



# CAREER MANAGEMENT GUIDE





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## INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

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If you have begun to read this career management guide then you have already taken one positive decision. We are confident that this guide will help you.

Presently, you may feel uncertain of the future. You may also feel angry, or you may be suffering a loss of confidence and self-esteem. You may be stressed and anxious. On the other hand you may feel unburdened and a great sense of relief. No matter which, if any, of these feelings are true for you, they are absolutely natural in the situation in which you now find yourself. Let us provide some reassurance. The future is uncertain but not bleak or without purpose. The feelings you have must be expressed and managed.

This Career Management Guide can be broken down into the following major parts, namely, Self-Assessment, Marketing Preparation, CV preparation and Interviewing. The guide provides a detailed explanation of each.

Your objective is to find the most appropriate career opportunity in the shortest time scale.

Our objective is to get you moving in the right direction by helping you to:

- ➔ Restore, if necessary, and maintain your confidence
- ➔ Assess your skills, strengths and qualities
- ➔ Identify a rewarding and realistic career goal
- ➔ Devise a strategy for attaining that goal
- ➔ Present yourself well at an interview
- ➔ Approach all stages of your job search with a positive attitude

Often people ask “How long do you think it will take for me to secure a position?” The honest answer at this stage is, “We don’t know”. Some have secured their opportunity in a few weeks, others in a few months. The timing depends on many factors such as, what will be your preferred career search objective? How buoyant is the particular sector you have chosen? How stringent are your salary objectives? Are you prepared to consider relocating? Do you have transferable skills that are marketable in other sectors?

The one thing that you can be certain of is that by making a positive start **now** each day the right opportunity will be closer.



## FEELINGS, OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTATIONS

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### Feelings

We have already mentioned how the present circumstances may be making you feel. The loss of one's job will invariably generate a wide range of emotions, which will vary from person to person and from day to day. Negative thoughts will be there alongside positive thoughts. You may dream of seemingly impossible goals. Your mood will change, just as it does with everybody, from time to time.

It is essential that you express your feelings, that you talk to somebody and that you try to control your moods so that all the negatives are pushed aside. Finding a new position can be a full-time occupation and you will need to apply a lot of your energy and resources in that direction to achieve your goal. But the most important factor will always be your frame of mind – your attitude, the way you feel.

Your objective is to get not just any new job but one that is most appropriate for you at this time. You must approach this objective positively and with confidence. The following points may well help you.

- a.** Remind yourself that your job has been eliminated – not you.
- b.** You are not alone! Many, many others have faced the same situation before
- c.** Do not store up negative thoughts or build up tension or resentment. Talk about how you feel and release them.
- d.** Secure the support of those closest to you – spouse, partner, immediate family, best friend.
- e.** Consider all the positive aspects about yourself, your life, your ambitions and your achievements.
- f.** Tell yourself that you are successful and that you have a great deal to offer.
- g.** Be active – the more effort you put into the search, the better you will feel and the greater the chances of success.
- h.** Relieve any stress you may be under with the help of physical exercise. Our advice is to keep fit. Play squash, work out, swim or tackle projects around the home, which you've been putting off for another day. You will feel the benefits (NB. If you have not engaged in physical activity for some time, ensure you consult your doctor in advance).



### **Issues to be Addressed**

Before you start you should identify and list the items on your “agenda” which are at the forefront of your mind and which need attention. Ensure that you give sufficient time to address these issues or work towards resolving or achieving them as appropriate.

#### **What are your immediate CONCERNS?**

**What actions do you need to take to address these concerns?**



## CAREER OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

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Before examining career options in any detail, it is important that you have first undertaken, either formally or informally, some form of self-appraisal exercise, which has enabled you to identify: -

- ➔ Your technical and business strengths
- ➔ Your transferable skills
- ➔ Your key personal attributes
- ➔ Your weaknesses
- ➔ Your likes and dislikes
- ➔ Your motivators
- ➔ Our most satisfying role to date (and why)
- ➔ Your career goals
- ➔ Your life goals
- ➔ Your range of interests
- ➔ Your financial needs (as well as desires)

It is from these that you will begin to consider and evaluate the potential options, to acquire related information and to explore their viability. The ideal objective may appear realistic in terms of your own skills and motivators but may not be so when viewed against the job market. So it makes sense to be exploring a number of alternatives at the same time.

By addressing each of the principal options and alternatives methodically, you will be giving yourself the best possible opportunity to resolve your current circumstances in the most meaningful way. You are currently in a "period" which could well could transform your career and lifestyle and, provided your change of role or environment has been well-researched and managed, the benefits to your well-being can be significant.

