

Know Your Worth

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When time and destiny collide...

When do you know it is time to turn dreams into reality? How do you go from having a job to having the ultimate career?

It is when you feel confident about your skills and know what you are good at. You have done your homework and research – and fear is the only thing holding you back. It is when time and destiny collide!

Whether you are changing your job or starting your own venture, you will need to know what you are really good at; what you like and dislike; and what you are worth – not only your financial value, but also the value you can add to any organization: your intellectual capital.

Some people have a very clear, defined vision, and they charge full steam ahead, never doubting themselves. They know what they are worth. But for most of us, it is not that clear, and it takes time and assistance to realize what it is we really want.

In the past, you may have conformed to what other people thought you should be good at. Somewhere along the line, the people you work with or even your friends started putting you down; they failed to see your vision. So you started doubting and questioning yourself, and now perhaps you feel uncertain about whether you are doing a good job or whether you are in the right profession at all.

Understanding exactly what you are good at and knowing how to make realistic decisions on a daily basis about what you want to do, can change

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you from being average in your profession to being brilliant! It changes your commitment. The difference is that you will feel more in control of your destiny.

People will ask you in interviews what value you can add to an organization. If you understand what it is you are really good at, you will understand your value. This will also make it easier to ask for the salary you believe your services are worth.

The fact is, if your next career move does not include your dreams and what you are good at, why move?

You will automatically be good at what you are doing if you are passionate about it. People cannot suppress passion; it will shine through. Where there is passion, success will follow!

Do you know your worth?

The need to understand myself and to search for my own value made me stumble across a process that would change the way I do business and deal with individuals in general. I needed to understand what my own worth was and also how I added value to any company I worked at. I wanted to know what made me good at what I do and why.

I found that this enhanced my ability to recognize value and to help others discover their true value and passion too. Now I teach individuals and companies how to ask for what they want in a different way. It showed me how people make decisions and, once the concept was shared with a person, it helped them understand how this impacts and relates to a work environment and the choices they make.

I came to the conclusion that there is an enormous need for effective career counseling, guidance and advice on preparing for an interview. That's why I am sharing this process with every person that crosses my path. Perception can make all the difference. People are tired of relying on agencies to turn their dreams into reality.

Ultimately, every client is a candidate, and they too need to understand their worth. This enables them to recognize what type of person would work best with them and also to recognize the value of every individual reporting to them, regardless of what level they operate at.

A great deal of the information I am sharing could seem nothing new at first, but it is the combination of the "what's" that changes it all, especially the things you currently take for granted. I often hear "It is just who I am."

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This advice is for everyone! Whether you are a CEO, a receptionist, a hairdresser, a chef or even an entrepreneur, it is still relevant. It is not the qualification or the skills and experience that you will become aware of, but what naturally makes you valuable. This is what you need to discover

Background

My area of specialization is Career Coaching. It became clear that this was the ideal area to specialize in after my years of experience in recruitment and life coaching, plus thousands of hours interviewing candidate after candidate for that perfect job opportunity and visiting clients at their premises to see their environments and what skills they need.

Most people I meet are generally unhappy with their jobs, although not all. The way they “ended up” and the road that life took them on is not what they had in mind. There are very few people who really love what they do and understand where and how they fit in, why they feel the way they do, and – most importantly – why they make decisions the way they do.

During my recruitment career, I was very fortunate to meet some of the top recruitment gurus world-wide, and this has made a huge impact on me and the way I understand people and their skills.

One specific method of assessment that became clear to me is used by most consultancies and consists of the Situation, Task, Action and Result method. What was the situation, what did you do about it, and what was the result? This method verifies a specific skill and provides proof that someone knows what they are doing. This is a proven method that can be verified by evidence. After working with this method, I created the platform for Natural Aptitude Planning (NAP).

Your CV

Employers give you a list of duties – your job description – which you paste onto your CV. You do this every time you work in a new position; hence, you develop a comprehensive CV.

A CV means that now you have a document with a list of different job descriptions. It does not necessarily reflect what you are passionate about and it certainly does not showcase what you are naturally good at doing. Your intellectual capital is not reflected in your CV. It simply showcases a list of duties.

Finding one's self-worth and intellectual value is not the same-old, same-old. It is really what you naturally tend to do and how you naturally tend to operate. Recognizing this shows you that you do not have to be labeled or boxed by what people think your experience is or by what you *should* be doing.

It is not relevant to the qualifications you have at all. Every person has a tendency to do things automatically because "that is just the way they are," and it is in their nature. This is exactly what a person's natural aptitude or added value is. However, most people I meet tend to not think about that as valuable because "it is just the way they are".

Irrelevant of job title, company or industry, throughout a career and life you will see a very clear skill-set. I have experienced and seen amazing changes in people who have gone through the process of NAP and taken this into account.

This process can also be used to teach companies to look at what a person's natural value is and how it can change turnover or bottom line

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profits. It is very unconventional; and no, it is not the industry standard at all. But it *does* make business sense, regardless of the type of company. It involves listening differently and really understanding why a skill is needed and what a person can offer. It is relevant particularly in how to retain skills.

I agree that there are thousands of skills per job, but there are not thousands of skills that will enjoy growth in that particular job. There is also a huge difference between a job and a career, no matter what level we operate on.

Take charge

Why is it that so few people take the time to plan their careers and know what they prefer doing and what they are actually good at?

Reality TV has become a major part of our visual entertainment. Designers show you how to plan your interiors, building contractors tell you what you should be looking out for and how to build the perfect house, and food experts tell you how to plan the perfect supper! There are also shows on how to plan for your health and save money for your children's futures, retirement and all that goes along with it.

A lot of people I meet blame their unhappy job situation on the economy and how unstable it is and say they are just thankful to do something. Yes, the economy plays a role, but it does not stop you from knowing your own potential and knowing your worth in the working environment.

Another trend is international-standard CV's, meaning short, succinct CV's. Although your CV can be short and to the point, it should always include information that shows your value-add and intellectual worth.

Finding out the value you bring to a company's bottom line – your intellectual worth – will definitely increase your confidence and give you a clear direction of what your next step should be. You do not need a life coach or need to "find yourself" to understand your worth.

After being in the recruitment industry for a decade, I have realized that there is a huge gap between having a job and finding the right career, and most people just want to make that move. About 15% of people move with

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a specific plan in mind. However, getting an interview at an agency does not qualify as career planning.

You do not have to leave your destiny and dreams in the hands of recruitment agents or the Human Resources (HR) managers of companies. If you understand your own worth and design your CV accordingly, it will be easier to get the right response.

Steps to getting noticed, an interview and the right job

Natural Aptitude Planning (NAP)

Finding one's natural potential and skills is really an amazing experience. It involves recognizing what you naturally tend to do and how you naturally operate, and it shows you that you do not need to be labeled or boxed by what other people think your experience is, or what they think you should be doing. What's more, your natural aptitude may not be relevant to the qualifications you have at all.

Every person has a tendency to do things automatically because "that's just the way they are" – and this is exactly what a person's natural value is, although most people tend not to think of it as valuable because it feels so "normal" to them. Irrelevant of job title, company or industry, throughout your career and life you will see that you have a very clear skill set. If you take this into account, things will fall into place.

NAP is very unconventional and, no, it is not the standard way of the recruitment industry at all, but it does make business sense, regardless of the type of company you work at or position you are in.

We will cover skills assessment and Natural Aptitude Planning (NAP) and how to structure your CV later in the book.

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You need to be able to position your CV in such a way that a client or recruitment consultant can understand exactly what you do and see why *you* are the best person for the available position.

To help you do this successfully, I need to take you through a series of questions and discussions that will help you determine how to position yourself.

Skills Assessment

The first part of a CV and interview is usually skills assessment, and this is done by most agencies and companies during the interview process. This means taking a look at the CV in detail.

Look at your CV from the employers' side. Indicate the level you work at and what exactly you do, which will make it easier for people to identify opportunities for you.

When you look at your CV, can you identify the following?

1. Draw or describe your organizational chart, showing your position, who you report into, who reports to you and how you interface on a daily basis with those above and below you.
2. Look at the duties you have listed on your CV. For example, if you are a Personal Assistant (PA) and you only listed arranging travel as your duties, consider giving more detail. Have you made travel arrangements locally and internationally? How often do you make arrangements, and what exactly did you handle? For example, visa's, hotel reservations, car rentals, itineraries? What specifically did you do? There is a big difference between a PA who arranges weekly or monthly international travel to a PA who makes arrangements once a year.
3. If you have technical skills, this also applies to you. People in a similar industry might understand what exactly you do, but if you are looking outside of your industry, you might not get noticed if

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you do not specifically showcase what you do. For example, in the mining industry, did you do open pit or underground work? What type of mining did you do and exactly what level did you work on? Never assume people understand what you do.

Cover all the relevant skills that you feel represents your passion and your focus.

Natural Aptitude Planning (NAP)

The second part and most important item that should be on your CV is Natural Aptitude Planning (NAP). This is usually missing. My experience with senior management is that usually they will showcase a level of achievement, the size of organizations and projects they were involved in, the budgets and the staff reporting to them. This still does not mean it is your passion or what you are good at doing.

What we will look at now is your natural aptitude and how you tend to make decisions under pressure. We will help you understand what your intellectual worth is to any organization and how to put that into your CV.

Let me explain a little bit more.

Employers give you a list of duties: your job description. If you past this into your CV every time you work in a new position, you develop a comprehensive CV: a document with a list of different job descriptions you are comfortable with using to represent you. Yet, this is often not what you are passionate about and you may feel that people do not see what value you can add. You wish that people will give you *that* opportunity.

I always tell people, be careful what you ask for; you will get exactly that. So what are you asking for with your standard CV?

Having been a journalist for many years, I know it is statistical knowledge in the industry that people are lazy readers. Any person reading a newspaper or article reads the first three lines, looks at the photo, and reads the caption below the photo. If they do not see anything they like, they do not read further.

A CV is exactly the same. Recruitment consultants and clients look at every heading of your CV and look at the first few lines below that. If they do not see what they are looking for, you are out of the process.

Look at your CV again. What are the first three things you have listed at every position you have had. Is that exactly what you want to be doing?

How and what to change without writing a book

Every person has a tendency to do things automatically or naturally when under pressure. This is exactly what a person's natural value-add is, and most people I have met tend not to think about that as valuable, because "it is just the way they are"

You need to understand what level you are naturally operating on and how you make choices (business acumen). Not everybody, even on the same level, thinks the same way.

How do you do this?

Be realistic and keep in mind your background, your working experience and your qualifications. If you studied chemical engineering but have a passion to work in the medical field, you still need a medical qualification.

Only do one thing at a time. It is easier for you to see the value you add and to understand what makes you good at what you do and how you make choices and decisions.

