

WIN EVERY DAY™

Career Advancement Programme

WIN EVERY DAY™



THE BLUEPRINT TO TRANSITION TO A SPECIALIST

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GETTING STARTED

The basis of this programme is to learn about yourself and to convert that learning into a consistent and optimal presentation of yourself.

The 3 fundamental steps to be satisfied are:

- 👉 have a clear vision of who you really are, what you specialise in and what ultimate job you seek;
- 👉 develop highly connected CV data, LI profile & value-adding interview answers that all send the same exciting message;
- 👉 Present a resonating approach that perfectly connects you to the job you match and really want.

In order to achieve this, follow the spreadsheet: *Win Every Day*™ step by step, in conjunction with this document.

If you chose a mentorship option, you will be helped and personally guided in the direction towards achieving your optimal solution.

It is important to allow your mind to be open to new opportunities and indeed work towards establishing them. You may have spent your entire career in the one industry, but your skills and achievements may suit your passion to shift into a different industry or even into a different function in which your qualifications will still be important.

Imagine a stagnating lawyer who assumes that the only career options are in law or positions with a strong legal focus, who suddenly realises that a management position in many companies or department heads, such as in Human Resources, are also open because of the legal background.

Use the tables in this document to assist you with your thought process and to help identify your strong points and include the most powerful and relevant ones in the appropriate pages of the spreadsheet mentioned above during the programme.

The following activity of determining your compensation package and value is a **bonus** inclusion and you should spend time AFTER the programme to reflect on your worth and determine what you deserve now as a specialist by deciding what is important to you. Assuming your compensation package value, in total, is €200k per year, you need to put an actual price on each component so that you can adjust the compensation if some preferences are not available, e.g. use of a company car might be worth €10k per year to you, but if they don't provide company cars, then you need to either increase your compensated cash amount (salary), or other options such as negotiate a higher amount paid into your retirement fund etc. to ensure your total value is covered without loss to your acceptable level of remuneration. See the following topic to help guide you.

L EARN MORE TO EARN MORE

All too often, candidates focus on trying to get the job on offer, but forget to consider what they really want to get in return.

It's not a one-sided benefit - meant only for the company - to be employed by them, particularly in a *superior* job. You are the specialist who will strengthen their market position and deserve a compensation package worthy of your input.

You bring value to the company - you lead people; you create new products; you bring in new business; you grow company profits etc., so you are entitled to much more than just a generic salary, which you need to prepare for. Importantly, the negotiation process should occur after you have shown your value to the company during the interview, so that the process can occur without risking selection itself for the job on offer.

As part of building your own Professional Brand, you need to identify what it is that you are trying to achieve for yourself and bring that to the negotiation table after showing your skills and values to the company. The more you learn about yourself, your value and what you deserve, the more you can earn.

Four important areas of your worth are explored below.

Salary questions:

What is the market rate for your position? How big is the company? What does the company want to offer? What benefits are you bringing the company? What is your true worth? How do your skills compare to the market generally?

In order to figure it all out, you can consult some online tools, such as official Bureau of Labor Statistics pages, or some private websites also. You may be able to find out from networking to get an idea of what a good salary is.

Importantly, you need to set your price on what you believe you are worth. If you are bringing more value to the table than others in your field, your price may be higher.

A well defined Professional Brand will show your potential and help justify your price. Aim very high, but don't overshoot your true value.

Bonuses questions:

When you work in a higher position, you are likely to have valuable targets to meet. Your work has a direct impact on company profits, so you can consider negotiating bonuses to your advantage.

Reaching ordinary targets that reflect generic employee roles may generate a small bonus, however your experience and related factors are going to be the main drivers in generating significant extra company profit; beyond what generic employees deliver, so the bonuses you seek should also be significant. Remember, you are a Specialist! Prepare your responses to strongly reflect this.

Holiday leave questions:

Companies generally offer around 20 days annual leave, some days of sick leave (in which you may be required to visit a doctor), parental leave, plus some kind of long service leave plan. They may include additional options also to assist with school age children or elderly parents etc., however, what arrangement is ideal for your personal circumstances?

You are a valuable potential employee that is in demand and you should present your leave preferences to help you fulfil your lifestyle, whilst still presenting yourself as a significant asset. Of course certain kinds of leave are mandated by law, so you need to establish an arrangement that is legal.

