUR WORK BEING *CRITICIZED* RATHER than you receiving *constructive feedback*.

Likely, most people respond to criticism in the way it was delivered to them.

Criticism is *negative* in nature. Some believe *launching* a counter-attack can be a good defence.

In this case a good answer would include you accepting the criticism, accepting it in the sense you *agree* to consider its merit.

Then you would ask the criticizer to back up the points they have made with examples. If generalizations have been made, you could point out the inaccuracies.

A productive way of dealing with unfair criticism includes you taking an *assertive* approach to challenging the individual who has criticized you.

Just *because* they have said something about you, doesn't *necessarily* make it *true*.

If you haven't responded effectively to criticism in the past, you can probably turn it to your advantage in the interview question by *briefly* describing a situation you didn't handle well but explain you have *learned* how to deal with it assertively and will handle it differently in the future.

This could be an example of the Past, Present and Future model for answering a question we talked about a few chapters back.

You are in essence, turning a negative into a positive example that will help make you look better.

- **How would your subordinates describe you?**

THIS IS A DIFFERENT VERSION OF A QUESTION WE LOOKED AT earlier.

- **Tell us about the last time you lost your temper?**
- **What situations *make* you lose your temper?**

IF YOU'RE NOT A PERSON WHO LOSES THEIR TEMPER, SAY SO.

If you *are*, be *careful* with your response.

Losing one's temper is often related to *not having* the skills to solve a particular problem.

The Interviewer is testing your ability to problem solve and remain in control of yourself with the situation you find yourself in.

- **Tell us about the worst supervisor you've worked under.**

THIS CAN BE A LOADED QUESTION.

You will need to provide examples of why they were the worst and how you were able to work with them or not.

- **Tell us about the *best* supervisor you've worked under.**

GIVEN THIS QUESTION YOU COULD HIGHLIGHT THE SUPERVISOR'S positive attributes you have liked.

Actions such as they were a good teacher or mentor would be helpful.

- **Tell us about a confrontation that you've had with a co-worker.**



THE IMPORTANT PART OF RESPONDING TO THIS QUESTION WOULD be in sharing how you successfully resolved the confrontation and moved forward in working together.

- **How do you maintain an effective working relationship with your coworkers?**

THIS IS AN INTERESTING QUESTION AS IT IS ASSESSING YOUR working skills.

Getting along with your co-workers is important. Certainly, for you, but perhaps even more for your manager.

They don't want to be spending all their time intervening in employee interpersonal conflict. It takes away from more important work they should be doing.

- **How would your best friend describe you?**

THIS ONE SHOULD BE FAIRLY EASY TO ANSWER. I WOULD EXPECT you have many things in common and hopefully your best friend is supportive of you.

If not, maybe it's time to get a new best friend.

- **How would your worst enemy describe you?**

I WOULD SUGGEST STAYING FAIRLY NEUTRAL AND REPLY YOU DON'T believe or are aware you have any enemies, let alone a worst enemy.

Admitting you do could lead you to follow-up questions you wouldn't want to answer and certainly wouldn't make you look good.



IN OUR NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT **STRENGTHS VS WEAKNESSES**  
**Interview Questions**

## 22. STRENGTHS VS WEAKNESSES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



**T**here are *many* questions an Interviewer can ask you about your strengths.

I've commented on a few of them, but the *main* concept is you share your responses in a *thoughtful* manner that highlights you well, but not at the expense of someone else.

- **Why should we hire you?**

BE CAREFUL WITH YOUR ANSWER HERE.

It isn't a time to be flippant. Saying "That you'd be stupid not to" won't help you.

*However*, this is a good time to remind the interviewer what you do have to offer.

- **What are your three greatest strengths?**

YOUR RESPONSE TO THIS SHOULD TIE IN WITH YOUR SUMMARY Statement from your resume.

It's another chance to reinforce what you have to offer.

- **What can you contribute to our organization?**

THIS IS WHERE HAVING A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF THE organization's history and culture would come in.

You could align yourself with a cause they believe in.

- **Assume that you are a candidate in the coming general election. Tell me why you are the best**

**candidate in the field.**

LET'S HOPE YOU DON'T GET ASKED THIS ONE, UNLESS YOU actually are applying for a position within a political party.

This question is likely asking several things beneath the surface. How confident are you? Can you be self-promoting yet humble at the same time?

It also addresses how you speak about the competition.

**HERE ARE SOME MORE EXAMPLES OF STRENGTH TYPE questions:**

- **What is your greatest strength?**
- **We've interviewed a number of highly qualified students for this position. What sets you apart from the others?**
- **What are your strengths?**
- **Select four to five strengths that are *job-related*, highlighting technical and leadership skills and work ethic.**
- **What part of your current job are you the most comfortable with?**

*PRESUMABLY, YOUR STRENGTHS ARE WHAT HELPS YOU BECOME comfortable with a specific aspect of your *current* job.*

Think of some examples that highlight your strengths. Perhaps you are good at customer service and working with people. Not everybody is.

Some people are more comfortable working with numbers. If that is your case, find a way to highlight the fact.

- **What are your strong points and how have they helped you to succeed?**



IN THIS NEXT SEGMENT, WE LOOK AT QUESTIONS THAT ADDRESS your *weaknesses*.

You shouldn't feel intimidated about these questions.

We all have weaknesses.

*Fortunately*, we all have different weaknesses.

What really matters is you have *acknowledged* you aren't as strong in an area as you could be and that you are working on *improving* your skills and confidence in the area.

Whatever you come up with for an answer, you should probably find a way to tie it into the job position you are applying for.

*Not* the fact you are weak in the area but perhaps your willingness to *strengthen* your level of competency for the benefit of yourself and your new employer.

Here are a few personal weakness type questions.

They are all really variations on the same question.

- **What is your greatest weakness?**

MENTION ONE WORK-RELATED CHALLENGE THAT YOU ARE PREPARED to overcome. For example: "I know there will be a learning curve before I am as productive as you would like a top performing (name of job you are applying for) to be. I have

always been able to master the skills necessary to be successful, and I am confident I can do that working for (name of company).”

- **Name your three greatest weaknesses.**
- **Which is the worst of your three greatest weaknesses and why?**
- **What are your weaknesses?**

AND HERE'S SOME MORE...

- **What part of your current job are you the least comfortable with?**
- **What are your weak points and how have you overcome them?**
- **What about yourself would you want to improve?**
- **In which area do you need to make the improvement in?**





IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT QUESTIONS THAT ARE SPECIFIC to interviewing for supervisory positions.

If you aren't applying for a supervisor's position, skip forward to the next chapter in this section.

## 23. SUPERVISOR ROLE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS



**T**he questions in this chapter, apply to job searchers who are applying for a supervisory position.

I'm not going to go into detail with these questions as they *likely* apply to a smaller group of job searchers than the general ones.

The questions are fairly specific, so you may want to spend some time on your own researching and developing some appropriate responses.

If you aren't applying for a supervisory position, please move on to the next chapter.

- **What is the purpose of a performance appraisal?**
- **What is the most important quality a supervisor should have?**
- **An employee approaches you with a sexual harassment-related problem. In your discussion with the employee, what items of information will be of the most importance?**
- **What are the characteristics of an effective supervisor?**
- **What qualities make for a good boss?**
- **What steps can a supervisor take to improve the capabilities of staff?**
- **How should an assignment be made to an employee?**
- **How would a supervisor evaluate an administrative employee's performance?**
- **What are the three most common weaknesses of managers and supervisors?**
- **Why is feedback important?**
- **What are some of the ways in which an employee starts to behave that usually indicate a potential problem?**
- **What guidelines should be followed in counselling an employee?**
- **Name the major sources of conflict in organizations.**
- **Describe the process by which conflict in an organization should be addressed.**
- **What are the five functions of a supervisor?**

- **What considerations should be made in establishing organizational goals for your unit?**
- **What actions can a supervisor take to insure that subordinates support the mission and goals of an organization?**
- **Vacations during the holidays are popular among employees. Describe the actions a supervisor can take to insure that service levels are unaffected during these times.**
- **What are guidelines to follow in constructively criticizing an employee?**
- **What are some of the signs that your staff may be suffering from burnout?**

[Declining health, increasing sickness and tardiness, absentmindedness, flaring tempers and procrastination.]



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT **GET TO KNOW YOU** TYPE questions.

## 24. PERSONAL 'GET TO KNOW YOU' TYPE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



**T**his chapter deals with Personal 'Get to Know You' Type Interview Questions.

As you would suspect, there are no right or wrong answers to these.

The purpose would seem to be for the Interviewer to take a *reading* on you as a person, separate from your work life. This would be *subjective* on their part of course.

For responding to these questions, you will want to be *upbeat, positive-thinking* and as always... show yourself in a good light.

Be careful of what some of us call **TMI** ... too much information. You don't want to provide so much information the Interviewer will start thinking about follow-up questions to what you have provided.

"Why in the world did you ever do that?" comes to mind.

I'm just going to list them and you can develop your own answers.

- **Tell us about the passion in your life as it relates to your work.**
- **What aspects of your work do you get the most excited about?**
- **What are your most outstanding qualities?**
- **If you were to start your own company, what would that company do?**
- **Tell me about the last book that you read.**
- **If you were a cucumber in a salad and somebody was about to eat you, what would you do?**

THIS LAST ONE HAS TO BE ONE OF THE STUPIDEST INTERVIEW questions I've heard.

But you need to be prepared for questions that seem to come from outer space.

- **What are your worst qualities?**

IT MIGHT BE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO SAY YOU DON'T TASTE VERY good in a salad with regards to the previous question, but you may want avoid it.

- **What is your favourite colour and what does it reflect in your personality?**
- **Rate yourself from one to ten on your work ethic with ten being the best. Describe yourself.**
- **How would your friends describe you?**
- **Do you like to socialize outside of work?**
- **What are your hobbies?**



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT ILLEGAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS and how to answer them, or not!

**“ACHIEVEMENT REQUIRES MORE THAN A VISION - IT TAKES courage, resolve and tenacity.” — Neil Eskelin**

**“SPECTACULAR ACHIEVEMENT IS ALWAYS PRECEDED BY spectacular preparation.” -- Robert H. Schuller**

## 25. ILLEGAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



**I**nterviewing job applicants has likely been with us ***forever.***

OVER THE PAST 40 YEARS OR SO WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF human rights, there has been a development in the area of what *kinds* of questions and *specific* questions Interviewers are able to ask you.



It can vary from country to country, so you would be *well advised* to do your own research to find out how things stand in your country.

These samples are provided for illustrative purpose only... drawn from Canadian and American resources and should not be considered as facts in law.

If you are interested in furthering your knowledge of questions that are appropriate vs illegal I would suggest you research the Human Rights Commission in the province or state that you live in.

### **What can you do if you are asked an illegal question?**

If you're asked an illegal question, you have several options available to you.

You can choose to answer the question and that is well within your rights, but you can also refuse to answer as well.

Of course, taking this option may create a rift between you and the Interviewer.

However, if you choose to answer an illegal question, remember you are giving information that isn't related to the job; in fact, you might be giving the "wrong" answer, which could harm your chances of getting the job.

You can *refuse* to answer the question, which is well within your rights.

*Unfortunately*, depending on how you phrase your refusal, you run the *risk* of coming off as *uncooperative* or

*confrontational* - hardly words an employer would use to describe the “*ideal*” candidate.

You can examine the question for its *intent* and *respond* with an answer as it might apply to the job.

For example, the Interviewer asks, “Are you a Canadian/US citizen?” or “What country are you from?”

You’ve been asked an illegal question.

You could respond, however, with “I am *authorized* to work in the USA.” [or whatever country you live in]

Similarly, let’s say the Interviewer asks, “Who is going to take care of your children when you have to travel for the job?”

You might answer, “I can *meet* the *travel* and *work* schedule this job requires.”

If you can’t see the *intent* behind the question, then ask “Can you tell me how this relates to my ability to fill the position?”

Most (if not all) interviewers will reword the question as it *relates* to the position.

You can also *choose to inform* the Interviewer the question they asked is illegal.