Once you have done this exercise and answered the six questions, I will show you how to write this into your CV in a succinct and specific manner.

Answer the following questions (in bold):

1(a). What specifically about your work do you enjoy and would like to be doing on a daily basis?

If you could pick one thing to do again and again and again, what would that one thing be? This does not have to be a specific duty; it can be just a word; for example, finance. Then think: what part exactly of finance? Is it the problem solving you enjoy or the analyses, projects and controls, or balancing every figure? If you identified one area, what about it specifically do you enjoy?

Always answer as if you were asked, what specifically, what exactly or what precisely. This will help you explain more succinctly.

1(b). Now that you have one thing listed, answer this: Are you good at it?

If you answer yes, consider whether you have had feedback from a manager, superior, clients or anyone that shows you are good at it? Describe what the specific situation was. What did you do about it, and what was the end result? Do not just give general information; give specific information.

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Relate the end result to having saved the company or the client time or money or to making improvements. Include the financial value: what it could have saved or did save the company.

This is the individuals' worth to their organization. It is very often "just the way they are"...

If you answered no, look at what the implications are. For example, if you are an Auditor and you feel you are passionate about analyzing reports, you might not have had feedback, but have you received any comebacks from submitting your findings? If all your information is always submitted without any faults or comebacks, then this is an enormous achievement in its own.

Is this achievement described on your CV? What was the situation? What did you do about it and what was the end result?

If you are looking for a new opportunity, what you are good at doing should be a focus in your new opportunity. If not, why would you move?

2(a). What is the second thing you enjoy doing on a daily basis?

Again, answer precisely and consider what about it you specifically enjoy.

Now see how the first and second answers relate or compare. Very often you will find that the second "thing," although worded differently, relates to the first answer

For example, if your first answer was that you enjoy analyzing reports, and your second answer is that you enjoy dealing with people, what specifically about dealing with people do you enjoy? Perhaps it is analyzing their problems or their career growth, or managing them? What part of dealing

with people do you enjoy? Not always, but very often, this will be similar to your first answer.

2(b). Once again, ask yourself this: Are you good at it?

Use the same method described above to consider what feedback you have had, if any, and what your actions or good work may have saved the company in terms of value.

3(a). What is the third thing you would enjoy doing on a daily basis?

Repeat the whole process once again for this answer.

3(b). Are you good at it?

At this point, you have three things you really enjoy doing and are very good at. These are unique to every individual.

The following questions are also very relevant to how you naturally tend to choose and operate at your best. The answers will impact your career, and be very relevant to the company, department or division you work in. You might know these things without being aware of it.

4. Are you detail orientated?

Think carefully about this. If you answer yes, then validate it by answering the following: Have you had good feedback from your superiors or clients commenting on this skill? Once again, if you had feedback, what specifically was the situation? What did you do about it? And what was the end result? Relate the end result to time or money saved, or any improvements made to the company. Include the financial value: what it could have or did save the company.

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Are you the backstop on detail? Every client I have recruited for will always tell me that their position needs someone with high attention to detail, but not every position really requires you to be that detailed.

Some individuals operate as the backstop on detail and spot inconsistencies immediately. This is in their nature. Other people are detail-orientated only when they are interested in the specific task at hand.

Understand the extent to which you are detail orientated and use this for your next interview.

For example, perhaps you are highly detail orientated and you feel valued when people or companies use your detail-oriented work for a good end result. In this case, when you have an interview for a specific position, ask the interviewer whether they require someone with high attention to detail. Ask if they need you to be the backstop on detail or whether there will be someone else making sure all the details are in order. Ask questions such as: What happens when I compile a specific report? How is it used?

If the information will not be used effectively, you may feel that you are not valued. If details are not important, a person with a high attention to detail may be underused and feel that they are not adding value to their job or company.

The reverse is also true: if you are not exceptionally detail orientated and the position requires someone with extreme attention to detail, you might constantly feel that you are not good enough and are not performing. Your efforts may be best spent elsewhere.

If you are in a management position and do not have the best attention to detail, but your position requires it, you can put a person in place that will help you achieve this. Please take note that I am not saying you cannot do

the job. What I am saying is that it might not be the best position for you, because it may not make use of your natural talents.

5. Do you prefer a structured or unstructured environment?

This is not about your ability to shift focus or multi-task. Do you naturally tend to make to-do lists? Do you plan your day and always know when you are going to do something? Or do you prefer a more spontaneous work day?

People often tell me they are able to work in both, which is fine, but if you understand how you naturally tend to operate, it will change a job to a career.

Generally, you either enjoy systems and procedures, or you don't. If you enjoy structure, you are not going to wake up one morning and start operating in an unstructured manner for months. Your natural tendency, if you are structured by nature, will always be to put structure into place or around you. You need to keep this in mind when you are going for an interview.

You also need to be aware that there are basically four types of companies:

1. Highly structured companies with set strategies and operations in place. They hire structured individuals but rarely allow them to bring change to the existing structure and processes. They need a person to comply with their rules and regulations.
2. Structured groups who hire structured individuals and allow them to put new structures in place or improve the current structure and processes.
3. Unstructured groups who hire either structured or unstructured individuals and allow people to put new structures and processes in place.

4. Highly unstructured groups who know they need structure and therefore hire structured individuals, but who have a board of directors, principles or holding group that does not really allow changes to the process, controls, and structures. This group is prone to stalling because the goal posts are always moving.

Once you are aware of how you naturally tend to operate, you will find it easier to reach your potential. When you go for an interview, you can ask questions about what projects the company implemented recently and what systems they use, when they were last upgraded, and how long these processes took. Questions like this will help you assess how the company operates and identify whether you will be able to fit into their environment.

This does not mean you cannot work in any alternative environment. Knowing how you naturally operate and how you are put together makes all the difference. For example, if management does not allow projects to move forward, and you are by nature highly structured, do you think you would enjoy the working environment?

It is likely that you will leave the company's employ unless a company recognizes this and uses your ability.

6. Do you enjoy handling projects from beginning to end or do you prefer to generate ideas and then move on?

Some people enjoy controlling every aspect of a project right through to completion, while others enjoy working on the conceptualizing stage and coming up with new ideas before handing it over to an efficient delegated team. Some people do both. But what do you naturally tend to do?

Often, senior people need to learn to let go and delegate, but you still have a natural style, whether you have learned to delegate or not. If you are in a senior position, this is often how you would manage your team as well.

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If you are someone who enjoys controlling the process or projects, you will need to look at environments that allow you to be very hands-on involved.

When going for interviews, ask the interviewer if they need you to control the process from beginning to end and be involved, or do they expect you to conceptualise ideas and then hand them over.

If the position requires you to generate ideas and hand them over but you naturally enjoy being involved and controlling the process, you will feel that people take things away from you and will not feel validated in your job.

The reverse is also true; if you are, by nature, a person who prefers to conceptualize ideas and hand them over to a team, when you are expected to control everything from beginning to end, might feel suffocated and not really feel in control.

NAP

You have now done your Natural Aptitude planning by learning the following five things about yourself:

1. A favored skill or duty, with relevant examples of past situations, your action, and how the end result saved time or money for the company or lead to improvements.
2. A second favored skill or duty with relevant examples (as above).
3. A third favored skill or duty with relevant examples (as above).
4. Whether you are highly detail oriented or not.
5. Whether you are structured or unstructured.
6. Whether you prefer to conceptualize or control.

The answers are unique to every individual and give you an idea of how you naturally operate under pressure.

If you look at your work environment, you will naturally default to this behavior and tend to focus on these things first. These are what you are good at and, when the going gets tough, what you tend to do first.

It has been my experience that this is very often missing on the CV. I have had comments such as “but it’s not part of my job,” yet this is what you do every day.

If a new opportunity is not in line with your NAP, it does not mean you will not be able to do the job; it simply means that you know it will be a job and not a career move.

Putting the information into the CV

You have now covered the six most important points. Putting your CV together will be easier with these six points. It is unconventional but true to your passion and what you are good at doing.

Take the answers from the first three questions and look at every position on your CV. See if you have missed any situations where you used that skill and add notes to each case about the situation, what you did about it and the end result (related to time or money saved or improvements made).

Use the last three answers in your descriptions to answer the first three questions. This will show clearly whether you are detailed, structured or enjoy controlling projects or conceptualising them.

Make sure that these are the first three points under every position.

Your CV will now show a clear set of skills in every position. This will allow you to make sense of working in one industry and then taking your skills to a totally different industry or different position. The skills still stay the same. It will also be very clear to everyone who looks at your CV.

People now cannot mistake what you are good at or what your passion is.

What else should your cv reflect?

The following information should be readily available on your CV:

- Full name and surname
- Age and ID number
- Area of residence and province
- Qualifications and the year completed. If the degree or qualification is not completed, still list it on the CV but indicate that it has not been completed. This includes your final year of higher education.
- Employers and positions, including the time period spent at each company (start with your most recent employer first)
- Your reasons for seeking new employment after every position
- Your preferred types of companies or environment
- Any preferences as to geographical areas
- A detailed account of your current salary package
- The salary you require to accept a new opportunity
- A list of references (people you reported to directly)
- An indication of your ideal position(s) at the end of the CV.

Examples of CV's before and after NAP

1. Designer with nine years experience in manufacturing, production and research (isotope separation).

Original CV

Designer/Assistant Engineer (Process and Mechanical)

- Responsible for engineering calculation on components to be designed, manufacturing techniques and production.
- Fully responsible for each design, ranging from concept, detail, revisions and drawings.
- Maintain and improve standards and quality assurance.
- Introduced multiple innovative ideas and designs on technology and in manufacturing process.
- Increased the efficiency of research by designing and implementing a systematic work-flow system.
- Increased design effectiveness through QCP and brainstorming.
- Increased communication and team work, resulting in higher standards and better results.

Production Planner, Draughtsman,

- Acted as Production Planner for the company, from designing, project planning, and manufacturing to assembling, testing and commissioning.

- Site visits for evaluation of maintenance, repairs and replacements on locomotives.
- Improved couplings, seals and brackets to be more reliable, cost-effective and easier to install.
- Erection of 700 m² stores building and stores layout, without influencing current projects and operations.
- Responsible for the drawing office; configuration, filing, designing, manufacturing and suppliers.

