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If you like what you read in our FREE book, imagine getting a job winning CV and customised interview coaching from the team that wrote the book. Who said only movie stars had their own publicity agents!!!



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What makes **Next Job Now** so special?

- **Proven job-winner.** Everything you'll read in Next Job Now has been tested and proven to be a winner. Our unique job hunting techniques are so successful that competitors have tried to imitate our methods.
- **Unique Designer CV.** Few people have ever seen a Designer CV. The visual impact is stunning and employers tell us they can't put them down. Our powerful 'storytelling' style ensures your entire resume gets read.
- **Everything you need.** Many career books cover only some of the things you need to know to win jobs. Next Job Now has everything you need for every stage of the job-hunting process. It truly is a one stop shop.
- **How to sell yourself.** We haven't rehashed the same old job-hunting stuff that's been around for decades. Next Job Now is based on a "sell yourself" approach that gets your message across in a compelling way.
- **Know your value.** Learn how to show the employer that they must hire you before any other candidate by communicating your unique value as an employee. We'll help you raise the asking price for your talents!
- **Questions you must ask.** What you ask during an interview can be even more important than how you answer questions. That's why we teach you what to ask to be seen as an insightful candidate who can get the job done.
- **Secret insider tips.** Next Job Now was not simply written by a recruiter, a psychologist or an employer. It was written by a very successful job hunter who knows what it takes to win jobs and helps people like you do just that.

"Fantastic. Even I would hire myself with a resume like that."

Next Job Now client



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Australia's best resumes.
Would you bet your career or family security on your current CV?

Click here for FREE samples.

Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au



David Penman is a career counsellor, trainer, interview coach and professional resume writer. He has worked with line staff, managers and senior executives across a broad range of industries domestically and internationally to establish a track record in successfully coaching them to win high profile jobs and promotions.

Previously a senior executive with a Top 4 Australian bank, David knows what it takes to get to the top and he's coached hundreds to do just that.

David has held a number of senior leadership appointments across the Asia Pacific, including Chief Operating Officer for Assirt Equities Research and Group General Manager of Fairfax's Strategic Research Division for Asia Pacific.

Originally a member of the Australian Defence Force, David has also indulged his strong passion for understanding interview behaviour through extensive research of personality and body language. His formal qualifications include being trained as an interrogator, Counter Intelligence Investigator and Specialist Interviewer with the military.

David studied a Bachelor of Laws at Deakin University, was awarded a Bachelor of Social Science (majoring in Human Resource Development and Communication) from Southern Cross University and holds a Certificate in Vocational Instruction and a Diploma in Personnel Administration. His experience both as a job hunter and employer is acknowledged by executives within major corporations.

David's expertise in the field of job hunting is complemented by a strong track record in sales. He has held senior sales appointments at the Director level and established a reputation for breaking sales records across Asia Pacific. His strong sales skills show through in his unusual ability to help others "sell" themselves to employers.



It's dangerous...that's the bad news

Put very simply, getting a new job can be a real pain!

You've probably heard the stories. Brilliant employees miss out on the job all the time because their cover letter and CV didn't catch anyone's attention. Not only that. There are so many tough new interview questions popping up that knowing how to get through an interview successfully can be a bit like walking through a minefield.

It's dangerous...that's the bad news. But that's about to change.

The truth about getting jobs

With the right advice, the power to step up to a better job is in your hands...that's the truth. Everything you need is in Next Job Now. It's a collection of the best ideas from some of the most successful job hunters and recruiters around.

Take one of our clients for example. In 1999, Tom (not his real name) was a junior manager on \$35,000 a year. Four years later, Tom is a senior executive and earns more than \$120,000. We helped Tom get promoted through three increasingly senior roles to get where he is now. He always had the goods...we just helped him get the jobs using everything you'll find in Next Job Now.

Next Job Now is a new way to get access to the most successful and persuasive jobhunting secrets ever written. We're lifting the lid on insider information that's usually shared only with big name clients of top recruitment firms.

How does that help you? With the help of Next Job Now, you'll discover precisely how the most successful job hunters have been trading in their old jobs for much higher paying ones.

This is a *guerrilla guide to getting jobs*. Getting a job is a little like going to university...you learn a lot of theory but it's not until you get out in the real world that you discover what actually works. That's why we're going to cut through the hype and teach you the "street-wise" way of getting jobs.

Next Job Now is short on theory and long on practical tips that will help you win the job of your dreams. Be sure to read everything thoroughly before you start your job hunt. Time spent in preparation is never wasted.

Why does Next Job Now work?

The problem with job-hunting these days is that pretty much everyone is doing exactly the same thing. There's really not much around to help you stand out from the crowd and get noticed. That's where Next Job Now comes in. We've rewritten the rules to put you firmly in the driver's seat.



You see, we originally started out as a full service resume firm and we've enjoyed such incredible success winning jobs for people that most of our clients pay upwards of \$500 for a resume. We want you to benefit from our insider knowledge as well for a mere fraction of that cost.

Next Job Now is a genuine one-stop-shop for your job-hunting needs. It's jam-packed with everything you need to get the job of your dreams. We offer much more than just advice...this is a comprehensive DIY kit with all the tips and tools you'll ever need.

How does it work? You'll find that it's remarkably simple...

First we'll show you how to get your CV picked out of the pack first time, every time with a high-impact cover letter and a unique Designer layout that is like no other you've ever seen.

Then you'll learn how to write a CV that people just can't put down using a "story telling" style that we developed from years of research. Importantly, you'll see how to put more of 'yourself' into the resume so the employer learns about who you are as an individual and what you stand for.

Finally, you'll see how getting through the interview is as much about what you ask as how you "sell" yourself when you answer questions. Don't worry...we'll give you answers to everything and some great tips on how to say it.

Who will benefit from this book?

If you need a job, would like a promotion or just want more money... then you need Next Job Now. Our unique approach to job hunting applies equally to jobs at all levels, regardless of industry or salary.

Our insider tips also apply internationally and across government appointments. In fact, Next Job Now is so successful that we are one of the few firms to successfully win IT degree accreditation for foreign IT professionals relocating to Australia on behalf of our corporate clients. Next Job Now genuinely works!

Here's what some of our full-service resume customers have told us:

"It's terrific. Thank you very much for all your help."

"We've had more calls for interviews over the last week than ever before."

"I've sent my resume to six recruiters and all of them have asked for a meeting."

"I got the job! Actually, you got me the job."



Next Job Now

CHAPTER 1

WAYS OF FINDING A JOB

Next Job Now

THOUSANDS OF JOBS.
More jobs than you can poke a stick at. National coverage across all industries.

[Click here to apply.](#)

Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au

The banner features a blue background with a curved horizon line showing various industrial and construction scenes. The Next Job Now logo is in the top left, and the text is in white and yellow.



Let the job hunt begin

“The golden opportunity you are seeking is in yourself, it is not in your environment; it is not in luck or chance, or the help of others, it is in yourself alone.”

Orison Swett Marden

There are many ways to find jobs, but the four most common methods include responding to job advertisements, meeting with recruiters, networking through contacts and cold calling employers directly. Let's look at each method in a little more detail.

Responding to job advertisements

By the time a job is advertised there will be hundreds or thousands of candidates just like you applying for the role. It's hard to stand out from the crowd when there's a lot to choose from. Responding to advertisements does work, but the odds are not normally good.

Luckily, our unique Next Job Now resume will tip the odds in your favour and get you noticed in a memorable way, making this method of job-hunting more successful than it otherwise might be.

You can use job advertisements to get the attention of a company even if the position advertised is not the type of role or level of job you are looking for. For example, let's say you see an advertisement for an IT Manager and the company sounds great even though you have no IT background.

You could write to the company explaining that you saw their advertisement, loved the way they talked about their culture and wondered if you could meet with them to see if your skills could add value to their business. This is how I got my first international job!

Don't overlook online postings as a valuable source of job leads. One of my favourite websites is www.seek.com.au. Seek covers all levels of jobs for numerous recruiting firms and includes quite a few executive search postings as well. It is well worth a look.

Meeting with recruiters

I've used the word "meeting" because you'll need to spend quite a bit of time doing exactly that if recruiters are involved in the job-hunting process. After all, they need to get to know you a little first.

Recruiters are naturally more interested in their client than you. They get paid by the company for placing someone, and that someone doesn't particularly have to be you. Don't get me wrong, recruiters are a very valuable part of the job hunting process. You just need to understand what motivates them and how to get best value from your relationship with them.



Consider this. You want a well-paid job with a great company. The employer wants a capable employee who fits in and delivers good value. So where does the recruiter come into the picture. Well, they want to place a candidate that will impress the employer sufficiently to generate repeat business.

The recruiter also hopes the candidate will become an advocate for their firm once they have been placed. Don't be afraid to let recruiters know that you understand the placement is a three way proposition. It will put their mind at ease and cast you in a more favourable light than other candidates.

The key to working with recruiters is to form an ongoing relationship with them, which means they have to *want* to talk to you. Nothing makes you more attractive to a recruiter than being able to give them information on what is happening in your firm that might lead to them being able to place new employees.

**“You need a
draw card to get
the employer’s
attention”**

Once you've met a recruiter, drop them a line every month or so to keep them up to date on what's happening with your company. You can also pass on highlights from your new achievements at the same time to bolster your value as a potential job placement.

I've met some nice recruiters over the years, but no-one has your best interests at heart as much as you do. Use recruiters, but focus the bulk of your efforts on other ways of finding jobs unless you are looking for senior roles such as executive placements or searches.

Networking through contacts

The time-honoured tradition of networking is a good way to get a job because you are dealing with people who know you and trust you. Be sure to let all your friends know when you are on the lookout for a new job and ask them who they know that might be able to help. Don't apply too much pressure though, or they may decline to help you in future.

Make the time to go to lots of events and functions to introduce yourself to people. Don't assume that your contacts will know why you are worth hiring. Briefly remind them what you offer, perhaps by sending a brief email with a few dot points covering your more impressive skills and achievements.

That's all I'm going to say about networking, because while it can be very effective, it is time-consuming and success is often reliant on the size of your network.

Cold calling the employer directly

Cold-calling is by far the best way of getting a job. Many jobs never get advertised. They simply get filled by “someone that somebody knows” or by an internal candidate who was



at the right place at the right time when they needed someone. By being proactive and getting noticed by an employer at the right time you can beat other candidates to the job.

Some firms steer clear of hiring external candidates because of the costs and complexity involved in using recruitment agencies and advertising. This opens a large window of opportunity for you. All you need to do is pick the companies you want to work for, do some research on them (which should be quite easy courtesy of the Internet) and send off a teaser letter to each company.

There are always jobs for good people. So even if the company you contact doesn't have an opening, they may just call you in to see if you could add value to their business. You never know, they may create a role or replace a non-performer...it has happened. This is my favourite job-hunting method.

Managing your job hunting campaign

Any good job-hunting campaign combines a variety of methods for finding work. You might want to kick start your hunt by responding to a few advertisements in newspapers and online postings, then take the time to cold call a selection of companies, followed by visits to a few of the mid-sized recruiters.

Here are a few tips to keep you on track with your campaign.

- Review your personal skills, experience and desires - be honest about what you are good at and what gets you excited.
- Consider the types of companies you want to work for, the locations you want to work in and the type of role you are seeking.
- Develop a shortlist of companies in priority order and identify the decision maker in those companies.
- Research the companies and tailor your cover letter and CV to their needs.
- Email a PDF copy of your resume directly to the decision maker and follow up with a hard copy in the mail (the mailed copy acts as a reminder).
- Send many more emails and letters than you think you will need. Plan on getting one interview for every 20 applications sent.
- Follow up each email with a 'courtesy call' the following week to introduce yourself to the decision-maker personally and confirm they received your CV.



Next Job Now

CHAPTER 2

GETTING INTO THE EMPLOYER'S HEAD

A banner advertisement for Next Job Now. It features the company logo on the left and the text 'Next Job Now' on the right. Below the logo, it says 'Insider secrets. Click here to learn about 3 mistakes other recruiters are hoping you will make.' followed by the question 'Will you be their next victim?' in large, bold, orange letters. At the bottom left, it provides the phone number '1300 112 114' and the website 'www.nextjobnow.com.au'. The background of the banner shows a collage of military vehicles and personnel in a desert setting.

Next Job Now

Insider secrets. Click here to learn about 3 mistakes other recruiters are hoping you will make.

Will you be their next victim?

Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au



What employers want

“The one important thing that I have learned over the years is the difference between taking one’s work seriously and taking one’s self seriously. The first is imperative and the second is disastrous.”

Margot Fonteyn

Most businesses are not charities. It’s harsh but true to say that an employer expects a return from you on their investment. Understand that and you will be streets ahead of other job applicants.

The employer is the person making all the decisions and your success depends on your ability to understand what it is they want from you. So put yourself in their shoes and focus on showing them that you are the answer to their business needs. At the end of the day job interviews are all about answering the three questions uppermost in the employer’s mind:

- Are you capable of doing the job?
- What will it take to make you do the job?
- Will you fit the company’s culture?

If you can convince the employer to answer those questions positively in their mind, then you are well on the way to success. So, how do we do that?

Most job applicants sit down and write as much as they can about themselves without giving much thought at all to what is going through the employer’s mind. The best way to discover what an employer wants is to research their company so you can develop strong sense of what they are looking for.

Through developing an appreciation of the employer’s needs, you can present your skills and experience in a tailored fashion that really raises their eyebrows. This means you will go a long way to answering the three key questions in their mind and making it to the shortlist while others have their CV tossed in the bin.

The information you gather during your research can be used to get into the employer’s head in the following ways:

- Include key themes that are directly relevant to the employer in the cover letter.
- Craft a resume that relates skills and experience directly to a specific role.
- Identify themes of importance to the employer so you can address them in the interview even if the employer does not raise them, which they often do not.
- Provide a ‘pre-interview summary’ to indicate you know what is important to them.
- Know what the employer might regard as your weakness for the job on offer and be prepared ahead of time to address them.



How to research a company

The better your understanding of an employer needs and their company's background...the better your chances of getting the job. Some methods you can use to research a company include:

- Arrange a visit to the company and ask people you meet as many questions as possible.
- Ask the company to send you a copy of the annual report or get it from ASIC.
- Scan current and past ASX media releases if it is a listed company.
- Do a newspaper search at the library.
- Use an internet search engine to conduct a general search (I personally prefer Google).
- Visit websites that have information on Australian companies such as www.companyinfo.com
- Obtain any marketing and product information available from the company.
- Ask for a copy of the job description and the KRA document to determine how performance will be measured.
- Ask the names of the people who will be conducting the interview and see if any information is available about them on the company website or the internet.
- Search for the company vision and the AGM notes if they are available in the public domain.

How to profile a role

Different employers have different ideas about what's important in a given role. They will approach each interview with a picture of their specific needs in mind and quiz you to see how you stack up against that picture.

Your research will help you identify what's likely to be important to a particular employer. Attributes such as a strong results focus, technical skills and interpersonal skills are all likely to be on their shopping list to varying degrees.

Improve your odds during the interview by imagining that you are the employer and write down a list of the five things that are most important to you in a new employee for the role in question. Later you will use this knowledge to tailor your cover letter, resume and interview performance.

Once you've identified what is likely to be most important to the employer, go over your background and experience to identify gaps that might give the interviewer cause for concern. Savvy employers will deliberately seek to expose the gaps to discover where



you fall short of their ideal employee. Later we'll learn how to tell stories in response to interview questions to bridge these gaps.

Now that you've decided who you want to work for and researched what the employer wants, its time to start work on that all important cover letter and resume. The resume is always written before the cover letter, but the cover letter is the first thing that employers see, so we'll start there.



Next Job Now

CHAPTER 3

COVER LETTERS THAT WORK

A banner advertisement for Next Job Now. It features the company logo on the left and the text 'Next Job Now' on the right. The background is a dark blue gradient with a curved, glowing effect at the bottom right, showing a collage of images including a person in a hard hat, a truck, and a construction site.

Selection criteria. Looking for Government jobs?
We have a 90% success rate winning interviews!!!

[Click here for FREE samples.](#)

Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au



The aim of a cover letter

*“At each moment of life, you are at a fork in the road
and you will choose which direction to take.”*

Richard Carlson & Joseph Bailey

The aim of a cover letter is to get your resume read. Let me explain that...

Most companies get junior staff to scan the resumes they receive. The person entrusted with skimming through the resumes to decide which ones will be read in detail normally only takes a few seconds to make up their mind.

The aim of your cover letter is simply to get the person who receives it to turn the page and look at your resume. That's why it's important to come across as different. Employers see so many cover letters and resumes that your's may get missed if it doesn't leap out and say "read me". A good cover letter tells the reader that your resume is worth reading from end to end.

Words that sell

Every job hunt is a sale, and the employer is the person considering 'buying' you. Since you only get one shot at making an impression, every word counts. That's why it's important to use words that sell yourself.

There's no doubt that your employer will expect you to make good things happen in your new role, so why not give them a taste of your ability to deliver the goods in the cover letter by using words that show you make things happen. Use action words at the start of every dot point on your cover letter wherever possible to convey a clear impression that you can add value.

When drafting dot points for your cover letter, get straight to the point and don't waffle. Keep your points to a maximum of one line each. Also, be sure the cover letter is fairly informal and don't include more than 5-6 dot points.

Below are some sample one-liners as thought provokers for your cover letter:

- Grew profit by 23% as General Manager for ABC Company.
- Led sales effectiveness initiatives for a \$30m NPAT business.
- Advised on the development of sales training & personally facilitated training.
- Developed sales training and online management systems for 1,300 staff.
- Proven ability to sell the vision to staff, customers and stakeholders.
- Sales is my "X Factor" – I love selling and teaching everyone how to do it!
- Six years strong retail planning and execution skills.



- Conceived entrepreneurial marketing that has been copied by competitors.
- Formally trained in public relations and media with practical experience.
- Increased staff satisfaction from 47% to 64%.
- Authored the 3-year strategic plan and restructured the business.
- Reduced the cost-to-income ratio from 64% to 55%.