General conditions questions:

A standard working week is between 35-38 hours in most countries. Lunch breaks may vary from 30 minutes to perhaps 2 hours (siesta), Start/finish times may be fixed or may be flexible. Working from home, flexitime schemes, overtime allowances, a parking space, use of company equipment such as a car, PC, phone etc. (and who will pay the related Fringe Benefit taxes) are all things to be considered. What do you want to be included in your agreement?

What ongoing career options do you envisage? Do you want some personal development options included to help you grow as a person and as an employee?

Does your personal life need some special considerations included also so that there is no time conflict?

What happens after 10 years of employment? After 20 years? After you retire? Do you want some portion of your agreement paid into a retirement fund?

Will your position require assistants? Do you want any input into who will be your subordinates?

There are many things beyond basic and generic salary and conditions that contribute to your happiness and success so use this programme to learn who you are and what you are worth.

Generally, the conditions are fixed for generic workers, but management positions are much more flexible, so you need to know exactly what you want to be ready to negotiate the agreement.

Your Personal Brand can help improve the outcome by positioning you as an achiever and value-adding to the company in concrete ways to help you justify everything you ask for.

There are many different fields and many diverse jobs so there is a wide range of possible inclusions you can ask for in the superior job market. You need to carefully understand your true value and every inclusion that you want.

Some jobs in the US are shown below to get you thinking about what you are earning in a similar field in your country and whether you can step up to your best job by building a powerful Professional Brand.

EXAMPLES TO GET YOU THINKING:

**Source: Sarah Landrum 2016 - Based on US job market. Salaries etc. may be different in other countries.*

Orthodontist - **Average Annual Salary: US\$221,390**

Smile! Orthodontists know how to straighten smiles and realign jaws with orthodontic hardware. They must choose the right equipment to do so, apply it and check the progress throughout a person's time with braces. Both orthodontists and their patients feel satisfied when they see the resulting grins that come from their handiwork. In fact, performing with purpose could be the key to job satisfaction across all industries.

Physicist - **Average Annual Salary: US\$118,500**

It takes some time to become a professional physicist since you'll need a Ph.D. to obtain a research job in most cases. But once physicists finish their degree, they get the chance to research, observe and experiment to come up with their own theories about different types of physical happenings. All of this takes place in the calm confines of a scientific laboratory, where they can really focus and delve into their studies.

Optometrist - **Average Annual Salary: US\$117,580**

To become a doctor of optometry, you'll have to go back to school and earn a state-level licensure, but the result is worth the while. Optometrists diagnose and treat all issues about the eye, and those in the field experience little stress in doing so. The medical field might seem like a space that's inherently stressful, but once you go through your intensive eye-related training, you'll feel confident and calm in your expertise.

Biostatistician- **Average Annual Salary: US\$115,900**

Crunching numbers on your own? There's nothing less stressful than that. It's up to a biostatistician to use these figures to analyse and better understand the results of biological research or other natural processes.

Computer Hardware Engineer - **Average Annual Salary: US\$114,970**

You can get your start in this field after graduating with a bachelor's degree from an accredited course. Computer hardware engineers can help in all processes in the creation of computer-related equipment — they design, research, build, develop or test these products. Their creations could end up in the hands of commercial users, scientists, military officials or other industrial workers.

Software Developer - **Average Annual Salary: US\$110,348**

Here's another job you'll enjoy if you prefer to work solo. The computer programmer's position is certainly challenging, but they also tackle issues and coding problems with their expertise. Plus, because the job is so rigorous, associates will know how hard your work is and respect you for your output — in other words, there won't be a constant pressure to speed up and perform at higher than your capacity. This career can lead you to other fruitful careers as a designer, senior developer or project manager, too.

Astronomer - Average Annual Salary: US\$110,220

Perhaps unsurprisingly, you can make a pretty low-stress career out of looking at the sky. Of course, an astronomer's job is more than just stargazing, but their research and analysis of the universe's phenomena allows them to stare into space regularly. It'll be awe-inspiring, and useful – you can apply your findings to the practical problems faced day-to-day down here on Earth.

Geologist - Average Annual Salary: US\$106,900

Despite what you might've learned in high school science classes, a geologist does a lot more than look at rocks all day long. They also examine and predict the earth's movement, studying the effects it has – earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides and floods included. The amount of time spent in the field exploring will prove this is a fun job that pays well.

Political Scientist - Average Annual Salary: US\$103,210

Not every low-stress job requires you to be a scientist in the traditional sense. Instead, you can make politics your focus. How do particular systems of thought start and grow? How do they operate? It's a political scientist's job to answer those questions once they have a higher-level degree in the subject or a related area.