Education

- MBA
- B.Tech in Industrial Engineering
- National Diploma in both Mechanical Drawing and Architectural Drawing
- National Diploma in Mechanical Engineering
- National Certificate in Project Management
- Certificate in Implementing ISO 9000:2000

Results of NAP done during an interview:

1. Results driven, process driven and accomplishment driven
2. Enjoys analyses (identifying gaps or problems in situations)
3. Prefers a structured environment (processes/procedures)
4. High attention to detail
5. Conceptual worker: initiates projects, implements ideas, puts controls and process into place, and then hands project over

Natural Aptitude Career Planned CV

EDUCATION

- National Diploma
- Mechanical Drawing and Architectural Drawing
- National Diploma in Mechanical Engineering
- National Certificate in Project Management
- Certificate in Implementing ISO 9000:2000
- Six Sigma – Green Belt Certification
- B.Tech. in Industrial Engineering
- MBA, (PGCBA – Post Graduate Certificate for Business Administration)

CAREER

Position: Designer/Assistant Engineer (Process and Mechanical)

Responsibilities

- Analyzed data on a daily basis to improve, adapt or change the designs, enhanced the final optimized product, and conducted “What-if” analysis.
- Simulated different scenarios with a high level of detail to gather and process information and increase efficiency.
- Evaluated manufacturing techniques and processes to find solutions that would save time, energy and money and increase effectiveness.
- Drove projects to be completed within expected timeframe through constant questioning and brainstorming sessions and by making use of all the resources available.

- Took responsibility for engineering process calculation to be designed, manufacturing techniques and production.
- Maintained and improved standards and quality assurance.
- Achieved multiple innovative ideas and designs on technology and in manufacturing process.
- Increased the efficiency of research by designing and implementing a systematic work flow system.
- Increased design effectiveness through QCP and brainstorming.
- Increased communication and team work, resulting in higher standards and better results.

Position: Production Planner, Draughtsman

Responsibilities

- Acted as Production Planner for the company, from designing, project planning, and manufacturing to assembling, testing and commissioning.
- Took responsibility for Design Evaluation (*make or buy*), production planning and scheduling.
- Completed various projects within expected timeframes and with cost savings. This was accomplished by making use of work-flow diagrams and prioritizing techniques. As a result, the workshop workload increased by about 20%.
- Reduced rework and scrap. Saved money and time by taking responsibility for improving and optimizing the manufacturing, design and planning processes. The costs saved were about 10-15% per project (budget).
- Reduced time and energy waste by implementing new equipment, as a result of work study performed. This resulted in more effective performances from staff.

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- Conducted site visits for evaluation of maintenance, repairs and replacements on locomotives.
- Erected a 700 m² stores building including design of stores layout, without influencing current projects and operations. Increased accurate stock control by 25%.
- Took responsibility for the drawing office; configuration, filing, designing, manufacturing and suppliers.

2. General Manager with 11 years experience in motor manufacturing

Original CV

Some key experiences:

- Project management
- Factory management
- Workshop and facilities management
- Mass manufacturing engineering and equipment.
- Maize milling
- Wheat milling
- Grading and fumigation.
- Silo management exposure.
- Animal feed manufacturing (ruminant and chicken feeds).
- Game lick manufacture
- Pasta manufacturing (longs and shorts)
- Biscuit manufacturing
- Automation installation and controls
- Process control and improvements
- ISO 9000 and 22000 (Haccp)
- General management
- International manufacturing and management experience.
- Citrus color sorting, processing and packaging.

Strong points:

- Technically well informed, experienced in manufacturing, milling and feed-milling
- Knowledge of business finances in a manufacturing environment
- Ability to create a positive work environment
- Attention to detail

- Strong motivator
- Can make decisions and take responsibility

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:

Education

- Grain Milling Federation Milling Modules
- Ph.D in strategies
- MBA
- Professionally registered with the Engineering Council
- Government Certificate of Competency (Factories)
- National Higher Diploma T4 (Mechanical Engineering)
- National N6 Diploma (Mechanical)
- Motor Mechanic (Certificate)

Computer Skills

- Word
- Excel
- Power Point
- Autocad (Mechanical Desk top)
- MS Project

Work Experience

date Group Operations Manager
date Regional Operations Manager
date National Operations Manager
date National Operations Manager
date General Manager

date Operations Manager
date General Manager Argentine Office
date Production Manager
date Plant Engineer

KEY COMPETENCIES:

- Successful record in operations
- Extensive project management experience (National and International)
- Ability to motivate people to achieve objectives and maintain high standards
- Extensive experience in managing people, projects and processes
- Practical knowledge of managing and implementing ISO 9001,22000 (Haccp)
- Develop, Manage and Integrate the Management Systems

Fields of application:

- Director related to Operations
- Managing Director of group of companies
- Project management and strategy implementation.
- Operational/production strategies, optimization modeling and management.
- Turn-around strategies in feed-milling and grain-milling

Results of NAP done during an interview:

1. Succession planning
2. Turn around operations
3. Detail orientated

4. Structured environment
5. Controls projects from start to end

Natural Aptitude Career Planned CV

Professionally registered with the Engineering Council in mechanical engineering, with a GCC (Factories), a MBA (general management).

- He has eleven years experience in motor manufacturing. The last few years were at general-management level.
- He has worked three years on automation projects as General Manager in Argentina.
- He was Operations Manager and later CEO during a six-year period at a citrus processing plant.
- He worked as National Operations Manager in feed milling for almost four years.
- He worked in North Africa as Business Unit Operations manager for almost one year and also worked in an international stainless-steel manufacturing group, but the operation was scaled down in Africa.
- He has been working with a grains milling company, in Gaborone for almost two years as Group Operations Manager.

Qualification Ph.D (Strategy)

Qualification MBA

Qualification Government Certificate of Competency (Factories)

Qualification National Higher Diploma T4 (Degree)

Qualification	National Diploma N6 (Diploma)
Qualification	National Diploma T3 (Diploma)
Qualification	Motor Mechanic (Certificate)

Work Experience

Date: Group Operations Manager

- Stabilized quality and improved volume throughput, resulting in turn-around in 2009 and 2010 of almost BWP 4,000,000 in the final month of the 2010 financial year.
- Project managed capital projects amounting to BWP 17,000,000 in difficult cash-flow situations.
- Reduced work force from nine hundred employees to six hundred employees with improved efficiencies and cost structure.
- Created a stable work force.
- Introduced an integrated management system.
- Project managed ISO 9,000 and 22,000 certification.
- Developed and implemented production planning.
- Developed streamlined logistics and customer supply system.
- Introduced training programs to ensure operational efficiencies.

Date: Regional Operations Manager

- Introduced new group reporting structure internationally with standardized and centralized reporting. This structure was adopted

when the company restructured outside Africa.

Date: National Operations Manager

- Improved quality, through-put and consistency in the various national manufacturing facilities, resulting in a turn-around from negative net profits to almost ZAR 25,000,000 profit at the financial ear end.
- Volume growth by almost 70%.
- Cost of sales reduction.
- Project managed ISO 9,000 and 22,000 certification
- Operational/manufacturing cost reduction by more than 20%
- Managed capital projects of ZAR20,000,000 annually while company had a very reduced operational capital.

Date: National Operations Manager

- Introduced integrated management systems.
- Project managed ISO 9,000 and 22,000 certification.
- Introduced centralized and standardized reporting structure.
- Formed part of a team who managed consistent financial growth with year-on-year profit growth of 6 to 8%

Date: General Manager

- Introduced a formal structure to the company.
- Improved quality and packing standards, resulting in an average of 8 to 10% increased return to growers, even under stringent export conditions with Rand:Euro dropping by 15% on exports.
- Reduced work force from 1,500 people to around 800 people with improved efficeincies, reduced costs, and higher out-put.

3. National GM Sales and Marketing Manager

Original CV

Company: Investment

Period: date

Position: **National GM Sales and Marketing Manager**

Key performance areas

- Responsible for query resolution, information sharing, training internal and external customers, dealing with walk-in customers, scheduling deliveries, inventory management and damages control, and incoming and outgoing calls
- Responsible for the procurement and testing of computer hardware and software
- Reduced direct cost, which impacted company profitability
- Empowered the administration team through coaching, delegating, training and discipline using a situational leadership quadrant
- Dealing with DOMs, ROMs and Ops queries related to schedules and contractual obligations.
- Responsible for sales generation and full credit-control function
- Responsible for subcontractor contracts and negotiations with suppliers
- Interview potential supplier capabilities, product testing from samples, profitability, product suitability, working with supplier to provide above-average suitability and negotiating purchase price (stretch)
- General buying of stationery, equipment, and hardware
- Creating back-up suppliers and buffing up for JIT supply

Know Your Worth

- Reduced the debtors days to thirty-three days by providing exceptional service
- Improved staff moral through daily “buzz sessions” and ensured their concerns were addressed speedily
- Assisted with opening of head office
- Introduced complaints channel for customers
- Introduced document management control and vehicle logging trips schedules
- Instituted disciplinary actions and chair corrective actions
- Management of tender processes, site visits, proposals and presentations
- Secured new suppliers of new cleaning products
- Preparing price structure for new deals
- Attend senior executive meetings and present unit’s future plans
- Staff recruitment

Company: Staffing Services

Period: date

Position: **Account Executive**

Key performance areas

- Responsible for specific client accounts
- Managed financials and improved collection
- Improved relations with clients
- Deliver and collect time sheets
- Business development and networking
- Research and Project Management
- Perform interviews and selection
- Managed employee relations

Results of NAP done during an interview:

On a daily basis, he enjoys customer relations (building sustainable relationships), retention strategies and staff-development initiatives (highly committed to imparting knowledge).

He is a conceptualizer who relishes implementation as well as seeing a project through from beginning to end. He is an extremely hands-on individual who like to take responsibility for his contribution.

Structured in terms of ensuring that company policies and procedures are followed.

Highly detail-oriented and believes that detail is the foundation of success.

Natural Aptitude Career Planned CV

Experience in line with Customer Liaison

- **Management and development of sales representative teams with a debt-book value of R 4 million**
- Direct involvement in the **selection and hiring of call-centre staff** (decision-maker) and previously worked as a **recruitment consultant**
- Applying **80/20 rule** by ensuring that 80% of calls were answered within twenty seconds.

