

GAINING THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE: FROM STUDENT TO INTERN

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Agenda

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[1] Introductions

□ **Eugen Spivak**

- Entrepreneur, consultant, innovator
- 2x York Alumni – Computer Science and MBA
- Leadership experience in 7 industries managing teams exceeding 110 resources
- Managing Partner at [ADT Group Inc](#)
- <http://ca.linkedin.com/in/eugenspivak>

□ **Aksinia Stavskaya**

- HR consultant, recruiter, innovator
- Successfully placed dozens of candidates at TTC, City of Toronto and other Public Sector clients
- Resource Director at [Aksinia Inc](#)



[2] Industries: Environment

- Companies are having difficulty in filling positions
 - ▣ Workopolis: Candidates are too junior; Craigslist: not enough of coverage; LinkedIn – pretty good
 - ▣ Candidate's knowledge is there, know-how is missing
- All good candidates are already working somewhere
- Catch-22: Experience is required to land a position, and you get experience by working somewhere
- 90% of recruiters call 10% of candidates
- Strategies outlined in this presentation will assist you to be in top 10%



[2.1] Industries and Competitive Dynamics: Healthcare

- Dynamics
 - ▣ Federal mandate, managed by province
 - ▣ Budgetary constraints
 - ▣ Transition to EMR (Electronic Medical Records)
 - ▣ Focus on increased effectiveness using both proven business models – program based, that contain both projects and operational activities
 - ▣ Focus on data warehousing, analytics, business int and reporting
- Entry Positions to Consider
 - ▣ Business Analyst
 - ▣ Data Analyst
 - ▣ Project Coordinator



- Hiring
 - ▣ Minimum requirement: some experience (including private sector)+ some knowledge of Healthcare terminology
 - ▣ Temporary full time positions that would allow you to prove yourself
 - ▣ Annual funding cycle: base funding and program funding targeting specific outcomes
 - ▣ Large projects / programs - typically augmented with vendor resources
- Tip: package your private sector experience well and demonstrate that you have some familiarity with Healthcare industry, and you are not in it just for the position

[2.2] Industries and Competitive Dynamics: Financial Services

- Dynamics
 - ▣ Increased Focus on Regulatory Compliance
 - ▣ Extremely risk averse environment
 - ▣ Long term tenure of full time employees
- Entry Positions to Consider
 - ▣ Financial Analyst
 - ▣ Data Analyst / IT Analyst
 - ▣ Risk Management Analyst (Credit, Market, etc)
 - ▣ Call Centre / Support Analyst



□ Hiring

- Enter as a specialist, following 6 months to 1 year – move ahead as a generalist
 - You can be considered a generalist when you know 20% in each 5 of the areas (e.g. covering everything that your future team does), rather than 100% in a single area
- Focus on positions in Head Office, rather than branch / retail banking
 - Both positions are posted on banking career sites
 - Be aware that real people are reading your profile, make it concise and interesting to read – tell a story about your experience
 - You don't have to start with the branch, and move into head office.
 - E.g. if you are a Business Analyst, you should know how to gather requirements, and need to demonstrate some familiarity with banking specific methodology
 - You may simply be hired because you demonstrate that you are tough, flexible and can invest plenty of time when required
- Demonstrate that you are a “reliable” candidate – suitable for more conservative environment of the bank

[2.3] Industries and Competitive Dynamics: Big 4 Consulting

- Dynamics
 - “Plan globally, operate locally” – global projects
 - Main focus on Consulting, Audit, Financial Advisory and Tax services
 - For entry positions you may be overworked, and underpaid
 - Partner-run companies, with member firms as operating entities in each country
 - Majority of positions are permanent focused on client facing consulting
 - Amazing opportunities to grow your knowledge and subject matter expertise
- Entry Positions to Consider
 - Consultant -> Senior Consultant -> Manager -> Senior Manager -> Consulting Director -> Partner
 - Analyst, or specific subject matter expertise