In any event, a multi-faceted campaign will keep you very active and can be an exciting and motivating experience in itself. Having a variety of active alternatives can also help you manage the frustrations you may encounter along the way.

Some disappointments may be inevitable and at some point in your campaign you may need to address secondary options and contingencies.



Use this section to help you identify what aspects of your career have been most and least satisfying to date.



Today there is a greater expectation and increased responsibility on you to identify your own objectives and to drive your career in the direction that you choose. The beginning of this process is accurate self-knowledge and assessment. The following questions have been prepared to help you identify your current strengths and weaknesses, clarify your own goals and identify your own career objectives.

In order to get maximum benefit please answer each question as honestly and fully as possible. We promise the insights you gain will make it worthwhile.

**What was the most satisfying role you have held to date?**

**Why do you believe it was the most satisfying?**

**What specific business achievements have been the most important to you? Why?**



**What do you think are your major business skills? Are they fully utilised in your current role?**

**What are your weaker business skills? Have you taken any steps to address these?**

**What are your personal strengths? (In other words how would your friends describe you?)**

**What do you look for from your manager?**

**What feedback did you receive during your last performance appraisal?**



**What motivates you at work?**

**What frustrates you at work?**

**What are you really best at?**

**Do you enjoy managing people and if so why?**

**What style of leadership do you adopt?**



**Have you ever refused a job or promotion? If so why?**

**In planning your future is there anything in particular you want to avoid?**

**What are your life goals?**

**What are your career goals?**

Hopefully having answered these questions you are ready to move onto exploring in more detail the next steps in your job search.



## CAREER OPTIONS

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### Similar Function/Similar Environment

- ➔ You may simply wish to continue in your current career or may wish to keep the possibility very much open and active in view of market conditions.
- ➔ It will be important to use your time effectively in a comprehensive search campaign utilising current business contacts, trade journals, selective consultancies, advertisements and speculative targeting in your business sector, in order to identify potential job opportunities.
- ➔ It will be important also to fine-tune your presentation skills, particularly in relation to your technical and business strengths and your asset value to prospective employers.

### Similar Function / New Environment

- ➔ Consider what other commercial or institutional environments have a function that closely matches your professional experience.
- ➔ Decide whether those environments might appeal sufficiently to you to be of interest. Where applicable, in addition to obtaining related trade journals, registering with respective agencies and networking, utilise commercial directories and the resources of a business library to research target organisations for speculative letters.
- ➔ From a presentation viewpoint, try to determine how your recent business background could bring “added” value to the new environment.

### New Function/Similar Environment

- ➔ You may feel much more inclined towards a change of role, but remaining very much within the same business sector or environment, where you can utilise the specific knowledge and skills acquired for the benefit of a new area.
- ➔ Marketing oneself for a new role would be regarded generally as more difficult than the two options mentioned previously. There is the possibility of having to overcome a “blinkered” outlook amongst some that may only wish to view you as a viable commodity in your previous capacity.
- ➔ It is important, therefore, to take time to identify in very specific terms the transferable asset value that you would be bringing to the new role, and how you could increase business and / or efficiency as a result.
- ➔ The principal elements of your campaign will comprise proactive networking, utilising current professional contact, and selective targeting of key organisations, addressing speculative “marketing” letters to the functional line manager(s) of the business or service areas you wish.



### **New Function/New Environment**

- ➔ By far the most difficult scenario, firstly to identify and secondly to achieve. Here, you would be looking to make a complete change, e.g. from Office Administrator in a publishing company to field sales representative of a sportswear manufacturer.
- ➔ The chance to be able to explore the possibility of moving into a new environment altogether, perhaps one which relates closely to one of your personal interests, and to perform an entirely different role may well prove to be highly attractive for some. Certainly, if conducted alongside the pursuit of other objectives in a focused career search plan, you might well feel there is nothing to be lost and everything to be gained.
- ➔ Specific methods here comprise networking, direct targeting and responding to specific advertisements in the press or related trade journals. Transferable skills and attributes, together with qualities, interests and past activities which relate directly or indirectly to the field being explored, will form the substance of any approach in this context.
- ➔ A fair amount of pre-preparation will be needed over and above the principal self-appraisal exercise referred to at the beginning. Consider carefully what the recipient might be looking for and be attracted by, and prepare your presentation on this basis. Further education and/or training might be required.



## THE JOB MARKET

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You may have heard that up to 80% of job vacancies are never advertised. Although this figure does sound high, it is a fair reflection of the marketplace, in that most individuals in a career search programme do secure their opportunities in the unadvertised sector.

However, you should not discount the advertised sector. Far from it, you will attack on all fronts, as we would not want you to miss what might be the ideal opportunity.