Here are some sample “selling” words that you can use to spice up you cover letters:

- Championed
- Conceived
- Developed
- Implemented
- Coached
- Oversaw
- Trained
- Facilitated
- Volunteered
- Initiated
- Planned

- Achieved
- Delivered
- Executed
- Rolled out
- Saved
- Increased
- Improved
- Enhanced
- Recovered
- Designed
- Progressed

- Built
- Restructured
- Created
- Established
- Crafted
- Authored
- Reduced
- Expanded
- Launched
- Advised
- Grew

Cover letter secrets

The idea of a cover letter is not to tell the employer all about yourself...your Designer resume will do that. You simply need to make the reader curious enough to keep reading. Here are some tips to help you achieve that aim:

- Focus on what employers want to read, not what you want to say.** This seems obvious but job applicants rarely do it. People are much more interested in talking about themselves. With a bit of research you can frame your cover letter around topics that the employer is interested in and use terminology they are used to seeing that will help them feel more comfortable.
- Link dot points to parts of the advertisement or Job Description.** Link the dot points in your cover letter to specific parts of the job advertisement or Job Description (you should call and ask for one at the earliest stage if it is an advertised role). Resist the lure to talk about what you did in your last role if it won't be important to your new employer in some way.



- c. **Talk about your “X Factor”.** Everybody is really good at something. As a job applicant that “something” had best be a skill or attribute your new employer can put to good use. Be sure to find out what the employer’s real hot button is and use it in your cover letter.
- d. **Don’t be too formal.** The reader has to picture themselves working with you on a daily basis and having an enjoyable chat. Too much formality will scare them off. You need to come across as professional but approachable. Shortly we’ll look at a few sample cover letters that use a relaxed formal style.

For something different, take a look at the informal style used in the opening paragraphs of a response to a job advertisement where the company spoke of an innovative culture and a skeptical interview panel:

“The selection panel should be skeptical. After all, many loss prevention programs are capital intensive, adversarial and ineffective. On the other hand, anyone who’s been involved in successful programs will know that they can transform culture, protect profit and build a focused team capable of great things.

That’s the conversation I had with the Head of Risk at ABC the other day when he called to ask how I’d brought losses to a standstill so we could replicate the process nationally.

Loss prevention is naturally about layered processes and systems, but it’s clearly people that count the most. A motivated and educated team will find ways to make their business better. That’s why I’m writing this letter, because I get the feeling your culture values this way of thinking too.”

- e. **Forget the fancy paper.** A lot of books on job hunting recommend buying all sorts of fancy paper to use for cover letters. Save your money. Content and layout is much more important than expensive, fancy paper.

Proven cover letter templates

Now that we know how to write a cover letter, let’s take a look at some more samples that you can use in your job-hunting campaign.

- a. **Cold-calling letter:** Check out the cover letter on page 25. This template should be used whenever you are applying directly to a company for a role that has not been advertised.

Be sure the letter is specifically addressed to an individual at the company who has the power to hire you. Call and do some research if you need to identify the hiring decision maker. It’s very important to spell the addressee’s name correctly and use the right appointment title.



The cold calling letter can be used for a few select companies or to conduct a general mailout. Remember, any mailout should be followed up by a personal call to each company.

It can be difficult to get your cover letter and CV through to a decision-maker, especially if you are sending it by email. One option is to call the switch, get put through to the decision-maker's PA and tell the PA you need their email address so you can send information for forwarding to the decision-maker. The PA normally won't fail to pass the CV on for fear of looking bad if they decision-maker finds out they let such an unusual candidate go.

- b. **Advertisement response letter:** The sample cover letter on page 26 is used to respond to any role advertised directly by a company. If you are unsure if the role is being advertised by a company or a recruiter you can still use this template.
- c. **Recruiting agency letter:** Use the template on page 27 for positions advertised through recruiters or when you wish to cold call a recruiter and have them try to match a role.

More samples of cover letters are provided toward the end of the book.



COVER LETTERS

Cold call letter	page 25
Advert response letter	page 26
Recruiter letter	page 27

A promotional banner for Next Job Now. It features the company logo in the top left, the text 'Next Job Now' in the top right, and a large blue section with white text. The text reads '100% FREE under CTAS.' followed by 'Defence pays us to help eligible members subject to approval at NO COST to the member.' At the bottom left, it says 'Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au'. The right side of the banner shows a collage of military and defense-related images.


Next Job Now

100% FREE under CTAS.
Defence pays us to help eligible members subject to approval at NO COST to the member.

Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au

YOUR NAME

22 Job Street
Newtown NSW 2000
Mob: 0400 123 456



Cold Call
Letter

23rd January, 2004

Mr. Mark T. Anthony
Business Manager
Company Name
123 Business Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Mr. Anthony

Could you use an IT professional with a high level of personal commitment, an entrepreneurial flair and a passion for growing business that is second to none? Please take 60 seconds to consider my credentials:

- 21 years' exceptional finance, information technology and management experience.
- Leadership of high performance teams delivering exponential revenue growth.
- Chartered accounting and audit experience with a leading global firm.
- Demonstrated success in establishing and developing businesses opportunities.
- Formal qualifications, including a Bachelor of Commerce and MBA (IT).
- Proven ability to negotiate major deals and partnerships.

Once you've had a chance to review my resume, I'd be grateful for the opportunity to discuss how I could add value to your business. May we talk?

Regards

Your Name
Enclosure

YOUR NAME

22 Job Street
Newtown NSW 2000
Mob: 0400 123 456



Ad Response
Letter

23rd January, 2004

Mr. Mark T. Anthony
Commercial Manager Company
Name 123 Business Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

By email: mark.anthony@companyname.com

Dear Mr. Anthony

RE: POSITION OF LEADING HAND LINEWORKER

Your advertisement in the *Age* on 20th May 2007 calls for a Leading Hand with a high level of personal commitment, a genuine belief in teamwork and a passion for customer service that is second to none?

Having built a hands-on reputation as a dedicated and capable employee, I'm ready to take that next step and make a larger contribution to ABC's Energy's goals. Please take 60 seconds to consider my credentials:

- Extensive experience in overhead and underground construction and maintenance.
- Strong knowledge of ABC Energy systems, policies and work practices.
- Track record of being flexible and getting the job done safely and above expectations.
- Proven ability to work well with team members and business partners.
- Good oral, written, interpersonal and presentation skills.
- Significant relevant qualifications.


Once you had a chance to go over my resume, I'd appreciate the opportunity to chat about your needs in more detail. May we talk?

Regards

Your Name
Enclosure

YOUR NAME

22 Job Street
Newtown NSW 2000
Mob: 0400 123 456



Recruiter
Letter

10th June, 2004

Mr. Mark T. Anthony Associate Director
Recruitment Company 123 Business Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Mr. Anthony

Could one of your clients use a commercially astute finance and IT professional with a high level of personal commitment, an entrepreneurial flair and a passion for growing business that is second to none? Please take 60 seconds to consider my credentials:

- 21 years' finance, information technology and general management experience.
- Leadership of high performance teams delivering exponential revenue growth.
- Chartered accounting and audit experience with a leading global firm.
- Demonstrated success in establishing and developing businesses opportunities.
- Formal qualifications, including a Bachelor of Commerce and MBA (IT).
- Proven ability to negotiate major deals and partnerships.

Once you've had a chance to review my resume, I'd be grateful for the opportunity to discuss future openings and obtain further information about the services you provide. May we talk?

Regards

Your Name

Enclosure



Next Job Now

CHAPTER 4

CREATING A WINNING RESUME

A banner advertisement for Next Job Now. It features the company logo in the top left corner and the text 'Next Job Now' in the top right corner. The main text reads 'Australia's best resumes.' followed by the question 'Would you bet your career or family security on your current CV?'. Below this is a blue button with the text 'Click here for FREE samples.' and contact information: 'Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au'. The background of the banner shows a collage of various military and industrial scenes, including tanks, aircraft, and soldiers.

Next Job Now

Australia's best resumes.

Would you bet your career or family security on your current CV?

[Click here for FREE samples.](#)

Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au



The power of a Designer resume

“Never be afraid to tread the path alone. Know which is your path and follow it wherever it may lead you. Do not feel you have to follow in someone else’s footsteps.”

Eileen Caddy

100% of people who don't get an interview don't get the job! That's why the resume is arguably the most important weapon in your job-hunting arsenal...because it wins you the interview. It's your opportunity to put a logical argument to the employer and convince them that it's worth meeting you.

Rightly or wrongly, employers make many judgements about you based on your resume. Few of us write resumes for a living, but the employer will assume that if your CV is less than fantastic then your ability to do the job will fall short of the mark as well. Then again, perhaps they won't judge you. Are you prepared to take that risk?

Over the years we've done a lot of work for high-profile clients and established a track record of getting them high-paying jobs. So you can rest assured that our resumes work!

The power of a designer resume.

A few years ago, a client sent his Designer resume to a CEO in Australia when he was working in Singapore. The CEO called to say he didn't have any openings just now but he had to meet the person who wrote the resume. Sure enough, the resume was memorable enough that he still wanted to meet our client six months later when he moved to Australia to take up a new job with a different firm. That's the power of a Next Job Now resume.

Before we get started on putting your CV together, take a few minutes to read through the sample resume on the following pages to get a general feel for what we will be doing. Please pay particular attention to what catches your eye when you first look at each page.



Next Job Now

6 FIGURE RESUME

This CV won a 6 figure job and was successful in assisting the candidate to change industries and gain a number of significant promotions.

A banner advertisement for Next Job Now. It features the company logo on the left and the text 'Next Job Now' in orange on the right. The main text is '100% FREE under CTAS.' in large blue letters. Below this, it says 'Defence pays us to help eligible members subject to approval at NO COST to the member.' At the bottom left, it provides the phone number '1300 112 114' and the website 'www.nextjobnow.com.au'. The background of the banner shows a collage of military vehicles and personnel.

Next Job Now

100% FREE under CTAS.

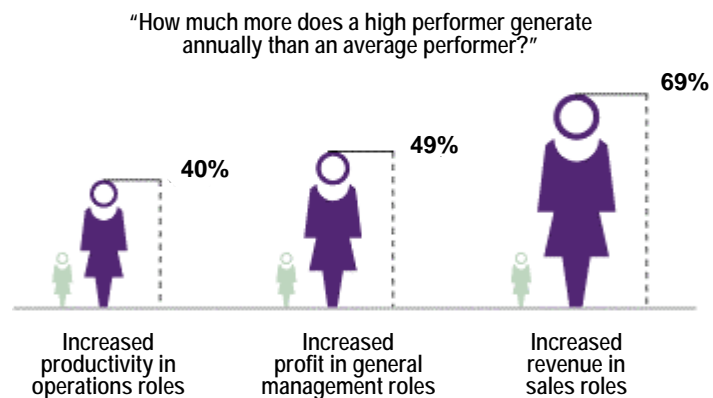
Defence pays us to help eligible members subject to approval at NO COST to the member.

Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au

Resume of Candidate Name

Good people are great for business

Mean of responses from 410 corporate officers



Source: McKinsey's War for Talent 2000 survey of 410 corporate officers at 35 large US companies

ANZ BANKING GROUP

Joined the Personal Financial Services team at the invitation of Tony Bloggs.

Regional Manager – North WA

P&L accountability for 14 stores with \$1.5b funds under management. Oversaw all aspects of the business, reporting directly to the Head of Rural Banking. Managed retail distribution of consumer, wealth, small business and insurance products. Led 95 staff through 14 Relationship, Branch and Investment Managers. Responsible for risk and compliance within North WA.

Highlights

Funded 100% manager attendance at Breakout and Inspiring Leaders within own run rate. Majority of North WA front-line staff completed Breakout. Advised on the development of FSRA (ANZ One Way) training. Liaised extensively with product managers, business partners and Local CEOs. Authored the strategic plan. Increased staff satisfaction from 51% to 90%.

Grew PBT by 41% p.a. and reduced CTI from 64% to 55%. Improved sales productivity by 23% and ROE from 23% to 38%. Developed and personally delivered sales training that was rolled out nationally across Rural Banking. Created the One Stop Sales Shop, a central online resource for sales training. Significantly reduced operating losses and improved portfolio risk trends. Conceived a retail refurbishment pilot to improve customer service and enhance sales.



BUSINESS SKILLS

14 years' management experience across the Asia Pacific region

Successful at building business in challenging international markets

Strong sales & marketing background across multiple industries

Exceptionally focused on measurable top and bottom line results

Motivated by growth potential and common value systems

Forged strong working relationships with key executives and partners

Ability to negotiate major deals and business partnerships

Track record in managing complex, multi-discipline business teams

Practical strategist with strong execution and empowerment focus

CLIENT NAME

Address Line One
Address Line Two

Developed marketing campaigns that were adopted nationally. Worked with business partners to achieve policy changes that opened new markets such as the rock lobster portfolio. Enhanced brand awareness through local PR and marketing campaigns. Sponsored key community activities in the public eye such as the Young Eagles program.

ASSIRT EQUITIES RESEARCH

Joined this leading St. George Bank owned equities research firm at the invitation of Tony Bloggs, CEO.

COO & Director of Sales

Leadership of sales, research, finance, compliance, marketing, people capital and IT functions. Following success in revitalising the sales force and marketing effort, I also took over the appointment of Director of Sales from the Executive Director. Responsible for all aspects of the sales function, including management of the sales cycle, authoring sales and marketing plans, business development training and downstream training of sales staff.

Highlights

Developed new products that increased revenues by \$1.2 million p.a. Initiated a marketing campaign that successfully built the brand and resulted in a \$1 million contract from a new client. Restructured the management team, reduced operating costs by 9% p.a. and reduced aged receivables by 80%. Guided senior staff through growth planning.

“Exceeded production targets by 20-45% to set the benchmark in performance...a line efficiency record of 94.5%.”

FAIRFAX BUSINESS MEDIA

With revenues of \$1.5 billion p.a., Fairfax comprises some of Asia Pacific's leading business titles and products, including *Personal Investor*, *Shares* and *Asset* magazines, Strategic Research Pty Ltd and *The Australian Financial Review*. Fairfax's Strategic Research division is a leading provider of business intelligence for 14 countries across Asia Pacific.

Invited to the international division of Fairfax Business Media in Singapore by the Divisional CEO, Tony Bloggs, when Group management needed help with the international expansion plan and the Asia Pacific plan in particular. Originally appointed Group Business Analyst and later promoted to Group General Manager of the Strategic Research Division after heading up a global business review.

Group General Manager

Overall management of operations, including full P&L responsibility. Led multi-national sales and marketing teams across Asia Pacific. Analysed product development, competitors, market trends, client needs, sales cycles and marketing activities.

Group Business Analyst

During my tenure as the Group Business Analyst, I travelled throughout Asia to identify market opportunities, create the business plan and lay the foundations for growth. Given the charter to develop plans for international expansion, provide sales/marketing coordination and conduct profitability analyses. Oversaw the analysis of emerging markets, managed acquisitions and reviewed new business proposals, including financial projections.

Highlights

Improved revenues for the CFO masthead by 10%. Volunteered to manage our most profitable magazine special, the *MIS E-Directory 2001*, exceeding budget by more than 26% and setting a new company sales record with extremely limited resources. Planned an \$18 million international acquisition and wrote the business plan to take our leading research product (*MarketBase*) to the USA. Launched and expanded several brands across multiple geographies. Built relationships with key government authorities.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Sales & marketing management
- General management (international)
- Business development training
- Coaching & productivity improvement
- Cost management programs
- Strategic planning & business analysis
- Customer needs analysis & networking
- Banking, FMCG, media, research, training

Developed the business plan for launching a sister publication to *BRW* magazine in Asia. Reviewed the sales pitch for premium research products to turn around sales. Volunteered to take over management of the *Business Online and Visa Asian Internet Awards* (an internationally televised event) to recover a 15% loss – recovered most of the loss. Developed business plans for Asia Pacific, US and UK product launches. Developed international sales and marketing strategies.

LION NATHAN AUSTRALIA

Recruited to this top 50, \$2.8 billion MNC by the Operations Director, Tony Bloggs, to increase plant productivity and foster a new leadership culture. With revenues of \$1.7 billion, Lion Nathan is an Australian icon specialising in brewing, liquor retailing and soft drink production.

Operations Manager (Team Leader)

Led three \$6 million FMCG production lines generating \$95 million revenues p.a. Responsible for operations, maintenance, quality control and staff management functions. Managed 36 permanent staff through 3 direct reports. Oversaw contractor support to plant-wide operations, including 200 casual staff.

Highlights

Built teams that exceeded production targets by 20-45% to “set the benchmark in performance”. Increased production efficiency for three high-demand stock keeping units from 55% to 72%.

Exceeded the performance of other operations managers by \$3 million in my first 3 months. Led a production crew to set a line efficiency record of 94.5%.

Markedly decreased staff absenteeism. Conceived a national labour management database that cut casual labour costs by \$0.4 million p.a. at the Tooheys plant alone, a saving of 16.7% p.a. Worked with senior union representatives on behalf of company management as a Strategy Consultant for the Enterprise Bargaining Committee.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY

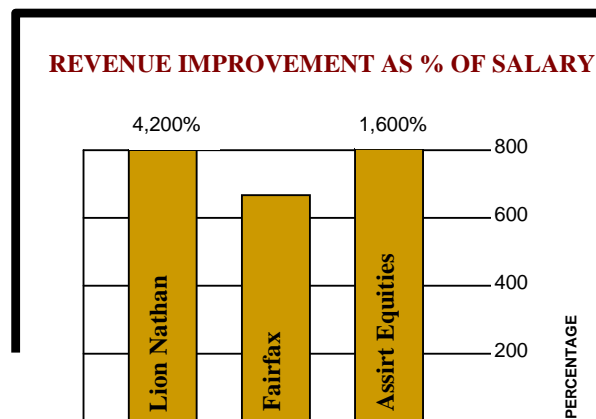
Promoted to this national level position at the Defence Intelligence Centre by the Managing Director equivalent for Army Intelligence Corps, Tony Bloggs. The Defence Intelligence Centre advises on Army capability development and provides specialist intelligence training to the Australian Army, Navy and Air Force.