□ Hiring

- Do not bet all of your energy on getting into Big4; get industry experience where you are needed at first
- Think of what are selection criteria for people without much experience
 - Marks, extracurricular activities, well rounded knowledge/subject matter expertise, sharp and dynamic mind
 - You can start as a Consultant if you stand out against criteria, or if you worked as financial analyst, technical analyst, business analyst, giving you majority of knowledge required for your target team
- Usually new position is 1-2 levels below the last position that you had in the private sector
- You are expected to do everything that is required for the project to succeed
 - Utilize transferrable skills: sales → negotiation, cash and expense management → budgeting, multitasking → working on multiple projects

[2.4] Industries and Competitive Dynamics: Public vs. Private Sector



	Public Sector	Private Sector
Dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete transparency for hiring• “Experience Matters”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More flexible hiring process• Some skills may be substituted by others
Unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unions collectively bargain on behalf of union members• Many of non-management positions are unionized, e.g. Toronto Hydro	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unions are mainly encountered in manufacturing and mining industries• Unions are frequently disliked by managers
Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sometimes use public sector language – e.g. no “profitability” or “revenue”, more often “program funding”• You may encounter former private sector manager interviewing you for a position in public sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on profitability and bottom line, especially for smaller companies• More focus on customer / account management• Different nature of compliance / regulation than public sector – e.g. Dodd-Frank

[2.4] Industries and Competitive Dynamics: Public vs. Private Sector



	Public Sector	Private Sector
Recruitment and Selection Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In addition to the resume, submission of “skills matrix” is frequently required. Skills matrix asks to demonstrate # of years with a given skill, and provide relevant examples• Interviews have pre-determined questions answers to which are recorded; candidates are assessed only based on their answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resume is used for submissions, cover letters are rarely read• First interview – usually with HR or the agency• Second interview – usually with hiring manager and someone technical• Third interview – frequently with the Director responsible for the area
Key Points for Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Package experience very well• On interviews only answer questions that are given to you, with focus on comprehensive coverage of the topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you don’t know an answer – show how you can get to the answer in the real world• Demonstrate that you will be a good addition to the team

[3] Differences Between Academia and the Real World

- 80-20 Rule (90-10, 99-1, etc)
- Initial Experience
 - ▣ Resume needs to work to get you the interview
 - ▣ Observe if it doesn't and revise it as needed
 - ▣ If you passed the interview, you can do the job
- First Steps
 - ▣ Make a list of your tasks, 80/20 them. Know which 2 out of 10 tasks, if not done, could get you into trouble
 - ▣ Ask your manager to help you to prioritize your list
 - ▣ Individuals rarely get fired for lack of knowledge while having good attitude, only for personality conflicts
- Building Core Competencies
 - ▣ Great boss – is the best business school in the country
 - ▣ Identify core competencies in your area, and build a solid island / foundation for your future
 - ▣ For each competency – choose 2-3 mainstream ideas, that when augmented with your experience – would give you a very well rounded practical approach



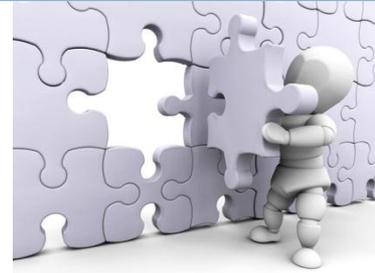
[4.1] Expectations of Employers: Risk Based Hiring

- When hiring, managers are making decisions based on perceived risk behind the candidate:
 - ▣ What if the candidate will have a conflict with other team members?
 - ▣ What if the candidate doesn't know something, will I have to spend 2 weeks of my time to train them?
- Your goal is to demonstrate that you are low risk candidate, and you are willing to work hard to overcome potential areas of risk
- Standardized Roles – know what the roles are in your industry. E.g. in IT:
 - ▣ Developer -> Sr. Developer -> Technical Analyst -> Solution Architect -> Enterprise Architect -> CTO
 - ▣ Sr. Developer -> Business Analyst
 - ▣ Technical Analyst -> Technical Project Manager



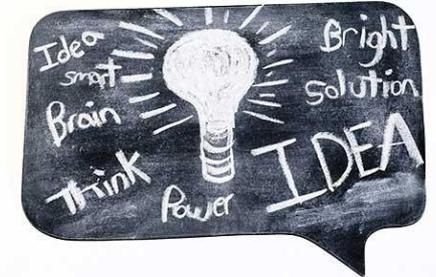
[4.2] Expectations of Employers: Industry Entry Strategies