It’s entirely possible the Interviewer was not aware of this fact or they may have just awkwardly phrased a *perfectly* legal question.

There is also the chance calling out a potential employer might make the interview process go worse, but you may not want to work for an organization that bases employment on inappropriate questions.

Please locate the Handout entitled ***Interview Questions-Legal vs Illegal*** located in the Additional Resources section at the end of the book for more detail.

It addresses specific areas of questioning that are illegal to ask and how it could or should be asked.

We won't be discussing it here.

**“WHEN EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE GOING AGAINST YOU, remember the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it.” -- Henry Ford**

**“ATTITUDE PRECEDES SERVICE. YOUR POSITIVE MENTAL attitude is the basis for the way you act and react to people. ‘You become what you think about’ is the foundation of your actions and reactions. What are your thoughts? Positive all the time? How are you guiding them?” — Jeffrey Gitomer**

## 26. BE A STAR!



**J**ob interviewing techniques have continued to evolve over the years.

In earlier chapters, we have looked at different ways to answer interview questions and looked at some *specific* questions you might be asked.

We are now going to build upon those techniques with yet another one. That is, being prepared to be a **STAR**.

**STAR** is an interview response technique that can be used by job seekers.

The STAR interview response technique is a method for answering behavioural interview questions. Behavioural interview questions are questions about how you have behaved in the past.

Specifically, they are about how you have handled certain work situations.

Interviewers ask these questions to see if candidates have the skills and experiences required for the job. One good way for them to see if candidates have what it takes is to look at past examples of performance.

Competency questions make up a large part of most job interviews and from a company's point of view they allow an objective assessment of a candidate's experience and the qualities that make them suitable for the job.

The STAR technique of interviewing makes it easier for the employer to compare all the people who are applying for the job in a methodical and structured way.

Here are some examples of behavioral interview questions. We will look at more examples later on:

- Tell me about a time you had to complete a task under a tight deadline.
- Have you ever gone above and beyond the call of duty?
- What do you do when a team member refuses to complete his or her portion of the work?

By now you are probably wondering what STAR stands for?



**STAR** IS AN ACRONYM FOR FOUR KEY CONCEPTS.

Each concept is a step the job candidate can take to answer a behavioural interview question.

By completing all four steps, the job candidate provides a thorough answer.

The concepts in the acronym include:

**Situation:** Describe a situation or problem you have encountered.

**Task:** Describe the task the situation required or your ideas for resolving the problem.

**Action:** Describe the action you took, obstacles that you had to overcome.

**Results:** Highlight outcomes achieved.

We'll expand upon each of these steps in a moment.

**Which questions need a STAR response?**

The questions will usually start along the lines of “tell me about a time when you...”

This will be followed by those competencies that have been listed on the job specification, so it is important to be familiar with them, so you can prepare.

For example, a marketing executive may require problem-solving skills, or a job in customer services may require conflict management skills. That would mean if you were applying for those jobs you would be well-advised to prepare answers to questions designed to determine whether you have the competency or not.

Hopefully, you do!

SOME INTERVIEWERS STRUCTURE THEIR QUESTIONS USING THE STAR technique. You may encounter a series of questions based around assessing one competency.

Here's a quick example: "Tell me about a time you had to complete a task under a tight deadline. Describe the situation and explain how you handled it."

Since you won't know in advance what interviewing techniques, your Interviewer will use, you'll benefit from preparing several scenarios from the jobs you've held.

First, make a list of the skills and/or experiences required for the job. You might look at the job listing for suggestions. Then, consider specific examples of times you displayed those skills.

For each example, name the ***situation, task, action, and result.***

You can also look at common behavioral interview questions and try answering each of them using the **STAR** technique.

We'll provide a list of behavioral interview questions for you to practice on a little later.

Whatever examples you select, make sure they are as closely related to the job you're interviewing for as possible. Now, let's break the steps down into greater detail.

**Situation:**

This is about setting the scene, giving a context and background to the situation. This situation can be from a work experience, a volunteer position, or any other relevant event.

Be as specific as possible.

You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand.

Describe the context within which you performed a job or faced a challenge at work. Make it *concise and informative*, concentrating solely on what is useful to the story.

For example, perhaps you were working on a group project, or you had a conflict with a co-worker.

So, if you're asked a question about time management, your reply would need to include the details of the project



you were working on, who you were working with, when it happened and where you were.

As another example, if the question is asking you to describe a situation where you had to deal with a difficult person, explain how you came to meet that person and why they were being difficult.

If the question is asking for an example of teamwork, explain the task you had to undertake as a team.

### **Task**

This is more *specific* to your exact role in the situation you are providing, so describe your responsibility in the situation.

You need to make sure the interviewer knows what you were tasked with rather than the rest of the team.

**Examples:** Perhaps you had to help your group complete a project under a tight deadline, or resolve a conflict with a co-worker.

Another... “It was my responsibility to find an alternative, so it didn’t reflect badly on the company and we didn’t waste the opportunity.”

**Action:** This is the most important section of the STAR approach as it is where you will need to demonstrate and highlight the skills and personal attributes the question is testing i.e. what your response to the situation was.

Remember, you need to talk about what you specifically did, so using ‘I’ rather than team actions—otherwise you

won't be showing off the necessary skills the employer is looking for.

Be sure to share a lot of detail, the interviewer will not be familiar with your history, although remember to avoid any acronyms and institutional language.

Now you have set the situation of your story, you need to explain what you did.

In doing so, you will need to remember the following:

- Be personal i.e. talk about you, not the rest of the team.
- Go into some detail.
- Do not assume they will guess what you mean.
- Avoid technical information, unless it is crucial to your story.
- Don't tell what you might do, explain what you did, how you did it, and why you did it.

What you're trying to get across here is how you assessed and decided what was the appropriate response to the situation and how you got the other team members involved—which in turn is a great way to demonstrate your communication skills.

### **What you did and how you did it.**

The interviewers will want to know how you reacted to the situation.

This is where you can start selling some important skills you have.

For example, you may want to describe how you used the team to achieve a particular objective and how you used your communication skills to keep everyone updated on progress, etc.

Here's another example, if you are asked about dealing with a difficult personality on your team you would talk about how you decided to take a certain course of action to avoid making the situation worse or upsetting the individual.

### **Why you did it.**

By highlighting the reasons behind your action, you would make a greater impact.

For example; when discussing a situation where you had to deal with conflict, many candidates would simply say: "I told my colleague to calm down and explained to him what the problem was."

However, it would not provide a good idea of what drove you to act in this manner.

How did you ask him to calm down?

How did you explain the nature of the problem?

Here's an example of what you could say:

"I could sense my colleague was irritated, and I asked him gently to tell me what he felt the problem was.

By allowing him to express his feelings and his anger, I gave him the opportunity to calm down. I then explained to him my own point of view on the matter, emphasizing how important it was we found a solution that suited us both.”

This revised answer helps the interviewers understand what drove your actions and reinforces the feeling you are calculating the consequences of your actions, thus retaining full control of the situation.

It provides much more information about you as an individual and is another reason why the STAR approach is so useful.

**Result:** Finally, explain the outcomes or results generated by the action taken. You might emphasize what you accomplished, or what you learned.

The result should be a positive one, and ideally one that can be quantified. Numbers always impress employers.

Examples of quantification, include repeat business, an increase in sales by 15% or saving the team 5 hours a week.

The Interviewer will also want to know what you learnt from that situation and if there was anything you’d do differently, the next time you were faced with the situation.

Here’s an example, “Joseph didn’t make the meeting on time, but we explained the problem to the 30 delegates and Frederick’s presentation went well – a bit rough around the edges but it was warmly received.

Joseph managed to get there for the last 20 minutes to answer questions.

As a result, we gained some good contacts, at least two of which we converted into paying clients.”

There are a few things to note with this response: it’s important to speak in *specific* rather than *general* terms and *quantify* your success.

In this example, we mentioned 30 delegates, the names of the people involved and quantified two contacts converted to clients.

From a *listener’s* perspective, this makes the story more interesting and they are more able to gauge your success.

*Nameless* figures and *undefined* successes can make the answer less feel less convincing.

Secondly, as there are likely to be many questions and interviewers have short attention spans, it’s important to keep your answers concise: convey the maximum achievement in the minimum time.

Finally, it’s important to finish on a positive note so the overall impression is strong.

For a longer list of these types of questions, view the Behavioural-Competency Based Interview Questions Handout, in the Additional Resources section.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE DISCUSS QUESTIONS YOU CAN, SHOULD  
and probably shouldn't ask your interviewer.

## 27. QUESTIONS TO ASK AN INTERVIEWER



**I**n this chapter, we'll look at questions you can, should and probably shouldn't ask your interviewer.

Let's get started.

It's worth repeating... **Will Rogers** said, "I never met a man I didn't like."

AN EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW IS A PLACE TO BE *LIKED*. UNLESS you're *likeable*, you won't be *hireable*.

*LISTENING* AND *QUESTIONING* PROPERLY IS THE WAY TO WIN THE interview. For the first few minutes of the interview, you're *observing* and *determining* how to proceed. You've been given *impossible* questions and have delivered *inspirational* answers.

NOW YOU MUST ASK QUESTIONS... *CAREFULLY*.

IN THE RECRUITER'S RULE BOOK **CLOSING ON OBJECTIONS**, PAUL Hawkinson (1984) wrote: *Constant* questioning can be grating, and if overused, can work against you.

No one wants to feel they are on the receiving end of the prosecutor's interrogation and questions must be used sparingly to be really effective.

But they are necessary because selling is the art of asking the right questions to get to the minor yes's that allow you lead... to the major decision and major yes.

The final placement is nothing more than the sum total of all your yes's throughout the process.

Your job then, is to nurse the process along.

That advice is written for Recruiters in their task of interviewing job applicants.



WHEN YOU ASK QUESTIONS OF THE INTERVIEWER, FOR THOSE brief moments, you are the Interviewer and you don't want to put them on the defense.

But before we get into some techniques for making the sale i.e. landing the job, let's take a look at some questions you might ask your Interviewer.

They are meant to help you prepare for the interview.

Some questions *may or may not* be appropriate for your interviewing situation. While asking questions of your interviewer may help you look eager and enthusiastic, it may be a tactic to use with caution.

Your Interviewer has come prepared to ask *you* questions. They may not be prepared to respond to *your* questions. The last thing you want to do is to *intimidate* your Interviewer.

If you do ask your Interviewer questions, this is where your notebook might come in handy in recording your Interviewer's response.

LET'S LOOK AT SOME QUESTIONS:

**Note:** Indicates some background information or industry advice has been provided for you to consider.

- **Why is this position open?**

- **How often has it been filled in the past five years? What were the main reasons?**
- **What would you like done differently by the next person who fills this position?**
- **What are some objectives you would like to see accomplished in this job?**
- **What is most pressing? What would you like to have done in the next 3 months?**
- **What would you want the person in this position to accomplish the first 30 days on the job?** [Respond with excitement about working on the type of projects/assignments mentioned.]
- **What qualities are you seeking in top candidates for this position?**

[If the Interviewer lists a quality/strength you have, but have not covered during your interview, respond by letting the employer know you have that skill.]

[If the Interviewer mentions something that matched your discussion, you can respond you are pleased to hear they are seeking someone with your skills and abilities.]

- **What are some of the long-term objectives you would like to see completed?**
- **What are some of the more difficult problems one would have to face in this position?**
- **What type of support does this position receive in terms of people, finances, etc.?**
- **What freedom would I have in determining my own work objectives, deadlines, and methods of**

**measurement?**

- **What advancement opportunities are available for the person who is successful in this position, and within what time frame?**
- **In what ways has this organization been most successful in terms of products and services over the years?**
- **What significant changes do you foresee in the near future?**
- **How is one evaluated in this position?**
- **What accounts for success within the company?**
- **Are you *ready* and *able* to hire now?**
- **How long will it take to make a hiring decision?**
- **What is the next step in the hiring process?**

[If the Interviewer's answer is vague, ask if you can follow up in a week. This question and response reinforces the fact you are very interested in the job.]