Manager -Training Design

Reviewed specialist Intelligence Corps capabilities and provided advice on training affecting Army’s 19,000 personnel. Led a team advising 45 client organisations on the analysis, design, delivery and validation of intelligence training. Administered Army’s linguist capability and managed language aptitude testing, specialist schooling and overseas training.

Acted as the sole Army representative on the Defence Language Requirements Committee and chaired the Army Linguist Requirements Committee. Directed 45 staff through 4 direct reports.

EMPLOYER’S ROI



Highlights

Authored the linguist policy and forecast strategic language requirements. Coordinated support to operational deployments such as TIMOR. Reduced overseas training costs by 12% and increased throughput of language aptitude testing candidates by 25%. Advised on the development of training management plans for MBA equivalent courses.

Officer in Command

Received an early promotion and this opportunity to turn around a troubled Army Intelligence and Security Unit (AIS). Reporting to the Director of Army Security at the national level, the AIS protected against threats to national security. Responsibility for operations covering an area of 1.8 million km sq.

Advised 20 executives on risk management and security. Provided support to national counter-terrorist activities and assisted in the development of national disaster plans. Liaised with State and Federal Government agencies at the executive level. Directed 42 staff through 5 direct reports.

EDUCATION:

Bachelor of Laws (Commercial, TBC)
Bachelor of Social Science (HRD & Communication)
Graduate Dip. in Information Management & Analysis
Qualified *Omega* sales coach for senior managers
Associate Dip. in Personnel Administration
Certificate in Information Systems Security
Certificate in Vocational Instruction
Diploma in Applied Thai

Thank you for viewing my resume.

PERSONAL VALUES

- Add customer value - build ongoing shareholder wealth and value.
- Sell the vision - relentlessly pursue passion, fun & achievement.
- Entrepreneurial spirit - perform, grow and breakout.
- Face reality - lead change wherever it is needed.
- Commitment to excellence - don't compromise on quality.

Highlights

Led a high-profile team through a comprehensive reorganisation. Created internal policies and procedures, built the management team and wrote the business plan. Increased operational activity by 35% and decreased expenditure by 8%. Briefed audiences of more than 500 people and top Army commanders such as the Chief of General Staff (Head of Army). My written work was circulated at the national level and was used to brief the Prime Minister of Australia.

PERSONAL:

Nationality: Australian
Married: 2 children (4 years, 6 months)
DOB: 19 September, 1970
Work: (08) 1234 5678
Work Mob: 0410 123 456
Home: (08) 2345 6789

Worked in Australia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Indonesia and Thailand. Lived in Singapore. Travelled widely to Europe & other international locations, including NZ.



Welcome back...

As you can see, the Designer resume is genuinely unique. It has some features you'd expect as standard in a normal resume plus some features that are very different, including:

NORMAL RESUME FEATURES	+ NEXT JOB NOW FEATURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">♠ Contact information♠ Skills & qualifications summary♠ Personal details♠ Employment dates♠ Chronological job summaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♠ Cover page graphic or quote♠ Business skills summary♠ Pullout quotes♠ Professional experience summary♠ Personal values

Does the Designer resume really work? Yes, it is very effective and has a much higher success rate than a normal resume. Let's look at why...

The Designer resume is based upon layout principles used by popular magazines. That's why it's unusual graphic appeal attracts attention straight away. Staff entrusted with scanning resumes for decision makers to review will notice it's different and your resume will make it past the first cut and get read.

This is a big win when you consider that many resumes never get more than a brief glimpse. Whether it's fair or not, many employers assume that you probably aren't up to the standard they are looking for if your resume isn't good enough to get their attention.

When the decision maker does read your resume, key design features such as pullout quotes and special summaries catch their eye and draw them into reading your resume in detail. Other tailored features such as the Personal Values summary build the reader's interest to a level where they want to explore even further to learn more about the sort of person you are.

To encourage the employer to want to read your resume fully, we use a casual narrative style to tell a story. People love to read stories and it makes reading your resume a much more enjoyable experience. Some employers have told us that they couldn't put the Designer resume down because they wanted to know what happened next in the life of the candidate. It's absolutely true!

You can differentiate yourself significantly by the way you tell your story and by preempting answers to some of the questions that the employer will want to ask during



the interview, eg. by including your values in the CV you tell the employer where you are likely to stand on certain issues such as leadership style. The less the employer has to guess about you, the more likely you are to get an interview.

Everything you need to craft your own resume

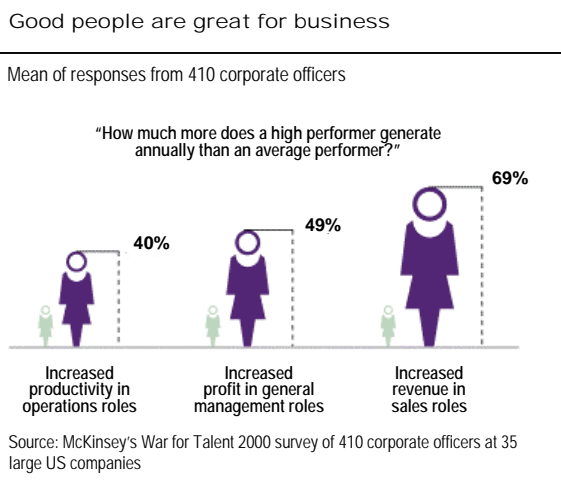
A well-prepared resume will almost never fail to convince an employer to invite you for an interview. Successful resume writing isn't so much about the technical content of your resume, it's more about the impression that the employer gets of you as a person and a professional. Now let's look at the key elements of a Designer resume and how to go about creating your very own:

- a. **Cover page.** The cover page is the centerpiece of the CV. Its purpose is to grab the eye and position you as different from the outset. That's why I recommend using a graphic or quote to get the reader's attention. Don't be afraid to make a bold statement about who you are. Employers like confident people and you've nothing to gain by being timid. In fact, you have everything to lose if you aren't able to assert your ability.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves: 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be?"

Nelson Mandela

If you choose a quote for your cover page instead of a picture, be sure to attribute it and don't use anything that positions you as radical or will conflict with the company values or the nature of the role. A quick visit to the library will unearth some great quotes in business and motivational quote books. Here's one of my favourite graphics for the cover page:





This particular graphic comes from McKinsey's War for Talent research and depicts the value that high performers add to a business in different roles. By using this picture you remind employers of how important it is to get the right person and imply that you are a high performer.

- b. **Business Skills summary.** Turn over the cover page of your Designer CV and the first thing you see is the Business Skills Summary. Like any good magazine, it catches your eye so you'll read it first and become interested enough in the teasers' to keep reading.

What was the first thing you looked at when you turned to this page? The Business Skills summary captures nine elements of your background and experience that the employer will find attractive. While the summary appears on the first page of your resume, it is the last thing that you write.

Once you've completed the resume you'll have a much better idea of your key skills as they relate to the job on offer. You need to review the job advertisement, position description and other company materials to find clues on what's really important to the employer and then link the Business Skills dot points clearly to the company needs.

Like the cover letter, use action words wherever possible to convey a sense of being able to get the job done. Choose a variety of results focused phrases as well as themes that show leadership, cultural value, industry experience, relationship building skills and functional expertise.

You can change the photo at the top of the box, but I recommend against replacing it with one of yourself. That's a little vain.

Be sure to update your name and address details at the bottom of the "Business Skills" box. Also, don't forget to update your name and phone number at the top of each page of the resume in the space provided (except for the cover page). Your mobile number is best, so you can be reached at any time.

9

BUSINESS SKILLS

Extensive experience in the training cycle and recruitment programs

Strong knowledge of training analysis, design, delivery and validation

Proven leadership and instructional skills across all staff levels

Skilled in needs analyses to develop training management plans

Track record developing innovative & successful recruitment drives

Expertise in competency development, coaching and assessment

Adept at building strong working relationships with business partners

Well-developed communication and interpersonal skills

Demonstrated ability to manage complex, multi-discipline work teams

YOUR NAME
Address Line One
Address Line Two
email@home.com.au



It can be quite challenging to squeeze part of your background into a short three line sentence, but you must force yourself to do it. The Business Skills summary isn't there to inform the reader, its sole purpose is to tempt the reader into keeping reading.

So don't waste words by using lots of flowery language. Get straight to the point and use only hard-hitting phrases that can be backed up in the text of your resume.

- c. **Pullout quote.** A pullout quote provides the opportunity to highlight something specific in your CV that the employer will find interesting and highly relevant.

Quite simply, scan your completed resume for a one-liner that will appeal to the employer and put it in a place of prominence at the top of the page where it cannot be missed.

This will grab the attention of the employer and encourage them to keep reading in search of more information about the achievement you've highlighted. Here's a sample pullout quote you might use for a job application where productivity improvement is important.

The diagram shows a resume page layout. At the top left, it says "Page 2". At the top right, there is a red box with the text "YOUR NAME HERE" and "Mob 0427 123 456". Below this, there is a section for "ABC MEDIA" with a "Highlights" sub-section. A grey box labeled "Pullout quote" has an arrow pointing to a specific line of text in the "Highlights" section: "Exceeded production targets by 20-45% to set the benchmark in performance...a line efficiency record of 94.5%."

Page 2

YOUR NAME HERE
Mob 0427 123 456

Pullout quote → "Exceeded production targets by 20-45% to set the benchmark in performance...a line efficiency record of 94.5%."

ABC MEDIA

With revenues of \$1.5 billion p.a., ABC comprises some of Asia Pacific's leading business titles and products, including *Biz Magazine* and *Medium Magazine*

Highlights

Improved revenues for the XYZ masthead by 10%.
Volunteered to manage our most profitable magazine special, the ABC -Director v. beating budget by

A pullout quote isn't necessarily something that someone actually said, but can simply be something you wrote in the text of your resume. Be sure the pullout is interesting and is an exact copy of text that is actually in the CV so it can be 'quoted'.

The text you use for the pullout needn't be on the same page as the actual text that appears in the CV, but you should try to achieve this wherever possible.



- d. **Professional Experience summary.** This summary aims to provide the employer with a snapshot of your experience at a single glance. By listing your experience in dot point form you reinforce the reader's impression of how experienced you are.

This is your chance to show the depth of your professional skills by mentioning the industries you have worked in and the fields you have exposure to.

Think about the kind of experience that would make someone in your industry really stand out. Go with short, punchy one-liners using keywords that the employer will recognize as being relevant to their industry.

INDUSTRY EXPOSURE

- OH&S compliance
- Operations management
- Training development
- Recruitment Consultant
- Stores management (APS role)
- Horizontal & vertical construction
- Qualified furnace mason
- Human Resources Management

When deciding if something in your background should be mentioned here, be liberal but honest in your interpretation. The section is titled "experience", not "expertise". Include something if it's fair to say you have some degree of exposure to it. You can always elaborate on the level of exposure during the interview.

- e. **Personal Values.** I'm not sure why, but candidates rarely personalise a CV by telling employers who they are as a person and what they stand for. It's important to stand out by giving the employer some insight into what lurks below the surface.

Your personal values drive your behaviour. By being up front about your values you get to show a side of yourself that no other candidate is likely to show. That makes you different in a good way...and different people get interviewed. Do some research on the company to find out which of your personal values correspond to theirs and be sure to include the matched values in this section as a minimum. Don't choose values that are radical or controversial.

PERSONAL VALUES

- Integrity
- High professional standards
- Safety minded
- Goal orientation
- Focus on delivering quality
- Encourage teamwork



- e. **Skills & Qualifications summary.** Here's where you include your formal and trade qualifications. You should also include any relevant workplace training and courses you have done. Be sure to mention all training that may interest the new employer, no matter how informally it was conducted. For example, you might want to include "report writing and presentation skills" if a past employer gave you coaching on how to do these things.

SKILLS, QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Gas Detection Instructor
- Qualified Furnace Mason and Bricklayer
- Diploma in Business (Human Resources)
- Diploma in Resource Management (Equipment)

- f. **Personal details.** Most resumes provide all the personal details and contact information on the first page. I really can't see the point in this, since an employer isn't even interested in you at that stage.

You need to help the employer understand how valuable you can be to their business before they will want to call you. That's why the bulk of your personal information belongs at the end of your resume.

Make sure you provide all the information an employer will need to confirm your suitability for the role. For example, it may be appropriate to include information on licenses, marital status, health, etc.

Keep in mind that while you can't be legally compelled to provide certain information (or answer some interview questions), you probably won't get an interview or the job unless you do provide the basics.

If you decide to mention your health, the only comment should be "excellent". Don't get carried away with hobbies. If you do include them, ensure they are not overly time-consuming and that they reflect your social and teamwork skills.

The Personal Details summary is also a great place to slip in a few strengths. The employer will not expect to see them in a CV and it will be one of the final thoughts you leave them with. We'll discuss strengths in detail later, but for now suffice to say they must be meaningful and memorable.



PERSONAL DETAILS

Name:	Client Name
Worked in:	Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Germany, UK, UAE, Oman
Hobbies:	Hockey, aviculture, family
Health:	Excellent
Email:	email@dodo.com.au

- g. **Employment dates.** Whether or not to you include employment dates in your CV depends on how many times you've changed jobs. You probably noticed that the sample CV we showed you earlier didn't provide employment dates. That's because the client had changes jobs several times over a few years.

If you could be seen as a job hopper, then I'd leave dates out and talk about reasons for changing jobs when asked at the interview about dates. If your career has been quite stable, then it's probably best to include employment dates so employers don't think the worst.

Employers do value diversity of experience in this day and age, so a few job changes over a career is viewed as a good thing. That said, if you have changed jobs more frequently then you'll need to have a good excuse handy. Perhaps something like:

- I was looking for something more entrepreneurial with a larger company backed by the resources to grow.
- My learning curve had flattened out.
- We relocated due to health reasons involving my spouse.
- It was only ever intended and agreed as an interim appointment.

- i. **Chronological job summaries.** The job summary is the most crucial part of any resume, since it allows you to communicate your value as a corporate asset and allows the employer to see what you have delivered to past employers.

Before we get into how to structure the job summary, realise that people really do like to read a good story. Why do you think novels and magazines sell so well? With that in mind, I recommend a storytelling style that makes your CV more enjoyable to read.



You'll probably recall from our sample resume that only the first three jobs are covered in much detail. As interested as the employer is in finding the right candidate, any resume becomes boring if you have to wade through too much stuff.

I once saw a 50 page resume...no wonder the person never got an interview! If you've been through a lot of job changes, simply provide a one page summary of the most recent roles back to 10 years under the general heading of "Other Employment". Check out the sample resume on page 88 to see how it's done.

Each job summary is broken into three separate sections – company name, your job title and responsibilities, and highlights.

- 1) **Company name.** One way to get the attention of the employer is to sell the sizzle on the company you've just been working for. Stating a few impressive facts about your old company gets the new employer thinking that you must be quite skilled to work for such a company.

Don't oversell the sizzle though, or the employer will wonder why you want to leave your current job. You can get handy information for this part of the CV by researching the company website or by checking out the latest annual report.

It's not always necessary to sell the sizzle on an old employer, but it does help. Here's an example of what you might say if you worked for a large beverage manufacturer:

ABC AUSTRALIA

Recruited to this top 50, \$2.8 billion MNC by the Operations Director, Bob Bloggs, to increase plant productivity. With revenues of \$1.7 billion, ABC is an Australian icon specialising in brewing, liquor retailing and soft drink production.

- 2) **Your responsibilities.** If you have one of those job titles that doesn't really tell a casual reader what you do, change it so it's obvious at first glance what your position involves, as we did in the example below where "Team Leader" didn't communicate the real function of the role.

Keep it brief when talking about your responsibilities. The employer is much more interested in hearing about what you achieved rather than what you were responsible for. Space will be tight and you can't afford to waste it on stuff that doesn't relate directly to how you can add value. In any event, you can always slip a few responsibilities in with the highlights.



Information that you need to cover in this section of the CV includes job title, countries worked in, geographic area of responsibility, promotions within the company, key functional responsibilities, the number of direct reports and staff managed indirectly. Refer to the sample CVs at the back of the book for more ideas.

Following on from our Lion Nathan example above, here's an example of what you might say:

Operations Manager (Team Leader)

Led three \$6 million FMCG production lines generating \$95 million revenues p.a. Responsible for operations, maintenance, quality control and staff management functions. Managed 36 permanent staff through 3 direct reports and oversaw contractor support to plant-wide operations, including 200 casual staff.

- 3) **Highlights.** This is where you should spend most of your time thinking about what you are going to write. Highlights provide the information needed to convince the employer that you could make a difference to their business. The information you provide here must be compelling, clear and comprehensive.

"Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people."

Anonymous

When describing achievements, tell the truth but be sure to use it to your advantage. It's not necessary that you were the main or only contributor to an initiative for it to be noted in your resume. If you were involved in some way then make an appropriate reference to your contribution so the employer can appreciate it.

Use action words such as "conceived, led, planned" to show that you make things happen. Talk about what you saved, simplified, enhanced or improved at every opportunity. For example:

- *Conceived sales training that grew revenues by 15%.*
- *Simplified repair procedures to reduce downtime.*
- *Improved marketing turnaround times.*
- *Decreased costs by reducing rejects due to faults.*



- *Increased staff satisfaction by 36%.*

If you are stuck for content, surf the web using keywords like “resumes” or “job description” combined with the title of the position you are applying for. You’d be surprised at what you can uncover when you have a little time on your hands.