- You enter as specialist, move ahead as generalist
 - ▣ Apply 80/20 to knowledge that you gain
 - ▣ Demonstrate breadth of coverage and ability to very quickly learn as required
- Review and capitalize on trends in the industry that you like
 - ▣ e.g. Dodd-Frank for Financial Services industry
 - ▣ Read all materials that you can get your hands on
 - ▣ Identify opportunities how to apply your knowledge on real world project
- Straight line is not always the shortest path
 - ▣ Consider joining medium sized consulting company that will be working on a project for Financial Services client
- Demonstrate adaptability
 - ▣ It's not the strongest that survives, but the most adaptable
 - ▣ If something doesn't work / is not effective – change your approach and try it again



[4.3] Expectations of Employers: How to Obtain Experience

- Volunteer! Companies and professionals frequently need assistance with:
 - ▣ Industry research and trend analysis
 - ▣ Research about specific companies / competitors
 - ▣ Consider non disclosure agreements that your clients may have
- Non profit companies frequently have volunteer opportunities (www.charityvillage.com)
- Be competitive with your salary / rate
- Share insight and lessons learned with your friends
- Create a mockup project for yourself, and deliver it from start to end; feel free to use case style situation, structure analysis and resolution properly



- Collaborate with few students and bid on the project on CharityVillage, where non profit companies post RFS/RFPs
- Utilize free marketing tools to market your skills
 - ▣ Craigslist, free advertisements in newspapers/magazines
 - ▣ Focus on high demand with high demand, e.g.
 - computer repair – you charge \$15/hr, companies charge \$60/hr.
 - marketing and social media
 - data / technical analysis
- Get your hands on every book in the area of your interest



[5] Resumes and Interviews: Where and How to Look for a Job

1. Directly through the company
2. Recruitment firms
3. Job Boards
4. Post your resume on Resume Databases
5. Organizations that partner with your University
6. Networking

[5.1] Resumes and Interviews: Resume – Do's

□ Do's:

- When writing (or saying) something - be concise and always have a point
- Utilize S.M.A.R.T. statements (specific, measurable, attainable...) to describe each aspect of your experience
- Use numbers, they jump out
- Structure each clause as: What_(1)_ so what_(2)_ [so what_(3)].
- Evidence based answers:
 - [--] Highly skilled at negotiation.
 - [++] On project XYZ, conducted negotiation with 5 business partners (1), resulting in average operational savings of \$120,000 per year(2). As the result, company returned to profitability (3)
- Use simple fonts - Arial or Calibri fonts, and somewhat conservative structure – it is proven to work



[5.2] Resumes and Interviews: Resume – Don'ts

□ Don'ts:

- Use underline, it diverts attention
- Use fancy fonts, visible tables, non standard structure, pictures, or anything else that is not trivial
- Put Education section at first; use your degrees as the suffix following your name in the header. Reality is that you will need at least some experience for managers to justify hiring you
- Use colors
- Have too much of white space, it means that you don't have enough to say
- Believe in a myth of 1-2 page long resumes, if you have **marketable details** and if you are concise and have plenty of accomplishments. Don't put irrelevant information!!



[5.3] Resumes and Interviews: Resumes – Types of Resume

- Resume Types
 - ▣ Objective Based (worst), Profile Based, Executive Summary Based (best – if you have plenty of experience)
- Recommended Sections – for profile based resumes:

Role A / Role B

Professional Summary

.....

Professional Experience

.....

Education

.....

Community Leadership (optional)

.....



[5.4] Resumes and Interviews: Sample Resume 1

JAMES ROBERTSON

43 Blackberry Drive
Chicago, IL 12345

Residence: (987) 654-1230
E-mail: jamesr@aol.com

SENIOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY / BUSINESS EXECUTIVE

STRATEGIC & CREATIVE THINKER WITH A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE
BACKGROUND IN HIGH-TECH / MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS
ABILITY TO MAKE TOUGH CHOICES AFFECTING FATE OF ORGANIZATIONS