- **Reduced wrap-up-time from two minutes to one minute and thirty seconds** in order to ascertain that agents were available to take calls so call answer-rate percentages were on par.
- Ensured that call lengths took between 2.5 to 7 minutes in order to satisfy the 80/20 rule.
- **Developed call-centre training programs** by using individual development programs to feed into the training-needs analysis
- Developed automated incoming-faxes training by initiating sourcing of suppliers, drafting the process and writing it up in terms of specifications
- Conducted random **quality-assurance checks** on a monthly basis
- **Profitable dialler campaigns** were reactionary exercises put together to fast track sales lagging behind. Cyril put in a predictive dial-up facility to pinpoint the strongest sales agents and set questions to be asked of potential customers in order to increase the sales and marketing
- **Exceeded company's monthly target of 350K by more than 50% consistently**
- Conducted **Daily Sales Outstanding** through account analysis by assessing pay history and looking at deductions. Managed DSO based on bank statements and not on remittance advice as this further sustained company cash flow.
- Effective **credit management** by analysing clients' pay history over three months and placing limits on accounts if necessary.
- Involved in **management of companies' exposure to risk** through credit references, general stability, financial statements, etc.
- Extensive quality assurance experience across career.
- Extensive dealing with **FMCG** companies such as: (Add a list company names)
- Exceeded a **sales target of R180 000 astronomically by bringing in R 1.8 million**
- Stable track record

EDUCATION

Matriculated

Diploma in Personnel Management and Training

Call Centre Management Standards and Implementation Certificate

MAP Certificate

IT Project Management Certificate

Technical and Management Skills

- Interactive and team building skills
- Call centre start-up strategies, CRM and SAP customer processes
- Advanced disciplinary procedure, performance, and coaching management
- Avaya and ATIO telephony systems
- Document management strategies and implementation
- Action request system (remedy)
- Accounts receivables/accounts management
- Purchasing management skills
- Sales management and training, change implementation, call centre tele-skills evaluation

CAREER

Period: Date

Company: Investment Holdings

Position: National GM Sales and Marketing Manager

Responsibilities:

Know Your Worth

- Query resolution, information sharing, training internal and external customers, deal with walk-in customers, schedule deliveries, inventory management and damages control, incoming and outgoing calls
- Manage and lead the performance of the twenty-three employees nationally
- Responsible for the procurement and testing of computer hardware and software
- Reduced direct cost, which impacted company profitability
- Empowered the administration team through coaching, delegating, training and discipline using a situational leadership quadrant
- Dealing with DOMs, ROMs and Ops queries related to schedules and contractual obligations
- Responsible for sales generation and full credit-control function
- Responsible for subcontractor contracts and negotiations with suppliers
- Responsible for interviewing potential suppliers, product testing, reviewed profitability, product suitability, working with supplier to provide above average suitability and negotiating purchase price
- General buying of stationery, equipment, and hardware
- Creating back-up suppliers and buffing up for JIT supply
- Reduced the debtors days to thirty-three days by providing exceptional service
- Improved staff moral through daily “buzz sessions” and ensured that their concerns are addressed speedily
- Assisted with opening of head office
- Introduced complaints channel for customers
- Introduced document-management control and vehicle-logging trip schedules
- Instituted disciplinary actions and chair corrective actions
- Management of tender processes, site visits, prepare proposals and presentations
- Secured new suppliers of new cleaning products

- Prepared price structure for new deals
- Attended senior executive meetings and presented unit's future plans
- Staff recruitment

Period Date

Company Staffing Services

Position Account Executive

Responsibilities:

- Responsible for various client accounts
- Managed financials and improved collection
- Improved relations with clients
- Deliver and collect time sheets
- Business development and networking
- Research and project management
- Perform interviews and selection
- Managed employee relations

4. Office Manager/Sales Assistant

Original CV

Qualifications:

Deutsch Schule zu
Matric
Book Keeping Diploma
PMI
Project Administration Course

Career History:

Date:

Woodworking industry

Manager

My duties

- Managing of the business and day-to-day operations and problem solving
- Finance
 - Annual budgeting and forecasting
 - Stock control
 - Pricing and costing
 - Cash-flow management
- Ensuring sales targets are met
- Ensuring profitability of company
- Staff management (including basic HR and recruitment):
 - Sales representatives (two sales people)

- General and cleaning staff (one person)
 - Outsourced staff (one technician)
- Drafting of customer agreements
- Responsible for all aspects of customer relations
 - Problem solving
 - Customer service and customer satisfaction
- Marketing
 - Original design and maintaining of our website
 - Designing and placing of adverts in relevant media (magazines, bulk mailers, etc.)
 - Search engine optimization – ensuring our website is found easily when searching on the Internet
- Stock control
 - Purchasing of stock,
 - Pricing and costing of stock – ensuring we sell at a profit
- Attend monthly Exco meetings and feedback to directors and shareholders
- Occupational Health and Safety Representative

Achievements:

- Within twelve months, the company has started to show profitability
- Turnover in 2009 exceeded seven million (in 2008 turnover was 1.7 million)
- Increased showroom area
- Currently we have over two thousand customers registered on our website – 50% of our business is generated through the website

Date:

Recruitment Group as Project Controller

Project Controller

Duties:

- Calls process: Managing of the entire call-logging and call-closing process from beginning to end. I was the main contact for our supplier and all correspondence went through me.
- Testing of the call before logging with our supplier to ensure that I understood where the problem lies
- Managing the resolution of calls logged
 - Deal with all queries
 - Testing the resolution
 - User feedback
 - Updating of user/operating manuals
- Weekly feedback meetings with suppliers
 - Managing the open calls
 - Assist the supplier to assign priority of the calls
- Change control, Project Leader, Three reports
 - Assigning the testing of new calls to team members
 - Testing all the calls myself
 - Feedback with the supplier
 - Close calls when necessary
- SLA management
- Research
 - As and when needed
- Documentation
 - User/operations manuals
- New Clients
 - I take calls from all clients who are currently not working with the company. I take down their requirements and pass this on to the correct division.

Helpdesk Administrator

Duties:

- Logging of calls for the technicians
 - Assigning priorities to calls
- Following up with the technicians on calls not closed
- Feedback after calls have been closed
- Dealing with very basic calls
- Updating the Database
- Clearing the incoming spam emails
- Managing the spam
- Acquiring quotes from suppliers

The position as a Helpdesk Co-ordinator was a temporary solution and as soon as they found the right person for the job I was promoted to Project Controller in our Project Team.

Assistant to the ICT Director

Duties as Assistant included:

- Screening candidate's telephonically
- Assisting candidates with the job-search process
 - Doing references with candidate's previous employers
 - Processing any checks (ICT, criminal, qualification) that were necessary
 - Presenting the offer to the candidate and following through to the signing stage
- Marketing the candidate to customers
 - Writing up of Fee Agreements
 - Arranging interviews for the candidates with our clients
 - Following up with the clients after the interviews

Know Your Worth

- Following up with clients on the next step (i.e. offer or regret)
 - Closing the deal
- SLA management
- Manage sales figures for the team
- Assist new members in the team in finding their feet
 - Problem solve difficult situations
 - Escalating when necessary

Achievements

- I assisted the ICT Director to invoice three million Rand in one year (this was a record billing, not only for the company but for South Africa).
- I automated the stats spreadsheets for all Consulting and Support Divisions and cut down the time spent from six hours to two hours per month per division
- Automated the stats for the Support Division and saved them three hours a month
- Created an electronic version of the consultants “Funnels” (The Funnel is a spreadsheet where the consultants record all their deals and the eventuality of the deal. This sheet would work out the potential billings a consultant could have in a month)
- Talent Scouting Project: as the project leader I had five people reporting to me on a recruitment drive. The project only ran for one month and we successfully placed two people.

Date:

German Industry

Trade Fair Representative / Junior Secretary

Duties:

As a Trade Fair Representative:

- Marketing of the trade fairs
 - Placing adverts
 - Sending out information brochures
 - Attending local expo's to find new clients
- Selling of entrance tickets to the trade fairs
- Selling of expo floor-space to South African Manufacturers
- Dealing with any queries about the trade fairs
- Attending the fairs in Germany and ensuring my clients satisfaction
- Preparing Budgets

As Junior Secretary:

- Arranging Functions
- Registration of new members
- I was the centre of correspondence for the group and therefore all email correspondence went through me
- I kept all members up-to-date on what was happening

Achievements:

- Increased sales for the Frankfurt by 25%.
- Increase sales for Nurnberg by 10%
- Increased the accuracy of our clients contact details on our internal Database.

Date

Orthopedics industry as Front Office Assistant/Sales Assistant

Duties:

- Compiling sales reports for the Managing Director
 - Compiling reports
 - Getting information from sales representatives
 - Co-ordinating team-building sessions
- Co-ordinating training for surgeons in Switzerland and Italy
 - Booking of flights
 - Booking of accommodation
 - Booking the Chief Surgeon for training
 - Organizing medical points
- Assisting Accounts with the debtors
 - Follow up on outstanding invoices
 - Matching payments to debtors

Results of NAP done during an interview:

1. Stats, analyses of sales
2. Problem solving
3. Detailed
4. Controlled
5. Structured

Natural Aptitude Career Planned CV

Qualifications:

Deutsche Schule zu

Matric

Bookkeeping Diploma

PMI

Project Administration Course

Career Achievements:

- Seeing as the Manufacturing group is a very small and new business, I focused my attention on addressing all the “teething issues” we were having and thereby increased the turnover in 2009 and exceeded R7 million (in 2008 turnover was 1.7 million).
- I have maintained our sales throughout 2010 by implementing all structures and procedures for every workflow in the business.
- By ensuring that the company Website is always up to date and accurate, we now have over two thousand customers registered on our website, and this is growing by four new clients a day (on average). The website generates an average of 50% of our sales.
- Having a passion for client service excellence, I assisted the Director of the Information Communication Technologies Division in reaching a billing of R 3 million in one year (this was a record billing for the recruitment group).
- Having a passion for analysis and statistics, I automated the Internal Sales Statistic spreadsheets for all Consulting and Support Divisions at the recruitment group and thereby cut down the preparation time from six hours to two hours a month per division
- At the German Industry, I gave the database my full attention, thereby improving the accuracy of contact information and increasing the sales for Frankfurt by 25% due to being able to contact more clients.

Career History:

Date:

Woodworking Industry.

Manager

My duties

- Managing of the business
 - Day-to-day operations
 - Ensuring sales targets are met
 - Ensuring profitability of company
 - Stock purchasing
- Customer Relations
 - Build customer relationships
 - Problem solving and solution finding
 - Created and now maintain a complete customer database
 - Ensure data integrity
 - Create quotes, invoices and write up all customer contracts.
- Finance
 - Annual budgeting and forecasting
 - Stock control
 - Pricing and costing
 - Cash-flow management
- Staff management (including basic HR and recruitment):
 - Sales representatives (two sales people)
 - General and cleaning staff (one person)
 - Managing of outsourced staff (one technician)
- Marketing
 - Original design and maintenance of our website
 - Designing and placing of adverts in relevant media (magazines, bulk mailers, etc.)
 - Search-engine optimization – ensuring our website is found easily when searching on the internet
- Stock control
 - Purchasing of stock,
 - Pricing and costing of stock – ensuring we sell at a profit

- Attend monthly Exco meetings and feedback to directors and shareholders
- Occupational Health and Safety Representative
- Record of sales and marketing stats

Achievements:

- Within twelve months, the company has started to show profitability
- Increased showroom area and therefore we are able to display more machines

Date:

Recruitment Group as Project Controller

Duties:

Calls Process

- Managing of the entire call-logging and call-closing process from beginning to end. I was the main contact for our supplier, and all correspondence went through me.
- Testing of the call before logging with our supplier to ensure that I understood where the problem lies.
- Managing the resolution of calls logged:
 - Dealing with all queries
 - Testing the resolution
 - User feedback
 - Updating of user/operating manuals
- Weekly feedback meetings with suppliers
 - Managing the open calls
 - Assisting the supplier in assigning priority of the calls
- Change control, Project Leader
 - Assigning testing of new calls to team members
 - Testing all the calls myself
 - Feedback with the supplier
 - Closing calls when necessary

- SLA management
- Research
 - As and when needed
- Documentation
 - User/operations manuals
- New Clients
 - I take calls from all clients who are not currently working with the company. I take down their requirements and pass it on to the correct division.