Continuing with our beverage manufacturer example above once again, here’s an example of what you might put forward as highlights:

Highlights

Built teams that exceeded production targets by 20-45% to “set the benchmark in performance”. Increased production efficiency for three high-demand stock keeping units from 55% to 72%. Exceeded the performance of other operations managers by \$3 million in my first 3 months. Led a production crew to set a line efficiency record of 94.5%. Markedly decreased staff absenteeism. Conceived a national labour management database that cut casual labour costs by \$0.4 million p.a. at the XYZ plant alone, a saving of 16.7% p.a. Worked with senior union representatives on behalf of company management as a Strategy Consultant for the Enterprise Bargaining Committee.

Show how you added value to your existing employer by talking about tangible benefits. Some of the topics you may wish to cover include the dollar impact of your achievements and specifically how they benefited the company, projects and volunteer activities you were involved in, special skills you brought to the business, what you did to help grow the business outside of your direct responsibilities, and even your financial contributions as a % of your salary.

Let’s review some incredibly successful resumes

Go ahead and browse some of the work we’ve done for real clients online at www.nextjobnow.com.au. Naturally, we’ve changed some details to protect the innocent. Notice how each resume is truly unique and the format can be changed to suit individual needs without any major structural changes to the layout.



Welcome back...

There's no doubt that the Designer resume is quite unusual...and that's precisely why it works so well. Some of our clients take a little convincing to try something so different, but they are always ecstatic at the results. Don't take our word for it, try it for yourself!

When to use a plain text CV

Many jobs are advertised by recruitment agencies on behalf of employers, so you'll need to go via the recruiter if you want a shot at the job. Some recruiters struggle with anything that falls outside the box and prefer to sanitise material you send them so it looks exactly like everything that everyone else has sent them...you get the picture.

Because recruiters want to present clients on even terms, they'll tell you your resume is "lovely, but can you please send us a resume in plain text or Word format". The truth is that they want to scan you into the database and they need a plain text resume to do that. So here's what you do...

Tell the recruiter that you'll forward a plain text resume but you would rather your Designer CV be put forward to the client if they are going to present you at all. They will generally do it if you ask politely and explain that the format of the CV forms part of the impression you want to give the employer and you would like them to see it as it was intended.

Your CV tells an employer who you are as a person

From my own personal experience I can tell you that the Designer CV is special enough that it is one of the few that recruiters will present outside of their standard format. I'm not exaggerating when I say that I've got an interview for almost every job where my designer CV was passed unchanged to the employer by a recruiter. I wasn't so lucky on the odd occasion when the recruiter refused and had me 'standardise' the CV. What does that tell you?

Even if you decide to use a plain text CV instead of our designer CV, you'll still be miles ahead of the competition due to our unique inclusion of personal values and the special summaries.

The trick with a plain text CV is to keep formatting very simple so it scans easily. You don't want to be remembered as the person who crashed the recruiter's computer! Check out the sample plain text resume on page 110 for a suggested layout.

Now it's time to write your very own Designer CV and send it off to win an interview for that dream job.



Next Job Now

CHAPTER 5

HOW TO ACE THE INTERVIEW

A banner advertisement for Next Job Now. It features the company logo on the left, the text 'Next Job Now' on the right, and a central message about interviewing coaching. The background of the banner shows a collage of various vehicles and equipment.

Next Job Now

Interviewing coaching.

A great interview performance wins great jobs on top salaries. *Get the job. Get paid more.*

[Click here for info.](#)

Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au



Wow the employer with a pre-interview summary

*“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I – I took the one less travelled by.
And that has made all the difference.”*

Robert Frost

Once your CV is in the mail you can sit back and wait for the interview, right? That's exactly what most candidates do, but it's not what you should be doing if you want to nail that job. Now is your chance to really shine by sending off a pre-interview summary.

A pre-interview summary is a 1-2 page brief that pre-empts key questions on the employer's mind and goes some way toward answering them before the interview even starts! It allows the employer to 'picture' you in the role, helping them to get comfortable with you more quickly and giving you the edge over other candidates.

The pre-interview summary is easy to execute. Once you've been invited for an interview, simply ask the employer or recruiter for an email address so you can provide additional information that may assist them during the interview. Two days prior to the interview, email your summary so the interviewer has enough time to read the material before meeting with you.

There are two types of pre-interview summaries, the detailed summary and the question summary:

- a. **Detailed summary:** The bolder applicant who doesn't mind a bit of self promotion could use the fully fledged pre-interview summary, which addresses such themes as:
- “Challenges facing the new [position title]”.
 - “How my background prepares me for the challenges”.
 - “What I would do in my first 3 months”.
 - “Why I want the job”.

If you don't already have much information about the company, you might want to arrange a meeting with key staff prior to the interview so you can get what you need to put together a detailed summary.

When preparing your summary, be as specific as possible where you are sure what the employer wants. If you are uncertain about some areas of the role, then be general so you don't say something that the employer won't agree with.

Do not use a detailed summary if it doesn't suit your style, you don't have a good picture of why the role exists, or you don't know what the employer expects. To see whether a detailed summary is for you, check out the sample on page 117.



- b. **Question summary:** For more conservative candidates or more senior roles, the pre-interview summary can be watered down by simply emailing a list of questions to the interviewer under the pretext that time is short in interviews and you want to provide the interviewer with a sense of what's on your mind regarding the role to make best use of time on the day. This is a very powerful strategy that I have found to be incredibly successful over the years.

Your aim in sending a question summary isn't to exhaust the questions you may want to ask during the interview, it's to position yourself as insightful and show that you've thought about the opportunity in great depth.

The questions you pose in your summary should give the subtle impression that you can afford to make sure this is the right opportunity. Questions you might ask in a pre-interview summary include:

- Why does the role exist and what is it really there to achieve?
- How do you see the role evolving over time?
- How would you describe the level of autonomy for the role?
- What is support for this role like at the senior level?
- What input does this role have into changing processes and products?
- What is the [position title] expected to do on a day-to-day basis?
- What is the area of responsibility (geographically and functionally)?
- How will success in the role be measured?
- Does the [position title] manage all factors that will influence success?
- What are the career opportunities flowing from this role?

Whichever type summary you choose, don't waffle. Your summary must be straight to the point and come across as high impact. It should not merely be a rehash of your CV. Most importantly, don't be pretentious in your summary. Your aim is not to be arrogant and say "look how much I know". It's simply to say "I hope these thoughts make your job a bit easier in deciding if I'm right for the role". Check out our sample pre-interview summary on page 118 to see how it's done.

Does a pre-interview summary work?

One of our clients was interviewed by a leading Australian manufacturer and told us he found the interview strange because he wasn't asked a lot of detailed questions. He was hired and later told they'd decided to hire him based on what he wrote in his pre-interview summary (it was a detailed summary). The interview had been used just to confirm that everything checked out!



Pre-interview summaries are extremely powerful, but only if you know enough about the company and the role to be confident that you aren't saying something the employer may object to. In any case, you always run that risk at interview.

If you are serious about getting the job, a pre-interview summary allows you to demonstrate a level of understanding about the role that will well and truly set you apart. You'll need to do some work to carry it off well though.

Insider tips on preparing for the interview

"You've got to search for the hero inside yourself. Search for the secrets you hide."

British pop group M People

Congratulations!

The interviewer would not agree to meet for an interview if they didn't already feel that you could do the job. The fact that you've been invited in for a chat means they think YOU can do the job.

The majority of managers have never been formally trained to conduct recruitment interviews. This works in your favour. Once you've read this book you will know more about interviewing than most interviewers.

There are countless books available on the finer points of interview techniques and we don't need to go over them all in detail here. Nonetheless, here are a few of the more important tips for interviews:

- **Practice makes progress.** Practice your answers to interview questions well in advance until you know them off by heart. Have a friend critique you on how natural your answers sound.

Prior planning and preparation prevents poor performance. Practicing your answers out loud makes them flow. Research suggests that people who sound fluent come across as being more intelligent and having better interpersonal skills.

- **Look the part.** The interviewer is obviously more interested in what you can do than how you look, but the way you dress can tip the balance. All things being equal, well groomed people are often viewed more favourably than other candidates. Here are a few tips for dressing:
 - Dress to suit the company's culture.
 - Dress as expensively as you can afford.
 - Wear darker colours for management roles.
 - Get your hair cut the week before the interview, not the day before.



- Wear conservative shoes and ensure they are clean.
- Don't wear aftershave or perfume.
- Wear in new clothes before the interview so you don't fidget.
- Coordinate you colours and have someone check them.
- **Arrive early.** It pays to know where the interview is, know how long it will take to get there and where you will park. The smallest of delays could mean you miss the best of jobs. The world isn't always fair and some employers are unforgiving on important occasions such as interviews. They rightly assume that you'll plan in 'fudge' time if the interview is important to you.

If you are late for an interview, call well before the scheduled interview time, apologise and ask if the interviewer would still like to meet with you. Stay calm and you'll give the impression you have a good reason for being late. If the employer agrees to meet, don't go overboard trying to explain the delay as it will make you appear guilty.

- **Be nice to everyone.** Don't ignore secretarial and admin staff. They often talk to interviewers about how you behaved and how you treated them. This may directly affect whether you are offered the role. In a two-horse race, the prize goes to the candidate who gets the recommendation of support staff.
- **Take a spare resume.** Take two copies of your resume with you to the interview in case there is more than one interviewer or the interviewer didn't bring their copy. You can also use the spare copy to refresh your memory if asked about specific details in the resume.
- **No mobile phones.** Turn your phone off before the interview. Better still, don't take it to the interview...leave it in the car once you arrive.
- **Firm handshake.** At the beginning and end of the interview, use a firm handshake and hold it for several seconds while you look the interviewer in the eye and smile.

The natural human tendency is to let go immediately you have given the hand a quick shake. Force yourself to hang on for a few seconds longer while you finish your spoken greeting and farewell. While we are on the topic of greetings, one of the best I've heard is:

*"Thanks for making time to meet with me today...
I know you're busy and I really appreciate it."*



- **Talking points.** Take a few items with you to the interview as talking points. For example, print off some interesting items from the company's website or take a copy of the annual report with you to the interview to show you've done your homework.

Don't make a fuss trying to get your research seen. Just place it neatly in a small pile to the side of your spare CV (perhaps in a clear plastic sleeve) so the interviewer can see you have it.

Sometimes it pays to take samples of your work to the interview. If you've been published in a magazine or written a great business plan, then take a copy with you and put it next to your other notes so it can be easily seen.

If the employer doesn't ask about your work samples directly (many people are naturally curious and ask what you've brought) you can always mention an item in the answer to an interview question and suggest that you've brought a sample if they would like to view it.

- **Be casual.** Relax during the interview. You don't want to come across as too relaxed, but you certainly don't want to come across as too formal! The interviewer has to be able to picture themselves working with you on the team on a daily basis. Nobody wants to work with a 'stick in the mud'.

Move about a little during the interview so you don't come across like a rabbit in the headlights, but don't fidget. If you have a habit of playing with objects like pens, then don't pick one up. Use some hand gestures to reinforce points that you have made.

At the end of the day, you want to be about as formal as you would be when you meet a new friend...and that's just how you should be treating the interviewer.

How to sell yourself

Because the job interview is a 'sales' process, you must think of yourself as the product and the interviewer as the purchaser.

There's that dreaded word again...sales!!!

I know what you're thinking. I'm not in sales, so I'll just ignore this part of the book and go with the Designer resume stuff. Please understand that you do so at your own peril.

You are the product the employer is considering buying to make them money and they are going to examine the package carefully to see what kind of a deal they are going to get.



It's easy to be cynical about selling, but ask yourself these questions. Would you buy from someone you didn't trust? Would you make a major purchase without first having the opportunity to ask questions so you could understand the product features and decide if they offered genuine benefits that met your needs?

**Put yourself
in the employer's
shoes...they are
the 'buyer'**

If you are not prepared to do these things, then what makes us think an employer will be any different. The interview is all about selling yourself, and the candidate with a knowledge of the sales process and how to apply it during the interview will shine head and shoulders above others.

Before we look at what the employer is likely to ask you during your meeting (we call it a meeting whenever we talk with the employer because professionals have 'meetings' while amateurs have 'interviews'), we're going to step through a basic sales process that can be used as a framework for the entire interview. The five steps to selling yourself at interview are:

- **STEP ONE** - Exploring needs
- **STEP TWO** - Building rapport
- **STEP THREE** - Presenting the solution
- **STEP FOUR** - Overcoming objections
- **STEP FIVE** - Asking for the job

Let's look at each stage of the process in a little more detail:

- a. **Exploring needs.** The most successful job hunters will tell you that you have to find out what the client wants and, more importantly, why they need it. You can't possibly hope to 'close' the sale without exploring the employer's key needs.

The best time to explore needs is well before the interview. Simply put yourself in the employer's shoes and think of the five key things they are looking for before they will hire you. Forget about what you want to say and focus on what they need to hear.

Once you've identified the employer's five key needs, brainstorm your background against each key need so you have an idea of how you'll address that topic if it crops up at the interview. The four brainstorm criteria are:

- What formal training do I have in the area they are looking for?
- How many years experience do I have in the area they are looking for?



- What the best example of a job I did that shows I meet the need?
- An example of positive feedback relating to their specific need?

While needs research is always best done well prior to the interview, it is possible to use the interview to conduct “emergency” needs analysis. Here’s how its done...

In most interviews the employer will want to do all the talking and ask all the questions. You need to become involved by asking questions at an early stage to ensure you can adequately explore needs. This is important because the candidate who is able to present their skills and experience in a way that best matches the employer’s needs will normally come out in front.

Finding out about the client company’s needs is as easy as speaking up and asking the interviewer about where the company is now, where it plans to go and how the position on offer helps it get there. Keep your questioning simple and rehearse well so it’s sounds natural and subtle.

Sample needs questions you may want to ask include:

- *“Tom, may I ask what the company’s key goals are?”*
- *“What role does this position play in achieving those goals?”*
- *“What are the top priorities for the position?”*
- *“What responsibilities of the position do you regard as most important?”*

The employer should respond by providing some insight into the key objectives behind the role, enabling you to address them as you answer the interview questions. As each ‘need’ is uncovered, paraphrase the need to clarify it and then move on to identify further needs. e.g:

“In light of our discussion, is it fair to say that the company’s objectives are (list them). (Wait for response)? Are there other objectives?”

You may come across an inexperienced interviewer who conducts a formal style interview and is reluctant to discuss company needs. Any such reluctance might be overcome by explaining that information on company objectives will allow you to better present your skills and experience in light of the company needs.

- b. **Building rapport.** Customers buy from people they like and trust. That’s the purpose behind building rapport. The first few minutes of the interview are absolutely critical. The employer’s initial impression of you will be a major factor in deciding if you are to be hired. If you give a bad first impression or fail to build rapport then the employer may write you off immediately and just go through the motions for show.



Don't cut rapport short. Let it go on as long as it feels natural. It's more important that the person connects with you than it is to get through all the questions they want to ask. Of course, don't try to prolong rapport if it is obvious the interviewer wants to move on.

Keep a few standard rapport lines up your sleeve to get things started, such as comments about the weather or a major local event. To take rapport even further look around the interviewer's office and comment on something you see. People love to talk about themselves, so ask a question or comment on an item in the room, e.g.:

*"That's an interesting photo Tom. Where was it taken?" OR
"Are those your children" or "is that a photo of your family".*

Rapport doesn't belong only at the start of the interview. Continue building rapport throughout the meeting as the opportunity presents itself. Whenever possible, also encourage the interviewer to talk about their background.

- c. **Presenting the solution.** Having uncovered key needs, it's time to present your skills and abilities to show how you can solve the company's problems. We present the solution by telling stories to paint a picture for the interviewer. Our stories highlight the features and benefits of us as individuals.

There are two methods of answering questions during interviews, the BIG CAR method and the Features and Benefits method. We'll check both of them out right now. But first, let's look at what to say when we first walk into an interview.

One of the first things most interviewers will say to you after the initial niceties is "Tell me about yourself". Most candidates waste this invaluable opportunity to ramble on about meaningless trivia that makes the eyes glaze over. Don't join their ranks...be different and get noticed.

Tell me about yourself

Here's how to make the most of this rare opportunity to showcase your experience:

1. Tell them how many years of what types of experience you have.
2. Tell them what companies you've worked for.
3. Tell them what that's given you exposure to.
4. And tell them that's what brings you here today.

Here's how to string it all together...

Interviewer: *David, please tell me about yourself.*



Candidate: *Thanks Tom. I have 15 years leadership, sales and marketing experience. Working with some fantastic companies like Lion Nathan, Fairfax, ANZ and Defence. That's given me exposure to national sales management, strategic planning, international marketing campaigns, project management and general management roles. Which brings me here today.*

The BIG CAR method

Of course, the interview is going to want to ask many more questions and we need a structure for answering them to ensure we provide the best possible answers. The structure I recommend is BIG CAR. Here's what it standards for:

- BIG** = Big picture (a motherhood statement saying you done a lot of X)
- C** = Company (what job you held and the company you worked for)
- A** = Activity (a detailed explanation of *relevant* things you did there)
- R** = Result (something that shows you were good at what you did)

Let's look at BIG CAR in practice with a simple question to illustrate how it works:

Interviewer: David, Tell me about a time you worked in a team:

- Candidate: **BIG** *I've worked in many teams during my career John, both large and small.*
- COMPANY** *Probably the best example is my time as a Sales Consultant at ANZ Bank.*
- ACTIVITY** *Where I worked with 6 other staff providing customer service in a retail banking environment to sell a broad range of financial products.*
- RESULT** *During my time in this role, performance appraisals commented that I was an effective team member who got along well with colleagues.*

Naturally, when you give your answer it all flows together in one nice paragraph, like this:

Interviewer: David, tell me about a time you worked in a team:

Candidate: *I've worked in many teams during my career John, both large and small. Probably the best example is my time as a Sales Consultant at ANZ Bank, where I worked with 6 other staff providing customer service in a retail banking environment to sell a broad range of financial products. During my time in this role,*



performance appraisals commented that I was an effective team member who got along well with colleagues.