- Talented, value-driven professional offering 10 years of experience in software development, product development, and global telecommunications.
- Verifiable record of accomplishment in increasing performance through dynamic leadership, strategic planning, process design, technology innovation and change management.
- Excel in guiding team of developers and analysts to provide solutions that deliver greatest business value. Equally adept in capitalizing on interpersonal and technology skills to create unique blend of innovative solutions and products while pushing creative envelope. Thrive on opportunities to drive people, processes, and technology.
- Offer international experience; have routinely traveled to remote locations throughout the world to work with marketing and product management teams. International projects include England, India, Singapore, Thailand, Canada, and France.
- Possess passion for high-tech business solutions. Experience in LAN/WAN technologies, global telecommunication infrastructures, equipment and protocols for voice and data systems, local telecommunication exchange carriers, software development, Internet solutions and enhanced communication services such as speech recognition products, applications development, transport and networking protocols and physical and data layer architectures.

CAREER PROFILE

ABC COMMUNICATIONS, INC. Chicago, IL., 2003 to Present

Tackled monumental challenges with near-impossible deadlines and turned around previously unsuccessful projects. Recognized as a driving force within company hierarchy.

Director, Software Engineering

Was promoted to above post, based on the ability to deliver results, and the business acumen combined with innovative thinking approach to lead a revolutionary electronic bonding initiative, launch and steer division towards profitability. Services focused on enterprise solutions for business to consumer telecommunications transactions. Services included ISP services, calling cards, local and long-distance phone service, and unified messaging and speech applications. Currently transitioning into role of Product Innovation Development and will assume speech product design and development endeavors.

- Led a 35-member software engineering team, leveraging relationships with various business groups, providing business owners with change management to adopt current process to new technology delivered from gateway system. Technology implementation allowed for visible presence in 30 states. Managed a resource budget of \$4 million.

- ❑ Resume has too many horizontal lines – looks like author prevents viewers from proceeding further in the resume
- ❑ No numbers in the professional summary – nothing jumps out
- ❑ Too many blocks, author of the resume may be perceived as “limited” or “boxed”
- ❑ Page numbers – will potential employer be lost among 3 pages of the resume?
- ❑ Residence telephone is used, potentially missing 80% of calls during the current business day
- ❑ Telephone number is not immediately visible
- ❑ “Career” focus, rather than “Professional”

[5.5] Resumes and Interviews: Sample Resume 2

John F. Filicetti, PMP, MBA

20430 96th Way South, Kent, WA 98031
Home: (253) 520-6949 | Mobile: (206) 396-5598 | johnfili@gmail.com

CAREER ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Skilled at leading companies and teams to higher levels of project delivery including project management offices, project portfolio management, Governance, methodologies, toolkits, training, mentoring, coaching, assessments, and quality reviews.
- Roles of increasing responsibility as individual contributor, consultant, manager and director in project management leadership, sales engineering, and business process consulting.
- Consulted at all corporate levels to solve needs.
- Many years of very successful program, project, and business management, including application development, Sarbanes-Oxley re-engineering, Business Intelligence, Sales Force Automation, Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), CRM, EDI, ERP, network integration, call center implementations, infrastructure upgrades, business solutions and other areas. Many projects have been international in scope with the largest budget exceeding \$100 million.
- Managed P&L and high proficiency with financial reporting, analysis and management, data management, and expert with Microsoft Office Suite and other PC Applications.
- Recognized for strategic thinking, technical expertise, implementation abilities, and innovation while handling tough assignments and providing quality results

EDUCATION and CERTIFICATION

- **MBA** St. Mary's College, Moraga, CA
- **Bachelor of Arts** in Industrial Education, Washington State University, Pullman, WA
- Project Management Professional (PMP) Certification from Project Management Institute (PMI)
- Graduate of the Dale Carnegie Program

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Instantis, Seattle, WA

2010-Present

Sr. Sales Engineer, PPM/PMO/Project Delivery Consultant

- Built pre-sales and post-sales processes and supported the definition, building and delivery of PPM/PMO/PM services leading to greater sales and product adoption.
- Provided process subject matter expertise to management, sales teams and customers

Daptiv, Inc., Seattle, WA

2006-2010

Sr. Business Process Consultant, Project Portfolio Management/PMO/Project Delivery Subject Matter Expert, Sr. Sales Engineer, SE Manager