### Open Job Market (Advertised Sector)

- ➔ As most people only apply in response to job advertisements seen on the web or in the quality press or professional journals, competition is stiff. It is common these days to find that well over 100 applications are received for each vacancy.
- ➔ It is important to study the advertisement carefully before putting your application together. Identify clearly what you can offer to meet the specific requirements of the company. Ensure that all such positive points are annotated clearly in the covering letter and/or that your CV is adapted, where appropriate, i.e. to emphasise activities or experiences which might be more relevant in this instance than before.
- ➔ With the initial vetting of applications being cursory in most cases, you may have only 30 seconds to make sufficient impact to qualify for a more detailed second review. Be conscious of this and structure your application accordingly.
- ➔ Moreover, follow **all** of the instructions given in the advertisement, e.g. quoting reference nos. or providing a **handwritten** letter or, more often, "giving details of current salary".
- ➔ Failure to follow such instructions will almost certainly mean automatic rejection and you will have wasted a good deal of time and effort as well as an opportunity.
- ➔ Many advertisements are placed through recruitment consultants and the method of response should be no different than your response to a company ad.
- ➔ Irrespective of specific advertised positions, you should contact or write to selective recruitment consultants, who handle assignments on behalf of client organisations consistent with your experience, skills and agreed career search objectives. Consultants are often working on behalf of clients on a continuous basis so their contacts can be very useful.



## The Web - A Couple of Myths Expelled...

### **Myth 1: Registering at several internet job sites will result in multiple job offers**

One of the most prevalent misconceptions in job-hunting is that job-hunting on the Web is some magic elixir that will result in employers lining up to interview you. While job-hunting on the Web should be one component of a job search for most job-seekers, it should not be viewed as having any higher success rates than applying to help-wanted ads in the newspaper or trade magazines. It's generally accepted that typically only about 5 percent of job-seekers obtain jobs through advertisements on the web.

### **Myth 2: The internet is the only Job Market**

There's no denying that job hunting online often yields fantastic results, but it's important to remember that there are other methods out there. Look at targeting businesses in your desired field and watch their economic growth and market trends.

### **Myth 3: Web adverts and postings represent the majority of jobs available**

At the very most, and some say this number is too high, only about 15-20 percent of all available jobs are ever publicly advertised in any medium. The vast majority of job openings are part of the "hidden" or "closed" job market. And the higher the position and salary, the less likely the position will be advertised at all.

How can job-seekers discover these jobs? Simply put, through networking.

Networking is by far the most effective job search tool you can use. Networking is all about building relationships with people who can help you in your job search; it doesn't mean that you need to ask everyone you know if they have a job for you however we'll explain in the next section how you can make networking work for you.

Some of the most common sites for job hunting include:

[www.fish4.co.uk](http://www.fish4.co.uk)

[www.totaljobs.com](http://www.totaljobs.com)

[www.monster.co.uk](http://www.monster.co.uk)

[www.jobseekers.direct.gov.uk](http://www.jobseekers.direct.gov.uk)

[www.reed.co.uk](http://www.reed.co.uk)

[www.jobsite.co.uk](http://www.jobsite.co.uk)



## SOCIAL MEDIA AND FINDING A JOB

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Most people know that the best way to find a job is through networking. You can go to networking meetings, tap into your own personal network, or ask friends who they know. With the Internet buzzing with social media, there are similarly many ways to use social media in order to network, and eventually find a job.

### LinkedIn

If you're not already on LinkedIn, you definitely need to be. Basically, it's a site that allows you to connect to people you know. It also allows you to see profiles of anyone else on LinkedIn, and gives you ways to connect to them. There are a few ways you can use LinkedIn in a job search:

#### Company Search

One of the best ways to use LinkedIn is if you have a very specific company you are interested in. You search on that company, and hopefully find people who are connected to other people you know. Then, you can ask your personal contact to connect you.

#### Job Postings

LinkedIn allows employers to post jobs on the site. The jobs are usually high quality, professional jobs.

#### Email

Send an email to everyone in your LinkedIn network, letting them know of your situation, and asking for any help or people they could put you in touch with.

#### Blog Link

LinkedIn now gives you the ability to link your blog post to your profile. So every time I post a new blog post, it updates it on my profile, so anyone looking at my profile will see what I'm writing about. It also includes the updated post in the weekly update emails that go out to your connections.

#### Twitter Link

Similar to Blog Link, LinkedIn also pulls your conversations from Twitter. So, anyone who is not on Twitter can see what you are tweeting about.