BIG CAR is a way of giving examples. You should always give examples wherever possible as they back up general statements and are far more likely to convince the interviewer that you can do the job.

Features and Benefits method

A feature is a characteristic or attribute of YOU as a product.

A benefit is the VALUE of the feature to the employer.

In the context of a job interview, 'features' equate to your accountabilities in a previous role and the competencies needed to fulfill them. The 'benefits' of your experience can be shown by discussing your achievements and how they added value. Let's look at how we tell a story during the job interview to address company needs:

FEATURE: *Mention your key accountabilities in a previous job and introduce a competency to address a need or problem.*

"Tom, you mentioned that ABC Company is looking for excellent project management skills. As the Director of Technology with XYZ Company, one of my key accountabilities was to liaise with clients on the implementation of new technologies across their businesses."

"I used project management skills extensively to do this. For example, I project-managed implementation of a \$10 million broadband infrastructure program."

BENEFIT: *List major achievements that relate to the competency and explain the value of your achievements to the company.*

"The project was delivered on-time and within budget...which meant that the client engaged us for its next project, and we generated an extra \$3 million revenue."

The features and benefits part of selling yourself is the most important part of the whole interview process. It's the logic that convinces the employer to 'buy' you or pass up on the offer. That's why you really must focus on presenting compelling benefits that excite the employer.

Be sure to use language that clearly highlights tangible benefits, ie. tell stories about occasions when you:

- Saved time



- Saved money
- Made money
- Made something easier
- Improved safety
- Improved convenience

It may surprise you to learn that even many sales professionals are not good at highlighting benefits. If this is true, then anything that makes it easier has to be worth paying close attention to. So be sure to read the next paragraph carefully.

Notice in the sample benefit statement above that we used the words “which meant that”. This is called a benefit joiner. If you use a joiner when you are taking about your achievements, then you are almost certainly describing a real benefit as opposed to merely rehashing a feature. Play it safe and use one of the following joiners when you tell your story:

- ...*which meant that*...
- ...*the advantage was*...
- ...*which resulted in*...
- ...*the benefit was*...

Draw the benefit out as much as possible when you tell your story. The employer is most interested in the value you can bring to their business, so that’s where your focus must be too.

Clearly link your benefits to the employer’s need so they can see you do in fact meet their need. In the sample feature statement above we introduced our story by paraphrasing one of the employer’s needs to highlight the self-evident fact that our benefit does indeed solve a problem for them. Here’s how we did it (see the underlined sentence below):

“Tom, you mentioned that ABC Company is looking for excellent project management skills. As the Director of Technology with XYZ Company, one of my key accountabilities was to liaise with clients on the implementation of new technologies across their businesses.”

If you do not possess a specific skill or experience that the company requires, tell a story that shows how your previous experience prepares you for new responsibilities and demonstrates your ability to adapt rapidly to new circumstances.

- d. **Overcoming objections.** You are unlikely to get the job if the employer has any concerns about your candidacy. That’s why it’s so important to identify and



address any concerns while you have the opportunity to do so during the interview.

A concern is anything that could stand between you and the job. The interviewer may raise concerns directly with you, in which case you must be prepared to address them right away. If you can't resolve a concern in the employer's mind, they will go on feeling that you aren't right for the job and that might prevent them from hearing the good things you say during the rest of the interview.

Just because the employer doesn't raise any concerns out loud, that doesn't mean they don't have any. Unspoken concerns are even more dangerous than the ones they tell you about, because they can derail you without ever having a chance to address them. That's why you must actively drag them out into the open and address them.

Some of the concerns you may come across include:

- Gaps in employment
- Gaps in technical expertise
- Reasons for leaving another job
- Short tenure in a previous role
- Salary requirements
- Cultural fit

Concerns may exist at the beginning of the interview, but they more often arise later in the interview after you've examined the employer's needs and presented your skills and experience as features and benefits.

It's important to view concerns as a legitimate opportunity for the employer to query some of the points you've raised. Any buyer expects to be able to question what they've been told, so don't take it personally and turn it into a confrontation or it will show through in your attitude. Simply stay calm and resolve the objection systematically.

The first step in identifying and resolving concerns is to ask if there is anything about your skills or background that gives the employer cause for concern or makes them think you wouldn't be suited to the role. eg:

"Tom, while we're together, I'd appreciate the opportunity to address any concerns you may have. May I ask what, if anything, gives you cause for concern about my suitability for this role."

If the employer does raise any concerns, use the following process to resolve them:



- i) Let the interviewer know that you've heard their concern.
"I can certainly understand why you might be concerned about my lack of experience in the beverages industry."
 - ii) Ask for more information to understand the concern better.
"Could you tell me a little about the challenges you feel I'll face without specific beverages experience?"
 - iii) Offer information about yourself to solve the concern.
"Tom, one aspect of my background we haven't had the opportunity to chat about yet is..."
 - iv) Check for any further concerns.
"Is there anything else you'd like me to go over while we're together?"
- e. **Asking for the job.** It constantly amazes me that many sales professionals do all the hard work in selling but miss the easy part...the close. Imagine insulting someone by wasting their time going over their needs and presenting a solution without doing them the courtesy of asking if they actually want to buy the product.

If you are going to sell yourself to an employer then do them the courtesy of asking them if they wish to buy the product! The most important part of any sale is to ask, ask, ask the question. You might have heard those incredible stories going around about people who get offered the job on the spot. Some of those stories are absolutely true. If you don't ask...you don't get.

Don't insult
the employer by
forgetting to
sell your
value

When I say "ask" for the job, I don't mean literally. But make no mistake, your manner needs to SAY "can I have the job please". The best way to communicate that message is to be passionate and let the employer know you think the job on offer is an excellent opportunity and you'd love to join the team. Before we let the cat out of the box, let's learn about how we can tell whether the employer is considering hiring us. It's called a test close and it works like this:

- i) **Test close:** Test closing involves asking a question which, if answered in a positive way, indicates that the employer is seriously considering you for the job. Most importantly, it allows you to go back and fix any concerns you might have missed during the interview.



A test close won't win you the job in itself, but it does let you know that you are in with a real chance.

People buy things because they like something about them and can see that they deliver obvious value for them. So what better way to find out if the employer is ready to buy than to ask what value they feel you can deliver:

"Tom, may I ask what about my background you believe will deliver most value for ABC Company?"

If the employer is not ready to 'buy' you, they will automatically respond with a concern. This let's you know that you have some work to do and you need to go back over the process for resolving concerns. If you leave the office while the employer still has concerns then you are unlikely to get the job.

If the employer shares their thoughts on your value to the company in response to your test close, move on to reinforce then close the sale.

- ii) **Reinforce:** Not only does an effective test close give you some idea about whether the employer is prepared to hire you, it often reveals the most important piece of information you could ever hope for. It let's you know the employer's primary reason for wanting you on the team. Armed with that knowledge, you can go right ahead and reinforce the employer's reason for wanting you, making it even more compelling for them to bring you on board.

My favourite way of reinforcing the test close is to tell a story about yourself involving the skill or attribute that the employer thinks will add most value:

Candidate: *"Tom, may I ask what about my background you believe will deliver most value for ABC Company?"*

Interviewer: *"I'm still concerned about your lack of beverages experience."*

(concern raised = test close fails)

In the example above, the test close has failed and we need to resolve the concern using the process we learned earlier. Compare this with the following example where the test close passes:

Candidate: *"May I ask what about my background you believe will deliver most value for ABC Company?"*

Interviewer: *"Your sales management experience will certainly be handy for the team."*



(no concern raised = test close passes)

Candidate: *“Thanks Tom. A reference will show that my sales skills have certainly proven useful to previous employers. At ABC, I increased sales revenues by 15% in 6 months after conducting sales training.”*

(specific reason for buying is reinforced)

- iii) **The most important question:** Having nailed the test close and reinforced the employer's reason for buying, it's time to close the sale. At the conclusion of every interview, don't forget to let the employer know that you believe the job offers a great opportunity:

At the very least, the employer will know that you are serious about the position. At best, you may be offered the job on the spot. It has happened! Here's an example that you may like to tailor to suit your interview style:

“Tom, thank you for making time to chat. This certainly seems like the challenge I'm after. In fact, I feel like it would be a great fit and I'd be absolutely thrilled to join the team.”



Next Job Now

CHAPTER 6

GREAT ANSWERS TO TOUGH QUESTIONS

A promotional banner for Next Job Now. It features the logo on the left and the text 'Next Job Now' in orange on the right. The main text reads 'FREE interview coaching videos' in white. Below this, a smaller line of text says 'Click here to see live videos online right now. Don't miss the "Knife Throwing" job interview video.' At the bottom left, it provides the phone number '1300 112 114' and the website 'www.nextjobnow.com.au'. The background of the banner shows a collage of various job-related images, including a person working on a machine, a person in a hard hat, and a person in a uniform.

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FREE interview coaching videos

Click here to see live videos online right now. Don't miss the "Knife Throwing" job interview video.

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Why employers ask questions

“Ask yourself this daily question: ‘How would the person I’d like to be...do the things I’m about to do?’”

Jim Cathcart

Now it’s time to wind back the interview clock to the bit where you get asked all the questions so we can take a closer look at how to provide great answers to even the toughest of questions.

It’s not enough just to practice rote answers to common interview questions. You need to understand the rationale behind each question and be prepared to answer any variation of the question.

Interviewers are going to spend a fair amount of time trying to drill down and get around your defenses. So you need to know what your answers will mean to the employer given that interviews are about determining whether you are the person that can best satisfy needs.

Let’s look at some survival tips for interviews and go over the different types of questions that could be asked. Later we’ll go over each question individually and suggest answers that might be suitable. The answers we’ve provided are a guide only. They should be tailored to suit your own experience and individual interview style.

Survival tips for answering questions

The way you answer an interview question is at least as important as what you say. Here are a few tips to keep you on the straight and narrow:

- **Listen carefully.** Always listen carefully before rushing in to answer a question. Rushing in suggests that you are rattling off prepared answers. When you do speak, keep answers shorter than 30-60 seconds. You have two ears and 1 mouth, so use them in that proportion. Each party should talk 50% of the time.
- **Don’t interrupt.** Never interrupt the interviewer. Aside from being plain rude and giving away the fact that you aren’t really listening at all, you may miss an important part of the question and not be able to give a complete answer.
- **Eye contact.** Keep eye contact with the person who asked the question. If there is more than one interviewer, look at the person who asked the question first and then glance at the others briefly as you answer the question. Finish by making eye contact with the person who asked the question.
- **See it through their eyes.** Every interviewer will have doubts and concerns. Before the interview, review your own CV and ask yourself “what reservations do I have about this person and their ability to fit in and do the job well?” This will



allow you to anticipate questions and prepare answers well in advance.

- **Don't leave wondering.** Don't ever leave an interview wondering if you could have answered a question better. If the interviewer looks puzzled or you are unsure whether your answer hit the target, seek clarification. For example, after you've given an answer you could ask:

"Tom, is this the type of information you had in mind."

- **Be humble.** Never tell the interviewer how to fix problem. If you want to show that you have a solution, you could say:

"We've had some success trying..."

- **Positive wins the day.** Answer questions with positive and assertive words. Avoid 'try' words like 'suppose, maybe, think, perhaps'. For example, in response to being asked what your strengths are, don't say "I suppose they are...". If you do not believe in yourself, then how can you ever expect the interviewer to believe in you. Also avoid giving negative information or hinting at exceptions to positive answers.

"Do, or do not. There is no 'try'."

Yoda, Empire Strikes Back

- **Enthusiasm is infectious.** Be passionate but not psychopathic. The employer wants to know they are getting someone who is committed and energetic enough to be a doer, but they don't want someone who is volatile or difficult to manage.

"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

- **Pause for effect.** Pausing makes you come across as more thoughtful and genuine. Don't ramble on incessantly and try to fill in all the gaps when the employer isn't talking. Pause to think about the question, provide an answer then pause to see what the interviewer does. Pausing in the middle of an answer after an important point is also a sure way to get it noticed.
- **Be prepared for the drill down.** No matter what style of question you get asked, a good interviewer will keep drilling down until they discover specifics.

Here's an example of what might happen:

Interviewer: *How would you rate your interpersonal skills?*

Candidate: *My line manager has commented that they are good.*



- Interviewer: *Give me an example of when you've used them effectively?*
- Candidate: *I used them to resolve a conflict at work.*
- Interviewer: *Tell me about the conflict. Who did it involve, what was it about, what did you do and what was the outcome?*

Good interviewers will be very specific about your involvement, contributions, achievements, values, leadership, personality traits etc. They will want in-depth examples and will keep drilling down until they get them. Think examples through well ahead of the interview so you can follow their lead comfortably.

- **Tell a story.** The interview is a great opportunity to tell your story in response to the interviewer's questions. The ability to tell a good story has made people rich and famous. Our needs are much more humble. We simply want to use the skill to get the job of our choosing.
Storytelling works because it paints a picture for the employer. We tell stories to help the interviewer imagine what it would be like to have us on the team solving their problems and working together. Start your stories with phrases like:
 - *"Colleagues would say that I..."*
 - *"People have mentioned..."*
 - *"My boss has commented..."*
 - *"A reference would show..."*

What the interviewer really wants to know

Every time you get asked a question, pause to consider "why am I being asked this? What does the interviewer really want to know and how can I put their mind at ease?" We talked earlier about employers being interested in answering the following three questions:

- Are you capable of doing the job?
- What will it take to make you do the job?
- Will you fit the company's culture?

Before we go into how to answer specific interview questions, let's look at each of the employer's key interests in turn to understand what they might ask in their search to determine your suitability for the role:

- a. **Are you capable of doing the job?** The interviewer wants to know that you have both the ability and experience to do the job on offer. They will ascertain this from your CV based on previous employers, roles and stated experience. At interview, they may ask factual questions related to:



- Technical skills and experience
- Formal qualifications
- Professional memberships
- Substantiating data from your current employer
- Ability to learn new things
- Functional expertise
- Leadership experience
- Industry exposure

Questions relating to these topics are likely to be quite straightforward, such as “do you have...?” or “have you worked with...?”

- b. **What will it take to make you do the job?** So much for being able to do the job. Now the employer wants to know what it will take to make you do the job and how happy you’ll be doing it. Questions you might be asked include:

- What was it like at ABC Company?
- What are 3 motivators and de-motivators for you?
- What would you like to be doing 5 years from now?
- Define your perfect job.
- What elements does a job need to give you satisfaction?
- What direction do you see your career taking?
- What remuneration do you expect should you be successful?

These questions are aimed at identifying your motivation for taking on the role and understanding what management effort will be required on an ongoing basis to ensure you deliver the goods. Most importantly, the company wants to know that hiring you will be a sustainable proposition and that you will stick around to deliver value.

- c. **Will you fit the company culture?** Cultural fit is the biggest challenge facing employers today. The more senior the role on offer is, the more important fit becomes. Typical cultural fit questions include:

- How do you manage underachievers / overachievers?
- Describe the attributes of your best / worst boss.
- Define the perfect / most difficult relationship with a boss.
- How do you interact with business partners?



- How do you handle crises?
- Define your leadership style.
- Describe how you make decisions.
- How did you grow professionally in your last position?
- What sort of person do you like to work for?
- How did you feel about that? Why?

During the interview it's not necessary that you be able to distinguish which of the three categories a question falls into. The question will either lend itself to you linking the answer to a need or it won't. Likewise, the nature of the question may allow you to tell story introducing features and benefits or it will not.

Simply link as many answers as possible to company needs. If the answer cannot readily be linked to a need, then tell a story anyway to illustrate features and benefits that you assume will appeal to the employer.

Behavioural questions

Many interview questions these days tend to be behavioural questions. There is a school of thought that past performance and behaviour is the best indicator of future performance. So many interviewers will ask about how you handled past situations or describe scenarios and have you explain what you would do in the circumstances.

Behavioural questions often start with, "Tell me about a time when you..." or "Describe..." or "How would you...?". Examples of behavioural questions you may come across include:

- Describe a time when you went beyond what was expected of you.
- Tell me how you make difficult or complex decisions.
- What are two of the most challenging decisions you've had to make recently? Why were they challenging?
- Tell me about the best and worst decisions you've made in your current job.
- How would you describe your creativity? Please give me a few examples.
- Would you say that you are a risk taker? Tell me about the biggest risks you've taken.

Pressure questions

Some interviewers ask pressure questions to see how well you think when placed on the spot. They are not that common, but there are some people who believe they work and still use them.



For example, you might be told that 2 bullets had been put in a 6 chamber revolver which was pointed at you, the barrel spun and the trigger pulled once with no shot being fired. You could then be asked whether you'd rather just pull the trigger again or spin the chamber.

These sorts of questions are frustrating and very difficult to work out even if you had a lot of time. In the example above you have a statistically better chance of survival if you simply pull the trigger without spinning the chamber again first.

If you are faced with a pressure question, stay calm. Just respond by saying that you're sure there must be a correct answer but you'd really need to think it through at length. If pushed for a quick answer, give them your best guess, but explain that in a business situation you'd never make such a risky decision without first consulting team members with the right expertise to advise you.

If you stay calm and give a confident answer with reassurances that you achieve well in real situations, then you will likely do well if faced with pressure questions. It may give you some comfort to think that all the other candidates will be in exactly the same position. You've just got to give a better answer than them.

Pre-package your interview answers

In every interview there are several questions that are strategically important...ones that you can almost always rely on being asked. It pays to give these questions special attention and take time to put together pre-packaged answers that you can rehearse well prior to the interview.

"The discipline of writing something down is the first step towards making it happen."

Lee Lacocca

Take Lee's advice. At a minimum, prepare written answers to the following questions in detail and rehearse them:

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What is your greatest achievement and why?
- Why do you want this job?
- Is there anything else you want to tell us?