Materials Engineer - Average Annual Salary: US\$94,690

Materials engineers have a hand in the entire production process of a certain item. They help create the necessary machinery, write the processes and choose the proper materials to make a certain product so that it meets all its design and performance standards. A bachelor's degree in engineering or materials science will be your ticket into the field, although you could get in with a related specialisation.

Biomedical Engineer - Average Annual Salary: US\$91,230

With a four-year degree in the subject – or with an engineering degree in a related field combined with on-the-job training – you can head into the field of biomedical engineering. It's a rewarding one, also – biomedical engineers tackle issues faced in the healthcare field, and their expertise helps improve patient care throughout the treatment process.

Operations Research Analyst - Average Annual Salary: US\$84,180

You might need a high-level degree – think Ph.D. or master's – to become an operations research analyst, but it's worth it. You'll need to know complex mathematical and analytical applications and put them to good use for a business. In most cases, operations research analysts help to identify internal issues, make more thoughtful decisions and investigate any lingering problems. You may need to brush up on your analytical skills.

Food Technologist - Average Annual Salary: US\$75,750

It's all about flavour for food technologists. They research and analyse everything we eat and figure out ways to make it taste better and last longer in storage. They're also responsible for ensuring that products pass the sanitation requirements set by the government and maintain their nutritional content. All these requirements might seem stressful, but food technologists work within a calm, pleasant lab setting, therefore making it a challenging but relaxed role.

Dental Hygienist - Average Annual Salary: US\$72,720

If you've ever been to the dentist, you know what a hygienist's job entails. They clean your teeth and do the first round of examinations to see if you're suffering from any oral disease. You only need an associate degree to take on this role, so switching careers wouldn't be too much of an undertaking. Plus, according to research by Vista College, the field has a reputation for providing a good work-life balance, which means you'll have more time to focus on personal affairs.



PROFESSIONAL KEYWORDS

There are 2 kinds of keywords in this programme - the first are professional keywords that identify what kind of role we are interested in, e.g process level, technical level, or manager level etc., which help to determine the language we need to use in the recruitment process and which function (Sales, Marketing, HR etc.) to narrow down our skills, interests and abilities so that we know exactly who we are professionally.

The second kind of keywords are position-specific keywords that match us as a person directly to the nominated aspirational job requirements, such as specific product experience, necessary qualifications, knowledge and so on.

Many keywords are provided, however, you can also use google to find similar jobs and check their requirements to ensure that you have the right skillset, qualifications etc. that are necessary to succeed in that role and make a note of the specific keywords to put on your list of keywords that you need to include in your sentences.

The following table is organised in *six* related categories to help determine your best role by filtering down what you are interested and experienced in. These words are already included in the '**Discovering yourself**' page of the **Win Every Day™** programme by default.

After your list is complete, use the best keywords at the end of this step to describe yourself in sentences in the following steps that strongly connect your CV data, LinkedIn profile and interview responses to your aspirational role.

All 3 areas should send the same powerful and connected messages.

Add additional keywords from the *tables on the following pages* into your sentences to strengthen them as required, including any industry specialty keywords (or even add your own keywords), to describe yourself perfectly in professional detail.

If you add/replace any keywords to the default list in the spreadsheet, keep them in the categories that match the structure below because they form part of the programme methodology. Do not alter the concept supplied.

JOB LEVEL	FUNCTIONS	STRATEGIC SKILLS	PROCESS SKILLS	EXPERIENCE	ACHIEVEMENTS
Entry Level	Human Resources	Analytical	Spreadsheets	B2B	Grow
Process work	Sales	Economics	Report Writing	B2C	Increase
Administration	Marketing	Forecasting	Process	Product	Reduce
Trainer	Customer Service	Operational	Communication	Service Delivery	Save
Manager	Support	Planning	People	Supervisory	Exceed
Executive	Engineering	Training	Customer Service	Financial	Implement
C level Executive	Projects	Business	Research	Software tools	Inspire
Mgmt Consultant	Management	Technical	Problem Solving	Projects	Innovate
Mgmt Specialist	Economics	Recruitment	Presentation	Teamwork	Publish

PERSONAL KEYWORDS

The table below contains many popular additional professional keywords to add to make your statements as strongly connected to your aspirational role as possible.

Consider whether these or any other specific key words represent your skills / value that will connect you to your ultimate job and if necessary, replace irrelevant default keywords with your chosen ones. Note make sure you are substituting 'like for like' key words, in order to maintain the overall methodology of the programme.