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE LOOK AT USING A TECHNIQUE FROM THE sales field to move your interview along. Hopefully, to the point you get offered the job.

## 28. USING “TIE DOWN” TECHNIQUES TO MOVE THE INTERVIEW ALONG

**I**n this chapter, we look at using “Tie Down” Techniques to Move the Interview Along, in your favour.

Moving the process along is done through the use of ‘**tie down**’ phrases in questions designed to elicit an *affirmative* response.

The method comes from the sales field. You have likely had it used on *you* many times and haven’t been aware of it. The idea is the sales person, in this case it’s *you* trying to sell *yourself* as the best candidate for the job, tries to get the other person to answer ‘yes’ to a series of small questions.

Once the person has answered ‘yes’ to the questions, it becomes very difficult for them to say ‘no’ to the big question.

TWO CHALLENGES ARISE WHEN USING THIS TECHNIQUE.

Firstly, you need to get used to using it. I would suggest doing some role playing with a partner and try to sell them

something. Doesn't matter what it is, it could be a pretend product, something you have made up.

The idea is to try to take the other person on a journey to the point where they have no choice but to buy your product or service.

The *second* challenge is you need to use this technique in a way the person isn't aware a technique is being used on them.

Most of us don't like to be sold to. We like to be helped to make a purchasing decision though.

We can use the same sales technique in moving our job interview along to the point where we will be offered the job.

Here are the most common techniques. I'm just going to comment on the ones that are likely usable in your job interview.

Aren't I/you/we/they?

Can't I/he/she/you/we/they/it?

Doesn't he/she/it?

Don't I/you/we/they?

Don't you agree?

Hasn't she/he/ it?

Haven't I/you/we/they?

Isn't he/she/it?

Isn't that right?

Shouldn't I/he/she/you/we/they/it?

Wasn't I /he/she/it?

Weren't you/we/they?

Won't I/he/she/you/we/they/ it?

Wouldn't I,/he/she/you/we/they/it?



THERE ARE MANY KINDS OF TIE DOWNS.

Now we are going to look at *four* of them that have value in moving *forward* in a job interview.

You should vary your dialogue when using them so you don't appear obvious or overbearing.

With each agreement, you obtain from the Interviewer, you have scored one more “minor yes” leading up to a “major yes” offer.

**The Standard Tie Down:** These are used at the *end* of a question:

“My qualifications appear to fit the position you have open, ***don’t they?***”

“Diversified Enterprises really has a lot to offer someone with my experience, ***doesn’t it?***”

“It looks like we’ll be able to eliminate the problem, ***don’t you agree?***”

**THE INVERTED TIE DOWN:** THESE ARE USED AT THE *BEGINNING* of a question:

“***Isn’t it*** an excellent position for someone with my background?”

“***Don’t you*** think we’ll be working together well?”

**THE INTERNAL TIE DOWN:** THESE ARE USED IN THE *MIDDLE* OF a compound sentence:

“Now we have had the opportunity to meet, ***wouldn’t it*** be great to work together?”

**THE TAG-ON TIE DOWN:** THE FINAL KIND OF TIE DOWN IS USED *after* a statement of fact. A slight pause, then an emphasis on the tie down, improves its effect:

“My experience will benefit Diversified Enterprises, **won’t it?**”

“You’ve really spent a lot of time and money to get the right person, **haven’t you?**”

“This problem can be corrected easily, **can’t it?**”

THE BEST WAY TO LEARN TIE DOWN QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES IS the same way you rehearse your script for the interview.

You write down all the tie down lines you can use during the interview, then read them into a voice recorder and play them back once or twice a day, every day, to implant them into your subconscious.

They’ll pop out automatically when you need them.



IN THE NEXT CHAPTER WE DISCUSS COMMON JOB INTERVIEW mistakes and how to prevent them from happening in the first place.



## 29. JOB SEARCH/INTERVIEW MISTAKES & HOW TO CORRECT THEM



**I**n this chapter, we provide examples of common job interview mistakes and how to *prevent* them from *happening* in the first place.

At any given time, there are *countless* people who are looking for employment.

As we have advocated throughout this program, there are *right ways and wrong ways* to go about your job search. Yet

so many people are still doing things that *hurt* their chances of finding employment.

You don't want to rub prospective employers the *wrong* way. After all, competition for jobs can be extremely *competitive*. Why reduce your chances of being selected as a successful candidate?

To help you put forth your best impression possible, here are some examples of job interview mistakes others have made. If *you* don't make them in the *first* place, you won't have to worry about how to correct them.

### **Common Job Interview Mistakes**

- **When contacted for an interview, the applicant says they have no idea who the person calling is and asks what job this is.**

Ok, maybe in some extreme cases the applicant may have *forgotten* applying for the position. However, you should always pay attention to the job postings you apply for.

Make sure you keep a file of all the job advertisements you apply for as well as the cover letter you write for it (remember each job should get its own cover letter written specifically to the job requirements of the position and how you meet those requirements.) Do some research on the company you are applying to and research what the position is so you are well-aware of the company or the position when you get a call for an interview.

- **The candidate shows up late for the interview.**

Being late for an interview? Really?

Things do happen but by all means give yourself enough time to arrive a little early for your interview.

First impressions are huge.

If you can't show up on time for the interview, how can the employer count on you, day to day in the job? No excuse (traffic back up, road construction, got lost, etc.) is going to change the poor first impression you've made.

Leave extra early to allow for any delays be ready to interview when you walk in the door. Map out your route on your phone so you know exactly where to go, what floor to go to and which person to ask for.

- **The candidate shows up too early.**

On the flip side, avoid showing up for the interview too early.

Why is this a problem?

Quite often interviews are scheduled back to back, and it is awkward for the Receptionist to have 2 or 3 people waiting for interviews. As well if you are the first interview of the day, the office may not be ready for you yet.

It is best you do arrive to the area early but only come into the building 5-10 minutes early prior to your interview.

- **The applicant brings too many items with them to the interview.**

Nothing is more distracting, unprofessional and disorganized than when you arrive juggling your cell phone, a Starbucks or Tim Hortons coffee cup, a huge purse/backpack/briefcase, an umbrella and a coat!

Be prepared and arrive with only the essentials you need to participate in the interview.

Ideally, you will want to arrive with only your car keys, your phone (more on that in a second) and a small folder or briefcase (that contains your resume, references, cover letter, the job advertisement, company information and some questions you may have about the company or position).

Leave all unnecessary baggage hidden in your vehicle and arrive composed and ready to participate in your interview.

- **The applicant is texting or on the phone.**

We get it; we are a plugged-in world, but by all means, ignore your phone for 30-60 minutes when you are in your interview.

Turn it off, ensure your ringer is off and maybe better yet leave your phone in your purse, backpack or briefcase. There is nothing more annoying than your phone ringing or buzzing during a meeting... interviews are no exception.

Shut off your cell phone before you get to the interview.

- **The candidate is chewing gum, candy or carrying a coffee.**

This is very unprofessional and far too casual behavior. Spit out your gum into a garbage can before you get to the building and get a coffee after the interview.

If you are offered a beverage during the interview, by all means accept it, but don't bring your own.

- **Candidate wears strong perfume/cologne/scents or smokes right before the interview.**

You want to be conscious of how many people have allergies to scents or asthma sensitivities.

You also want to make a great first impression and sending the receptionist or Interviewer into an allergic reaction is not going to help.

For you smokers out there, while you may not be able to smell the smoke and nicotine emanating from your person, others can. Try to avoid lighting up before an interview.

- **Research the parking situation.**

Prior to arriving be sure to know where you can park and if you need to pay for parking. Make sure you plug the parking meter sufficiently. Have an idea of how long your interview is expected to take and put more money in the meter than you need.

You don't want to have to interrupt the interview to go plug the parking meter, so be prepared ahead of time.

- **Applicant dresses inappropriately.**

Depending on the type of job being applied for, your attire may vary. Regardless, you should dress professionally without overdressing for your interview.

Mini-skirts, impractical high heels, or casual, immodest or flashy clothing will set the wrong impression. For any professional position, erring on the side of modesty will always help make the right impression.

If you are serious about finding a good job for yourself, you will take each chance you need to make an excellent impression. Applicants lose the interest of employers if they are unprofessional or casual.

- **Candidate talks too much.**

INTERVIEWS SHOULD INVOLVE TWO-WAY DIALOGUE.

While the *employer* is looking to learn more about you, avoid *dominating* the conversation and not letting the Interviewer get a word in. Listen *carefully* and provide a *clear concise* response to questions.

Use your judgement as to when you need to communicate additional details.

Being confident is one thing but being a chatty pants can be annoying and may impact the first impression you are presenting.

- **Fuzzy Resume Facts**

Even if you have submitted a resume when you applied for the job, you may also be asked to fill out a job application during your interview.

Make sure you know the information you will need to complete an application including dates of prior employment, graduation dates and employer contact information. It's understandable that some of your older experiences may be hard to recall.

Review the facts before your interview. It can be helpful to keep a copy of your resume for yourself to refer to during your interview although certainly don't use it as a crutch.

- **Not Paying Attention**

Don't let yourself zone out during an interview. Make sure you are well-rested, alert and prepared for your interview.

Getting distracted and missing a question looks bad on your part. If you zone out, your potential employer will wonder how you will be able to stay focused during a day on the job, if you can't even focus during one interview.

If you feel your attention slipping away, make the effort to stay engaged. Maintain eye contact, lean forward slightly

when talking to your Interviewer and make an active effort to listen effectively.

While you may have no problem paying attention in a one-on-one interview in a private office, it's harder to stay in tune with the interviewer when you're meeting in a public place.

- **Not Being Prepared to Answer Questions**

Your Interviewer is probably going to ask you more than just the basics about where you worked, and when.

To get a feel of your aptitude for a job, your Interviewer is going to take advantage of the allotted time and flesh out everything he or she needs to know about you as an employee.

Don't let yourself be caught off guard. Prepare for your interview by reviewing what questions to expect, and how to answer them.

Be prepared with a list of questions to ask the employer so you're ready when you asked if you have questions for the Interviewer.

- **Not having any questions**

Most Interviewers leave time at the end to answer questions. Usually, they know you're vetting them, too, and want to make sure it's a two-sided conversation.

It's also a bit of a test.



The questions you ask often reveal the way you think and what's important to you. It also shows you care enough about the job that you want to know more.

Not having any questions prepared, signals you don't care, aren't curious, or haven't done your homework.

If you freeze up, throw out an old standby question like, "What does success look like in this role?" or "What's the culture like here?"

- **Asking weirdly personal questions**

Conversely, some candidates get a little too personal with their questions.

Your questions should be related to the job in discussion, not related to the interviewer.

- **Badmouthing Past Employers**

Don't make the mistake of badmouthing your boss or coworkers.

It's sometimes a smaller world than you think and you don't know who your Interviewer might know, including your former boss who is an idiot...

You also don't want the Interviewer to think you might speak that way about his or her company if you leave on terms that aren't the best.

When interviewing for a job, you want your employer to know you can work well with other people and handle conflicts in a mature and effective way, rather than badmouthing your coworkers or talking about other's incompetence.

When you're asked hard questions, like "Tell me about a time you didn't work well with a supervisor. What was the outcome and how would you have changed the outcome?"

or "Have you worked with someone you didn't like? If so, how did you handle it?," don't fall back on badmouthing other people. Instead, review how to answer difficult questions.

- **Displaying low energy**

This one is hard to define but an interview killer.

Here's what it looks like: Slumped shoulders, lack of eye contact, slowness to respond to questions and a general lack of enthusiasm for the company or role.

If you don't clearly want the job, it's near impossible to persuade someone to give it to you.

- **Focusing too much on themselves**

Talking endlessly about what you want, how this job is the direction you want to go in your career and how the experience would be great for you is meaningless drivel to an Interviewer.

Companies don't pay you to help you out!

They hire you because you have traits and skills that will help them achieve their goals. Use your responses to illustrate how you can be of service to the hiring manager.