#### Recommendations

Get as many recommendations on your profile as you can – this will help highlight potential recruiters where you've added value in past or previous roles

#### Status Updates

Similar to Facebook, LinkedIn also has status updates. Warren suggests that it's a good idea to update your status, to better inform your connections what you've been up to.



## Headline

LinkedIn gives you a place to add a professional headline. You may not realise that this is seen by everyone, I had mine as “Consultant”. The best advice is to make the title more exciting and enticing. A suggestion would be to change it to something like “Innovative marketer with a drive for results.”

## Twitter

The best part of Twitter is that it allows you to connect with people you don't know, based on common interests. What a great way to do some networking!

### Basic Networking

Get connected to people who are involved in areas where you are interested. Today I heard about jobs available at two companies. I tweeted two people I met on Twitter, and in minutes I had some information about the jobs.

### Job Postings

Get connected to people who know about jobs that I would not have otherwise known, i.e. @socialmediajob or other recruiters on site.

### Connecting

When someone follows me or I follow them, I read their bio thoroughly. If it looks like they work somewhere I might be interested in, or if I think they might be someone who could connect me to others, I get in touch with them. A few have said no or not responded at all, but for the most part, everyone is very open to meeting or talking.

### Companies

My favorite Twitter tool is Twellow (on my list of programs I “use regularly”), which actually searches people's bios and URLs on their bios. It's amazing! For example, I did a quick search on Shift communications, a company I would love to work for and I could see that 13 people from Shift are on Twitter.

### What's Going On

General advice would be - be more proactive in talking about what's going on in regard to your job search. So, mentioning things more often about interviews you've had or people you've met with. This keeps it fresh in people's heads that you're looking for a job.

### Reaching Out

Reaching out to people you want to network with and saying something like “Hi - I'm looking to break into social media. Is there anyone you can think of to refer me to?”

### Twitter Name

General opinion is that your Twitter name should be your name, as it will help in your search engine results.



## Facebook

You should use Facebook primarily for connecting with friends or people you know and reconnecting with people from the past. But, it can also be an effective networking tool.

### Notes

Hopefully you do know everyone your friends with on Facebook; however you may not necessarily know or remember where each person works. And, I suspect you definitely don't know where each of their friends works. An idea maybe to write a "note" on Facebook, explaining the situation you are in, and what you are looking for in a new role. A note tends to stay on people's screens longer than a status update, and you can write much more.

### Status Update

A good idea maybe to post status updates relating to your job search, to keep it top of people's mind that you are still looking for a job. Perhaps say things like "I had a great interview this morning... keep your fingers crossed!" or "I have a networking meeting later today with a company I'm really interested in!".

### Notes for Blog Posts

Create a "note" for each blog post, notes stay on people's screen's longer. Its possible people are more likely to read it if they don't have to scroll through to find it.

### Tag Your Friends

If you write a blog post that includes a reference to a friend on Facebook, tag them. That way, their friends will be alerted to your post, and your message will spread more quickly.



## **The Hidden Job Market (Job opportunities that you can discover or create as part of your proactive marketing activity in the Unadvertised Sector)**

### **Networking:**

- ➔ This general term describes the use of contacts to help you access to job opportunities.
- ➔ You may be reticent about this approach for fear of alienating friends or business colleagues – don't be! You will find that they are only too pleased that you have approached them and remember you not asking for a job, only their advice, which they will take as a compliment.
- ➔ Prepare below a full list of contacts (i.e. friends, relatives, business contacts (i.e. friends, relatives, business colleagues, suppliers, customers, bank manager, accountant, contacts made at conferences, training courses or hospitality events). They must be industry wise or of sufficient seniority to have the knowledge that you seek and that would be useful.



- ➔ Assess these names against your career search criteria and reduce your primary list to those names that would be most appropriate to approach initially.
- ➔ A telephone call to each is usually more effective than a letter. However, this depends on how “real” the contact is and in some situations a suitable letter might be more appropriate. Remember whether you telephone or write you have the same objectives.

**Your objectives are to:**

- ➔ Ask for advice
- ➔ Secure a meeting
- ➔ Update yourself on the industry
- ➔ Find out about the industry
- ➔ Obtain secondary contacts
- ➔ Get their permission to use their name as an entry to secondary contacts
- ➔ If they know of an opportunity to sponsor you as a candidate, so much the better
- ➔ Generally, create an extra pair of eyes and ears working on your behalf in the market place

**Consider these options:**

- ➔ “I’ve been giving serious consideration to what I want to do in the future and have developed some ideas that I would like to discuss with you, as I would welcome your objective opinion. Could we arrange a meeting in the near future?”
- ➔ “I’m John Smith. Jill Jones suggested I contact you as I’m reviewing my career options and she thought you may be able to give me an insight to your industry, in which I’m particularly interested. I have devised a marketing plan and wonder if we could meet to discuss these issues.
- ➔ Following a meeting with a contact, thank them for their help. You may consider writing to them to register your appreciation. In any event keep them informed of developments.