Helpdesk Administrator

Duties:

- Logging of calls for the technicians
- Assigning priorities to calls
- Following up with the technicians on calls not closed
- Feedback after calls were closed
- Dealing with very basic calls
- Updating the Database
- Clearing the incoming spam emails
- Managing the spam
- Get quotes from suppliers

The position as a Helpdesk Co-ordinator was a temporary solution and as soon as they found the right person for the job, I was promoted to Project Controller in our Project Team.

Assistant to the Information Communication Technologies (ICT) Director –
Duties:

As Assistant included:

- Screening candidate's by telephone
- Assisting candidates with the job-search process

- Taking down references with candidate's previous employers
- Processing any checks (ICT, criminal, qualification) necessary
- Presenting the offer to the candidate and following through to the signing stage
- Marketing the candidate to customers
 - Writing up of Fee Agreements
 - Arranging interviews for the candidates with our clients
 - Following up with the clients after the interviews
 - Following up with clients on the next step (i.e. offer or regret)
 - Closing the deal
- SLA management
- Manage sales figures for the team
- Assist new members in the team in finding their feet
- Problem solve difficult situations
- Escalate when necessary

Achievements

- Talent Scouting Project – as the project leader I had five people reporting to me on a recruitment drive. The project only ran for one month and we successfully placed two people.

Date:

German Industry

Trade Fair Representative/Junior Secretary

Duties:

As Trade Fair Representative:

- Marketing of the trade fairs
 - Placing adverts
 - Sending out information brochures
 - Attending local expo's to find new clients

Know Your Worth

- Selling of entrance tickets to the trade fairs
- Selling of expo floor space to South African manufacturers
- Dealing with any queries on the trade fairs
- Attending the fairs in Germany and ensuring my clients' satisfaction
- Preparing budgets

As Junior Chamber Secretary included:

- Arranging functions
- Registration of new members
- I was the centre of correspondence for the group and therefore all email correspondence went through me
 - Kept all members up-to-date on what was happening

Achievements:

- Increased sales by 10%

5. Distributions Manager
Original CV

Diploma in Logistics Management

WORK HISTORY:

Counter Parts Sales Supervisor

Date:

Job Functions:

- To supervise and guide staff in their duties
- To do quotations for various customers
- To do monthly sales reports
- To conduct regular stock counts.
- To train sales staff and manage sale-flows
- To negotiate prices of parts with various suppliers
- To do sales
- To monitor administration and departmental budgets.
- To render efficient service to user departments; i.e., workshops

Stores/Warehouse and Distribution Manager

Date

Job Functions:

- To exercise good judgment and make sound decisions
- To maintain good purchase records for future references
- To do stores/warehouse administration and company yearly budget
- To hold meetings with various suppliers
- To ensure timely movement of vehicles according to schedules

Know Your Worth

- To develop schedules and shifts
- To lead stock-taking process and reconcile stock levels against SAP
- To do stores/warehouse monthly reports
- To lead in training and skills development of all stores personnel
- To coordinate the movement of trucks and freight between cities and other regions
- To keep records, logs and schedules of service calls received
- To make decisions in both routine and non-routine situations
- To provide leadership, support and guidance to the team
- To develop and monitor performance goals
- To implement the operational plan and achieve business targets
- To effectively manage all receipts, storage and issues incoming materials into company
- To ensure business continuity
- To look for proper progressing of orders made so that right materials are delivered at the right time with the right price at the right place
- To determine priorities for Dispatchers and prepare reports on activities

Results of NAP done during an interview:

He enjoys achieving set-targets on a daily basis through the effective management of stock as well as staff. He also enjoys staff development as he feels it is imperative that if someone is absent from work or unavailable for whatever reason, there needs to be another individual on site who can execute their job; therefore, empowering staff is key

He prefers to conceptualize and implement as he is a hands-on person and the very nature of his job within the warehouse requires involvement from start to finish.

Structure is the only way to achieve deliverables within the stock-management arena, and detraction from following procedure can result in massive losses as well as costs for the company

He is highly detail-oriented as he need to pay attention to all comings and goings on the warehouse floor

Natural Aptitude Career Planned CV

Experience in line with Distribution manager

- Previous experience within the FMCG sector at Outlet Stores and Perishables Manager
- Twenty-two reporting staff at the warehouse
- Diploma in Logistics
- Managed to turn stock loss problems at warehouse around within three months and, hence, the request that he move from production Controller to Warehouse Controller
- Estimates value of stock within the five warehouses he manages at approximately R 30 million
- Introduced cost-reduction initiative for wooden pallets rented, which incurred expenses in terms of damage. This reduced the cost from R 250 000 down to 0
- Responsible for tracking fleet throughout Southern Africa including: Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe
- Dedicated to staff development

EDUCATION

Qualification: Diploma in Logistics Management

CAREER

Period: Date
Company: (Pty) Limited
Position: Warehouse Rebate Controller

Responsibilities:

- Ensure stock is correctly allocated to production departments
- Control stock with regards to demarcation, safe stacking, location, loss control, recording of damages
- Report all incoming stock
- Report incorrect stock codes or quantities to Financial Department
- Ensure correct and safe storage of pallets, boxes, rejected materials and equipment
- Ensure that all wastage, cardboards boxes, wrapping and any other packaging wastage is collected and removed to designated bin/skip/container at the end of each shift
- Regular checks and inspection of racking and fence system
- Damaged/rejected material is held in a demarcated quarantined area
- Control and update the rebate register
- Stock counts are completed as per company schedules
- Adhere to SARS requirements and processes
- Attend internal/external meetings when required
- Open and close stores/warehouse

Know Your Worth

- Control and security of all keys issued
- Manage consumables and general costs, ensuring that operational budgets are adhered to
- Daily checks on maintenance of all company forklifts
- Monthly report to the operations manager
- Correct and secure use of vacuum systems within the factory
- General administration, data capturing and other ad-hoc duties

Period: Date
Company: (Pty) Limited
Position: Production Controller

Responsibilities:

- Supervise the manufacturing facility in an efficient and fair manner
- Ensure that all company standards, policies and procedures are adhered to at all times
- Conduct regular meetings with manufacturing teams
- Attend morning operations meeting and other meetings if requested
- Check in good time that the assembly line and other operations are fully manned and utilized
- Ensure that schedules are adhered to and that all relevant procedures are followed at all times
- Ensure Daily Shift Report is handed in to Operations Manager's office at the end of each shift
- Update targets and measurement on a daily basis
- Accurate running of assembly line, no mixing of stock, schedules or finished goods
- Calculate completion of schedule and inform Rebate Stores to bring in next (order) schedule
- Ensure that all material (packaging, tubes and cabinets etc) are of correct quality and dimensions

Know Your Worth

- Good communication between all levels of staff and management
- Control tools and equipments in area of responsibility
- Make sure that all operations within manufacturing adhere to the correct start and finish times
- Keep all relevant reports and documents secured and up to date

Plan your next step

You have taken the first step; you have now put together a true reflection of your skills. But finding a good opportunity is more than just having the right tools.

Finding work is probably one of the most frustrating and mind-numbing processes imaginable — or, it can be, unless you find a consultant who really understands your background and what you are looking for. In other words, one you can partner with.

This is easier said than done

The key to finding the right job is finding a consultant you trust and feel comfortable dealing with. Ultimately, finding work is still your responsibility, and this means taking action when sending out your CV. In this day and age, there are thousands of agencies to choose from.

Recruiters receive on average 350 CV's or more per day. The key to making yourself visible is to pick up the phone and keep following up until you can speak to the consultant in person. Some consultants will phone back but, unfortunately, a large number of them do not.

Once you have made contact with the consultant, keep following up with them and remind them what specific position or industry you are looking at. This will help the consultant remember you in return. Phoning enough times and having short conversations will result in getting to know the consultant little by little. In return, the consultant will also get to know you better.

Know Your Worth

Always try to set up an interview with the consultant. Meeting face to face is far more powerful than you realize. You will also quickly be able to gauge whether the consultant is seriously interested in representing you or whether you are just another body passing through the door. You do not have to settle for this. Find someone who is genuine about making a difference and who takes you seriously.

Build a relationship with your consultant. This is not an easy process or quick fix, but it can make all the difference to how you feel and whether you find that career.

First Impressions

First Impressions – guess what: they count! And here is why. It is almost like going on a blind date. Imagine you arranged a meeting with your blind date, but when you walk into the room you see three people who look good and one with hair hanging in their eyes, chains that make it difficult to recognize the gender, and – you are almost sure – a touch of make-up too. And you pray, *Please, do not let it be him. Please do not let it be him* And guess what? It is him!

Clients feel exactly the same way about possible employees. This includes during interviews at recruitment consultancies, agencies or with Human Resources. First impressions are critical and are based on your appearance. The interviewer will start forming an opinion of you before your interview begins. Most employers believe that people who look as if they care about themselves are more likely to care about their job.

Your goal should be to come across in the best possible light by being attractive in the way you dress, in your gestures and facial expressions, and in your speech. There is only one way to dress for the first meeting: professional.

Every person has certain likes and dislikes, and although a position should be based on your ability to do the job, people unfortunately work with a gut feeling and perception.

Research has shown that non-verbal communication and appearance accounts for about 80% of a decision being made before you have said one word!

Know Your Worth

Dress clean-cut, conservative and current. Dressing appropriately is important to establish your credibility and so you will be seen as a person who can be part of a team. Ensure your appearance is clean and tidy. A suit is the best form of dress for both men and women. Your most professional colors are still a black, dark-blue or charcoal suit with a white shirt or blouse and a solid-color tie. As a general rule, the more clothing you have on, the more credible, persuasive, and business-like you will appear.

This does not mean that you should wear a three-piece suit for an interview when the temperature soars to thirty-five degrees; it simply means you have more credibility when this style of dressing is appropriate. It would also depend what type of position you are applying for.

Forget about personal style. You can always wear your “personal style” wardrobe once you have the job and know the company culture. Women should keep in mind that the less skin you show, the higher your credibility. Trousers with a jacket or a formal shirt go well together. Avoid extremely short skirts or daring and plunging necklines. Wear light and professional make-up and ensure you freshen it up prior your interview. Do not let the make-up wear you. Before your interview, wash your hair and groom your nails. Make sure if you are wearing nail polish that it is not chipped.