You can also use other keywords as additional keywords in the sentences.

QUALIFICATIONS	INDUSTRIES	STRATEGIC SKILLS	PROCESS SKILLS	EXPERIENCE	ACHIEVEMENTS
Accountancy	Accounting	Administrative	Adaptability	Analytical	Align
Art	Aerospace	Analytics	Artistic aptitude	Auditing	Beneficial
Associate	Agriculture	Auditing	Coaching	Cash handling	Boosted
Bachelor's	Airline	Automotive Tech.	Communication	Conflict handling	Budgeting
Biology	Archaeology	Banking Operations	Conflict resolution	Construction	Created
Business	Architecture	Bookkeeping	Creativity	Creativity	Developed
Certificate	Automotive	Budgeting	Critical observation	Customer Service	Discovered
Chemistry	Banking	Construction	Critical thinking	Electrical	Expenses
Degree	Chemical	D/B Management	Design aptitude	Driver	Growth
Diploma	Computer hardware	Design	Desire to learn	Food handling	Implement
Director	Computer software	Editing	Flexibility	Forecasting	Increased
Doctorate	Construction	Engineering	Innovation	Forklift operator	IT analytics
Economics	Education	Financial	Languages	Interviewing	IT hardware
Engineering	Energy generation	Hardware	Logical thinking	Leadership	IT implementation
Finance	Food production	Healthcare	Motivation	Management	IT programming
Legal	Government	Java Script	Passion	Marketing	IT software
Master's	Healthcare	Legal	Positivity	Mentoring/coaching	Leadership
Mathematics	Human resources	Manufacturing	Problem solving	Negotiating	Machinery
Medical	Insurance	Marketing Research	Proposal Writing	Operator	Management
Nursing	Law enforcement	Mechanical	Reporting	Plumbing	Managing people
Ph.D	Logistics	Medical Diagnosis	Research	Presentation	New business
Physics	Marketing	Nursing	Resourcefulness	Problem solving	Profit
Postgraduate	Pharmaceutical	Proj. Management	Social Media	Public speaking	Projects
Professor	Physics	Science	Teamwork	Report writing	Reduced
Qualified	Retail	Software	Time management	Sales	Reduced waste
Science	Telecommunications	Spreadsheets	Troubleshooting	Supervisory	Savings
Teaching	Tourism	Teaching	Value education	Technical	Superior
University	Waste mangement	Translation	Work ethic	Technology	Targets

FIVE HUNDRED MOST FREQUENT KEYWORDS THAT BOOST YOUR VALUE

In addition to the Personal Keywords table, the following table contains the 500 most frequent keywords in alphabetical order. You should use relevant variations of these keywords to improve your chances of your CV being noticed by Applicant Tracking Systems, because although a few ATS recognise tenses, plurals, and other word variations, most only find exact matches.

That means that if a recruiter searches for “project manager”, you MIGHT not come up as a search result if your CV only includes the phrases “managing projects”, “project managed” and “project management”.

Do not unnecessarily capitalise the first letter (if the list has it in lowercase), because the word in the form shown is popular and may be found mid sentence with a 'small' first letter. Although this list is extensive, not all fields of all industries are covered by these keywords, so include any other keywords relevant to you.

account management	commissioning	financial reporting	leadership development	product management	regulatory compliance
accounts payable	complex projects	financial reports	lean	product marketing	regulatory requirements
accounts receivable	compliance	financial services	legislation	product quality	SEO
acquisition	computer applications	financial statements	licensing	Professional	service delivery
administrative support	computer science	financing	life cycle	program development	SharePoint
admissions	computer software	fitness	lighting	program management	six sigma
Adobe	consulting	Flex	Linux	programming	small business
Adobe Creative Suite	consulting experience	forecasting	litigation	project delivery	software development
advertising	consulting services	frameworks	machine learning	project management	software life cycle
affiliate	contract management	front-end	manage projects	project management skills	software engineering
agile	contracts	fulfillment	management consulting	project plan	SolidWorks
algorithms	controls	fundraising	management experience	project planning	SOPs
alliances	conversion	GAAP	market research	process improvements	sourcing
analysis	correspondence	general ledger	marketing materials	procurement	specifications
analytical	cost effective	GIS	marketing plans	product design	spelling
analyze data	cost reduction	governance	marketing programs	product development	sports
android	counsel	graphic design	marketing strategy	product knowledge	spreadsheets
annual budget	CPG	hardware	mathematics	proposal	SQL server
API	CPR	help desk	MATLAB	protocols	staffing
architecture	CRM	higher education	matrix	prototype	stakeholder management