### **Some points to remember about networking:**

- ➔ when you talk to people it helps for you to be specific and clear about what you are looking for and how they might help;
- ➔ It is OK to ask for help, and if people can help you then they will certainly try
- ➔ Although it will usually be inappropriate to expect someone to have a job for you (if they had then you would be in an interview rather than in a networking meeting where you want information) you will do well to be open and honest – “Yes, I am job searching; however, I don’t expect you to provide me with one. The reason I have come to see you – i.e. what I do want from you is .... And to keep your ear to the ground for me.”
- ➔ Many different people from your previous background may be useful to you; many others who you have yet to meet and would not at this stage are a “warm contact” will feature on your list of “want to talk to ‘s”.

### **You may want to talk to people – with a specific and planned agenda in mind – about:**

- ➔ Activities and trends in a particular sector; which companies are doing what, planning what and have what problems;
- ➔ Your CV – asking for their feedback and comments
- ➔ Ideas connected with your options and your marketing strategy;
- ➔ Other appropriate people that they can refer to
- ➔ Remember that this is your campaign based on your activity. Well-meaning contacts may tell you that they will search on your behalf; the reality is that this is unlikely despite their good intentions. No one can sell you (make a good impression) better than you!
- ➔ Remember to thank your contacts for their offers to help and that you would appreciate an introduction to any potential referral so that you yourself can make the approach.
- ➔ People are likely to provide the solution to your problems, so talk to as many as you can as often as you can. And do it well, with a focus on what you want.
- ➔ Follow-up is very important; the onus is on you to “remind” your network that you are still around, by keeping them apprised of progress and new strategies etc...



## Direct Targeting and approach letters

Selecting which organisations to approach depends on your objectives and is based on your knowledge / research of the related industry and/or sector. You are looking for companies to target that may be able to use your skills and experience.

Your objective is to search out positions that will not be advertised because:

- ➔ The vacancy has not yet been announced or passed to a recruitment consultant to advise on.
- ➔ The vacancy has been publicised but having received your letter you are advantaged before normal methods are used.
- ➔ Your letter acts as a catalyst to bring forward the researching of a new product area or project.
- ➔ Your approach to the Managing Director or Chief Executive is of sufficient interest that they will find a position for you.
- ➔ Your application challenges an internal promotion to the vacant position.

Better therefore, that your letter is directed personally to the head of the functional line applicable to your skill, and not to the HR or People unit. Often a telephone enquiry via the company switchboard will provide you with the name of the appropriate person, if it is not available from directories or other sources.

Your letter will be brief, no more than one page. You will demonstrate your interest in their organisation, what you can bring to the organisation, and that you want a meeting to explore possibilities (see next section: Approach Letters).

By keeping your eye on press and professional journals, look out for organisations whose annual reports signal expansion, who are involved in a takeover or may be moving into a business activity where you have considerable expertise.



## CV PREPARATION

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The CV is essentially a factual document. The layout and the content of your CV needs to be clear in annotated format rather than long pieces of prose. Polished presentation of the CV will likely instil the impression of a polished candidate.

It is, in effect, your marketing brochure.

Brief personal particulars should come first followed by details of employment, with the last job first, and information about the duties, responsibilities and achievements, it's also a good idea to highlight relevant skills followed by any relevant qualifications and finally, interests and other activities should appear at the end.

For most people, 2 pages would be considered the ideal length; in exceptional cases only, a relevant third page might be unavoidable; for some, however, a 1-page CV may be even more appropriate.

Whilst presentation style can vary, (the next few pages have some examples of templates for CV's available in word) the essential contents of a good CV are highlighted in the next few pages. **However, before you read this section get a copy of your CV and with a critical eye explore how it might be improved consider the following points.**

- ➔ Is it up to date – have you added the experiences gained in your last role for example?
- ➔ Are there any projects that you have been involved in (which are relevant to the areas where you would like to work) that could be included?
- ➔ How long is your CV?
- ➔ Is everything on your CV still relevant?
- ➔ Are there unnecessary details that could be removed?
- ➔ Is there a friend who could be honest and objective with you who you might get to also review your CV?
- ➔ Do your interests and activities market you as an individual?
- ➔ Would you employ you?