During the interview, put your bag down beside you, where it does not obstruct movement or get in the way. Always switch that cell phone off.

Men should always refrain from wearing earrings or visible neck chains to the interview. Make sure your nails are clean and cut short and your suit and tie are crisp and clean. Stay away from cartoon-character ties and socks. Clients might not take you seriously.

General tips:

Take a tissue or handkerchief with you to dry possible damp brows or clammy hands before meeting with your interviewer. Greet your interviewer by his or her surname with a smile and a firm handshake. (Do not break your interviewer's hand.) A firm handshake shows confidence and establishes good rapport.

It is perfectly normal to show some sign of nervousness; it shows that you are taking the interview seriously.

Wait until you are offered a chair before you sit down.

Do not smoke during the interview, even if your interviewer smokes or offers you one. Also, do not smoke just before your interview. Your interviewer might be a non-smoker and this may affect their decision subconsciously.

It is acceptable to ask for a glass of water or accept water when asked, but if you are extremely nervous, better to refuse; you might spill it all over.

Never chew gum during an interview.

Use a person's name when talking, as this allows you to get and keep their attention.

Do not be late for your interview. Always be there five to ten minutes early and announce yourself at reception five minutes prior your interview. It gives you a chance to look at the company's newsletters and brochures and to view the overall employee's satisfaction and interaction, which will help you to form an opinion about the company.

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If you are too early for an interview, the interviewer may get agitated and you might feel uncomfortable. If you are late, they see it as part of a problem that will develop further once you are employed.

Sit upright but remain relaxed; do not cross your arms or slouch. Try to look your interviewer in the eyes, but look rather than stare. Focus your attention upon him rather than gazing around the room. Inappropriate smiling is the most common example of non-verbal behavior that undercuts verbal messages, making you seem weak and unassertive.

Fill in application forms or do tests if you are required to do so. This is often a formality or based on the company's policies. You will create suspicion or unnecessary trouble if you argue about it or refuse to do so.

Fill all documentation in as neatly and as accurately as possible.

Do not fill in a salary figure; write down "negotiable."

Speak clearly and concisely. Use short sentences. Do not mumble or ramble on and on.

Do not try to disguise dialects or regional accents as this will only create more problems for you later in the interview.

Technical questions can cause problems. Think carefully before giving a response and ensure that your answer shows initiative, common sense and imagination.

Good eye contact, an upright posture and an overall positive attitude can often make up for deficiencies in other areas.

If you are attending a panel interview, try not to direct all answers and questions to one person. Look and speak to the whole panel. Have a

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writing pad at hand with your questions and feel free to take down alternative notes.

A positive attitude is very important, even when you have doubts about the job. It is very easy to decline a position once a job has been offered, but it is not so easy to retrieve an interview after suddenly realizing it is exactly the job that you were looking for. Make sure the interviewer knows that you want the position.

Before the interview

How do you prepare and where do you start once you have an interview appointment? An interview should not be a surprise party.

Do you just take the time, address and contact details of the person you will be meeting with? Or should you do more?

This is your opportunity to create a long-lasting impression. Make sure that this impression is positive by preparing beforehand.

You do not run a marathon without training or preparing.

How to prepare:

1. Before an interview:

Get as much information as you can from the consultant you are dealing with. Learn about the client and the company you are going to be interviewed by. If the consultant cannot give you enough information, phone the company's reception and ask a few questions. Ask about the company and their products and services. This action will show that you have initiative and will give you a valuable discussion topic at the time of the interview. Find out as much as possible, such as where they are based, how long it will take you to travel there, and whether it is viable for you to drive there from wherever you will be before the interview. Google the company to get as much information as possible about the group.

Know the address and exact location. Phone the company and ask reception or your recruitment consultant for a map and an exact description

of how to get there, where to park, and which floor to go to. Some companies have paid-parking facilities; make sure to always keep change on hand.

2. Appointment time

Be very sure you are on time for your interview. Get there at least ten minutes before to be on the safe side. Do not be late, and do not be too early.

3. Appearance

Dress the part of the position you are applying for. If you are seeking a Site Foreman position, do not dress in a suit. Whichever way you dress, your clothes should be clean and neat. If you are a male, ensure you are cleanly shaven

4. Attitude

If you take the trouble of going for an interview, then go there with a positive attitude and expect that you will be offered the position. Be confident without being arrogant. Even if during the course of the interview you realize that the specific position is not for you, continue to sell yourself; there may be another opening.

5. The Interview

Make sure you know what position you are being interviewed for and who you will be meeting with. Get the person's name, surname and job title. Make sure you know how many people you are meeting with. If possible, ask the consultant or Human Resources officer what their personalities are like. Knowing what that person is like will help you prepare for your interview more thoroughly.

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Learn about the company's products, size, and international connections. Also know which groups they belong to and their position in the market.

Get as many details as possible on the position you are being interviewed for. What skills are they looking for? What would your responsibilities be? Consider the reporting line, promotional prospects, machinery/equipment, salary, and fringe benefits.

In most cases, your recruitment consultant will brief you on much of this information. If you have access to the internet, look up the company's website. This is an excellent way of learning more about the company. If you are contacted directly by the company, get the information from Human Resources.

See every interview as an opportunity to learn something new and meet new people to network with. Ensure that you understand the questions fully and correctly and that you then answer them clearly and to the point. Do not rattle on and on.

You should give the interviewer the impression that they are in control.

The Interview

The interviewer's aim is to determine your ability to do the job. Take into account what you know about the company and the role being offered, and then decide which aspects of your own experience to stress most positively.

Show how your experience and background qualifies you to do the job on offer. Keep in mind your Natural Aptitude Planning (NAP). Show your potential employer what you can do for them and what you want to do for them rather than focus on what you expect of them.

You do not have to feel intimidated by the interviewer and become anxious. Never talk about your personal problems, and this include problems you might have had in your previous job, otherwise they will think you will bring your problems with you into your new job.

Do not be a "know-it-all; seen it all." There are certainly areas where you have not got much experience. Offer to learn and to put in extra effort in your own time.

Listen, express interest, and come to the point, but do not take over. By doing this, you will help your interviewer learn more about you. If you are asked for a certain skill or experience that you do not have, do not just say "no"; add, "Although I am very interested in learning."

Anticipate likely questions and rehearse your responses beforehand. Be honest. Your answers may well be checked with your references.

Questions to answer during the interview

If asked questions, always back up an answer with relevant examples or reasons; do not just say “yes” or “no”. Volunteer information, and try to keep answers to no more than one minute long.

Describe your answer with specific examples. What the situation was, what you did about it, and how it added value to the company.

Listen carefully to the interviewer’s questions. If you do not understand the question, ask him or her to please repeat it.

Do not answer too quickly.

Always be positive in your interviews. Do not talk negatively about your past or current employers, the prospective employer or their employees. This will scare the interviewer, and you will leave the client with a negative impression. If there is something you strongly disagree with during the interview, do not raise an objection at that point or disagree immediately. Make sure you understand the situation before being discouraged. Hold it back until after the interview, when you can clarify the issue with your Consultant or with the HR officer. If you are uncertain, ask for another interview to clarify.

When asked about your reasons for leaving a company, it is very important never to blame, criticize or say “promises weren’t kept.” Be prepared to substantiate your reasons for leaving. People often say they want a new challenge. Be prepared to explain your understanding of a challenge. To

say that you moved for more money is not a good idea. This will make you sound interested only in the money and not the opportunity.

When clients ask you to talk about your strengths and weaknesses, do not give a personal characteristic as a weakness; rather, make it work related. For example, "My sense of urgency is sometimes interpreted as impatience by others." Keep all your examples work related. People do judge, although not consciously. Your strengths and weaknesses should reflect what you are like in a business environment.

If you are asked to list your strengths or positive characteristics, it is important to show how this strength will compliment or benefit the work you do or the company you will work for.

Try and use different examples and not the same situation again and again. Going through the Natural Aptitude Planning (NAP) process will help you prepare different examples.

When you are asked by a client to describe who you are as a person, make sure you are careful to stick to your working background and not discuss your personal life. Use what you have learned from your NAP process.

Be alert when you are asked where you see yourself in five years time. This is a dangerous question. If you come across too ambitious, clients will be scared that they might not be able to keep or retain your skills. If you come across too weak or look disinterested, they may think you lack ambition and a sense of urgency.

A good way to answer is to ask what their expectations for the role would be. Alternatively, you can say that you really want to become the best at this particular position in the industry and that you want to learn as much as possible and grow with the company.

What do I say when the interviewer asks me whether I have any questions?

This is almost always a sign that the interview is drawing to a close and that you have one more chance to make that impression.

Now you can impress the interviewer with a good choice of prepared questions. Think carefully when asking questions and make sure they are relevant to the industry, the market, the company and the role you are interested in. Ask questions at a general level, and try to save the best question for this part of the interview. If you did not get a chance yet to show the knowledge you have of the company, now is your chance. Say what you know, and ask related questions. It is always good to mention that you have studied the company's annual report or looked at the website. Consider remarking on any substantial progress the firm has made within the past year or cite an area of company involvement that interests you.

Ask as many job-related questions as possible, as this will give the interviewer the impression that you are keen and knowledgeable. It will also help you understand the role and take a mental photograph of the position.

What salary should I ask for in an interview

Salary is still one of the most difficult areas on all levels of the recruitment scale.

Do not leave it up to the recruitment consultant or company to understand your salary breakdown. Make sure you know exactly what you are getting and what you can expect. It is vitally important that your recruitment consultant as well as the client knows your expectations.

Make sure you know what the cost of hidden benefits amounts to, as this will impact on your total cost to company.

To understand your salary, you need to understand the difference between Cost to Company, Gross Salary, Basic Salary and Net Salary.

Cost to Company (CTC) Salary means every single cent in an annual package that is given to you. Whether it is a bonus, thirteenth check, paid parking, lunch, clothing allowance, a car, petrol, or a cellular phone. Every cent of the total cost to company is paid by the company, and it includes all the hidden luxuries a company gives its staff – even the weekend lodge or the occasional rugby tickets, etc. Basically, things you use or are given but do not pay for.

Basic Salary is just that: the basic figure without any benefits or added costs over and above. Make sure that you are very clear when speaking to a client or recruitment consultant regarding your current salary. Ninety percent of people interpret a salary breakdown differently. If you name your

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current salary to a client or a consultant, do not assume they will understand what you are earning. Usually, when a client talks about basic salary, it means there are still benefits over and above. The basic salary plus medical and pension and a thirteenth check. Basic salary is always worked out over twelve months. Check with the person you are meeting with. Always ask if that is the entire package.