- **Forgetting to follow up**

So many people forget this basic rule of interviewing: Follow up within 24 hours by email to thank the Interviewer for their time and underscore your interest in the position.

If you don't do it, hiring managers may think you're not interested or organized, or they may simply forget about you.

- **Following up too aggressively**

While it's important to follow up, you should not send multiple emails or call an Interviewer.

It is extremely awkward for Employers to receive a call out of the blue from someone demanding to know why they haven't heard from them.

Send your follow-up email and then move on with your life. Anything more is probably too much.

- **Being angry**

Angry people are NOT people employers want to hire.

Angry people are not fun to work with. They may frighten co-workers and/or customers or clients. They may also abuse both people and equipment (computers, cars, etc.).

***Instead:*** If you are angry over a job loss, horrible commute to the interview, earlier fight with your kids or spouse, or anything else, dump the anger before the interview, at least temporarily.

Stop, before you enter the employer's premises, take a few deep breaths, put a smile on your face and do your best to switch gears mentally so you are not "in a bad place" in your mind.

- **Sharing TMI (too much information)**

Sometimes, people have a whole-truth-and-nothing-but-the-truth mindset in a job interview, so they "spill their guts" in answer to every question. Not smart or useful!

We're not recommending telling any lies, but we are recommending you avoid boring the interviewer and blowing an opportunity by sharing too much information.

If they want more details, they'll ask.

Instead: Answer their question and then stop talking. Or, ask a question of your own.

- **Negative body language**

If you never smile, have a limp handshake, and don't make eye contact with the people you meet at the employer's

location and especially with the Interviewer, you'll come across as too shy or too strange or simply not interested.

Instead: Show your interest and enthusiasm.

- **Flirting or other inappropriate behavior**

Unless you are interviewing for a job as a comedian or host/hostess in a social club, don't try to be entertaining or amusing.

And, don't flirt with anyone, including the receptionist and the security guard.

Instead: If making them laugh isn't a requirement of the job, take the interview seriously.

Save flirting for your second day of work.

- **Not having an elevator pitch.**

Likely, in every interview, you'll encounter some variation of the "tell me about yourself" prompt.

This is a direct invitation to outshine your resume, tell the employer what value you're bringing to the table, and address any weaknesses or anomalies in your employment or educational record.

Too many people think they'll be able to "wing" this part of the interview, but scientifically, it's just not possible: The average human attention span is five seconds, so if you aren't ready to go when the moment comes, you'll lose the

Interviewer's interest in the time it takes you to craft a response.

This completely defeats the purpose of the elevator pitch, which is to start - not conclude - the conversation.

- **Asking for feedback after being rejected.**

Requesting feedback or suggestions for improvement may demonstrate your humility and dedication to personal growth, but it puts the hiring manager in an awkward position.

Furthermore, it's unlikely you'll get a straightforward response, because most feedback can create a legal liability for the employer.

Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, responding to requests for feedback takes up time the employer doesn't have, which is often seen as intrusive and irritating.

So, please, reconsider asking for it.

**Note:** This is another one of those controversial suggestions. Other experts will tell you that you should follow-up with rejections.

You may learn some valuable information for your next interview.

- **Missing Opportunities to Prove Yourself.**

Interviewers will ask questions that give you the chance to demonstrate your qualifications and show you have what it takes to do the job.

“Failure to answer questions with ESR (Example, Specifics, Results) responses,” is a failure to make the most of the interview.

Most questions offer you the opportunity in your answer to provide the Interviewer with specific, relevant examples of you accomplishing some type of measurable result that benefited the employer.

This requires you to have done your homework ahead of time and to accurately portray what happened, so when the employer verifies your story with prior employers, it matches what you said.

- **Begging for the job**

Even if you are desperate for work, begging won't help.

You will probably embarrass your Interviewer and will lower your chances of being considered for the job.

I personally have experienced this when I was hiring to fill a position.

- **Forgetting to notify your references you have just had an interview and the employer may be calling**

It can be a waste of an Interviewer's time and effort to contact one of your references only to find out they didn't know that they were a reference or they didn't know much about you.

Securing a job interview should be considered as a success, but it is often just the first step in the process.

In order to make a great impression you will want to avoid the job interview mistakes listed above. Be prepared, project confidence and be professional.

A mediocre interview can make or break your chances of a second interview or of receiving an offer.



IN OUR NEXT CHAPTER WE TAKE A BRIEF LOOK AT MAKING A POST-interview phone call.

**“NO ONE LIMITS YOUR GROWTH BUT YOU. IF YOU WANT TO earn more, learn more. That means you'll work harder for a while; that means you'll work longer for a while. But you'll be paid for your extra effort with enhanced earnings down the road.” -- Tom Hopkins**



### 30. MAKING THE FOLLOW-UP PHONE CALL



**A**ssuming you have made it to the interview stage, here is a strategy to consider after your interview.

The follow-up telephone call is one of the most *important devices* in job searching and also one of the *most unused*.

Many job searchers *don't* feel confident enough about themselves to make this important phone call.

As with your initial follow-up response, the keys to success when you telephone your target are *timing* and *technique*. That means knowing:

- When to call

- Whom to call
- And What to say

YOUR ONGOING PURPOSE OF THIS *FOLLOW-UP* PHONE CALL IS TO maintain the prospect's impression of you as:

- Enthusiastic
- Confident
- Energetic
- Dependable
- Loyal
- Honest
- Proud of your work
- Concerned with service

THE FACT YOU'RE TAKING THE *TROUBLE* TO MAKE THIS FOLLOW-UP call, by itself, *demonstrates* these qualities.

Or at least it should!



## **LET'S LOOK AT TIMING THE TELEPHONE FOLLOW-UP.**

### *Don't Wait Too Long!*

The best advice to heed is the “fiddle theory,” introduced by Robert Singer in *Winning Through Intimidation*: The longer a person *fiddles* around with something, the greater the odds that the result will be negative. . .

In the case of *Nero*, Rome burned; in the case of a *sale*, the longer it takes to get to a point of closing, the greater the odds it will *never* close.

As a *general* rule, you should always assume time is always against you when you try to make a deal --- *any* kind of deal.

There's an old saying about “striking while the iron's hot.”

If you haven't received a response to your follow-up letter within a *week* after the interview, call, but ... Never on a Monday.

Mondays are full of staff meetings, unexpected crises, and weekend wounds. Don't call, write, or interview on a Monday if you can help it.

Statistically, the best time to call is Tuesday through Friday, from 9.00 am to 11.00 am.

**TARGETING THE TELEPHONE FOLLOW-UP** YOU *ALREADY* KNOW who should receive your call.

You spent a long time talking with him or her during the first interview.

Despite these interview tips, you may still feel in a one-down position with your Interviewer. Don't!

*Initiating* the call automatically gives you the upper hand.

You're *prepared* and can *guide* the conversation to the outcome you want.

**“THE ONLY REAL LIMITATION ON YOUR ABILITIES IS THE LEVEL of your desires. If you want it badly enough, there are no limits on what you can achieve.” -- Brian Tracy**

## **SECTION FOUR: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### **Additional Resources:**

Here is a collection of resources referred to throughout the book as well as a collection of job interview preparation related questions asked on Quora.com and answered by me, Rae Stonehouse.

Links have been added to the articles to provide you with even more answers from people who may or may not agree with me. And some... are from outer space and worth a chuckle.

### 31. WHOLE LOTTA SHAKING GOING ON

I've titled this chapter **Whole Lotta Shaking Going On**, because when you are out there networking, meeting new people and greeting people you already know, there *really* is a lot of hand shaking going on.

A handshake is more than just a greeting. It is also a message about your personality and confidence level.

In business, a handshake is an important tool in making the right first impression. The same applies when you are job searching.

Your ***business*** is finding yourself a job.

Let's take a closer look at the simple act of shaking another's hand. Maybe, it's not so simple after all!

Before extending your hand, introduce yourself. Extending your hand should be part of an introduction, not a replacement for using your voice.

This isn't the cue to start reciting your elevator pitch though.

Extending your hand without saying anything may make you appear nervous or overly aggressive. On one hand (pun intended!) it would seem that shaking someone's hand should be an easy process. We have likely been doing it most of our adult life.

On the other hand, some people seem to have problems with it.

I believe that part of the problem that creates anxiety is that we over think things sometimes. We are anxious because we give more importance to the activity than it really deserves and it takes on a life of its own, creating anxiety.

A self-fulfilling prophesy if there ever was one.

Another part that likely creates anxiety is that we can only control our portion of the interaction. If our partner is an experienced hand- shaker, then all should go smoothly but many aren't.

THERE ARE A FEW *DIFFERENT* HAND-SHAKING STYLES THAT COME up in the liter- ature and I am sure you have likely experienced them yourselves.

I personally don't like grasping someone's hand who has the so-called "**wet fish**" handshake. It can leave you with an obsessive urge to wipe your hand as soon as you can, but fight the urge.

Even worse, there are times that my hand is sweating and I don't want the label. I have developed the habit of giving my hand a quick, unobtrusive wipe on my pant leg before offering my hand.

THEN THERE IS "**BONE-CRUSHER BILL.**" THE OFFERED HAND often comes in as curve from the hip of Bill with the express purpose of crushing walnuts.

Or so it would seem.

Bill never seems to realize the pain that he causes in others or the fact that people start to avoid him. Word can get around!

ANOTHER INEFFECTIVE HANDSHAKE I CALL THE "**ROYAL**" handshake.

Someone only offers you the tips of their fingers and no matter how you try you can't seem to grasp more than a few fingers. You are left feeling that you were robbed.

The bottom line is that *you* should avoid being any of these profiles. If you need to practice at home before going to a networking session, do so.

IT SEEMS TO BE COMING MORE COMMON THAT FRIENDS ARE hugging when meeting in a social setting. There are many people that are what I call "huggy" people.



I would suggest waiting to see if you offered one rather than expecting one. It could make for an awkward situation if you were to offer a hug on a first contact and it wasn't welcomed.



## 32.YOUR USP

**Y**our **unique selling proposition** (a.k.a. **unique selling point**, universal selling point or **USP**) is a marketing concept used to differentiate yourself from your competitors or others in the market place.

Some good current examples of products with a clear USP are:

- Head & Shoulders: “You get rid of dandruff”

Some unique propositions that were pioneers when they were introduced:

- Domino’s Pizza: “You get fresh, hot pizza delivered to your door in 30 minutes or less—or it’s free.”
- FedEx: “When your package absolutely, positively has to get there overnight”
- M&M’s: “Melts in your mouth, not in your hand”
- Metropolitan Life: “Get Met, It Pays”

The term USP has been largely replaced by the concept of a **Positioning Statement**. Positioning is determining what

place a brand (tangible good or service) should occupy in the consumer's mind in comparison to its competition. A position is often described as the meaningful difference between the brand and its competitors. **Source:** Wikipedia

I recently was blindsided at a Chamber of Commerce function in my city when we were standing in circle participating in what they call a power networking session. We were asked what makes us or our business unique. I didn't recognize it as a USP question and provided an ineffective response. If I had recognized it for what it was i.e. a USP question I would have responded with "Mr. Emcee is a full-service event organizer. From start to finish ... we do it all!"

Your challenge is to develop a USP that on one hand is short and to the point, yet is clear enough that it captures the essence of your business and will stick in the mind of whoever you are sharing it with. Having it prepared in advance, believing in it and being able to recite it with a moment's notice will go a long way in reducing your anxiety and fear which are all part of shyness.

I would also suggest researching your competitors or others that are in a similar business that are not necessarily your competitors to see if they have chosen a similar USP as you have. I am aware of two business coaches that chose a USP that had only one word that was different. That one word totally changed the context of the USP but it really upset one of the coaches accusing the other of stealing her idea, even though they had been developed independent of each other.

**Power Networking Logistics:**

- 1. Research your competitors to learn what their USPs are.
- 2. Create a USP for your business.
- 3. Share it with colleagues and ask their opinion. Ask if it makes sense. Ask if it is easy to understand. Ask if it captures the essence of your business.

**WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR?**

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**What is your USP?**

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### **33.LEGAL VS ILLEGAL JOB INTERVIEW QUESTIONS HANDOUT**

**N**ote: this document is written from the perspective of an Employer

#### **INQUIRY AREA**

#### ***Illegal Questions***

#### **NATIONALITY ORIGIN/CITIZENSHIP**

- Are you a Canadian/American citizen?
- Where were you/your parents born?
- What is your “native tongue”?
- Are you authorized to work in Canada?
- What language do you read/ speak/write fluently?  
(This question is okay only if this ability is relevant to the performance of the job.)

#### **Age**

- How old are you?

- When did you graduate?
- What's your birth date?
- Are you between the ages of 18 and 64?

### **Marital/Family Status**

- What's your marital status?
- Whom do you live with?
- Do you plan to have a family? When?
- How many kids do you have?
- What are your child-care arrangements?
- Would you be willing to relocate if necessary?
- Would you be able and willing to travel as needed by the job? (This question is okay if it is asked of all applicants for the job.)
- Would you be able and willing to work overtime as necessary? (Again, this question is okay assuming it is asked of all applicants for the job.)

### **Affiliations**

- What clubs or social organizations do you belong to?
- List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you belong to that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job.

### **Personal**

- How tall are you? How much do you weigh?  
(Questions about height & weight are not acceptable)

unless minimum standards are essential to the safe performance of the job.)

- Are you able to lift a 30kg weight and carry it 100 metres/300 feet, as that is part of the job?

## **Disabilities**

- Do you have any disabilities?
- Please complete the following medical history:
- Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? (If yes, list them and give dates when these occurred.)
- What was the date of your last physical exam?
- How's your family's health?
- When did you lose your eyesight? How?
- Do you need an accommodation to perform the job? (This question can only be asked after a job offer has been made.)
- Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job? (This question is okay if the interviewer has thoroughly described the job.)
- Can you demonstrate how you would perform the following job-related functions?
- As part of the hiring process, after a job offer has been made, you will be required to undergo a Medical exam. (Exam results must be kept strictly confidential, except medical/safety personnel may be informed if emergency medical treatment is required, and supervisors may be informed about

necessary job accommodations, based on exam results.)

## **Arrest Record**

- Have you ever been arrested?
- Have you ever been convicted of \_\_\_\_\_? (The crime named should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)

## **Sex**

- Are you male or female?
- What are the names & Relationships of persons living with you?
- You may be asked if you have ever worked under another name.

## **Race/Colour**

- What is your race? What colour is your hair, eyes, or skin?
- No race-related questions are legal.

## **Religion**

- What is your religious affiliation or denomination?
- What church do you belong to?
- What is the name of your pastor, minister, or rabbi?
- What religious holidays do you observe?



- None (If you wish to know if an applicant is available to work Saturday or Sunday shifts, ask: “Are you available to work on Saturdays and Sundays if needed?” Make sure you ask this question of all applicants.)

### **34. BEHAVIORAL/COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS HANDOUT**

**N**ote: At the end of each example there is a notation of what competency the question is assessing.

1. Describe a situation in which you had to use reference materials to write a research paper. What was the topic? What journals did you read? (research/written communication)
2. Give me a specific example of a time when a co-worker or classmate criticized your work in front of others. How did you respond? How has that event shaped the way you communicate with others? (oral communication)
3. Give me a specific example of a time when you sold your supervisor or professor on an idea or concept. How did you proceed? What was the result? (assertiveness)
4. Describe the system you use for keeping track of multiple projects. How do you track your progress so that you can meet deadlines? How do you stay focused? (commitment to task)

5. Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge your company or class was facing. What was the challenge? What role did others play? (creativity & imagination)
6. Describe a specific problem you solved for your employer or professor. How did you approach the problem? What role did others play? What was the outcome? (decision making)
7. Describe a time when you got co-workers or classmates who dislike each other to work together. How did you accomplish this? What was the outcome? (teamwork)
8. Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn? (time management)
9. Describe a time when you put your needs aside to help a co-worker or classmate understand a task. How did you assist them? What was the result? (flexibility)
10. Describe two specific goals you set for yourself and how successful you were in meeting them. What factors led to your success in meeting your goals?
11. Tell me about a time in which you had to use your written communication skills in order to get across an important point. (Decision Making)
12. Give me an example of a time you had to make a difficult decision. (Decision Making)
13. Describe a specific problem you solved for your employer. How did you approach the problem? What

- role did others play? What was the outcome?
14. Give me an example of when taking your time to make a decision paid off. (Initiative)
  15. What did you do to prepare for this interview?
  16. Give me an example of a situation that could not have happened successfully without you being there. (Planning & Organization)
  17. Describe a situation when you had many projects due at the same time. What steps did you take to get them all done?
  18. How do you determine priorities in scheduling your time? Give me an example. (Flexibility)
  19. Describe a time where you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
  20. Describe a time when you put your needs aside to help a co-worker understand a task. How did you assist them? What was the result? (Leadership)
  21. Tell me about a time when you influenced the outcome of a project by taking a leadership role. (Leadership)
  22. Give me an example of when you involved others in making a decision. (Time Management)
  23. Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn?
  24. Tell me about a time when you were particularly effective on prioritizing tasks and completing a project on schedule.

**35. QUESTION: IS IT OKAY TO FAKE A RESPONSE ON AN INTERVIEW JUST TO GIVE A GOOD IMPRESSION?**

**A** nswer Provided:

NO, DEFINITELY NOT. YOU ARE ONLY FOOLING YOURSELF IF YOU think you are fooling your Interviewer.

Most interviewers, if they have experience, will know they are being fed a line. This only sets them up for thinking “I wonder what else you are lying about”?

I believe you are far better to admit you don't know anything about the question being asked. An alternative, if you don't know a lot about the question, is to respond with what you do know about it. That's not the same as faking it.

You will probably get a better impression by admitting you don't know something than faking it and proving you don't know something.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**36. QUESTION: IF A JOB APPLICANT MENTIONED USING INFORMAL MINDFULNESS MEDITATIONS (IN THE INTEREST SECTION) AS AN EFFECTIVE CONCENTRATION AID ON A CV, IS IT LIKELY A POTENTIAL EMPLOYER WOULD SEE THIS AS A VALUABLE THING?**

**A** **Answer Provided:**

I had to reread the original question after reading some of the answers provided.

I thought the question was asking about 'mindfulness medications' which takes the question in a different direction. To that question I would have replied 'No, definitely not!'

In my humble opinion, I don't see the value in adding mention of using any sort of meditation on your CV. Nor do I see the value of adding an Interest section.

You would be better off expanding other sections of your CV/resume to show you are the best candidate for the job. And what you do include on your resume should directly relate to the requirements of the job and your ability to fulfill them.

I believe an Interest section is just fluff on a CV. Don't get me wrong, there is value in having a repertoire of interests to share and demonstrate your passion, but save it for your

interview where you can wow the Interviewer with your passions in life help make you a good hire.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**37.QUESTION: DOES IT MAKE YOU UNEASY TO INTERVIEW FOR AN EXPERIENCED, MID-LEVEL POSITION THAT HAS BEEN OPEN FOR 60 DAYS OR MORE?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

I don't see myself applying for an experienced, mid-level position in the near future.

Having said that, I wouldn't see myself worrying the position has been open for 60 days or more.

It often takes a while for an employer to get things organized. There may not have been any qualified applicants. The fact that you are being interviewed at all is noteworthy in the sense that they are considering you as a potential hire.

There may even be other reasons such as nobody wants to apply for the job. There could be a myriad of problems with the job, including the direct supervisor, the employees, working conditions, etc.

It might be worth your while to do some sleuthing to find out if any of what I have suggested may be true. If they are, it may be a deal breaker for you wanting to work there. Or, it may give you some insight on how to answer questions



from the interviewer that may be covertly addressing a problematic work environment.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**38. QUESTION: IS IT A BAD IDEA TO POSTPONE A JOB INTERVIEW (RIGHT AWAY) BECAUSE OF YOUR CURRENT JOB?**

**A** nswer Provided:

While it has been proposed that you should never turn down a job interview, I can't whole-heartedly support the premise.

Every opportunity comes with logistics attached. Should one of this logistics be the fact that you are currently at work or the interview would be during your scheduled work time, I think it could be detrimental to your current employment status should you choose the interview over your work obligation. Postponing, or rescheduling would be prudent.

I guess it also depends on how desperate you are. I really don't like having to respond to someone else's sense of urgency. It can be artificially induced pressure.

Postponing or rescheduling may also serve to illustrate you are an assertive person and may very well work in your favour. Unless of course, they are looking to hire a follower.

If the interview is during a period you are not working... then by all means go for it!

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**39.QUESTION: IS IT OKAY TO TELL AN INTERVIEWER THAT YOU ARE NERVOUS?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

There is no reason you can't tell an interviewer you are nervous, but it serves no purpose other than attempting to reduce your anxiety. It won't!

Any good interviewer will know you are nervous, without you telling them. Depending on their personality, they may understand and be supportive of you or they may use it against you.

You would be better off in trying to reduce your nervousness prior to going for the job interview.

This can be done by brainstorming possible questions you may be asked during the interview and preparing for answers. The job description itself can be a great place to prepare yourself for potential questions.

Another great anxiety-reducing strategy is to do some role playing. Have someone ask you questions and answer them as if you were in the actual job interview.

Anxiety usually won't kill you but seeming overly anxious may kill the interview. You want to come across as being confident and the right person to be hired for the job.

There is an old saying that goes 'fake it until you make it.' If you believe you are confident and not anxious, you in turn will be confident. It really works!

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**40. QUESTION: I GOT A CALL BACK FOR A JOB INTERVIEW, BUT I TOLD HER I WANTED TO KEEP MY CURRENT JOB. I CHANGED MY MIND. CAN I CALL BACK NOW OR IS IT TOO LATE?**

**A** **answer Provided:** Normally I would say “so sad... too bad!” You probably blew the potential opportunity.

The interviewer’s initial thought may be “Well, how can I expect you to stick with me if I hire you?”

But then again, they may just say “well here is someone who has the guts to call back.”

You might get another chance at an interview, perhaps not. Definitely not, if you don’t call back.

One way or another, you need to deal with the ambivalence you seem to be experiencing over your current job. You need some closure. Don’t be surprised if you are asked to explain your initial declination of the interview, either on your return phone call or during the interview.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**41. QUESTION: HOW CAN YOU PROVE TO AN INTERVIEWER THAT YOU ARE THOUGHTFUL?**

**A** **answer Provided:** As in many questions, there is no definitive way to answer it.

Every interviewer has their own set of criteria to decide whether you are thoughtful or not.

Of all the job interviews I have had over the years, I don't think I have ever once asked myself "I wonder if I was thoughtful enough?"

And there is room for interpretation on what the word 'thoughtful' actually means. From my perspective, I think of being thoughtful as bringing an extra cup of coffee back from the coffee machine for my coworker if I was going to grab one. I interpret being thoughtful as thinking of other's needs without the expectation of something in return.

In the instance of a job interview, I think maybe 'thoughtful' isn't the word you are thinking of.

Perhaps you are thinking of being decisive, knowledgeable or well-spoken?

The only way to prove you are all the above ... is to be so.

Even then, it would still be difficult to prove. I suppose the definitive way to know would be you get the job.

A useful technique is to watch the body language of your interviewer. If they seem to be smiling, or drawing closer to you, it might be indicative of whatever you are saying to them is resonating with them. If so, keep it up!

If they seem to be withdrawing from you and frowning, it might be indicative of you're not doing so well. Time to make some adjustments.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).





**42. QUESTION: SHOULD I GO FOR A JOB INTERVIEW WHEN I'M ALREADY EMPLOYED?**

I emailed requesting an interview. I want to explore the opportunity. Should I let them know in my response that I'm currently employed?

I had sent my resume to a company years ago but didn't show up to an interview.

Since then I've worked for a similar company.

They recently emailed me and requested an interview.

I want to explore the opportunity.

Should I respond with a yes and tell them I am currently employed first?