- Provided PMO, PPM, and Project Management solution strategy, consulting, best practices, and creative solutions to meet customer needs leading to greater sales and product adoption.
- Delivered pre-sales and post-sales SE and process consulting and support as a PPM/PMO/PM and process subject matter expert for the sales team and customers
- Implemented an online Customer User Group of over 100,000 users providing best practices and providing answers to customer issues

Seattle Children's Hospital, Seattle, WA

2005-2006

IT Project Management Office Director

- Provided increased project management delivery and higher communications by directing IT project management efforts and by implementing Project Portfolio Management, project management tools, standards, and methodology
- Consolidated and communicated project management metrics and dashboard through the creation of a Project Management Office

- In total, recruiters/hiring managers spend about 15-20 seconds looking at each resume
- Viewing happens in waves, with 5-8 seconds per wave
- Example – what stands out:
 - Wave 1 – PMP, and some MBA; no clue as to what is this person looking for
 - Wave 2 – he did manage large budgets; but how come in his most recent position he is Sales Engineer?
 - Wave 3 – IT PMO Director? Interesting!

[5.6] Resumes and Interviews: Interview Dynamics

- Question Categories
 - ▣ Personal: How do you deal with ambiguity?
 - ▣ Professional: What was your biggest accomplishment?
 - ▣ Interpersonal: How do you handle conflict situations?
- Conflict type questions
 - ▣ Focus on feelings, not the rationale
 - ▣ Communication is the negotiation of meaning: look at strong feelings of the person and align them with the direction that you need



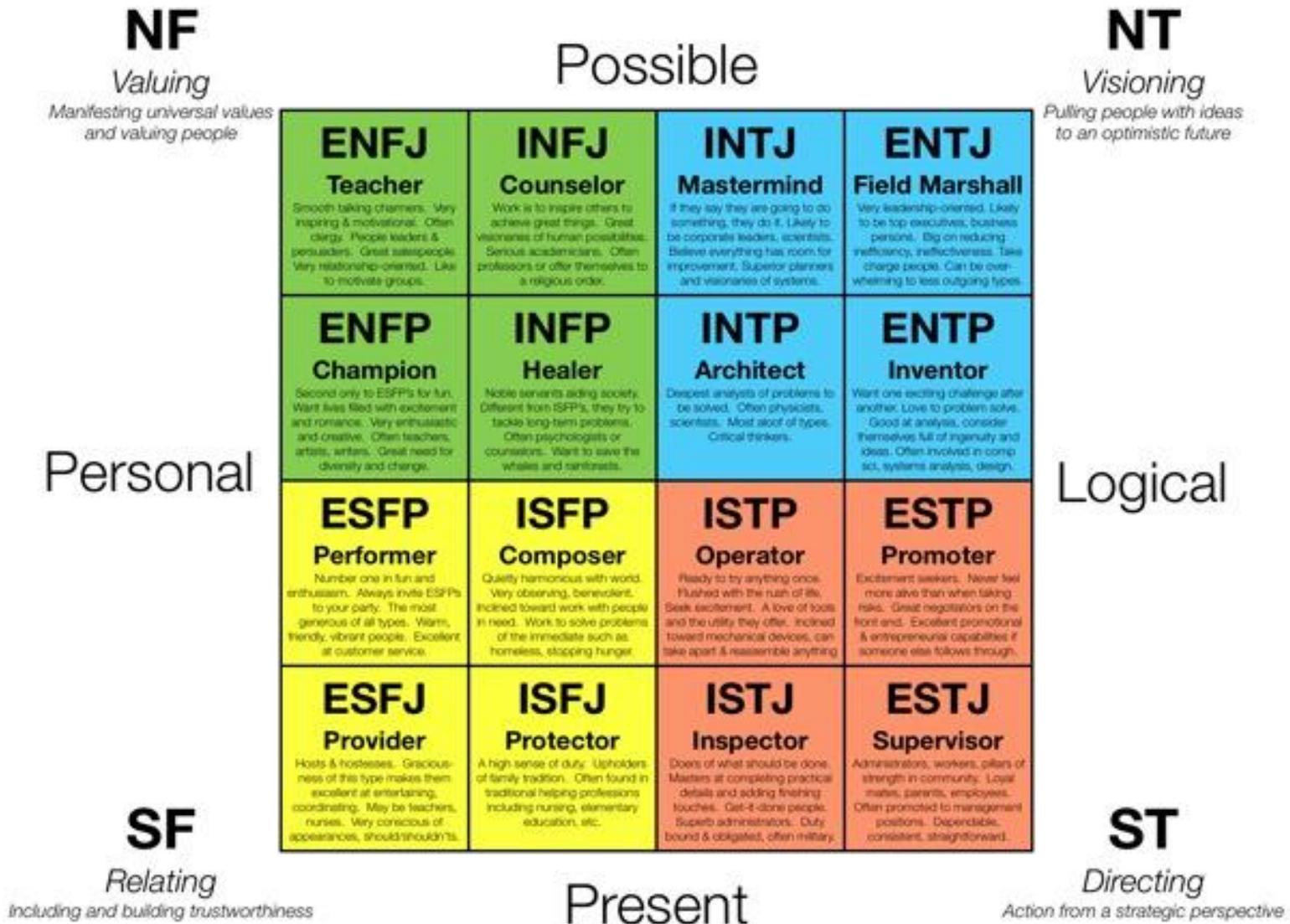
[6] Competitive Advantage: Initial Perspectives