Sample interview questions and answers

Some of the more common interview questions you are likely to come across are covered on pages 66-76 using the following format:

Question: Why do you want to leave ABC?

Rationale: Are you running away from anything?

Answer: Focus on themes that suggest you like it where you are, but you need that 'something' more. Perhaps you need an opportunity to build bigger things, or you want to add a new skill/industry to your career portfolio, or you just want scope to be more creative.

Be sure to spend time thinking through the rationale behind each question so you can spot variations of the question during the interview and answer them with ease.



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CHAPTER 7

KILLER QUESTIONS YOU MUST ASK

A promotional banner for Next Job Now. It features the company logo in the top left corner and the text 'Next Job Now' in the top right corner. The main text reads 'FREE CV for Defence spouses' in large, bold, orange letters. Below this, in smaller white text, it says 'Click here to see if your spouse qualifies for a FREE resume and coaching under SWAPP.' At the bottom left, it provides the phone number '1300 112 114' and the website 'www.nextjobnow.com.au'. The background of the banner is a blue gradient with a curved horizon line and a collage of military vehicles and personnel in the bottom right corner.

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Click here to see if your spouse qualifies for a FREE resume and coaching under SWAPP.

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Why many job seekers fail

*“Discovery consists of seeing what everyone else has seen
and thinking what no-one else has thought.”*

Albert Szent-Gyorgyi

The traditional interview format is poorly suited to extracting answers to the three critical questions on the employer’s agenda that we’ve already discussed. That’s why many candidates fail. They wait for opportunities to answer questions that are never asked, or they don’t ask enough questions themselves for fear of appearing too demanding.

By asking questions that show you have thought about the job opportunity in depth, you can differentiate yourself from other candidates and highlight your preparedness and astuteness. You should go to every interview prepared to ask as many questions as necessary to satisfy yourself regarding the opportunity on offer.

**Insightful
questions show
that you are in
demand**

The candidate who asks insightful questions will be well regarded by the interviewer. In addition to gaining valuable information that will prove useful in any further rounds of interviews, you will subtly come across as an individual who is in demand and can be selective about the role you choose. Once this happens, many interviewers will start to ‘sell’ you the job to ensure they have your interest. That’s a sure sign you are being considered for the position.

Choosing the right time to ask questions

Waiting until the end of an interview to ask questions is a mistake. By the later stages of an interview, the prospective employer will have formed a strong impression about your suitability that may be very difficult to change. You should start asking questions early in the interview and continue throughout.

Asking questions early in the interview will:

- Afford you some influence over proceedings and ensure you don’t do all the talking.
- Build rapport, since interviewers generally like to talk about their own company.
- Create opportunity for you to ask many more questions without seeming overly demanding toward the end of the interview.

What insightful candidates ask

The questions you should ask depend upon the nature and level of the position you are applying for. However, there are certain questions that should be asked at every interview, whether you are meeting with a recruitment agency or the employer directly.



As a guide, we recommend the following questions:

a. **Questions you *must* ask...at least some of them**

- What are the company's key goals?
- What role does this appointment play in achieving those goals?
- Why is this position available?
- Where is the role located?
- What are the challenges & priorities of the position?
- What responsibilities of the position are most important?
- How much autonomy can I expect in the role?
- Could you describe your ideal candidate for me?
- Can you describe the company culture for me?
- Could you tell me about company management styles/decision making?
- Who does the position report to and what is their management style?
- What are the key strengths and weaknesses of my prospective staff?
- Who will I interact with, how often and in what way?
- How would my performance be measured?
- What makes you feel I'll be successful in the role?
- What concerns you about my background and experience?

b. **Questions you might ask**

- When will you know if you've made the right choice in filling this position?
- Why did you join the company...why do you stay?
- When staff leave your company, where do they go?
- How long do you want me to stay with the company?
- What travel commitments does the position involve?
- Does your company value training? What is provided, when?
- What are my future prospects for promotion?
- Do you have a formal performance appraisal system?



c. **Questions to wrap-up the interview**

- What is your timetable for filling the position?
- What happens next in the selection process?
- Will you be recommending that I proceed to the next stage of selection?
- When can I expect to hear from you?



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CHAPTER 8

HOW TO TELL THE EMPLOYER TO HIRE YOU

A banner advertisement for Next Job Now. It features the company logo in the top left corner and the text 'Next Job Now' in the top right corner. The main text reads 'Australia's best resumes.' followed by the question 'Would you bet your career or family security on your current CV?'. Below this is a blue button with the text 'Click here for FREE samples.' and the contact information 'Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au'. The background of the banner shows a collage of various jobs and industries, including a pilot, a construction worker, and a person in a lab coat.

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What is a value proposition?

"The doers cut a path through the jungle; the managers are behind them sharpening the machetes. The leaders find time to think, climb the nearest tree, and shout 'Wrong jungle!' Find time to climb the trees."

Peter Maxwell

When an employer interviews you for a position with the company, they are looking for ways you can add value to their business. Many candidates fail at interview because they can't show how they can add value.

Cultural fit and other factors are certainly important elements of your suitability for employment, but your ability to contribute to the company's growth and prosperity is probably the single most important consideration in deciding whether you will get the job.

By asking questions that show you have thought about the job opportunity in depth, you can differentiate yourself from other candidates and highlight your preparedness and astuteness. You should go to every interview prepared to ask as many questions as necessary to ensure you satisfy yourself regarding the opportunity on offer.

**Insightful
questions show
that you are
in demand**

Every candidate that fronts for an interview will be looking for ways of convincing the employer that they are the best value the company will find. Hence, it's not enough just to show that you will add value, you have to show that you will add more value than any other candidate. This means that you have to show that you can add unique value.

Outdoing your fellow candidate doesn't mean you have to boast about your achievements. You simply have to get your unique value across in a clear and confident manner. You'll be way ahead of other candidates just by letting the employer know that you understand that you have value as a corporate asset.

Your value proposition

It's important to develop a Value Proposition that reflects your skills and experience for the role being offered. If your background was is IT management, the key elements of your Value Proposition might be:

- Your all round leadership, strategy and execution skills (in addition to your technical expertise in IT).



Once you have a clear picture of your Value Proposition, refer to it at various stages throughout the interview when answering questions. At the very least, end the interview by taking the opportunity to tell your prospective employer what value you can add, eg:

“Tom, I’ve really enjoyed our time together today. If I may, before we finish I’d like to summarise what I see as my real value to a business such as yours:

Many companies I’ve talked to over the years look for strategic or operational thinkers. I’ve worked hard to develop all-round skills, and I’m a believer that you have to be more than just one or the other – you have to think on both levels at the same time...and you have to know when to get your hands dirty and lead by example.”



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CHAPTER 9

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

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The banner features a blue background with a curved, glowing orange and yellow border. On the right side, there is a collage of images showing various industrial and military vehicles, including tanks and trucks, in action.



Sending thank you letters

You must always send thank you letters even if you feel you did poorly at the interview. If the employer is forced to decide between two strong candidates, the more polite candidate is likely to land the job.

Thank you letters should be sent the same day as the interview or the next day at the latest. Write a separate letter for each member of the interview team and for other staff that you met. Topics you may wish to write about in a thank you letter include:

- How much you enjoyed the meeting and learning about the company's objectives.
- How excited you are at the prospect of joining the company and commencing a rewarding career.
- Reinforce that your values coincide with the company's direction.
- Mention relevant skills and abilities that were not discussed during the interview.
- Review next steps in interview process.

On the following pages are some sample thank you letters that you can tailor to your needs.



THANK YOU LETTERS

1st	interviewer letter	page 81
2nd	interviewer letter	page 82
3rd	Support staff letter	page 83

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The banner features the Next Job Now logo on the left and a collage of various industrial and construction scenes on the right, all set against a blue background with a white curved line.

YOUR NAME

24 Street Name
Suburb Name NSW 2000
Ph: (02) 1234 5678



Thank you
letter 1

10th June, 2004

Mr. Mark Anthony
Regional Sales Director
Sales Company
123 Business Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Mark

Thank you for making time to meet with me yesterday regarding the role of Regional Sales Manager. I am excited at the prospect of joining the Sales Company team and commencing what I am sure will be an extremely rewarding career.

Mark, opportunities such as this are rare. Sales Company offers the challenges that I have been seeking for some time now and I would very much like to play a part in your company's future success.

Regards

Your Name

YOUR NAME

24 Street Name
Suburb Name NSW 2000
Ph: (02) 1234 5678



10th June, 2004

Mr. Mark Anthony
Regional Sales Director
Sales Company
123 Business Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Mark

I very much enjoyed our meeting yesterday to discuss the role of Regional Sales Manager. Thank you for taking time out and allowing me to draw on your experience to investigate the role in greater detail.

I am excited at the prospect of joining the Sales Company team and commencing what I am sure will be an extremely rewarding career.


This is a magnificent opportunity to join an innovative and highly motivated team. I would very much like to play a significant part in Sales Company's future business success.

Regards

Your Name

YOUR NAME

24 Street Name
Suburb Name NSW 2000
Ph: (02) 1234 5678



Thank you
letter 3

10th June, 2004

Mr. Mark Anthony
Administration Manager
Sales Company
123 Business Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Mark

Thank you for making my visit to ABC Company such a hassle-free and enjoyable affair. It was a pleasure to meet you and I especially enjoyed our time together chatting.

Thanks to your efforts, the day ran smoothly and I felt very comfortable during the whole process.

Regards

Your Name



Checking where you stand

"It is better to have lived one day as a tiger than 1000 years as a sheep."

Tibetan proverb quoted by Alison Hargreaves

Having sent your resume and pre-interview summary, resist the urge to call every second day and pester the employer about whether you've been selected for interview. That will make you look desperate and give the employer cause to think you are running away from something. That said, you must pluck up the courage and call at some point if you are uncertain about whether you will be interviewed.

For advertised roles, the application period will normally stay open for two weeks from the date of the advertisement and it will usually take the employer or recruiter a further week at least to work through the resumes and organise themselves.

To check where you stand, call the company or recruiter five working days after the cutoff date for application and ask them when successful applicants will be advised they have been short listed for interview, e.g:

*"Hi Mary, it's David calling. How are you today? (wait for reply).
Mary, this is just a courtesy call to enquire when short listed applicants will be
advised of interview dates for the position of IT Manager."*

You can learn a lot from the way the employer handles your enquiry when you call. I've often found that enquiries handled with reverence suggest you may be in the running for an interview.

What do you do if you don't get an interview? You should call the employer and ask them where they feel you need to focus to improve your employability. Do this even if you are invited for an interview but don't get offered the position.



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CHAPTER 10

SHOW ME THE MONEY

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The banner features a blue background with a yellow horizontal stripe. On the right side, there is a curved image showing a construction site with heavy machinery and workers. The text is in white and yellow, with the 'Next Job Now' logo in the top left corner.



How employers decide what to pay

"I am in the world to change the world."

Käthe Kollwitz

The employer will generally have a salary range in mind. It's your job to convince them to think of your price tag as being at the upper end of their proposed limit or even a little beyond it. A good interview performance will go a long way toward showing you are worth an extra investment.

I've never found it necessary to get lawyers involved or get wrapped up around the axles when negotiating pay. If you can't get the deal you want it normally means you haven't sold yourself properly. Employers will pay if they believe you are worth the money.

Convincing employers you are worth paying for

When negotiating salary, an employer may say that the amount you are requesting is outside of the planned salary bracket. If it is well outside the bracket then either they are cheapskates or you are applying for the wrong job. If it's not too far outside the bracket, then you'll need to convince them that it's worth stretching a little.

You could stretch the salary on offer by explaining how other employers have paid more than they originally had in mind to bring you on board, but they've never been disappointed with the solid return on their extra small investment.

Before stating your salary requirements, tell the employer that any decision to move would naturally need to make good financial sense, but that you'd be looking for other non-financial benefits as well.

Tell the employer that you see, fun, career development, good leadership, training and responsibility as rewards and you're certain you'll get them based on what's been discussed. The employer will recognise that you're different and may be prepared to pay more for your cultural value in addition to your technical expertise.

**To raise
your asking
price...be
different**

When negotiating a new package, consider the cost of living expenses. For example, you'd need at least an extra \$10,000 on top of your old your package just to break even if you moved from Perth to Sydney and had to fork out for additional rental and transport expenses.

The allure of a new job can be extremely powerful and I've met candidates who try to



convince themselves the offer is fantastic and they should take the job. At the end of the day, every decision to move genuinely needs to make good financial sense, so take everything into account when considering how well off you are with your current employer.

Some things to consider include:

- Base remuneration
- Pending pay rises
- Any near term promotion
- Superannuation
- Bonuses
- Shares and options
- Fully maintained car
- CBD Parking
- Employer provided child care
- External coaching
- Tertiary studies and training
- Housing allowance
- Flexible work hours
- Phone allowance
- Notebook computer
- Cost of living increases
- Relocation expenses
- Change in costs of schooling for children
- Long service leave and annual leave
- Retirement benefits
- Golden handcuffs forfeited
- Other fringe benefits

Remember that if you had to pay for some things yourself, you would need to earn as much as twice the cost of the benefit in pre-tax dollars, so factor that into your decision on whether you are getting a good deal. At the end of the day, I personally wouldn't change jobs for less than a 20% increase on an old package in real terms.



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CHAPTER 11

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF JOB HUNTING

A promotional banner for Next Job Now. It features the company logo on the left and the text 'Next Job Now' on the right. The main headline reads 'Australia's best resumes.' followed by the question 'Would you bet your career or family security on your current CV?'. Below this is a blue button with the text 'Click here for FREE samples.' and contact information: 'Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au'. The background of the banner shows a collage of various jobs and industries, including a pilot, a construction worker, and a person in a lab coat.

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Using the right body language

No-one expects you to be a body language expert, but good use of some body language basics can help you connect with the interviewer and might just make all the difference in an interview.

There are cynics in this world who say that body language is a lot of rubbish. Believe what you will...I've seen it work. Are you prepared to throw away that perfect job opportunity to back your beliefs? Take it from me...anything that can improve your chances of landing a job is worth a go.

Here are a few hot tips to improve your performance:

- Smile. Be sure to smile as often as possible and make it genuine. A real smile involves the whole face, not just the mouth.
- Tilt your head. You can give a strong impression of interest by tilting your head slightly to the side.
- Nod your agreement. Show agreement while the interviewer is speaking by nodding gently.
- Maintain eye contact. Hold eye contact when speaking. Looking away gives the impression of dishonesty or lack of confidence.
- Crossing your feet. Sit as far back on the chair as possible and cross your feet down low under the chair.
- Crossing your legs. If you must cross your legs at the knees, turn your chair 45 degrees and angle toward the Interviewer.
- No pyramids. Don't 'pyramid' your hands or fingers. This is an arrogant power gesture.
- Don't fold your arms. Folding your arms creates a barrier and locks the

Mistakes that can cost you the job

There are so many pitfalls along the road to winning a job. Stick to what we've covered in Next Job Now and you will have eliminated the worst of them. Just to be safe though, here are a few final safety tips on how to keep yourself in the running. Mistakes that could cost you the job include:

- Making the employer work too hard to get you.



- Not being aware of the employer's price point.
- Being too formal or too informal at the interview.
- Responding with shallow answers that are obviously canned.
- Saying what you think the interviewer wants you to say all the time.
- Providing references that do not check out.
- Being untruthful about your achievements in your CV.

Happy hunting!

"Don't say you don't have enough time. You have the same number of hours per day as Helen Keller, Pasteur, Michelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson and Albert Einstein."

H. Jackson Brown Jr

Getting a job is simple, but it's not easy. It takes time and commitment. Fortunately, you've now got everything you need to go after that job of your dreams. You are well ahead of the competition...they'll be stepping on those landmines while you are walking around them.

If you need us, we are just an email away at help@nextjobnow.com.au resume and job coaching service, but you really do have everything you need to do it yourself. Why not visit our website and check out our monthly job tips and premium resume templates.

Good hunting

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Penman'.

David Penman



Next Job Now

APPENDIX 1

SAMPLE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

A promotional banner for Next Job Now. It features the company logo on the left and the text 'Next Job Now' in orange on the right. The main text reads 'FREE interview coaching videos' in large white letters. Below this, a smaller line of text says 'Click here to see live videos online right now. Don't miss the "Knife Throwing" job interview video.' At the bottom left, it provides the phone number '1300 112 114' and the website 'www.nextjobnow.com.au'. The background of the banner shows a collage of various industrial and construction scenes.

Next Job Now

FREE interview coaching videos

Click here to see live videos online right now. Don't miss the "Knife Throwing" job interview video.

Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au



Sample questions and answers

The sample questions and answers on the following pages are by no means exhaustive. They do, however, cover many of the key topics that are likely to crop up in interviews go into some depth on the rationale behind each question being asked.

The suggested answers to common interview questions cover themes that employers will generally expect to hear about from successful people. Use these themes to script answers in a way that suits your personal interview style.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Question: **Tell me about yourself.**

Rationale: **We'd like you to get the ball rolling today.**

Answer: Most candidates use this very rare opportunity to talk about minor administrative details in their life. For example, they say "I'm 35, married with 2 kids and grew up in a small town by the sea..." etc.

Stand out during the interview by using this opportunity to further your agenda. Talk about qualities the employer wants in the role and hit on themes you know will be of value. For example:

"Bob, over the years I've been privileged to work with some great companies and some very talented people. My 15 years of financial services experience has presented challenges that allowed me to develop strong leadership, banking and project management skills. As far as my strengths go, I'm a balanced entrepreneur who is great with people and loves selling the vision. Now I'm looking for a new challenge to make the most of these skills and strengths."

Question: **Why do you want to leave ABC?**

Rationale: **Are you running away from anything?**

Answer: Focus on themes that suggest you like it where you are, but you need that 'something' more. Perhaps you need scope to build bigger things, or you want to add a new skill/industry to your career portfolio, or you just want scope to be more creative.

Question: **What's it like at ABC Company?**



Rationale: Can you do the job?