assembly	cross-functional team	hospital	mechanical engineering	psychology	standard operating procedures
asset management	CSS	hospitality	media relations	public health	standardisation
audio	customer experience	hotel	medical device	public policy	start-up
audit	customer facing	hotels	merchandising	public relations	startup
auditing	customer requirements	HRIS	metrics	publications	statistical analysis
AutoCAD	daily operations	HTML	Microsoft Office	publishing	statistics
automation	data analysis	HTML5	Microsoft Office Suite	purchase orders	status reports
aviation	data center	human resource	Microsoft Word	purchasing	strategic direction
AWS	data collection	I-DEAS	migration	Python	strategic initiatives
banking	data entry	IBM	mining	QA	strategic planning
benchmark	data management	immigration	MIS	quality assurance	strategic plans
beverage	data quality	in-store	mobile	quality control	strategy
BI	database	InDesign	modeling	quality management	strong analytical skills
big data	datasets	industry experience	mortgage	quality standards	supervising
billing	deposits	industry trends	MS Excel	R (programming language)	supervisory experience
biology	design	information management	MS Office	raw materials	supply chain
branding	development activities	information security	MS Project	real estate	supply chain management
budget management	digital marketing	information systems	.NET	real-time	support services
build relationships	digital media	information technology	networking	relationship building	Tableau
business administration	distribution	installation	non-profit	relationship management	tablets
business analysis	DNS	instructional design	office software	repairs	talent acquisition
business cases	documentation	instrumentation	on-boarding	reporting	talent management
business continuity	documenting	internal audit	on-call	research	tax
business development	drafting	internal communications	operating systems	research projects	teaching
Business English	drawings	internal controls	operational excellence	researching	technical issues
business intelligence	driving record	internal customers	operations	resource management	technical knowledge
business issues	due diligence	internal stakeholders	operations management	retention	technical skills
business management	dynamic environment	international	oracle	revenue growth	technical support
business planning	e-commerce	internship	ordering	RFP	telecom
business plans	ecommerce	intranet	OS	RFPs	test cases
business process	economics	inventory	outreach	risk assessment	test plans
business requirements	editing	inventory management	outsourcing	risk assessments	testing
business stakeholders	editorial	internal communications	partnership	risk management	therapeutic
business strategy	electrical engineering	internal controls	partnerships	root cause	trade shows

business systems	electronics	internal customers	payments	routing	training
C#	EMEA	internal stakeholders	payroll	SaaS	transactions
C++	employee engagement	international	PeopleSoft	safety	transport
CAD	employee relations	internship	performance improvement	sales experience	transportation
call center	end user	intranet	performance management	sales goals	travel
case management	engagement	inventory	performance metrics	sales management	travel arrangements
cash flow	English	inventory management	pharmaceutical	sales operations	troubleshooting
certification	English language	investigate	pharmacy	Salesforce	TV
CFA	ERP	investigation	phone calls	SAP	Twitter
change management	ETL	invoices	photography	SAS	UI
chemicals	event planning	iOS	Photoshop	scheduling	underwriting
chemistry	expenses	iPhone	physical security	SCI	Unix
circuits	experimental	ISO	physics	scripting	usability
client relationships	external partners	IT infrastructure	PMP	scrum	user experience
client service	fabrication	ITIL	policies	SDLC	UX
cloud	Facebook	Java	portfolio management	security clearance	valid drivers license
CMS	fashion	Javascript	positioning	segmentation	value proposition
consumers	FDA	JIRA	PR	reconcile	variances
content	field sales	journal entries	prospecting	reconciliation	vendor management
continuous improvement	filing	journalism	presentations	recruitment	vendors
co-op	financial analysis	KPI	process development	regulations	video
coaching	financial management	KPIs	process improvement	regulatory	VMware
coding	financial performance	LAN	product line	regulatory	warehouse

WHAT INFORMATION ARE INTERVIEWERS ACTUALLY LISTENING FOR?

The following matrix contains many value-adding personal characteristics that are important to be successful. Depending on the nature of the position on offer, check that your answers reflect all relevant qualities appropriately.