## Example One: Word Professional CV

[Click here and type address]

[Put Phone, Fax and E-mail here]

# Max Benson

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## Objective

[Click here and type objective]

## Experience

1990–1994 Arbor Shoe South Ridge, SC

### National Sales Manager

- Increased sales from \$50 million to \$100 million.
- Doubled sales per representative from \$5 million to \$10 million.
- Suggested new products that increased earnings by 23%.

1985–1990 Ferguson and Bardwell South Ridge, SC

### District Sales Manager

- Increased regional sales from \$25 million to \$350 million.
- Managed 250 sales representatives in 10 Western states.
- Implemented training course for new recruits — speeding profitability.

1980–1984 Duffy Vineyards South Ridge, SC

### Senior Sales Representative

- Expanded sales team from 50 to 100 representatives.
- Tripled division revenues for each sales associate.
- Expanded sales to include mass-market accounts.

1975–1980 Lit Ware, Inc. South Ridge, SC

### Sales Representative

- Expanded territorial sales by 400%.
- Received company's highest sales award four years in a row.
- Developed Excellence in Sales training course.

## Education

1971–1975 South Ridge State University South Ridge, SC

- B.A., Business Administration and Computer Science.
- Graduated *summa cum laude*.

## Interests

SR Board of Directors, running, gardening, carpentry, computers.

## Tips

Select the text you would like to replace, and type your information.



## Example Two: Word Elegant CV

# RICH ANDREWS

## OBJECTIVE

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[Click here and type objective]

## EXPERIENCE

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1990–1994     Arbor Shoe     South Ridge, SC

*National Sales Manager*

- Increased sales from \$50 million to \$100 million.
- Doubled sales per representative from \$5 million to \$10 million.
- Suggested new products that increased earnings by 23%.

1985–1990     Ferguson and Bardwell     South Ridge, SC

*District Sales Manager*

- Increased regional sales from \$25 million to \$350 million.
- Managed 250 sales representatives in 10 Western states.
- Implemented training course for new recruits — speeding profitability.

1980–1984     Duffy Vineyards     South Ridge, SC

*Senior Sales Representative*

- Tripled division revenues for each sales associate.
- Expanded sales to include mass market accounts.
- Expanded sales team from 50 to 100 representatives.

## EDUCATION

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1971–1975     South Ridge State University     South Ridge, SC

- B.A., Business Administration and Computer Science.
- Graduated *summa cum laude*.

## INTERESTS

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South Ridge Board of Directors, running, gardening, carpentry, computers.

## TIPS

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Select text you would like to replace, and type your information.



## Example Two: Word Contemporary CV

[Click here and type address]

[Put phone, fax, and e-mail here]

# Deborah Greer

## Objective

[Click here and type your objective]

## Experience

1990–1994 Arbor Shoes South Ridge, WA

### National Sales Manager

- Increased sales from \$50 million to \$100 million.
- Doubled sales per representative from \$5 million to \$10 million.
- Suggested new products that increased earnings by 23%.

1985–1990 Ferguson and Bardwell South Ridge, WA

### District Sales Manager

- Increased regional sales from \$25 million to \$350 million.
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1971–1975 South Ridge State University South Ridge, WA

- B.A., Business Administration and Computer Science.
- Graduated *summa cum laude*.

## Interests

South Ridge Board of Directors, running, gardening, carpentry, computers.

## Tips

Select text you would like to replace, and type your information.



### Other features which may be included in the CV: -

- ➔ Statement of immediate career aims (if not directly assumed from latest position)
- ➔ Principal skills areas – technical, sector and functional
- ➔ Qualitative/Quantitative indicators, where applicable, to show size of role
- ➔ Language skills
- ➔ Computer literacy
- ➔ Residency status/nationality (if relevant)

### Elements which should be excluded from the CV and from initial job applications, unless specifically requested or relevant: -

- ➔ Personal characteristics/self-evaluation
- ➔ Reasons for leaving
- ➔ Salary data
- ➔ Referees
- ➔ Place of birth/nationality (unless relevant e.g. for positions overseas)
- ➔ State of health
- ➔ Male/female indicator
- ➔ Religion
- ➔ Details of driving licence
- ➔ List of publications
- ➔ Samples of work
- ➔ Copies of diplomas/certificates
- ➔ Testimonials
- ➔ Photograph
- ➔ Fancy covers

If you are applying for more than one type of job then what you include in your CV and the way you express it may vary, since you will want to highlight those areas of your experience which are relevant to a given target. Having isolated the essential features of the job in question, identify the things you have done which can be presented as having had similar features.

For example, if the job calls for you to be **orderly and methodical**, you could point to business and leisure activities or academic pursuits which you had to carry out in a systematic way (e.g. being a secretary of a society, or a job which required careful attention to detail, such as one handling share issue4s).