Answer: Give an answer those talks about opportunities to make key contributions and work with talented people. Talk about major projects and other key activities. Don't oversell here, or the interviewer will wonder why you want to leave.

Question: How would you describe your management style?

Rationale: Will others be able to get along with you?

Answer: The 'firm, fair and friendly' routine is best. Employers want to know that you will be approachable and likeable, but that you will demand results when the chips are down. Make sure to mention the importance of involving team members in management processes, since shared ownership of decisions promotes success.

Question: Describe the worst boss you have ever worked for.

Rationale: Will you get on with our bosses?

Answer: Give answers that suggest you have never worked for a boss who was truly bad or had no redeeming qualities. It's okay to share that you did once work for a boss who had some unlawful or socially unacceptable practice (e.g. Was sexist or condoned dangerous initiation practices).

Question: Describe the best boss you ever worked for

Rationale: Do you learn from and respect your bosses?

Answer: Suggest that you have worked for several exceptional bosses (if that is the case). Explain why particular bosses were notable and give examples of what you learned from them (skills that will be valuable to the interviewer of course).

Question: What have you enjoyed most in previous jobs?

Rationale: Will you enjoy the kind of work being offered?

Answer: Be honest...you want to know if the daily duties of the new position are enjoyable. Talk about work tasks you've enjoyed doing in the past that will likely be expected in the new role (which means you must always ask for a job description before the interview). Good answers include talking



about enjoying accountability, working with people and learning from them.

Question: **What remuneration do you expect should you be successful?**

Rationale: **Are you money motivated?**

Answer: Unless you are going for a sales role, it's best not to come across as money motivated. Don't discuss money unless and until it's absolutely necessary – after they really want you.

If asked about money, explain that your decision to apply for the position is not motivated by money - it's about finding the right challenge (challenge, opportunity and lifestyle are also elements of any good remuneration package). Finish with the comment that "of course, any move would need to make sense for me financially".

If you have to talk money, explain that you'd really have to find out more about the job responsibilities before you could attach a price tag. Then ask, "can you tell me the range you have in mind for the position." If that fails, it's got to the point where you need to give a dollar range.

Question: **What did your supervisor criticise in your last evaluation?**

Rationale: **Can you handle criticism?**

Answer: Offer a few common weaknesses that have no real impact on performance. Make sure to add that you worked hard to overcome the issue and have put it behind you. Finish by saying that you are always trying to improve yourself and that you are always thankful for advice that helps you do so.

"My supervisor said I was doing well and that I should look to the future by broadening my influencing skills upward and across to position myself for a future promotion."

Question: **Tell me about a time you were under a great deal of pressure.**

Rationale: **How effectively do you work under pressure?**

Answer: Discuss occasions when you handled complex, dangerous or contentious matters. Highlight a logical approach to the solution and ensure you focus on timely decision-making. Reinforce the fact that you stayed calm and paused to consider all information available within time limits. Offer that you multi-tasked effectively and managed at the right



level (not too much and not too little).

Question: **What are your strengths?**

Rationale: **Will you fit in here and will you add value?**

Answer: Be prepared to discuss lots of strengths. Rattle them off at the beginning and then hone in on a few. Remember though, the more strengths you have, the more weaknesses you also need to present. Select strengths that will add value to the employer and try to phrase them in an unusual way, eg:

- Balanced entrepreneur
- Good with people
- Innovative communicator

You might like to mention 3 key strengths and then tell a brief story about how they added value in your old job, e.g.:

“Tom, three of my strongest skills are communication, people management and problem solving. If I may tell you about one of my responsibilities that required all three skills”:

“At Sales Company, I assumed the responsibility of streamlining casual labour management (worth \$2.3m pa). I had to liaise with many parties who had differing interests and solve a myriad of problems associated with the old system of labour provision. I overcame the problems by creating a labour management database and fostering a strong relationship between the Company, casual staff and the labour provider. At the end of the day, we saved \$400,000 and absenteeism was substantially decreased”.

Question: **What are your weaknesses?**

Rationale: **Do you have any unacceptable weaknesses?**

Answer: Any candidate worth their salt is open about having lots of weaknesses, but quick to add that they have many more strengths to offset them, and also to add that they have worked hard and overcome weaknesses. You may wish to discuss non-critical weaknesses eg:

“I am very energetic and expect a great deal of my people. However, I have learned that motivation is an individual matter, and I am regarded as a demanding but very fair boss.”



OR

"Maybe sometimes I hang onto low performers just a little too long, training them and trying to turn them around...when perhaps I should cut them loose just a little bit sooner."

OR

"I have high standards and won't settle for the status quo."

Question: What will your referees say your strengths and weaknesses are?

Rationale: Are you being honest about your strengths and weaknesses?

Answer: Any doubt you have about whether your referee will back up your assertions as to your performance will be obvious to the interviewer, so be sure to answer in a confident manner with pausing for too long. Simply say "I'm confident my references will be along the same lines as we've discussed today."

It is impossible to know exactly what a referee will say, so don't try to guess or it may seem staged. Stick with a general acknowledgement that you're confident your referee's will back up what's been discussed.

Question: What is your greatest achievement?

Rationale: Are you a high performer and a self-starter?

Answer: You need to show that colleagues respect your professionalism and that you can get along with them at a work level and social level to some extent, e.g.:

"My colleagues would say that I am a team player and that they don't know where I find the time to do the things that I do in a day. My close colleagues would say that I am always willing to make personal sacrifices to help them."

Question: What would your colleagues say of you?

Rationale: Do you walk over others to get what you want?

Answer: You need to show that colleagues respect your professionalism and that you can get along with them at a work level and social level to some extent, e.g.:



“My colleagues would say that I am a team player and that they don’t know where I find the time to do the things that I do in a day. My close colleagues would say that I am always willing to make personal sacrifices to help them.”

Question: **Can we check your references?**

Rationale: **Do you have anything to hide?**

Answer: It’s almost certain that the employer will check references. The more dubiously you answer this question, the more certain you can be that they will. There is only one answer to this question – an emphatic “of course”.

One variation on this question is to ask “what would Mr. X (your superior/ peer/subordinate) say about you if we contacted him?” This is known as the Threat of Record Check (TORC). Interviewers who use TORC does not always follow up references extensively.

Question: **What makes you stand out amongst your peers?**

Rationale: **Why should I hire you instead of another candidate?**

Answer: Good people know their own value and are able to communicate it modestly. Frankly, if you can’t point out your uniqueness and value as a corporate asset then you don’t deserve the job. This is the single most important question of the interview, and if the interviewer doesn’t ask it, you still need to get the message across, e.g.:

“I have a record of assuming responsibilities beyond those expected of my position, and of getting the job done well.”

Question: **Where do you see yourself in 5 years?**

Rationale: **Are you suitably ambitious but not overly so?**

Answer: An employer wants to know that you’ll try hard, so they want to hear that you will strive to do your best and see where it takes you. Keep answers general and angle toward suggesting that in 5 years you’d hope to “be in a role with broadened responsibilities”. You might also say “perhaps you could tell me about opportunities that may be opened to me.”



Question: How many hours a week do you work to get the job done?

Rationale: Will you leave early or can we work you to death?

Answer: It's important that the employer knows you will work until the job is done (within reason). At the same time, you want them to know that you lead a balanced life and that family is an important consideration, eg:

"Tom, hours worked aren't a great concern for me. When there's a need, I'll work until I've done what needs to be done. At the same time, I'm a family person and I believe that the best results at work are achieved when there is balance in your life."

Question: What kind of mentoring and training style do you have?

Rationale: Will you be a dictator or an inspirational leader?

Answer: Modern business places a lot of emphasis on growing its own leaders within the company. Growing leaders requires good coaching and mentoring skills. Thus, the interviewer will want to know that you believe in motivating others rather than directing them, and that you view training as a lifelong process.

Tell the interviewer that different situations require different leadership styles and you always try to choose what's best for any given circumstances. You should add that it's okay for staff to make mistakes, as long as they learn from them.

Question: How much direction and feedback do you need to excel?

Rationale: Will you need to be micro-managed?

Answer: You may suggest that you need to know the underlying objective of the task so that you can tailor your efforts appropriately, adding that you don't require interim feedback, though it is always welcome.

Question: Describe a situation where you managed a problem subordinate

Rationale: How do you deal with under-achievers and problematic staff?

Answer: Businesses don't want to carry any dead wood, but they don't want to demoralise staff by unnecessarily sacking personnel either. When faced with this question, explain that you would consult with the staff member to ascertain the real cause of the problem.



You might suggest that a development plan would be required and that performance be measured regularly. If objectives were not met, the staff member may have strengths that could be used elsewhere. If not, the staff member would need to be moved on if reasonable efforts at coaching and training failed.

Question: How do you manage high-achievers?

Rationale: Will talented staff want to work for you and can you manage them?

Answer: The interviewer will want to know that you can retain and develop talented staff. High-achievers can be difficult to manage and can cause turmoil as they drive the pace of change.

Explain to the interviewer that it's important to let talented staff have enough room to innovate and build, but that it's also important for them to work as part of a team and that team buy-in is an essential ingredient of success. This can be achieved by rewarding achievement and simultaneously encouraging teamwork.

Question: What are your motivators and demotivators?

Rationale: What will it take to make you do the job?

Answer: The interviewer wants to know what turns you on and what turns you off in a work sense. Be honest with your answers, otherwise you may end up with a job you hate.

You may be motivated by responsibility and entrepreneurial opportunity, or bureaucracy and untimely decisions may demotivate you. Whatever the case, your motivators should be present in the new job and the demotivators should be absent.

Question: Are you a 'detail' person or a 'big picture' person? OR

Rationale: Are you a 'thinker' or a 'doer'.

Answer: Balance is the key when answering this question. There are times when you must be a thinker and times when you must get your hands dirty. Don't fall for the age-old trap of choosing between these attributes. You must possess both.

Think back to our sample Value Proposition and you'll recall we talked about how to position yourself nicely around this theme. e.g.:



“Many companies I’ve talked to over the years look for strategic or operational thinkers. I’ve worked hard to develop all-round skills, and I’m a believer that you have to be more than just one or the other – you have to think on both levels at the same time...and you have to know when to get your hands dirty and lead by example.”

Question: Are you more comfortable working with tangible, short-term issues or uncertain, long-term issues? Why?

Rationale: Can you live with ambiguity and uncertainty?

Answer: The more senior the role, the more important it is that you can work with ambiguity. Tell the employer that it’s natural to prefer certainty whenever possible, but that you are equally comfortable operating in uncertain environments and that it’s a natural part of business. Add that you cope with uncertainty by making the best decision available on the information at the time. 90% now is better than 100% too late.

Question: How do you stay abreast of what’s happening in the market and what competitors are doing?

Rationale: Do you maintain a good situational awareness?

Answer: Present themes that suggest you stay abreast of market opportunities and competition by reading newspapers, watching the news, subscribing to industry journals and approaching competitors to keep in touch with what they are doing. You could also mention that you liaise with peers in other companies and regularly ask customers what is happening in the competitor space.

Question: What do you know about our company

Rationale: Are we just another job opportunity to you?

Answer: No employer wants to feel they are just another job opportunity. Make them feel special by identifying something you like about the company and be prepared to discuss it.

Don’t reel of lots of useless facts and details about the employer. Simply mention one or two significant points and talk about them in some depth to show you’ve done the research. Focus on the intangibles like values, culture, innovation, customer service etc.



This question can also pop up under the guise of “Who else have you applied to?”, in which case you might respond that you have researched a quite a few companies and applied to a handful that you believe offer opportunities that match your skills and provide a good working culture. Be prepared to name a few competitors worthy of note.

Question: **Is there anything else you want to tell us?**

Rationale: **Go ahead and have your say on anything we missed.**

Answer: This is probably the most valuable question you can ever be asked, because it opens the door for you to talk about any subject of your choosing. Don't squander it by rambling on about a myriad of different topics. Just pick one powerful theme and communicate a single message in a compelling way.

Since this question, is normally asked at the end of an interview, I recommend you use it as an opportunity to communicate your Value Proposition if you haven't already. It is also a good time to ask for the job.

Question: **Why have you changed jobs so often?**

Rationale: **Will you quit on us too?**

Answer: If you have changed jobs frequently then you'll need to alleviate the employer's fear factor by having a good excuse handy, such as:

- I was looking for something more entrepreneurial with a larger company backed by the resources to grow.
- My learning curve had flattened out.
- We relocated due to health reasons involving my spouse.
- It was only ever intended and agreed as an interim appointment.

You could also add that stability is very important for your next challenge and you'd like to spend a few years in the one role, possibly under contract if that would provide the company a greater sense of comfort around tenure.

Question: **Give an example of when you influenced others at work to take ownership of an idea.**

Rationale: **Can you win support for ideas?**



Answer: Employers will want you to talk about topics such as introducing ideas to the team, presenting information to sell the sizzle, building networks, using benefits to persuade an audience and influencing strategies.

Question: **Tell me about a time you took the initiative at work?**

Rationale: **Do you take the initiative?**

Answer: You'll need to convince the interviewer that you are a doer, not just a thinker. This means telling stories about times when you were proactive and generated ideas for improvement.

Themes to cover include seeing opportunities where others did not, pursuing self-improvement and solving problems when no one specifically asked you to do so.

Question: **Tell me about your biggest failure.**

Rationale: **Will you be open about failure and do you learn from mistakes?**

Answer: For the informed candidate, this question is far from being a trap...it is a wonderful opportunity. Many candidates respond by relating a tale of woe about something they did poorly and focusing on the downside that followed.

The savvy candidate realises that the employer is actually asking if they are a self-starter who takes the initiative. With initiative comes the risk of failure. People who take balanced risks occasionally fail, but more often than not they succeed. That's the kind of entrepreneurial spirit employers often look for.

Respond to this question by telling a very short story about a minor failure and then turn it into a story about how you took the initiative.

Question: **Tell me about a time a peer strongly disagreed with you. How did you handle it? What was the result?**

Rationale: **Are you a team player?**

Answer: Team players are people who build on the ideas of others. They put group goals ahead of individual goals, work in a cooperative manner and openly support team priorities. Most importantly, they assist other team members in getting where they need to go. Weave these elements of



teamwork into an anecdote about your background.

Question: Walk me through a big work problem you faced and solved recently.

Rationale: Can you solve problems effectively?

Answer: Effective problem resolution involves breaking problems down into solvable chunks, gathering relevant information, analysing issues, considering alternatives, evaluation pros and cons, making decisions, winning resources and informing others.

Question: What happens to people who are not successful under your leadership?

Rationale: How do you develop and coach staff?

Answer: A good coach removes barriers to performance, asks questions rather than tells, has honest conversations, provides opportunities, observes, shows by example, follows due process for under-performance and provides timely feedback.

Question: Tell me about a time you changed your stance on a work issue.

Rationale: How flexible are you?

Answer: Flexibility involves thinking on your feet, applying rules flexibly in changing circumstances, adapting your own strategies to include the ideas of others and adjusting to new responsibilities quickly.

Question: Tell me about a time you won your team's commitment for change?

Rationale: Can you inspire your team?

Answer: Leaders who are effective at winning team buy-in are people who listen, demonstrate empathy, ask for commitment, share thoughts and feelings, set the bar high and sell the vision on why it need to be reached. Most importantly, they are frequent and honest communicators.



Next Job Now

APPENDIX 2

SAMPLE COVER LETTERS

A promotional banner for Next Job Now. It features the logo on the left, the text 'Next Job Now' in orange on the right, and a blue background with a curved image of military vehicles at the bottom right. The main text is '100% FREE under CTAS.' in large blue letters, followed by 'Defence pays us to help eligible members subject to approval at NO COST to the member.' in smaller white text. At the bottom left, it says 'Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au' in white.

Next Job Now

100% FREE under CTAS.

Defence pays us to help eligible members subject to approval at NO COST to the member.

Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au

YOUR NAME

24 Street Name
Suburb Name NSW 2000
Ph: (02) 1234 5678



Cover
Letter
Sample
One

5th January, 2000

Mr. Mark T. Anthony
Chief Executive Officer
Asia Pacific Technology Company
123 Business Street
SINGAPORE 123456

Dear Mr. Anthony

Could you use a Managing Director with a track record of growing revenues more than 25% year-on-year and exceeding targets by 57%?

I am searching for an opportunity to grow market share for an innovative company in the enterprise and telecommunications product sector with the following needs:

- Creation and expansion of alliances.
- Negotiation of major deals with content providers, ISPs and the enterprise market.
- New product development and management of product mix for profitability.
- Business planning and market development.
- Analysis of market trends and competitive initiatives.

Once you've had a chance to review my resume, I'd be grateful for the opportunity to meet with you and discuss your needs in detail.

May we talk?

Regards

Your Name
Enclosure

YOUR NAME

24 Street Name
Suburb Name NSW 2000
Ph: (02) 1234 5678



Cover
Letter
Sample
Two

5th January, 2004

Mr. Falsebody
Sue Alot Lawyers
12 Money Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

By email: steve.falsebody@suealot.com.au

Dear Mr. Falsebody

RE: POSITION OF 1st -3rd YEAR LAWYER

Could you use a lawyer with a high level of personal commitment, a genuine eye for detail and a passion for growing business that is second to none? Please take 60 seconds to consider my credentials:

- Achieved 200% of initial billing targets.
- Established professional network in Sydney, providing genuine business opportunities.
- Proven ability to win repeat business through excellent customer service.
- Strong business experience, allowing me to communicate well with clients at all levels.
- Formally recognised for the quality of my work as an Articled Clerk.
- Track record in working autonomously to grow client accounts and win new business.
- Extensive exposure to legal policy, legislation and government processes.
- Demonstrated aptitude for Litigation, significantly outperforming my peers.

Having recently completed my Articles in Notown, Suealot have generously offered me a role in my home town of Bigville as a Commercial Lawyer. Prior to accepting this offer, I am keen to canvas other challenges that may be available.