Gross Salary is when the benefits are included in the basic figure. This means that you need to deduct medical and provident fund/pension fund from the figure to get the basic salary. This is still not the full package; it is the basic salary plus the medical and provident or pension. There still might be other benefits over and above this figure.

Net Salary is the money you take home or put in your pocket after all deductions have made. It is what you take home at the end of the month, meaning what you can spend!

On an interview, when asked about what salary you are looking for, the best possible answer is to mention your current package: what you are currently earning. However, do not just say you earn, for example, R20,000. Specify whether this is basic salary, net salary, gross or total cost to company.

When you say R20,000 to the client, they might think you are talking about your total package, while you might assume they know you are talking about your take-home net pay. There is a huge difference between the two.

Salary is always tricky. The best way to answer this question is to say, "My current package is (X-amount), and I get ... (discuss benefits, commissions and when your next increases are expected)." Then say, "I take home (X-amount) after deductions. From what we have discussed, this opportunity is really something I see as challenging (and then substantiate this). I am

certain that your organisation would make me an offer that is fair and market related, in which case I would be very keen to consider.”

Remember, if the interviewer pushes you for a figure, a good way to leave it is to say that you would accept a lateral move on your current package. This is a worst case scenario. Then you know the company will not offer you less than what your current package is. It will also show that you are interested in the opportunity and company and not just making a move for more money.

Be aware that companies do not have to increase your salary or offer you more. However, consistency regarding offers and what you can expect within industries across the board is normally 10% to 15% more than your current salary, unless you have a specific skills that is in high demand.

When money is the only thing that motivates you to make that move or accept that job, maybe it is because it is not the right opportunity or time to make that move. Do not accept just any new job; make sure it is a career move and in line with your NAP.

MEDICAL AID

Always make sure you know what medical aid you are on and how many dependants are on the medical aid. This can affect the offer tremendously. Make sure you understand the implications of taking different scales and different medical aid options. Sometimes companies do not offer medical aid at all.

PENSION or PROVIDENT FUND

Make sure you understand what this fund is and what percent the company contributes. This can affect your net (take-home) salary.

THIRTEENTH CHECKS/BONUSES

Companies do not automatically have a guaranteed thirteenth check. They might have a one, but it can be based on performance and not guaranteed. Make sure you know what the client offers.

Some companies offer fourteenth or even fifteenth checks. This is a huge incentive for anyone but it is at the discretion of the company.

Bonuses are very often a new substitute for a thirteenth check. Make sure you are aware whether the bonus is guaranteed or not. Knowing all the benefits can very often be the difference between saying yes or no to an opportunity.

ALLOWANCES

Always ask about cell phone allowances, car, petrol, housing, food, and clothing allowances.

THE 20 MOST DIFFICULT QUESTIONS YOU'LL BE ASKED IN AN INTERVIEW

Being prepared is half the battle.

The interview is considered to be the most critical aspect of every journey that brings you face-to-face with a future boss. One must prepare for it with the same tenacity and quickness as one does for a marathon.

1. Tell me more about yourself.

This is often the first question in an interview. Be extra careful that you do not say too much or say the wrong things. Keep your answer succinct and specific. Stick to your education and working background. Who you are at work? Emphasize your work experience. Remember, this is likely to be a warm-up question.

2. What do you know about our organization?

Do not rely on information from friends or colleges when going for an interview. Google! Search the company's website. You should be able to discuss the company's products, services, revenues, reputation, image, goals, problems, history and philosophy. Do not come across as a know-it-all! Let your answer show that you have taken the time to do some

research but do not overwhelm the interviewer – and make it clear that you wish to learn more.

You might start your answer with: "During my job search, I've investigated a number of companies. Yours is one of the few that interests me, for these reasons ..." Or "I have been on your website several times and keep going back. I really like the fact that"

Always keep your answer positive, even if you are a financial manager interviewed to turn the financial constraints of the group around.

3. Why should we hire you instead of the next person?

Talk about your NAP and the points you learned about yourself; i.e., what you are really good at doing and how this is in line with what they are looking for. If you discuss what you are good at, back this up with strong and relevant examples, including how you saved prior company money or time. Your passion will come through and you will automatically stand out from everyone else. You will talk with conviction, and this is not something a person can fake.

4. Why do you want to work for us?

The answer is not because, "It is a nice company, and I like interacting with people".

This is a good opportunity to show you have researched the company's website and are aware of the group's particular industry. Before going for an interview, make sure you know why you want the position at this particular group.

What you could stress is that you have done the appropriate NAP and the opportunity at hand is very much in line with your natural aptitude.

Avoid going to interviews where you would not be able or would not want to function.

People cannot keep passion down, and passion always shows without you having to try too hard.

5. How did the consultant or HR describe the position for which you are being interviewed?

Keep your answer succinct and specific and think in terms of NAP and the responsibilities and accountabilities the consultant or HR described to you. Make sure that you really do understand what the position involves. If you are not certain, ask the interviewer specific questions. Take a mental photo or picture of the position. Make sure that you really understand the position rather than walk out of the interview feeling uncertain.

6. What do like most about this position?

NAP will help you know why you are right for this position. List all of the NAP points and why you fit.

7. How quickly can we expect results from you, should you join the company?

Do not be over-confident. Say that while you would expect to meet the deadlines and pull your own weight from the first day, it might take six months to a year before you could expect to know the organization and its needs well enough to make a major contribution. Also, reiterate that you would keep open communication channels on any given task or project for senior management to be able to track progress.

8. What will keep you at the company?

If your NAP is in line with the opportunity, make sure you say that you are interested in a career with the organization because of this. Also, say that you want to learn and grow as much as possible in that particular industry.

9. You may be over-qualified or too experienced for this position. How do you feel about a position that is not that senior?

If the position is in line with your NAP, you can reiterate this in the interview and explain why you would be successful in this role.

10. What is your management style?

Make sure you have done proper research on the company. Ask your consultant what the current person's management style is and how it is received. Know the management style of the person you would be reporting to and how you would be able to compliment this person.

Your NAP will give you a clear indication of how to answer this question.

11. Are you a good manager? Can you give me some examples? Do you feel that you have top managerial potential?

Keep your answer achievement and task-oriented and think how you can use NAP to ensure you use examples from your career and stress your experience and any feedback you have had.

12. What do you look for when you hire people?

You can answer that this would depend on what specifically the position needs to achieve for the company. If you really understand what the

company wants to achieve with the position, then you can begin to look for the right person: someone who is passionate about it. NAP will give you a good understanding what to look at.

13. Have you ever had to fire people? What were the reasons, and how did you handle the situation?

Admit that the situation was not easy, but say that it worked out well, both for the company and, you think, for the individual. Show that, like anyone else, you do not enjoy unpleasant tasks, but you can resolve problems efficiently and, in the case of firing someone, humanely.

14. What important trends do you see in our industry?

When going for an interview in a specific industry, make sure you know the most important trends related to your particular position and to that industry. This will help showcase how well you understand the position you are applying for. Consider technological challenges, opportunities, economic conditions, or even regulatory demands.

15. What do you think is the most difficult thing about being a manager or executive?

Make sure that you mention the specific areas that challenged you. Keep in mind that you should not come across as negative; rather, these are areas you will give more attention to.

16. Why are you leaving your present job? (Or, why did you leave your last job?)

Be brief, to the point, and as honest as you can without sounding negative or talking badly about a previous employer or company. Refer back to

having done NAP and really understanding more about what you want out of your career as opposed to just having a job.

If you were retrenched, say so; otherwise, indicate that the move was your decision. Do not mention personality conflicts.

The interviewer may spend some time probing you on this issue, particularly if it is clear that you were terminated. Remember that your references are likely to be checked, so do not lie or make up a story for an interview.

17. Why aren't you earning more at your age?

Say that this is one of the reasons why you have done NAP and also why you are looking at opportunities that are more in line with your passion. Do not be defensive. Say that you have always focused on a good opportunity as opposed to just the money. You are now at a stage in your career where you can align your skills and compensation.

18. What do you think of your boss?

Be as positive as you can and always refer back to your duties.

19. What salary are you looking for?

Salary is always a delicate discussion. See the discussion under “What salary should I ask for in an interview?” (p80)

20. What are your long-range goals?

Refer back to your NAP planning and to your reasons for looking at a new opportunity. Do not answer, “I need more money” or “I am interested in the

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position you have advertised." Relate your goals to the company in line with the position you are interviewing for.

Your personality is just as important

Whether or not the position is offered to you depends on more than just your qualifications, experience and skills; it will also depend on your attitude and your ability to sell yourself. The fact that the company agreed to see you, proves that your professional background is basically right.

Your most important attributes that must come across are the following:

Be Honest: Experienced interviewers are seasoned at discovering lies. If that happens, you will not get the job, even if it was a trivial and unimportant issue. The interviewer may not confront you about having been caught lying, and you may never know why you did not get the position.

Be Competent and Capable: The employer looks for excellence that is consistent. Use examples to show that you are able to work to the best of your ability. Use feedback from your current boss, clients or colleagues to verify these abilities. Keep in mind your process during NAP

Be Confident: It is your job to sell yourself to the interviewer, and a confident approach will single you out as a candidate who must be taken seriously. However, be wary of being over-confident.

Be Interested and Enthusiastic: Show interest and enthusiasm at all times in the interview, even when you have lost interest. Ask for more information and details about the company and position. You can show your enthusiasm by saying, "I am always willing to learn new things and

expand my knowledge”. Do not react negatively if you hear something you do not like; the job can always be turned down later. It is always good to network.

Be Willing to accept Extra Work: Say that you are not a clock-watcher and are always willing to help out and do extra work, if you are.

Be Reliable: Say that your previous employer could always rely on you, that you take responsibility very seriously and that you are determined to complete a task. Try to use examples from past experiences: “We often had to work extensive overtime, but it was worth it to see the project completed on time,” or, “I was not ill for one day over the last two years, and I am always on time.”

Be Willing and Committed: Say that you would give everything for the right job.

Be Enthusiastic and Full of Good Ideas: Give examples of initiative in previous jobs and explain how the company profited from it. This will show what value you have added to the organization in your previous employment. NAP will give you an opportunity to showcase different examples.

Be Reasonably Assertive: This does not mean you should become overbearing and tell the interviewer how to run the business. Try not to be a “know-it-all”. People are easily offended and might feel threatened. On the other hand, you do not want to come across as being meek and mild.

Show Loyalty: Every employer wishes to find total loyalty, which you can show by talking highly of previous employers and colleagues. “My last employer was always very fair and encouraging. If they could have offered me a wider spectrum of challenge, I would not have left.” Never speak badly of previous employers or disclose any financial or personal details.