- Value Exchange – know which value is required, which gaps does the employer need to fill – and what **exactly** are you bringing
- Focus on relative progress, not absolute level of where you are
- Find out the most difficult thing that you can do it, and then just do it. You will either sink, or swim – and the volume of the relative progress would be tremendous
- Wisdom is in doing; you are what you do, not who you say you are
- Start with doing something that makes the biggest difference, only then add the energy and speed

[6.1] Competitive Advantage: Get to Know Yourself

- Everyone has their dominant traits and non dominant traits
- Psychologically we want more of what we already have, not what is missing
- Know your traits by some of the tests that are available:
 - ▣ Taking your Myers Briggs Test – <http://41q.com>
 - ▣ Taking StrengthsFinder 2.0 test - <http://strengthsfinder.com>
 - ▣ Learning Astrology
- Tests above will give you an idea of what is non dominant. You will have to work extra hard, but results will surprise you

[6.1] Competitive Advantage: Get to Know Yourself - MBTI



[6.2] Competitive Advantage: How to Build Yourself

- There are two things that build us: books we read, and the people we meet. You will need both!
- Look at how big is your island of core competencies
 - ▣ Either use standard business pillars – Operations, HR, Finance, Sales and Marketing or specialized -
<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/bestsellers/top10everything.asp>
 - ▣ In every pillar – familiarize yourself with 2-3 leading ideas / books / approaches, add your own experience. Resulting 3-4 alternatives will give you a very well rounded approach to face an issue or a situation



[6.2] Competitive Advantage: How to Build Yourself – cont'd

- ❑ Experiment and do things differently to observe difference in outcomes; insanity is doing the same thing and expecting different result
- ❑ When you don't know what to do, for 2-3 days (1) do the first thing that you can get your hands on, (2) reflect on findings and (3) adjust your course
- ❑ Shortest path is not a straight line, an impenetrable glass wall may be in front of you

[6.3] Competitive Advantage: Key Skills for New Grads

- Tolerance for Ambiguity: leaders feel comfortable making decisions when they have between 40-70% of information
- Flexibility and ability to adapt to quick changes in the direction of work/project/company, etc
- Lack of attachment to your work products – what happens to them in the course of the organization doesn't reflect the quality of the products that you have produced
- Do 105% of work, with extra 5% aimed to make life of others easier
- Know which challenges your boss is facing; structure your work products to resolve / help out with your Boss' problems



[6.3] Competitive Advantage: Key Skills for New Grads – cont'd

- Be clear about promises – if you can put something that you do on your resume – it is progress, otherwise it's blank promises
- Out of complexities, simplicities emerge. If you are struggling with something, spend as much time with it as it is needed to see simplicity and elegance of the solution.
- Do not think too much about a career; think of your competitive advantage and relative progress
- Seek to understand before you want to be understood