CATEGORY	BEHAVIOUR	TECHNICAL	VALUE-ADD	ELIMINATION
ADAPTABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Willingness to help ✓ Flexibility to do things differently ✓ Excitement to have new challenges ✓ Eagerness to improve ✓ Understanding that things change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Diverse skills that will allow you to undertake the role ✓ Qualifications that empower change ✓ Analytical approach to problem solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Experience in change management ✓ Capable of implementing change ✓ Influence other people positively ✓ Forward vision towards technology etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Unwilling to accept new ways ✗ Preference for staying with how it's always been done ✗ Limited experience and knowledge of contemporary ways
COMPANY CULTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Alignment between your needs and the company's ✓ Stimulated by the work ✓ Value adding benefits you bring ✓ Thinking aligns with the company ✓ Self awareness and openness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Approach to work that blends with the company and its systems ✓ Terminology that reflects the values of the company ✓ Experience in a similar culture and a positive influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Awareness of the companies mission and its importance ✓ Ability to be successful in the role through promoting the company values ✓ Bringing enhancements to the company culture and values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Different goals ✗ Unwilling to follow company direction ✗ Conflicts of interest ✗ Historical work failures ✗ Uncertainty of the company needs and expectations ✗ Poor terminology in sensitive topics
COLLABORATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ See things from the other side ✓ Patience and effort in communication ✓ Teamwork and motivation ✓ Awareness of working styles ✓ Supporting coworkers with additional help when busy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demonstrated success in previous team projects ✓ Value shown in teamwork delegation ✓ Knowledge of 6 SIGMA or other common tools used in team and project work ✓ Able to define team roles and structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lead other people and projects successfully ✓ Built profit through project success ✓ Familiar with the functions of stakeholders, partners and colleagues ✓ Negotiation skills when dealing with other teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Limited knowledge around collaboration benefits ✗ Low or no experience working with others ✗ A feeling of individuality ✗ No demonstrable examples ✗ Unable to delegate effectively ✗ Not able to take orders
LEADERSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sense of ownership of product and problems, guidance to others ✓ Supporting evidence of viewpoint to reinforce direction ✓ Personal behaviour at high standard and inspirational ✓ Assertive through motivation, not force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Previous history with leadership tools ✓ Able to demonstrate effective leadership ✓ Conflict management skills ✓ Provide examples of leadership success ✓ Design an effective team for a project ✓ Project management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Success stories ✓ Innovative mindset and focus ✓ Powerful recommendations by colleagues and clients ✓ Demonstrable steps to growth through good leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Focuses only on yourself ✗ Unwilling to set direction ✗ Conflicting approaches ✗ No success stories ✗ Poor approach to delegation ✗ Limited value placed on budget or time constraints
PERSONAL GROWTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Rise to the opportunities ✓ Invest time/money in yourself to continually learn and improve ✓ Longer term view of opportunities rather than immediate expectations ✓ Request feedback to grow and improve ✓ Take pride (not boast) in achievements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Understanding of opportunities for development ✓ Disciplined approach to achieving goals ✓ Structure to long term ambitions ✓ History of personal growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mentor other people to be better ✓ Lead growth of teams to succeed ✓ Build self confidence in others ✓ Develop opportunities for subordinates ✓ Promote skills within the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ No interest in career progression ✗ Unwilling to learn more skills by accepting new challenges ✗ Unbalanced view of personal growth vs company growth ✗ Limited commitment towards self discipline
PRIORITISATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Time management ✓ Methodical discipline ✓ Planning steps ✓ Delegation awareness ✓ Balance between fast and perfect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Methodology to organise tasks and manage time ✓ Approach to delegating ✓ Ability to refuse conflicting priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Achieve effective results ✓ Organise tasks better ✓ Reallocate duties for better balance ✓ Delegate effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Not punctual ✗ Can't stay within deadlines and budget ✗ No knowledge of suitable management tools



THE STAR METHOD OF ANSWERING

When an interviewer asks you a behavioural question (based on your past performance in specific circumstances), it's useful to answer using the STAR method. This stands for **Situation, Task, Action, Result**. It's a way of structuring your answers to make them as compelling as possible, while also providing all the relevant information that your interviewers need to hear.

To make the most of this technique, give answers that are honest and thorough, without rambling. Give only the most relevant details to keep your answers concise—the interviewer will ask if they want more information.

Example question:

Tell me about a time when you were under a lot of pressure at work. How did you handle the situation?

Example answer:

Situation - What were the circumstances? What was the challenge?

In my previous role, an important member of the team quit suddenly in the middle of a major project. We knew we wouldn't be able to hire and onboard a new team member before the project's deadline—but this was a major project for a large client, and we didn't want to lose the account.