**ANSWER PROVIDED:**

I wouldn't respond to them and tell them you are currently employed. I don't see the purpose in doing so.

They are either asking you to come in for an interview because they still have you on record as being interested in working for them once upon a time or they have been

scouting for talent and think it might be worth their while to bring you into talk to you.

Either way, you are in a good position.

The fact you are currently employed is moot. You may find they have a good offer for you and it's worth your while to move to a new job, or you may find your current job really isn't all bad after-all.

You won't know for sure until you go talk to them.

Just make sure you have updated your resume and have it synced with your LinkedIn profile. You can count on the fact the potential employer will be checking you out on-line as you should be them.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**43. QUESTION: WHAT IS THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF TIME TO GET BACK TO AN ORGANIZATION ABOUT YOUR INTERVIEW?**

I did the interview back at the end of June and it is now mid-July they said they would contact me by mid to end July, should I just follow up and ask them or no?

**ANSWER PROVIDED:**

I would call them to see what's up.

No news is no news and they haven't provided you with any.

Job applications are a two-way street, meaning you bring just as much to the table as they do. Sure, they hold all the cards with having the job, but you also took your valuable time to interview with them.

Give them a call and see what's up.

At the worst, you will annoy them and/or they will tell you they gave the job to someone else.

At the best, you may get a job offer for still being interested or perhaps a second interview.

Far too many employers use stalling tactics like this rather than being assertive in telling someone they didn't get the job.

But then again, there may be circumstances preventing them from making a decision until then.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**44. QUESTION: IS IT OKAY TO TELL THE INTERVIEWER THAT I'M CURRENTLY HAVING MY OWN BUSINESS?**

I quit my job a year back and started a legit small business of my own. The reason being aside from experience, is to fill my time. But I'm having money issue and now trying to apply for a job.

**Answer Provided:**

I would suggest being prepared to talk about it if the interviewer asks about it.

You may or may not have featured it on your resume. It would depend if the fact you have a small business adds to your experience or skill set and help place you as the ideal candidate for a specific job.

If you have a LinkedIn profile, odds are your business will be mentioned there. If you don't have a LinkedIn profile and/or your business isn't mentioned there, then perhaps may be one of the root causes of your financial challenges.

If your business is featured on your LinkedIn profile, odds are your interviewer will see it. Some job search experts are saying some 93% of hiring managers are checking out

social media to see if there are reasons to rule out job applicants.

If it isn't brought up for discussion in the interview, I wouldn't bring it up. If it does, the interviewer might be thinking about conflict of interest issues. Could the business take you away from working on your job or prevent you focusing on what they would be paying you to do?

You will need to develop answers for those types of questions.

It might also be a good time to see how you can make your business more profitable. I know several people who got jobs as a result of their business activities.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**45. QUESTION: IS IT APPROPRIATE TO ANSWER “WHY DO YOU WANT THIS JOB?” WITH ANY ANSWER RELATED TO THE MONEY IT PROVIDES OR BEING PAID DURING A JOB INTERVIEW?**

**A** nswer Provided:

I’m going to play Devil’s Advocate and say ‘sure, why not?’

Mentioning the wages and/or benefits are desirable can be an honest way to answer the question. This leads you to follow-up with providing what the job means to you.

You have to craft your answer in a way it aligns what the employer is looking for. They have a problem to solve. You need to be seen as the solution.

This would be where you offer that you like new challenges, you are looking to grow in your career, you believe in the employer is doing and want to be part of it, etc.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**46. QUESTION: I HAVE GIVEN SIX INTERVIEWS SO FAR AND I'M CONSTANTLY GETTING REJECTED IN THE FINAL ROUND. WHY IS IT SO?**

**A** **answer Provided:** Without ever having seen you in an interview situation, there is no way to answer this question.

But let's turn it by a few degrees and look at it differently.

You are making it to the final rounds of the interview, in at least six situations. While it is depressing you were unsuccessful in landing the job, you must be doing something right in the preliminary interviews to make it that far.

So, what's happening in the final round? Are you getting nervous? Are the interview questions too complicated for you to answer? Do you stumble in answering the questions?

Upon completion of an interview, do you debrief yourself? What went right? What went wrong?

Are there areas you could have benefitted from a 'do over'?

Have you asked any of the interviewers why you were unsuccessful in getting the job. Some people will tell you to



never ask that question, others will say 'go for it!' I guess it depends on your comfort level.

You could be doing something that is sabotaging your chances, or it may simply be there are better candidates for the job than you.

All you can do is keep on trying. You should be learning something from every interview. At the very least you will be increasing your job interviewing skills and your self-confidence.

Hopefully, you will be lucky on the next interview. Keep at it!

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**47. QUESTION: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BEST WAYS TO DEAL WITH DIFFICULT COLLEAGUES?**

**A** **answer Provided:** Your situation, unfortunately, isn't all uncommon.

Over the years, I have studied conflict in the workplace quite a bit.

Here are a couple articles I have written that may provide you some ideas.

**Canadian Thistle or Klingon Death Plant: A Gardener's Approach to Managing Workplace Conflict**  
<https://raestonehouse.com/workplace-conflict-resolution/canadian-thistle-or-klingon-death-plant-a-gardener-s-approach-to-managing-workplace-conflict/menu-id-143.html>

Workplace conflict is addressed in the second half of the article.

Another one, from my field of healthcare, outlines a case study of bullying in the workplace.

**PROtect Yourself! Calley's Story: A Bullying in the Workplace Case Study**

<http://raestonehouse.com/workplace-conflict-resolution/protect-yourself-calley-s-story-a-bullying-in-the-workplace-case-study/menu-id-1>



**48. QUESTION: IS IT OKAY TO NOT HAVE A  
HARD COPY OF YOUR RESUME WHILE  
GOING FOR AN INTERVIEW?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

It isn't a matter of being okay or not okay to have a hard copy of your resume available.

By not having one with you during the interview, you lose out on having a powerful tool at your disposal.

Paper and printing are cheap. Have two copies with you. Have one at the ready should the interviewer have not printed one.

The other one is for your reference. I'm referring to reference in the sense you can use your resume during the interview to illustrate or point out specific points to help you answer interview questions.

In a job interview, presentation and professionalism, while not necessarily scoring points on the interview questions can help bias the way the interview scores your answers.

Having your resume available may show you are serious and professional about obtaining a position with this business.

When it comes to landing the job, when in competition with other candidates with the same qualifications and experience, it might make the difference.

For the sake of a few cent's worth of printing costs, can you afford to take the chance of not having a hard copy of your resume?

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**49. QUESTION: HOW DO YOU PREPARE FOR AN INTERVIEW DESCRIBED AS A DEEP DIVE INTO YOUR RESUME AND YOUR DECISION-MAKING SKILLS?**

**A** nswer Provided:

You don't indicate whether this is your first interview for a particular job, or if this is a follow-up one.

I would expect if they want to learn more about you and your experience, you are still in the running for the position.

I would also expect a 'deep dive' into your resume would require you to defend or at least explain, the career choices you have made.

It would be kind of like defending your thesis.

The interviewers may agree with your choices or they may disagree with them. But no matter, they were your choices, for better or for worse.

As for defending or explaining your choices, you should be prepared to do so for every career move.

Think as a detective would. Brainstorm a list of questions you would ask someone if you were deep diving into their resume.

Examples:

- Why did you work with XXX company?
- Why did you leave them so soon after starting?
- What skills did you develop there?
- What is your opinion of that business?
- How do you compare this job you are applying for and with the one you have just left?
- What do you hope to gain by working for us?

Once you have developed your list of questions, develop and practice your answers out loud, so you are comfortable with them.

Be aware of any rough spots or areas you might be uncomfortable talking about. Having been fired from a job sometime in the past might be a rough spot. You need to come up with an explanation that mitigates the fact you were fired.

They will probably be judging you on the way you respond to questions, especially if they are testing you 'under fire.' So.... Keep cool!

I hope this helps.

Good luck with your interview.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**50. QUESTION: WHAT IS THE EXPECTED ANSWER WHEN ASKED “WHAT’S YOUR OBJECTIVE” IN AN INTERVIEW?**

**C**an I repeat the same line I have written on my resume?

**ANSWER PROVIDED:**

I’m going to address your second question, first.

Objective statements are out!

According to the so-called experts, don’t begin your resumé with an objective statement that describes your desires and career goals.

Today’s hiring managers aren’t concerned with what is it you’re looking for—they’re focused on finding the right hire.

This means you need to replace the objective statement with a powerful summary that shows how you will add value to potential employers.

The key is to demonstrate to the reader there is a clear fit between your skills and their needs.



This is where the Summary Statement comes in or what some like to call your “written elevator speech.”

Having said that, you still need to be prepared to answer the question in an interview... What’s your objective?

I would expect the interviewers would want to hear an honest answer. I would avoid being too honest in saying “I want the big bucks!”

Your answer should tie into how obtaining this position you are applying for fits into your overall career goal. Will it provide personal growth, challenges, opportunities, etc.?

It would be helpful to drop in some comments about how you believe in what the company has been doing well (assuming they are of course) and you want to be part of something bigger than yourself.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**51. QUESTION: HOW CAN I DO WELL IN A JOB INTERVIEW WITH SOCIAL ANXIETY?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

Having worked most of my career in mental health, some of it as a therapist, I would agree with the comments and suggestions provided by Nancy Barbour.

Social anxiety and any of the other anxiety-related disorders can be debilitating for those who suffer from it. And *suffer* is a good word. Their anxiety sucks out any enjoyment of their life.

I'm going to take a little different approach to answering the question though.

Interviewing for a job is not something we do every day. It is difficult to become self-confident in an activity we are likely performing in a less than an equal capacity with our interviewer.

While social anxiety can certainly be debilitating, not knowing how to perform in a job interview, can produce its own level of stress.

Being self-confident in any endeavour can help reduce anxiety levels, at least to a manageable level.

You would be well-advised to learn how to participate in a job interview. This includes researching the job you are applying for and knowing what the key competencies the employer is looking for.

It also means developing a series of questions the interviewer is likely to ask to assess your capabilities of performing in the role. Role playing answering questions prior to the live version can go a long way in reducing your anxiety.

Fear of the unknown is a common fear. If you practice in advance, you can help reduce your anxiety. Performance anxiety is also common. You are better off to build your confidence in practice sessions before you go live.

Make no mistake. Looking for work is work! You have the added challenge of social anxiety. When you land your job, guess what ... your social anxiety will still be there and will probably affect your day-to-day working conditions.

That's where the psychotherapy comes in.

Good luck in overcoming this challenge. You can do it!

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**52.QUESTION: HOW SHOULD I ANSWER THE QUESTION “TELL ME MORE ABOUT YOURSELF” IN A JOB INTERVIEW?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

Focus on the aspects of your *work experience* that apply specifically to the position you’re applying for.

This can also take the form of, “if I asked one of your faculty members/previous supervisors to tell me about you, what would they say?”

Your answer should spotlight the education, experience, and work ethic matches what the employer is seeking in an employee. End by saying you are *well prepared* for the position the interviewer is trying to fill.

This would also be a good opportunity to reiterate your Summary Statement from your resume. This is where you are able to promote yourself as the ideal candidate for the job.



**53. QUESTION: IS IT MORAL WHEN COMPANIES POST FAKE JOBS ON CAREER WEBSITES FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRE-QUALIFYING PEOPLE WITHOUT ACTUALLY NEEDING NEW STAFF SINCE THAT'S A BIG WASTE OF TIME FOR THOSE WHO SEEK EMPLOYMENT?**

**A** **Answer Provided:**

A problem with ethics is it isn't always a black & white situation. Many ethical situations are grey at best.

I would expect, while posting jobs that don't exist isn't common place, neither is it unknown. I'm sure some companies do it as their standard practice.

Years ago, I applied for a job that looked quite interesting. I must have had the qualifications as they invited me in for an interview. The interview seemed to be going well when they asked me if I was willing to relocate to another city in our province. I said 'no' as I had just moved my family across the country to the city we were in and didn't want to go through that process again.