If the job requires you to **persuade other people**, you could draw attention to activities where you have had to “sell” ideas, or roles involving contact with the public.

For **helping** jobs in the health, social welfare or education areas, you could mention situations where you had helped or trained others (whether this was in an official capacity).

For **management** jobs requiring you to oversee others, you could highlight occasions in your past where you had to organise, make decisions and lead others in carrying them out. If the job needs someone who is good at **planning ahead**, you could emphasise budgeting, itinerary preparations and contingency plans – situations where you have had to decide in advance what you would do.

For jobs calling for **thinking and problem solving**, you could search for instances where you had to analyse some situation and find the solution to a problem (working out more efficient ways of doing things).

If the job calls for **creative flair**, you could look for times when you had to be innovative and used lateral thinking and intuition to come up with something new (e.g. initiating a better way to serve customers or devising new projects).

If the job required the ability to **work under pressure**, perhaps to meet deadlines or to cope with a number of different demands at the same time, you would briefly recount situations in your own past where you had needed these abilities.

If the job requires **skills in writing** effectively, expressing yourself well in speech or a facility in using numbers, you could similarly look for aspects of your work, leisure pursuits or merely everyday activities, showing you possess the qualities in question.

The best way to highlight such accomplishments is in the form of Key Achievements. Try to keep the written summary brief in each case – you can expand further doing the interview.



Begin each one with an “achievement verb”, for example: -

- Acquired
- Enlarged
- Organised
- Advised
- Ensured
- Persuaded
- Arranged
- Established
- Planned
- Augmented
- Expanded
- Prepared
- Built
- Facilitated
- Presented
- Completed
- Generated
- Produced
- Conducted
- Implemented
- Rationalised
- Converted
- Improved
- Reduced
- Corrected
- Increased
- Saved
- Created
- Initiated
- Set up
- Decreased
- Installed
- Specified
- Designed
- Instigated
- Steered
- Developed
- Integrated
- Streamlined
- Devised
- Introduced
- Strengthened
- Directed
- Launched
- Succeeded
- Doubled
- Managed
- Supervised
- Effected
- Negotiated
- Trained
- Engineered
- Optimised
- Won

There are of course, many others you might use more appropriately.



## RESPONDING TO ADVERTISEMENTS

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### Advertisements

- ➔ Whether a company advertises directly, or through a recruitment consultancy, due to the degree of interest, they will look for reasons to exclude an application rather than include it. You perhaps have 30 seconds to impact with your letter and CV at the initial sifting stage.
- ➔ We know that your CV will give you a positive marketing platform. We need a similar approach when it comes to developing a letter for positions in the advertised sector. First the basics:
- ➔ Read the advertisement carefully then re-read it.
- ➔ Use a fluorescent pen to pick out their stated requirements. Compare your skills and experience and establish whether there is a close enough match. Make sure that you know how they want you to progress the application. Read the final instructions carefully – what are you expected to do? Write with a CV. Telephone for an application form? Respond accordingly. Be particularly aware of requests for handwritten applications.
- ➔ Remember the advertised is phrased to find the perfect applicant. Such a commodity rarely exists. So, if you are close enough to the criteria, apply!
- ➔ You can develop a multi paragraph letter that embraces your skills and experience areas. The opening and close to your letter will be consistent for each application. The points you select will vary according to the requirements of each position. You will select those that match what the specification dictates.
- ➔ This way each application to the advertised sector will be unique. Using an indented bullet point format to highlight your selections will enable the reader to see that you do match their needs and your chances of an interview are increased.



## THE INTERVIEW

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A recent survey identified the following reasons for rejecting candidates after interview.

- ➔ Displayed no real interest in the job or the company
- ➔ Poor personal presentation
- ➔ Lack of confidence apparent
- ➔ Social interests were inconsistent with team players
- ➔ Presentation lacked energy or dynamism
- ➔ Limp handshake
- ➔ Arrogant “know it all” attitude
- ➔ Asked too many questions
- ➔ Severely criticized last management
- ➔ Lack of ambition apparent
- ➔ Fidgeting was distracting
- ➔ Kept saying “you know”
- ➔ Had not conducted even the most basic research on the organisation
- ➔ Obviously eaten garlic the night before

From this survey, there are many things that can be off putting to an interviewer. Some are very personal and quite subjective and more importantly nothing to do with skills, experience or abilities.

So even though they seem simple do take care of the basics when you are preparing and attending an interview.