Task -What goal were you working toward?

I was tasked with taking over their responsibilities in addition to my own to ensure the project was successful.

Action - What did you do specifically to address the situation?

I worked with my manager to deprioritise some other projects I was working on so that I could dedicate more time and effort to this account. I made myself completely available to the client, including taking calls with them some evenings to ensure they were wholly satisfied.

Result - What was the outcome? What did you learn?

The project was delivered on time and to a high standard. The client was so happy they went on to sign a larger contract with us.

Example **STAR** answer: Budgeting, resourcing and tasking are complex issues, so my team needed to outline all the key milestones and outcomes to generate a critical path. We then looked at whether certain non critical tasks could be shifted to a later project in order to focus on the main product required for implementation and minimise scope creep. We discussed the various options with all the stakeholders and reached a firm agreement on the project scope.



TECHNICAL QUESTIONS

Explain your reasoning process

Many technical interview questions have a specific correct answer. This means you need to find a way to make your answer stand out from the answers provided by other candidates. Explaining your problem-solving process and the logic you used to arrive at your answer can help you stand out as a stronger candidate.

Know different methods for solving a problem

Some technical interview questions have several answers that could be correct. When answering a question that has several possible scenarios for arriving at a solution, explain your problem-solving process and make it clear that you know how to use each method to find a solution.

Ask for clarification, if needed

If the interviewer asks you a question and you need additional information to properly answer it, it is ok to ask the interviewer for clarification. This will show the interviewer that you have the ability to identify when additional information is needed and that you aren't afraid to ask for clarification when you need it.

Elaborate on answers you don't know

If you are asked a question during a technical interview that you don't know the answer to, it is ok to tell the interviewer you don't know the answer. However, you should elaborate on your answer and explain how you would go about finding the information for the answer if this were a problem you faced on the job. This will show the interviewer you have the ability to search for information to solve problems when you don't know how to do something.

Be prepared to prove your skills

Many technical interviews include an aspect where you are asked to prove your skills through a series of brainteasers, whiteboard coding challenges or remote coding assignments. While this phase typically occurs during the second or third interview, it is important to be prepared for at least one brainteaser question or whiteboard challenge during your first technical interview. With these questions, it is important to remember to talk through your reasoning process and explain the steps you are taking to answer the question.

CATEGORIES OF QUESTIONS

To be successful at a job interview, 'reading the mind' of potential interviewers would be nice and helpful.

Although we can't do that, it is still possible to be prepared to answer the questions to the best of your ability simply by focusing on the role and the likely questions related to that field and building an extensive pool of valuable data about yourself.

Professional and experienced interviewers ask questions for specific purposes, which are intended to elicit certain kinds of answers to ensure they clearly identify the best candidate for each position.

The main categories have a different role in the selection process. They are:

- **Character/behaviour of the candidate**
 - Determine the nature and 'position fitness' of the candidate;
- **Technical alignment/process skills to do the tasks**
 - Demonstrate the candidate's process skills and approach etc. to do the job;
- **Strategic knowledge and fit for the position**
 - Demonstrate the candidate's strategic thinking etc. to fit the position;
- **Added Value to the company**
 - Assess the benefit the company will receive from selecting a particular candidate;
- **Unexpected questions**
 - Designed to see how well a candidate can 'think on their feet' and to catch any lies or conflicting answers, as well as identify creativity and analytical skills.

On the following pages, each of these categories has a range of related questions, as well as information to help you understand the traps and opportunities available to develop superior answers. Study the examples of poor/neutral/better for each one, think about whether a question applies to your field of work and construct your answers that are reusable.

Write the basis of your answer first; capture the main idea, then move on to the next one. The next day, review each answer carefully and refine the text to be more natural, positive and inclusive of relevant information. Repeat this process until you are satisfied that each answer truly represents you in the most positive way it can.

Although it's not possible to list every likely question, the examples provided on the spreadsheet are intended to allow you to develop responses to a wide range of test questions that can be adapted and used in other questions and will help you understand how to approach and provide powerful answers to the questions that you do receive with greater confidence. Nevertheless, You can add any questions (and responses) that you believe may apply to your chosen position to ensure that the response has high-value.



CHARACTER / BEHAVIOUR QUESTIONS

Interviewers are interested to know what kind of person you are and how well you will fit in the company/team. Are you a team player/individual, are you creative/innovative, responsible/reckless? You need to demonstrate that you are going to be a functional and contributing member of the company by aligning yourself to their values and mission and not be toxic!