The interview seemed to fizzle out after that. I believe this to be a 'bait and switch' scenario. I wonder if there actually was a local job or if the interview was bait to hire people for other hard to fill positions in other cities?

I know of another situation where a nurse colleague was interviewed for the position of the Administrator for a

Hospice House. It became apparent to her during the interview the position had already been filled and they were going through the motions of interviewing several candidates to make the hiring process look legitimate. That was a waste of time.

There is another way to look at the situation though. While it doesn't necessarily give you an immediate job, it can be beneficial to be pre-qualified in the event something does open up. There are also benefits to being interviewed by the business. If and when a second interview results, you will have a better idea as to what the interview would be like.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**54. QUESTION: WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU SHOULD, AND SHOULD NOT SAY, DURING A JOB INTERVIEW WHEN YOU GET ASKED “SO TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF?”**

**A** **answer Provided:** Focus on the aspects of your *work experience* that apply specifically to the position you’re applying for.

This can also take the form of, “if I asked one of your faculty members/previous supervisors to tell me about you, what would they say?”

Your answer should spotlight the education, experience, and work ethic matches what the employer is seeking in an employee.

End by saying you are *well prepared* for the position the interviewer is trying to fill.

Another version of ‘tell me about yourself’ is... **“What would you like me to know about you?”**

Keep the answer *short* and *power-packed*.

Identify four to five qualities that make you a strong candidate.

Highlight your academic achievements, ability to do the type of work you are interviewing for, and your work ethic.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).





**55. QUESTION: HOW DO I GET A JOB  
WITHOUT LYING ABOUT MYSELF?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

Benjamin, as you are only 19 years old, I'm going to make the assumption that what you are really asking is "How can I get a job without having any skills or experience?"

If I'm wrong, sorry ... perhaps somebody else may benefit from my response.

Lying, will work against you, not for you. The only one you will be fooling, will be yourself.

Assertions of skills, experiences gained and employment can easily be verified or debunked. Any skilled interviewer will see through a job candidate that is lying.

I would expect at 19 years old, you don't have a lot to capitalize on in your resume. That's not necessarily a problem. Everybody has to start somewhere.

You have some work ahead of you. I would suggest a two-pronged approach, developing your resume as well as your LinkedIn profile. They should resonate with each other.

One of the first steps is to take an inventory of the skills and experience you actually have. This can include any summer or part-time jobs you have held. Brainstorm a list of duties and skills you had and developed while in those jobs.

Unless you have developed some specialized skills, you will likely be looking at an entry-level job. Most of us go through this process. It is only by trying different jobs can we determine what we don't want to do for a job and what we might like to do.

Take advantage of this time in your life and explore possibilities until you determine what you are passionate about.

I graduated high school with little work experience and the passion to become a chef. After three years cooking in a large institutional kitchen, I decided while I enjoyed cooking, I didn't want to cook for a living. I looked for opportunities available to me and decided on becoming a Registered Nurse. I have been doing that for over 40 years.

While working as a nurse, I developed many other skills that have helped me throughout my life.

I've learned my passion in life wasn't cooking, it hasn't been working as a nurse, but it has been in helping other people.

As you go through life you will collect experiences, skills, stories and self-confidence to share them with others and you will find lying isn't necessary. Just be yourself.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).

**56.QUESTION: IF YOU SERVED TIME FOR SOMETHING YOU DIDN'T DO, WOULD YOU MENTION THAT IN ANY JOB INTERVIEWS?**

**A** **nswer Provided:**

Yes, no, maybe... it depends!

If you have served time i.e. you were charged for a criminal offence in a court of law and were incarcerated for a period it is a fact of life ... your life. You can't hide it. The important aspect of it is you have hopefully come out a better person, and you learned from the experience.

I don't think you should necessarily be volunteering this information in a job interview but on the other hand neither should you be ignoring it.

These type of situations can come up in an interview when the Interviewer is looking at your resume and wondering about an unexplained absence from the workforce.

You need to have practiced an answer for that particular question. It may also be phrased in a different way. The question of 'would you pass a criminal record check?' might be a way it is posed to you. If you are not truthful or evasive, it will work against you.

For some jobs, where a criminal record check is required, the fact you served time, would be revealed.

While you can control how you present the details of your wrongful conviction and subsequent incarceration, you have no control of how the interviewer receives it and processes it.

Perhaps they regularly hire convicted felons who have served their debt to society. It may not be a big deal to them. For others, the fact you have been locked up may be a deal breaker. They could terminate the interview on the spot.

The fact you say you were wrongfully charged, doesn't come into play in a job interview. However, it remains as an obstacle for you to overcome and move past. The past doesn't necessarily equal the future and you have your whole life ahead of you to right the wrong.

Best of luck to you!

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**57.QUESTION: IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE TOO SURE OF YOURSELF?**

**A** **nswer Provided:**

I believe it is quite possible.

Being sure of yourself is a combination of having a healthy ego, a strong self-confidence and a broad range of experience to apply to different situations.

Many of us can be quite sure of ourselves in certain areas, perhaps public speaking as an example, but not so secure in other areas such as networking.

Skills and confidence in one specific area don't necessarily cross-over to other areas.

There are people who are narcissistic and have an inflated view of their self-worth and their abilities. They can't fathom the idea they aren't perfect in all aspects of their life.

Then there are those 'that are so far behind, they think they are first.' They don't know what they don't know. We often call that 'delusions of adequacy.'

The Universe has a way of levelling things out. Being too sure of oneself a few times may work out, but perhaps not the next time.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**58. QUESTION: WHAT ADVICE CAN YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WITH SOCIAL ANXIETY, IN REGARDS TO JOB SEARCHING PROSPECTS?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

Your question touches on two areas I have personally experienced and have spent a great deal of time researching strategies to overcome.

In my e-book **Power Networking for Shy People: Tips & Techniques for Moving from Shy to Sly!** I outline strategies for shy networkers to level the playing field with those who are more outgoing.

Shyness and social anxiety are the same thing. We weren't born with it; we learned it. If we learned it, we can learn other techniques of overcoming or at least working within our anxiety and making it manageable.

A big part of how we experience social anxiety is what is called a 'self-fulfilling prophesy.'

We are expecting to be anxious as we have in the past. So, what happens? We become anxious because we always have in the past. We are talking about fear.



A commonly used acronym for FEAR is false expectations appearing real. That is the self-fulfilling prophecy in action.

When it comes to job searching and interviewing, it can often play havoc with our insecurities and increasing our social anxieties.

Many people believe the employer holds all the power in a hiring situation and it is an unfair balance of power. This in turn increases our insecurities.

I believe knowledge is power and if you have it, you can increase your success rate.

That lead me to write and publish **You're Hired! Job Search Strategies That Work**. As the title says, I provide strategies to increase your personal power in the job searching process. The knowledge will help you gain the power to be effective in your job search.

Both increasing your knowledge of job searching and becoming more comfortable in social situations takes time.

When it comes to social anxiety specific to job searching, it is likely related to the prospect of having to do cold calling i.e. to people you don't know, obtaining references and/or worrying about the idea of having to answer interview questions. At least it was for me.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention one of the best ways to reduce your social anxiety and in turn increase your self-confidence and the likelihood of landing a job, is to join Toastmasters.

As a 24-year member, I can't speak highly enough of the benefits and person growth I have seen in myself and countless others. Check to see if there is a club in your community.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**59.QUESTION: WHEN A COMPANY ASKS FOR REFERENCES WITH ADDRESSES, DO YOU INCLUDE THE PERSON'S HOME ADDRESS, OR THEIR WORK ADDRESS?**

**A** nswer Provided:

One of the necessary preliminary activities prior to going for a job interview is lining up a team of references.

These references should represent both personal and business-related.

You should determine in advance how your references want to be contacted by a potential employer following up on your behalf.

Make it easy for both your references and the employer. Your references should be readily accessible. So, while one may prefer their business contact be used, another may prefer to use their home contact info.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**60.QUESTION: WHAT ARE TIPS AND TRICKS TO INCREASE YOUR ODDS OF GETTING A JOB AT A COMPANY BY USING NETWORKING SKILLS?**

**A** nswer Provided:

I would suggest utilizing a multi-faceted approach.

Firstly, research the company on-line. Locate and read their social media properties. More than likely they will have a Facebook business page, a LinkedIn Business page and possibly a Twitter profile.

Find out what is important to the company. What do they believe in? What is important to them? What are they most proud of?

Secondly, find out who the key people behind the company are. What roles do they take on in the company? Then check out their individual profiles on LinkedIn.

If you are comfortable in doing so, send them an invitation to connect on LinkedIn and provide them with a reason they might want to connect. Not the fact you are looking for a job though.

If the company's social media properties allow for posting comments, see how you can add value by posting replies to

their postings.

Networking face-to-face with people in hiring positions in companies can be a little tricky, in most cases, their networking is restricted to events with other members of the company.

There can be a benefit in leveraging your connections to see if anybody knows anyone working at the company in question, or if they have any connections there.

If you are gutsy, you may want to contact somebody in the company for an informational chat where you ask for the opportunity to pick their brain.

In business networking events, it can be helpful to ask people you connect with outright “Do you know anybody who works at....?”

I go into strategies such as these in greater detail in my book on job search strategies that work.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**61. QUESTION: HOW CAN I ASK FOR MY JOB BACK AFTER GETTING FIRED? I LIKED THE JOB AND WAS SUCCESSFUL THERE FOR 20 MONTHS BUT LOST MY TEMPER AND USED EXPLETIVES WHILE ON A CALL WITH TECH SUPPORT LAST WEEK.**

**T**his was the only time this has ever happened.

**Answer Provided:**

If you have the courage to do so... do so!

Your question leaves a lot to the imagination.

Were you in a unionized job?

Was there a disciplinary meeting?

Was progressive discipline offered before the firing?

I don't see anything in your question and supplementary information to say you were sorry for what you did, or you learned something from the situation.

Sure, you can ask for your old job back, but why should they give it to you?

Are you aware whether your comments did any damage to the business?

Did you do anything at the time to mitigate the potential damage or loss of faith in the company you likely created?

I have been fired before and was successful in getting a job back, not the original one though. I had a union behind me that backed me up.

When you are on your own ... you are on your own.

I would say it is time to move on. You may want to polish up your resume and find some credible references to get you past the having been fired hurdle.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**62.QUESTION: I HAVE GIVEN SIX INTERVIEWS SO FAR AND I'M CONSTANTLY GETTING REJECTED IN THE FINAL ROUND. WHY IS IT SO?**

**A** **answer Provided:** Without ever having seen you in an interview situation, there is no way to answer this question.

But let's turn it by a few degrees and look at it differently.

You are making it to the final rounds of the interview, in at least six situations. While it is depressing you were unsuccessful in landing the job, you must be doing something right in the preliminary interviews to make it that far.

So, what's happening in the final round? Are you getting nervous? Are the interview questions too complicated for you to answer? Do you stumble in answering the questions?

Upon completion of an interview, do you debrief yourself? What went right? What went wrong?

Are there areas you could have benefitted from a 'do over'?

Have you asked any of the interviewers why you were unsuccessful in getting the job. Some people will tell you to



never ask that question, others will say 'go for it!' I guess it depends on your comfort level.

You could be doing something that is sabotaging your chances, or it may simply be there are better candidates for the job than you.

All you can do is keep on trying. You should be learning something from every interview. At the very least you will be increasing your job interviewing skills and your self-confidence.

Hopefully, you will be lucky on the next interview. Keep at it!

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**63. QUESTION: HOW DO YOU BECOME  
CONFIDENT IF YOU ARE A VERY SHY  
PERSON?**

**A** nswer Provided:

You ask a short simple question that requires a complex answer to do it justice.

It's far too easy for people who don't experience being shy and quiet to say 'just stop doing it.'

Life doesn't work that way.

Being shy and quiet is merely a manifestation of having a deficit of social skills and a lack of self-confidence in the area of socializing.

If you experience severe anxiety over the thought of getting out there and socializing, it would be a different matter.

Being shy and quiet is a temporary state. You can change it.

The first step of course is being open to making changes in your life. Learning to socialize better does require socializing more.