## Preparation

Before the interview:

- ➔ Prepare your strengths and achievements particularly those that are relevant to the requirements of the position. Think yourself into the role.
- ➔ Prepare examples of your past performance across a range of tasks.
- ➔ Prepare your responses to more difficult questions. Ensure that they are concise and convincing and deliver them with confidence.
- ➔ Prepare some good questions to ask that will reflect your motivation towards the position. You should always be able to justify why you are asking questions.
- ➔ Ensure that you know how to get to the interview location and allow yourself plenty of time to do so.
- ➔ Research as much information about the company, its products and services.
- ➔ Take with you two spare CV's in case they have mislaid yours or you are asked to be interviewed by another person.
- ➔ Bring along samples of your work but don't produce them unless asked or it seems particularly relevant to the discussion.

## The interview itself

- ➔ As you first meet your interviewer extend a firm handshake, smile and engage their eyes. Within the first minute people can form an opinion based on appearance and voice? Make it a good one!
- ➔ Good interviewers recognize that to get the best out of a meeting that they must ensure that candidates are at ease. You may therefore find that the first few minutes may involve social conversation – be as relaxed as you can and act normally.
- ➔ If you are kept waiting a long time, do not complain but check again to confirm your presence and time of interview.
- ➔ If there are obviously other candidates in the same area read your own CV or notes rather than engage in discussions with other candidates.



## Questions, questions and some answers

The following section has examples of some basic questions that you should be very comfortable answering. There are also tips on how to tackle the more difficult ones.

Make notes here about the way in which you would respond if you were asked these questions.

### Tell me about yourself?

- ➔ Since this is often the opening question be careful to limit the length of your answer to 3 or 4 minutes.
- ➔ Given that you have little information on what the interviewer wants to hear it is appropriate to ask what part of your background would be most interesting.
- ➔ If you don't get any guidance then give a summary of your education, career and most recent experience.
- ➔ Emphasise the last topic, as this is the area you are most likely to ask questions on.
- ➔ Remember this is a warm up question so don't use up all your best points in it.
- ➔ Conclude by saying – is there anything that you would like me to expand on?

### Your answer:

**How much do you know about us?**

- ➔ You will have researched the company so say something like “naturally I am aware that you are the leading...” (Use as much information from your research as possible)
- ➔ End this question by saying “However I do hope to hear more today!”

**Your answer****Why are you applying?**

- ➔ My qualifications and experience appear to be compatible with your requirements and I believe that I could make a substantial contribution.

**Your answer****Why did you leave your last employer?**

- ➔ Honesty is the best policy. If you were made redundant think of it as the position being one that was surplus due to changing demands or restructuring. Recap the valuable experience you gained.

**Your answer**



**Do you regret Joining?**

➔ Not at all! I enjoyed my time there and learned a great deal etc

**Your answer**

**Tell me about your last position?**

**Your answer**

**You appear to have changed jobs often?**

**Your answer**

The answers you noted in the career section will help with the next few questions.

**What are your strengths?**

**Your answer**



**What are your weaknesses?**

**Your answer**

**What are your recent achievements?**

**Your answer**

**What is your management style?**

**Your answer**

**Which role have you most enjoyed? Why?**

**Your answer**

**Why do you think you are more suitable for the job than other candidates?**

**Your answer**

**How do you cope with colleagues that you don't like?**

Give an answer than is based around the following.

- ➔ I must say that this has never been an issue as I find I can relate to people at all levels. However, if faced with this situation I would hope that we could be professional and learn to work together because in business there are always going to be differing opinions and these should not get in the way of business performance.

**Your answer**

**What interests do you have outside of work?**

- ➔ Think about the skills required in the job and try to talk most about the interests that reinforce your suitability. E.g. if the role involves working in a team then telling people that you like reading, surfing the net and stamp collecting may be true but not very helpful!

**Your answer**

**What are your career goals?**

**Your answer**

**What salary are you looking for?**

- ➔ If you already know what is being offered than answer accordingly. If you don't suggest a range. Remind the interviewer that whilst salary is important that job satisfaction and career opportunity are equally important.

**Your answer**

**What are you doing now?**

- ➔ The answer is not "nothing" it's "actively seeking a new career opportunity!"

**Your answer**

**How is your job search going?**

- ➔ Give an honest but positive answer.

**Your answer**



### Are you considering other offers?

- ➔ Try and give the impression that you have just begun to look. If you cannot then indicate that you are talking to a couple of organisations but stress that the job in question sounds the most interesting so far.

### Your answer

We hope that this guide has been a useful first start to find new opportunities. The most important advice we can offer is to treat the process of finding a job like a job itself. It will require dedication, motivation and self-discipline not just to find any job but one that is right for you.

The more active you are in the search process and the more time you invest in preparing yourself well for it the more likely you are to find the right opportunity you and within a relatively short time scale too.

**GOOD LUCK!**

*With us...it's personal*