May we talk?

Regards

Your Name

Enclosure

YOUR NAME

24 Street Name
Suburb Name NSW 2000
Ph: (02) 1234 5678



Cover
Letter
Sample
Three

5th January, 2004
Mr. Big Boss
Retail Search Company
12 Money Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

By email: big.boss@retailsearch.com.au

Dear Big

RE: POSITION OF LOSS PREVENTION MANAGER - Ref: 0000

Many loss prevention programs are capital intensive, adversarial and ineffective. On the other hand, anyone who's been involved in successful programs will know that they can transform culture, protect profit and build a focused team capable of great things. That's the conversation I had with the Head of Risk at ABC the other day when he called to ask how I'd brought losses to a standstill so we could replicate the model nationally.

Could XYZ use an executive with a high level of personal commitment, an entrepreneurial flair and a passion for growing business that is second to none? Please take 60 seconds to consider my credentials:

- Headed risk management and protective security programs for 45 client businesses.
- Skilled in investigation management and liaison with federal government agencies.
- Strategic experience as Group Business Analyst for ABC Company.
- Proven ability as a public speaker, trainer and 'seller' of the vision.
- Designed, developed and conducted security, sales and service training nationally.
- I'm passionate about whatever I do...and about teaching everyone how to believe in it!

This certainly seems like the challenge I've been searching for. If you're looking for a genuine team player to champion loss prevention as a valuable way of doing business rather than simply an audit function, then I'd love to chat. May we talk?

Regards

Your Name

Enclosure

YOUR NAME

24 Street Name
Suburb Name NSW 2000
Ph: (02) 1234 5678



Cover
Letter
Sample
Four

5th January, 2004
Ms. Dorothy Scarecrow
IT Company
PO Box 0000
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms. Scarecrow

RE: POSITION OF IT MANAGER – REF: 2001/36

Could you use an IT Manager with a high level of personal commitment, a love of information technology and a passion for customer service that is second to none? Please take 60 seconds to consider my credentials:

- Experienced in ABC Company systems and policies.
- Coordinated project planning and implementation for high-profile IT clients.
- Significant experience in business continuity and exposure to ITIL.
- Track record in developing and implementing testing strategies, plans and processes.
- Authored and managed Disaster Recovery Plans, including Y2K planning.
- Proven ability to work well with business partners and achieve target outcomes.
- Excellent oral, written, interpersonal and presentation skills.
- IT project management.

Speaking plainly, this sounds like an exciting challenge and I can certainly see myself enjoying the work and the lifestyle in Canberra. May we talk?

Regards

Your Name
Enclosure



Next Job Now

APPENDIX 4

SAMPLE PLAIN TEXT CV

Next Job Now

100% FREE under CTAS.
Defence pays us to help eligible members subject to approval at NO COST to the member.

Phone 1300 112 114 www.nextjobnow.com.au

The banner features a blue background with a curved horizon line showing a military scene with tanks and soldiers. The Next Job Now logo is in the top left, and the text is in white and blue.

CLIENT NAME

email: emailaddress@yahoo.com

Phone: 0410 123 456

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Senior leadership appointments with full P&L
- International multi-site operations across 14 countries
- Track record in GM and COO roles internationally
- Strategic sales and marketing management
- Strong financial acumen - retail and corporate banking
- Broad generalist skills across all functional areas

OVERVIEW

- 15 years' leadership experience across the Asia Pacific region
- National management of direct, broker, super fund and spotter channels (\$400m budget)
- Stewardship of a \$1.4b multi-channel retail business for household name brand
- Extensive budgeting, P&L and cost management exposure (NIACC & CVA models)
- Managed sales programs for a \$120m NPAT retail business with 274 outlets
- Leadership of FMCG operations generating \$95m revenues pa for Lion Nathan Australia
- Grew profit by 120% (\$8m pa) and FUM by 100% (\$800m) in 3 years for ANZ
- Increased staff satisfaction from 51% to 90% within 12 months

15 YEAR CHRONOLOGY

Finished Dec 05	National Sales Manager, Corporate	Members Equity
Apr 02 – Dec 04	Regional Manager (regional GM)	ANZ Banking Group
Oct 01 – Apr 02	COO & Director of Sales	Assirt Equities
Sep 00 – Oct 01	Group Business Analyst & GM, Strategic Research	Fairfax Media
Aug 99 – Aug 00	Operations Manager (Team Leader)	Lion Nathan Australia
Jul 89 – Aug 99	Various senior management roles	Defence

MEMBERS EQUITY BANK

National Sales Manager, Corporate Banking (Melbourne)

Brought on board to spearhead the rapid expansion of the business, reporting directly to Tony Bloggs, Head of Business Banking. Responsible for **national management of all channels**, including business banking, **corporate banking, SOHO and the broker distribution platform**. Direct reports included the National Broker Manager, Senior Business Development Managers, credit support teams and Equipment Finance staff.

Achievements



Developed the national broker distribution and equipment finance sales strategies. Implemented the company's first national aggregator relationships, **establishing alliances with leading players such as AFG, Balmain NB and eMOCA. Systemised broker management, segmenting firms into three tiers and developing tailored retention and growth strategies.** Paved the way for a **national franchise finance model** involving well known brokers and third party franchise developers.

Underwrote growth by targeting high-performance BDMs and winning them over from competitors. Developed a cost-of-hiring model to identify early investment indicators. **Recruited, trained and managed a team of corporate banking BDMs with individual performances ranging from \$40m-\$90m+ FUM pa.**

Entrusted with accountability for delivering budgeted revenues representing a substantial component of the Bank's new business growth nationally. Streamlined sales reporting and pipeline management, introducing a national sales management system to track lending opportunities across a **\$400m+ pipeline** and reduce "key person" risk.

Gained exposure to a broad range of industries, including property development, construction, aged care, hotels and transport, etc. Fostered a network of contacts to generate referrals in target markets. Hired BDMs with strong referral sources, leading to significant fund inflows. Allocated budgets and contributed to the development of specialisations.

Monitored competitor activity and proposed changes to products and pricing to ensure the business remained competitive during a period of rapid growth. Revised the BDM incentive policy and introduced a Sustainability Multiplier to encourage achievement of critical stretch targets.

Developed due diligence requirements for outsourcing major contracts. **Implemented a low-cost sales and broker management system with real-time reporting** to significantly enhance decision making at the executive level. Contributed to the broader team through product development, systems re-engineering, marketing and policy development.

ANZ BANKING GROUP **Regional Manager (Perth)**

Invited to join ANZ by the Head of Rural Banking, Australia at a time when the Board was considering divesting Rural Banking operations on the back of non-performance. Gave direction to the achievement of ANZ's strategy, goals and values, taking up leadership of a languishing banking business encompassing 14 branches across 2 million km sq.

Oversaw the day-to-day management of this **\$1.4b (FUM) business** in keeping with the powers, discretions and delegations granted by the Group Executive. Functional responsibilities included **strategic planning, sales, finance, operations, regulatory compliance, marketing, public relations and human resources.** Exercised **pricing discretion across commercial lending and deposits** and authorised writeoffs within operational limits.

Given the mandate to grow profit, increase market share and transform the sales culture in this highly visible leadership role. **Directed a network of retail branch outlets, franchises,**



agencies and business lending centres to distribute a comprehensive suite of retail, corporate, wealth management and agribusiness products. Channels included business banking and corporate lending from \$1-10m. **Leadership of 15 senior BDMs and Branch Managers.** Managed FTE within agreed establishment and approved remuneration arrangements.

Achievements

Set about rebuilding the franchise by proactively finding and developing the best people, increasing **staff satisfaction from 51% to 90% within 12 months.** Brought a balanced entrepreneurial approach to the business, nurturing key talent and stretching people to bring out new ideas and fresh approaches. Built a framework of accountability to achieve a **high standard of corporate governance.**

Guided execution of the strategic plan. Managed the migration from consumer to SME and corporate lending ahead of the trend to **increase business lending from \$10m to \$80m pa within 18 months. Increased average business lending deal size by 253%.**

Delivered **profit growth of 120% in 2½ years** whilst reducing **cost-to-income from 64% to 55%** without impacting service levels. Established a “return for performance” culture, **accelerating sales productivity by 36%** and **ROE from 23% to 41.6%.** **Grew FUM by \$320m pa,** improved lending margins by 60 basis points and **increased deposits by 20% pa** to address CFI issues.

Worked extensively with Customer Value Added (CVA) financial models to evaluate performance in key areas of accountability such as **profit, return on equity, margins, share of wallet, market share, operating losses, product cost, ELP, staff satisfaction and customer satisfaction.**

Coached Relationship Managers on deal structuring and made recommendations to the Credit Manager for deals outside of local delegations. Regularly reviewed credit memoranda for commercial lending from \$1-10m. **Managed the risk profile of the portfolio within acceptable criteria and audited credit compliance regionally.** Played a key role in policy developments such as ANZ's Rock Lobster policy.

Implemented business management systems to enhance accountability and improve transparency down to line managers. For example, cascaded CVA reporting to branch level.

Developed and implemented the overall sales strategy to ensure strategic priorities were met. Identified target market segments, authored sales policy, led the sales team, restructured business units to maximise sales capability and managed the sales support infrastructure. Implemented sales planning, tracking and reporting systems.

Expanded the sales platform by promoting third party distribution channels such as brokers, originators and alliance partners. Entrusted with **management of high profile, pilot distribution projects** to accelerate revenue streams. For example, managed **ANZ's first ever retail banking franchise pilot** from conception.



Conceived, developed and rolled out a large scale sales program, substantially increasing productivity across the full suite of retail and corporate banking products. Invited to develop a national sales program based on my success transforming the sales culture regionally. Deeply involved in building a new sales culture within ANZ and widely recognised as **a leading contributor to the establishment of ANZ retail sales practices at the strategic level.**

Headed sales effectiveness initiatives across a \$120m NPAT business with 1,500 staff. For example, worked as **part of a high-level project team with a \$12m budget** to develop ANZ One Way, an FSRA compliant sales methodology that was adopted across all divisions of ANZ.

Developed the senior field management team, placing decision-making in the hands of people closest to the customers to improve operational management. Plucked potential high performers from obscurity and gave them scope to take balanced risks, resulting in some of the best operational performances nationally.

Acted as the **public face of ANZ locally, managing media affairs and public relations** to ensure ANZ's values, services and people were consistently presented to stakeholders in a positive way. Proactively managed external stakeholder relations, liaising with government and industry representatives to provide strong advocacy for ANZ's expansion. Commended by influential industry players for the work done to change public perceptions of the Bank and win the support of key industry lobbies.

Held membership of national committees such as the **Branch Council and Sales Council**, working closely with internal partners to identify business opportunities and **improve efficiency across 274 outlets representing \$26 billion FUM.**

Proactively monitored market trends and competitor activity, making recommendations on changes to the operating model, pricing and product development to ensure the bank's offering remained competitive.

ASSIRT EQUITIES RESEARCH COO & Director of Sales (Sydney)

Reported to the CEO as a member of the company's executive management team, with leadership of the sales, finance, compliance, marketing, people capital and IT functions.

Took over the appointment of Director of Sales from the Executive Director following success in revitalising the sales force and marketing effort. Managed product and service delivery, overseeing the design, marketing, sales and promotion of products and services.

Achievements

Ensured that Assirt remained financially viable through sound cashflow management, accurate forecasting, budget preparation and appropriate financial controls. **Prepared Board-level reporting.**

Responsible for all aspects of the sales function, including authoring annual sales and marketing plans, business development training and downstream training of sales staff. Provided support to



new product development and worked closely with senior executives from client firms to create and expand new channels.

Maintained institutional relationships with major clients. Personally liaised with high profile C-Suite executives to research their needs and deliver tailored solutions. **For example, negotiated key equities research contracts with the CEO of E*Trade.**

Developed new products that significantly increased revenues. Restructured the management team, **reduced operating costs by 9% p.a.** and **reduced aged receivables by 80% to avert insolvency** soon after coming onboard. Consistently sought media opportunities to gain positive brand exposure.

FAIRFAX BUSINESS MEDIA

Group Business Analyst & General Manager, Strategic Research (Singapore)

Invited to the international division of Fairfax Business Media in Singapore by the Divisional CEO, Alistair Gordon, when Group management needed help with the international expansion plan and the Asia Pacific plan in particular. Originally appointed Group Business Analyst and later promoted to General Manager, Strategic Research after **heading up a global business review.**

Overall management of operations, including **full P&L responsibility.** Led multi-national sales and marketing teams across Asia Pacific. Analysed product development, competitors, market trends, client needs, sales cycles and marketing activities. **Managed and grew the multi-national sales team,** with responsibility for establishing the long term sales and business development strategy for Asia Pacific markets.

Group Business Analyst

Travelled throughout Asia to identify market opportunities and lay the foundations for growth. Given the charter to develop plans for international expansion. Identified and researched new business opportunities for Fairfax, **evaluating emerging markets, proposed acquisitions, potential channels and partnership options.**

Conducted in-house analysis of trends impacting company products and services. Met with major clients on a regular basis to assess industry trends and client needs. Performed cost/benefit analyses and analysed the income potential of new product and service proposals. Reviewed business proposals, financial projections and budgets.

Planned the **AUD \$18 million acquisition of a Hong Kong firm.** Launched and expanded several brands across the USA, UK and APAC, building relationships with government authorities to minimise delays. Wrote the business plan to take the leading research product (*MarketBase*) to the USA.

Volunteered to manage the Division's flagship magazine special, *e-Directory 2001*, **beating budget by more than 26%** and setting a new company sales record with limited resources. **Improved revenues for the CFO masthead by 10%.**



LION NATHAN AUSTRALIA Operations Manager (Team Leader)

Led **three \$6 million FMCG production lines generating \$95 million revenue p.a.** Responsible for the operations, maintenance, quality control and staff management functions.

Achievements

Built teams that exceeded **production targets by 20-45%** to “**set the benchmark in performance**”. Increased **line efficiency for three high-demand stock keeping units from 55% to 72%**. Exceeded the performance of other operations managers by **\$3 million in my first 3 months**. Led a production crew to set a **line efficiency record of 94.5%**.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Email: email@home.com
DOB: 19th September, 1970
Family: Married, 2 children
Hobbies: Flying, golf, scuba diving
Worked in: Australia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, New Zealand
Travelled to: Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, France, Hawaii, mainland USA, England
Mobility: Domestic and international

QUALIFICATIONS & ACCREDITATION

- Bachelor of Laws (Commercial, TBC)
- ANZ Business Leaders Program for Executives
- Bachelor of Social Science (HRD & Communication)
- Qualified Omega sales coach for senior sales managers
- Graduate Diploma in Information Management and Analysis
- Rogen Advanced Public Speaking Courses & media interview training
- FSRA regulatory compliance

PSYCHOMETRIC ASSESSMENTS

Literacy: 99th percentile
Numeracy: 96th percentile
Verbal reasoning: 95th percentile
Advanced abstraction: 94th percentile
SPQ*Gold: Not reluctant - strong Accelerator
GPI (Leadership): Results available upon request

^Testing conducted independently by Personnel Decisions International in 2005



Next Job Now

APPENDIX 5

SAMPLE PRE- INTERVIEW SUMMARIES

A banner advertisement for Next Job Now. It features the company logo on the left and the text 'Next Job Now' on the right. The background is a dark blue gradient with a curved, glowing effect at the bottom right, showing a collage of images related to government and military work, including a soldier, a tank, and a helicopter.

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Suburb Name NSW 2000
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Detailed
Pre-Interview
Summary

Dear Mr. Big

RE: POSITION OF IT MANAGER

Thank you for making time to discuss the position of IT Manager. Because time is often short during interviews, I've taken the liberty of highlighting several aspects of my experience to assist you in evaluating how my skills and experience would benefit IT Company.

Challenges facing the IT Manager

As I understand it from our discussion, you need an IT Manager who can:

- Lead, manage and develop high-calibre IT and Operations staff.
- Consult credibly across a range of client organisations on digital solutions.
- Manage complex projects from inception to completion.
- Liaise effectively at the senior level to gain and maintain trust.
- Communicate persuasively and with flair.

Skills and experience necessary to meet the challenges

My experience has been gained in dynamic, high profile and stressful environments where much is expected of leaders. Aspects of my background and experience that will assist me in meeting the challenges of the IT Manager role include:

- 6 years project management experience.
- Diverse organisational change qualifications and experience.
- Proven ability to communicate effectively at all levels.
- A casual management style allows me to foster morale and gain acceptance of change.
- I am readily able to communicate corporate goals so they are understood by all staff.
- No-one will work harder or make a larger commitment to IT Company than I will.

Conclusion

I'm told my project management and digital solutions skills have proven quite valuable to previous employers. When combined with my ability to think strategically and gain the most from staff, I am confident that these skills will allow me to make immediate and significant contributions to IT Company. I look forward to meeting you on Thursday afternoon.

Regards

Your Name



-----Email Message-----

From: Job Seeker
Sent: Friday, 23 April 2004 10:03 AM
To: Anthony, Mark
Subject: Thank You

Good Evening Mark

Because time is often short during interviews, I have taken the liberty of forwarding a few questions to give you a sense of what's on my mind regarding the role of IT Manager prior to our meeting this Friday.

This certainly seems like a fantastic opportunity and I'm looking forward to chatting about the role in greater detail.

My initial thoughts are:

- Why does the role exist and what is it really there to achieve?
- How do you see the role evolving over time?
- What is the company culture like?
- What is support for this role like at the senior level?
- What input does this role have into changing processes and products?
- What is the [position title] expected to do on a day-to-day basis?
- What is the area of responsibility (geographically and functionally)?
- How will success in the role be measured?
- Does the [position title] manage all factors that will influence success?
- What are the career opportunities flowing from this role?

Regards

Job Seeker
Appointment Title
Current Employer
02 1234 5678
0427 123 456
job.seeker@work.com.au

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won a six figure job!*