[6.4] Competitive Advantage: Putting it All Together

1. Get to know yourself
2. Build your experience based on the resources that you have
1. Find out the needs in a given industry/role, and know how you can fill them
2. Refine your resume – include accomplishments + evidence based answers
3. Send few of your resumes to non-mainstream postings (e.g. Craigslist), unless ask explicitly – do not send the cover letter
4. Observe response; if no response – revise your resume
5. If you know that the resume works, start mass distribution. Have one very good copy of the resume and send it to more places, than maintaining multiple copies with not enough of time to maintain them



[7] Networking

- Be sincere, find opportunities bring value
- Consider Mutual Rewards
- Be cheerful and easygoing
- Level of Spin
- Push vs. Pull
- Have a point and be concise yet sociable, people are busy, don't waste their time



[7.1] Networking

- Networking can bring you
 - ▣ Mentors, perspectives to adopt – it will be much faster than grooming those in yourself
 - ▣ Insight and know-how, resulting in shorter route towards your destination
 - ▣ Knowledge of what you don't know
 - ▣ Volunteer / Career Opportunities
- Focus on building new connections and exchange of value
- Understand their needs and help other people for them to help you, network with the intention to help other people
- Develop a habit of introducing and helping people



[7.2] Networking: Steps

1. Identify the connection (based on
2. Approach
3. Introduce yourself [10-15 seconds]
4. Build Rapport
5. Earn the right to speak (by listening)
6. Earn the right to make statements (by asking a question)
7. Find out how you can be of help to them
8. Casually let them know how they can be of help to you
9. Collect business cards / agree on follow up or on next steps
10. Thank them and move on



[7.3] Networking: Tips

- Make a list of whom you would want to approach
- Know what you want, and always have a point
- Prepare, take time to learn about other person / their business
- Ask open ended questions
- Have a firm handshake – practice it, make sure that your hand is warm and dry
- Do not ask uncomfortable questions – e.g. to help you to get a job in their company; do not offer your business card unless you are asked for it
- Keep your promises, follow up and keep in touch
- No expectations = pleasant surprises and avoidance of disappointments
- Practice

[7.4] Networking: How to Build Rapport

1. Mirror their body language, but don't be a monkey
2. Match their pace. Imagine how spinned up / spinned down they are between 1 and 10, and bring yourself to the same level. Practice various levels.
3. Breathe when they breathe, speak when they breathe out
4. Get in accepting mood, agree with them and acknowledge; if you need to disagree – disagree with them without being disagreeable (state your point + indicate your openness for the debate)
5. Use both push – e.g. putting forward a question, and pull – e.g. create accommodating situation
6. Remember and use people's names
7. <10% what you say, all the rest how you say it
8. Assume that you already have rapport
9. Read up about NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming)

[7.5] Networking Activity

- “Job Seekers”:
 - ▣ You have 5 minutes to circulate the room
 - ▣ Approach and introduce yourself to 2 Hiring Managers, and make a positive impression
 - ▣ Start up a conversation to share info about yourself, your skills/experience and accomplishments, and your job search goals
 - ▣ In your conversation, find out how you can bring value to “Hiring Manager”
 - ▣ Strive also to learn more about the hiring manager and his/her needs

[7.7] Networking Activity

- “Hiring Managers”:
 - ▣ When approached by a “Job Seeker”, make a mental note of your initial impression of the individual
 - ▣ Pay attention to body language, facial expressions, gestures, voice level, eye contact, attitude, confidence, ability to carry a conversation, etc.
 - ▣ Ask and answer questions as appropriate
 - ▣ Strive to gain more info about the “Job Seeker”

[7] Networking Activity

Debrief:

- “Hiring Managers”: Reflect on the individuals who made positive impressions on you – what did they do or say that helped them to stand out as “Job Seekers”?



NOW SWITCH ROLES

Questions?



Appendix: Resources

- Desire is primary, ability / opportunity is secondary and it follows
- Books:
 - ▣ Management of the Absurd
 - ▣ The Magic of Thinking Big
 - ▣ You are in Charge, Now What – Thomas Neff
- Web Sites:
 - ▣ <http://valuebasedmanagement.net> – Summary of Every Major Business Framework
 - ▣ <http://www.quickmba.com>
 - ▣ <http://boardmatch.org> – Non Profit Board Openings
 - ▣ <http://www.torontojobs.ca/en/html/agencies.php> - Employment Agencies