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This, of course, may present difficulties if you are asked about sales targets or financial budgets. Depending on your commitment to your present or past company, you could say, "It is not a secret, therefore I could tell you that ...". If it is confidential information, it would be better to say, "The figures are confidential, but I was 25% above last quarter," or "We were 10% below expected costs of our budget." This way you remain loyal.

Team Work: Say that you fit in well with other team members but you are able to work independently when necessary.

Despite a bad economy or any recent political changes, always display a positive attitude towards the company, the job market in general, the country, the political position, this very position and your life.

Companies do not employ negative, depressed and worried people; they hire those who can accept life as it is and see the good and positive side of it.

Second or follow-up interviews

Panel interviews, second interviews or follow-up interviews can very often be a deal breaker. People tend to be more relaxed during the second interview. This is generally good. You should be aware of being over-confident during these interviews as it may come across as arrogance.

You should also be aware of giving too little information. People tend to give less information about themselves during the second, third or panel interview, as they have met one or two of the interviewers on previous occasions. Never assume that one particular person discussed your background and details in-depth with the others.

When people fail the second or third interview, the feedback is often that it was because the person did not display enough energy or solid experience. Always treat the second, third or panel interview like your first interview.

RELOCATION: Things to take into consideration

When relocation is on the cards and you are thinking of moving overseas to another province or state, make sure you have taken everything into account. Do this before you start going on interviews. People very often say they are open to opportunities anywhere. They go for interviews, get the offer and discover they cannot make the move.

So what should you look at?

Have you discussed the opportunity with your spouse? This would include your wife, husband, fiancée, fiancé, girlfriend, boyfriend or partner. Take into consideration what positions they work in and whether they would be able to find work. Are they ageing, sick, or very close to you? And how do they feel about the move?

If you have children, how old are they? What type of schools do they need? What grade or year are they in? How do they feel about the move?

How does your family feel about the move? How close are you to your parents, brothers and sisters? Are your parents frail, and do they need you to look after them? How do they feel about the move? How would the move really affect them? How often would it be possible to visit them?

In terms of property and assets, do you have a bond agreement? Do you rent or do you have to sell your property? Do you have a lease agreement and, if so, what is the lease period?

Will you use an estate agent or will you sell directly?

What will happen to your car?

Do you have other assets?

What are your expectations when relocating?

Will there be relocation expenses? What do you expect from the position, salary, standard of living, and accommodation within the timeframe anticipated?

After the interview

You have been to a client for an interview, now what? You need feedback.

Usually consultants will ask you or expect you to give them feedback. If you have to deal with a client directly, then Human Resources (HR) will expect your feedback.

But why should you give feedback to a consultant, to HR or to the client? And what type of feedback should you give?

The HR division or recruitment consultants have already built a relationship with the people who interviewed you: the line managers. They will have a better knowledge of the employer and will be able to better counsel you with constructive comments relating to whether you should accept a position with that company or rather drop it.

A feedback session will also enable you to objectively decide whether the position is really one that is in line with what you want or need for the next career move.

There are things you should look out for and take into consideration before accepting an opportunity.

Usually, successful interviews last a little longer. There is the odd client who interviews for only ten minutes or even less, but the usual time would be anywhere from thirty minutes to two hours, depending on the position and the client. This is why feedback is always important.

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It is good to remember who you met with and the designation of the interviewer. This will give you an indication of how long the process will take. It is almost always a good sign when the interviewer introduces you to other people during the interview or shows you their premises.

It is important to voice your thoughts on the people or person you met with to your consultant or HR. This will also help you decide whether you are able to work with the person or not. Trust your instincts. Also, look around and get a feeling for the environment and the culture of the company, and clarify anything you do not understand with the person you are feeding back too.

Treat every interview the same, whether it is your first, second, third or even seventh interview with the same client: always treat it like it's the first. Never assume you have the position; arrogance will definitely knock you out of the process. Also, never assume that the person you have met before has relayed the information from that particular meeting.

The purpose of the interview is to really understand whether you can do the job. Clients do not hire you for what you want to become but for what value and skills you can already add. So when giving feedback to HR or to your consultant, reiterate how you think you can add value.

Also let your consultant or HR know if the interviewer made any references to another interview or testing that should be done. They will help you speed up the process.

When you have any concerns about the position, the company, the situation, etc., speak up. Do not leave it and hope it will go away or come right once you have accepted an offer. It won't; it will get worse. Address all your concerns upfront with HR and your consultant; you can even mention it to the client in a follow-up interview. If it is not in line with your career

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plan, then you really should discuss it openly and decide whether it's really worth you pursuing the opportunity.

Counter offers: Yes or No

You found that job, and you can hardly contain your excitement! That is, until you receive a counter offer from your current company. Now what? Should you take the counter offer or cut your losses and go?

Going through the NAP process upfront will help you during decision-making time. The reasons for wanting to make that move are hardly ever just money related.

If you are only moving for more money, then maybe it is not the right time to make a move. You could just keep on moving for more money and never choose the right career.

Let's face it: a counter offer is flattering and often part of the recognition you have been waiting for. Or is it really?

There are various reasons companies make counter offers, and some offers are really aggressive. To replace key staff in an organization can be costly and time consuming.

There are other reasons you need to be aware of companies extending counter offers. Companies often try to buy time to find the right skill by extending a counter offer. Consultants in the recruitment industry will confirm that 80% of staff leave within six months of accepting a counter offer.

Aside from the various reasons for extending counter offers, there is also a psychological impact. For example, you are a valued employee and diligent

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at your job and your manager or directors trust you, yet you have been going on interviews without your employer's knowledge. Suddenly, you resign. The trust relationship you worked at is broken in that instance, regardless of what level you are on or how good you are. It is like catching your spouse cheating on you. The relationship will never be the same, even if you get a second chance: a counter offer.

The nature of the relationship changes, whether they tell you that they cannot cope without your skills or give you more responsibility. A company will immediately put procedures into place that will safeguard that particular position.

A counter offer is very often your next raise you were working towards, but it is just given to you earlier. In some cases, the counter offer is to buy time to find a replacement.

You might really like your company but feel you are not being grown and developed. You find a new opportunity and get a counter offer, and suddenly you have the recognition you have been craving. The thing is, the people stay the same and the environment will stay the same; nothing will change. You will still feel under-valued and any feeling of satisfaction will be short-lived. By the time you realize this, the new opportunity is long gone.

NAP will help you understand what you are looking for, specifically in your career and what you can compromise on.

Before embarking on a new career, make sure you know what type of environment you need to be in to be successful and what you are passionate about. You just might be in the right position without realizing it.

Resigning

Resigning is probably one of the most important things you will ever do in your career. Yes, you have read right. Your attitude during your resignation period will be tried and tested. Things might get ugly, yet it is how you conduct yourself during this period that will make all the difference.

Always keep in mind that the company still needs to give you a reference at some point and time. Even if you part on bad terms, a good attitude will definitely go a long way.

Not everybody gets along with their bosses. It happens. So you do not have to hide it during an interview. It is easy for seasoned recruiters – as well as for Human Resources professionals – to pick up whether it was personal or work-related issue.

Keep your resignation short and to the point.

Resignation Example:

(Your name and surname)

(Your physical address)

(Code)

(Company Name)

(Physical Address)

(Code)

(Date)

Attention: (Title or name of person you are directly reporting to)

Dear

This letter serves as my formal notice of resignation from, effective from with my last working day being

Please be assured that I have given this proper consideration and this was purely a career-oriented decision.

I want to express my gratitude for the rewarding professional association I enjoyed during my employment with, which will be memorable for many years.

Thank you again for the courtesy extended to me. I trust that you understand this is my final decision.

Yours sincerely,

(Your name)

Within

We have not made the effort to be here and then do nothing. We are here to learn how to be passionate, vivacious beings and live the human experience.

Many of us spend our whole life searching for a place where we can feel more appreciated, more fruitful, more secure, all without realizing that place is within each of us.

When we gather up those parts of us that have become scattered and we recognize our limiting behavior, we will have access to all the resources needed for us to enjoy the immense promise our careers hold.

What am I on about? The Comfort Zone. A friend recently described this to me brilliantly. He asked me the definition of insanity and then explained it as follows: "Insanity is to do the same thing over and over again, in the same way, with the same effort, planning and intensity, while expecting a different result." This to me equals the "comfort zone." Slipping into a comfort zone is a simple process.

Our activities and behavior tend to take on familiar patterns. Patterns become habits, habits become routines, and before we know it those routines become a rut. If we are creatures of habit, why do we feel so dissatisfied when we finally manage to get into a routine and reach consistency, especially in our careers?

More often than not the routine happens without conscious planning. So why do we put ourselves through what can be a stressful situation? Above all, difficult situations constitute growth. Intellectual stimulation gives you a sense of achievement.

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Intellectual stimulation is something you do not have to compete for with anyone else, and it is a constant ongoing process. Stepping into the unknown teaches you, gives you new life experiences, and tests you. It gives a sense of adventure, and once you push through the initial fears you might find something you love and are successful at – and you might make money.

Facing your fear feels good. So what gets you out of your comfort zone? Face your fears and change your behavior. NAP will encourage you to think differently about yourself and your skills.

Raise your estimation of yourself by at least 10% and realize that you too can be capable. One of the great stumbling blocks to getting what you want out of life is the fear of failure.

Achieving what you really want almost always requires you to overcome some fear of failure. Use your fear to drive your passion to succeed. We live in an era where there are literally hundreds, if not thousands, of tools to help us grow and develop.

Use your Network

Use your networking skills to promote your own skills. Without spending too much time, you can get your own name out there.

My passion has always been people. Networking is something I have been doing naturally throughout my life. To me, personally, networking is simply the way you communicate.

Every single person I have ever met is a possible network opportunity, even the ones I did not like. It is the actual recognition that each and every person you have a conversation with, whether they are asking you for directions or saying good morning or talking up a real storm, is important. In each of these is an opportunity to recognize that that individual has ambition (maybe not the same as yours), hopes and, most importantly, hidden insecurities – just like you.

It is when people feel regarded and feel you have noticed them that they remember you. This applies to both verbal and written communication. Being remembered is the secret to networking. People remember the way they felt and, without knowing it, this is your first instinct when you think about a person. You will phone or talk to someone again if the memory was good.

Networking is also using the people you meet along the way when you need to draw on their individual skills set. Networking does not mean you have to know a person well before making contact. It means that you have been introduced to the individual or heard of them through a referral.

Networking is not complicated. It is about having fun and taking a keen interest in the people you meet. Remember their names, what they were

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wearing, what they looked like, what position they were in or title they held, and remember the conversation you had at the time. Networking works when looking for a new opportunity.

Social networking websites also make it easier to help you with that new career move. Do not be too proud or afraid to post that you are in the market for a new opportunity on social networking sites. If done tastefully, it can go a long way.

“I was always looking outside myself for strength and confidence, but it comes from within. It is there all the time” – Anna Freud