It can be helpful to go to social events with a more outgoing person. They can introduce you to people and you

might be able to emulate the skills they possess when it comes to socializing.

Think of improving your social skills as a series of incremental steps. Each step you take should be evaluated and adjusted as needed.

I would suggest creating your own plan for socialization. It could be something as simple as talking to a stranger at the bus stop or while in line at a store.

It could be in participating in a 1 to 1 conversation at a networking session when somebody asks you a question. It could work up to your initiating the conversation.

One cure for being quiet, is actually having something to say. It can be helpful to be up-to-date on what is happening in your community or even the larger picture of your country.

As well as speaking or talking about a topic you know about, it can be equally valuable in being a good listener. Asking questions to a person who is telling you a story can make you a great conversationalist in the eyes of the storyteller.

Assuming you are over the age of 18, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the value of joining a Toastmasters club in your community. As a member you will help develop your communication skills, which in turn develops your self-confidence. It can be a great way to overcome your quiet, shy ways. It has worked for me.

2

**64. QUESTION: I'M SHY SO I AM NOT ABLE TO SAY SORRY OR EXPRESS MYSELF IN MY VIEWPOINTS. IS IT WRONG TO BE AN INTROVERT?**

**A** **answer Provided:** The concept of right or wrong is often in the eyes of the beholder. Being an introvert is neither right nor wrong.

What is wrong, at least in my opinion, is being shy as well as an introvert, not being happy about it and not doing anything to rectify the situation.

In my mind that is a waste of human potential.

Simply put, shyness is a lack of communication and social skills.

Shyness can be a self-fulfilling prophesy. We are afraid of socializing and conversing with others, so we isolate ourselves. We avoid conversation. This in turns increases our fear. Then we isolate ourselves and our fear increases.

We can break the cycle if we choose to. It takes time and effort. It takes stepping way out of our comfort zones.

Assuming you are over the age of 18, I would suggest you look to see if there is a Toastmasters club in your area.

While Toastmasters doesn't specifically have a program that focuses on reducing shyness, almost all the activities serve to incrementally increase your self-confidence.

Increasing your self-confidence is the key to reducing one's shyness.

If you are an introvert, you will be one for the rest of your life. That is how you are hard-wired.

Embrace your introversion!

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**65. QUESTION: HOW SHOULD I LIST AN EMPLOYMENT GAP OF 7 YEARS ON MY CV?**

**A** **Answer Provided:**

As has been suggested, you shouldn't draw attention to the fact you haven't been in the workforce for 7 years.

However, you definitely need to be prepared to answer a question about it, should you get to a job interview.

At the very least, the interviewer may be curious. At the most, they are doing their due diligence.

While there are numerous reasons a person may be out of the workforce for a length of time, all valid, it does raise one's curiosity. Many would wonder if there has been a lengthy prison term involved.

It also depends on if this is the first job you are seeking after the gap or if you have had other jobs since then. If you have had other jobs since the gap, it is likely moot.

If you are coming off of the seven-year gap, you will likely need to mitigate the effect it has on your employability.

When you were off, did you do any training or any activities that would add to your skills or experience?

Not knowing what field or profession you were working in before you were off, I'm left wondering if your former work experience and skills are relevant? You may need to be prepared to have to defend and promote the value of your previous work experience if it is relevant to a job you are applying for.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).





**66.QUESTION: IS NOT BEING ACTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA BAD FOR JOB-SEEKERS?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

It's not necessarily bad for you, but it isn't good either.

Recent articles on job searching are saying some 93% of employers are researching applicants online to see what their digital footprint is. Often, they are doing so even before calling you for an interview.

They are looking to get a sense of your character. Basically, they want to see if you fit into their tribe. They want to rule you out or in before they contact you.

Being active on social media isn't likely the most important issue. It is the content you are sharing that could be problematic. If you are sharing photos of you getting hammered on your vacation or at parties, it doesn't shed you in a good light as a future employee. It doesn't help any either if you have 'friends' who are tagging you in compromising situations.

Conversely, not being active on social media, or having a social media presence at all can also work against you. The

employer may assume you are not very good at technical matters or have paranoid tendencies.

The other caveat is it really depends on what industry you are working in and your age demographic.

A proactive social media presence would be an expectation in a younger job seeker but not so in an older worker.

Unless the older worker was seeking work as a communications director or in the marketing field.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**67. QUESTION: HOW DO I ADDRESS BEING FIRED FROM A PREVIOUS JOB IN A RESUME, ON AN APPLICATION, AND INTERVIEWS?**

**A** nswer Provided:

Unless the interviewer personally knows you, or knows of your situation, it isn't likely to come up in an interview, unless you draw attention to the fact.

If you are applying for work within the same company, likely there will be documentation on your personnel record.

The challenge is you may have to be prepared to explain an absence from the workforce, as identified in your resume, if it took you a while to get another job. Or if the one you are applying for is the next one since you got fired.

In the off chance you are asked about your 'firing' you can minimize its negative effect by having a story prepared in advance. The 'why' you got terminated may not be as important as what you learned from the situation.

The last time I got fired, I used the time to upgrade my skills in interpersonal conflict resolution, assertiveness and interpersonal communication. I became a stronger personality as a result of being fired.

Another aspect to address is how you feel about being fired. Being fired can shake you up for a while. The important thing I personally learned was while the employer can take my job but they can't take my dignity. As you travel through life, you may very well get fired. It happens. But life goes on.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**68.QUESTION: HOW LONG SHOULD I WAIT  
FOR CONTACT FROM AN EMPLOYER  
DURING THE HIRING PROCESS?**

**A** **answer Provided:** I would definitely contact them.  
They have an obligation to you. An agreement for employment has been made.

Perhaps there is a snag with the process. Even if it is a major problem, you should still be in the loop.

I feel it is better to be considered a nuisance at their end if you call than to be worrying about not having any information at your end.

As originally answered on Quora.com.



**69.QUESTION: WHAT DO JOB SEEKERS MOST DISLIKE ABOUT THE JOB SEARCH PROCESS IN AMERICA TODAY?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

I'm going to expand the question to include all of North America, which includes Canada as it is where I reside.

From my perspective, the biggest complaint I hear from job searchers is it is an unfair relationship.

From their perspective, it seems the employer, or whoever is interviewing them, has all the power. They know the interview questions in advance and they know the answers they are looking for.

Some interviewers have advanced people skills, others are way out of their comfort zones and make it very uncomfortable for the job searcher. If you are interviewing and you don't get the feeling you are wanted there, it is difficult to do your best in the interview.

Another complaint I hear from job searchers is they apply for a job, possibly get interviewed but they never get any follow-up.

I understand for some jobs, there can be a landslide of applications. Issuing a statement such as 'due to the high volume of applicants expected for this position, we will only be contacting select ones for follow-up', while understandable, in my view is poor public relations.

The organization is missing an opportunity to develop a relationship with the job searcher for future hiring possibilities.

From the job searchers perspective, they sit and wait for an acknowledgement. They don't even know if their application was received by the organization.

Powerlessness, is the biggest complaint I hear about from job searchers and I have experienced it myself.

As originally answered on [Quora.com](https://www.quora.com).



**70. QUESTION: WHAT ARE SOME TIPS TO NOT BE NERVOUS FOR A BUSINESS PRESENTATION?**

**A** **answer Provided:**

While it has been suggested being nervous is good, I'm going to challenge that thought by disagreeing.

Self-confidence is better than being nervous any day.

Using poker as an example, a pair of aces beats a pair of kings. Self-confidence beats nervousness.

There are at least three issues that need to be addressed in answering this question:

1. Fear of public speaking i.e. nervousness
2. Fear of failure
3. Intimidation by the audience

All three of these issues are interconnected.

Nervousness can be caused by lack of self-confidence, poor public speaking skills, being affected by past public speaking situations that didn't go well, etc. Don't underestimate the effect that too much caffeine in the system can have in increasing your nervousness.



Becoming less fearful and proficient at public speaking is achievable. It takes time and a concerted effort to move forward but is well within the reach of everyone.

Consider joining a local Toastmasters club if you have one nearby. At a Toastmasters club you will learn to speak in varying situations that require public speaking confidence. A business presentation isn't really any different from any other presentation other than the fact that there may be repercussions to your career or salary if you don't do well.

Fear of failure can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you go into the business presentation from a position of weakness i.e. you think the audience is better than you and perhaps you aren't worthy to be there, odds are that is how you are going to present yourself.

While your audience can be intimidating, I think it is important to keep in mind your audience may be somewhat intimidated by you as well. After all, if they act upon your proposal or conversely, they don't, it may have repercussions for their career as well.

Now back to the nervousness in the short term. There are steps you can take to significantly reduce your nervousness and improve your presentation's effectiveness.

1. Know your presentation/material inside out.
2. Be prepared for FAQs (frequently asked questions). If the questions aren't asked, insert them into your presentation.
3. Practice your presentation out loud. Recording yourself on video can be effective in helping you become

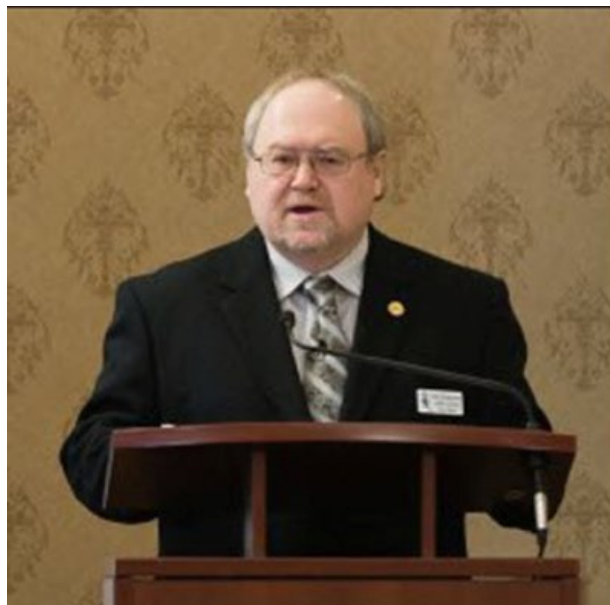
comfortable with your content. The downside of practicing alone is you don't have the advantage a live audience brings e.g. feedback, attention etc.

4. The Wonder Woman super pose works for some people in advance to going to your presentation. Personally, I would feel stupid doing so. Far better to envision your success.

5. Athletes use envisioning success as part of their daily training. If it works for them, it will work for you as a presenter. Prior to your live presentation, any time you think about your presentation think about it in positive terms. See yourself being successful and achieving your purpose. Think of happy smiling faces hanging on every word you say. Envision yourself wowing them.

6. Upon completion of a business presentation debrief yourself. What worked? What didn't work? And then factor in what you learned about yourself for a better presentation next time.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Rae A. Stonehouse is a Canadian born author & speaker.

His professional career as a Registered Nurse working predominantly in psychiatry/mental health, has spanned four decades.

Rae has embraced the principal of CANI (Constant and Never-ending Improvement) as promoted by thought leaders such as Tony Robbins and brings that philosophy to each of his publications and presentations.

Rae has dedicated the latter segment of his journey through life to overcoming his personal inhibitions. As a 25+ year member of Toastmasters International he has systematically built his self-confidence and communicating ability. He is passionate about sharing his lessons with his readers and listeners.

His publications thus far are of the self-help, self-improvement genre and systematically offer valuable sage advice on a specific topic.

His writing style can be described as being conversational. As an author, Rae strives to have a one-to-one conversation with each of his readers, very much

like having your own personal self-development coach.

Rae is known for having a wry sense of humour that features in his publications. To learn more about Rae A. Stonehouse, visit the Wonderful World of Rae Stonehouse at <http://raestonehouse.com>.



**PUBLICATIONS BY THE AUTHOR**

**PROtect Yourself! Empowering Tips & Techniques for Personal Safety: A Practical Violence Prevention Manual for Healthcare Workers**

<https://books2read.com/protectyourself>

**Power of Promotion: On-line Marketing for Toastmasters Club Growth**

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