The following examples are intended only to give you an idea of how to structure answers so that you add value to every response by using positive keyword sentences that strongly connect you to the position on offer. You need to consider the help provided in the earlier tables, as well as ensuring your answers are always positive and value-adding:

► Tell me about yourself

This may seem to be an easy question to answer, but don't make the mistake of missing your opportunity to impress from the outset. The interviewers are looking for value-adding characteristics with every question, such as what your specialty is and why you decided to apply for the position. Try to demonstrate that your skills and experience are high standards and that your interest in utilising them is what attracted you to the company's open position. You can include some additional information that build your character, such as a competitive tennis player, which may show that you enjoy fitness, teamwork, challenges and so on.

EXAMPLE ANSWERS:

Poor answer: I'm 28, divorced so I'm keen to earn some money and I'm looking for a job in a company that is flexible so that I can spend time with my new partner.

Neutral answer: I'm 28, I've been working in this field for a number of years and I'm looking for a change to a better company with more opportunities. I have 2 children, I'm divorced and my hobbies are fishing and swimming.

Better answer: Thank you for inviting me here today. I would like to provide you with a response that connects my personal attributes to my professional self to show my suitability for the position. To answer your question, professionally, I am a highly successful specialist SALES MANAGER, focused on BOOSTING PROFIT in the SALES sector with great results, EXCEEDING TARGETS EVERY QUARTER, YEAR ON YEAR FOR THE PAST 3 YEARS AND MORE. As a SALES PROFESSIONAL, I specialise in BOOSTING SHAREHOLDER PROFITS. To provide an example, in my last role, I was able to ACHIEVE SAVINGS OF OVER €400K PER YEAR BY IMPLEMENTING NEW SYSTEMS TO TRACK SALES AND PROSPECTS, AS WELL AS TO MATCH THEM TO SPECIFIC PRODUCTS THAT WERE MORE RELEVANT TO THEIR NEEDS, WHICH REDUCED A LOT OF WASTED EFFORT. All of my experience is geared around achieving exactly the kind of results that I believe you are looking for in this position.

With me, you will get a specialist who is highly experienced in BOOSTING PROFITS IN A SALES ENVIRONMENT, MANAGING LARGE TEAMS AND ACHIEVING STRONG RESULTS WITH SOFTWARE TOOLS, AS WELL AS INNOVATING AND OPTIMISING PROCESSES, which I am sure you agree is a great match for the position requirements.

SUMMARY: Don't be afraid to say what is necessary to *establish value*, and add as much relevance as possible. Don't get off topic, but add all the value points you can that relate to the category. It's important to speak clearly, concisely, intelligently and to give the interviewer something very positive to think about right from the very first question.

Another common question:

► What are your greatest strengths?

The interviewer is interested to see how you view yourself and whether you match the needs of the company. You don't want to come across as egotistical or arrogant but that doesn't mean to be humble and undervalue yourself. This question is one of the key selling moments and you need to promote your skills and achievements admirably. Make sure that your answer is more about your strengths and the value they bring and not about your ego. Your greatest strengths should correspond to relevant achievements that you list on your CV, e.g. successfully managed a key project to improve product quality and ensure compliance to ISO 9001.

EXAMPLE ANSWERS:

Poor answer: I'm good at delegating work to others and I prioritise my work based on how important the person that gave me the task is. My manager is my top priority.

Neutral answer: Although I haven't done this kind of job before, I'm sure I could do it because I have a lot of experience with managing people and working on projects.

Better answer: My greatest professional strength is MY STRONG VISION ON HOW TO ACHIEVE THE BIG PICTURE GOALS BY UNDERSTANDING THE LITTLE ONES. I won't say that my approach makes me unique, but definitely I am a highly effective MANAGER that gets results and that I will bring value here also.

As a previous project manager, I have the technical and personal skills and experience to bring the best out of people, particularly in teams to reach the desired outcomes. In my last position, we completed the project under budget and early because I identified several ways to streamline the process. I am goal and deadline focused and my work history shows my success, which you can see in my résumé. In addition, I enjoy leadership roles which are a significant part of heading a team. I believe that this position of 'Team Leader - Quality' is a great match to my qualifications and experience. I have also brought my portfolio that demonstrates my many achievements, if you would like to review it and I am more than happy to answer any questions that you may have.

SUMMARY: Employers want to see intelligent and successful candidates, so your answer should demonstrate these skills specifically, particularly in the fields you see yourself as a premium candidate. As always, demonstrate your value-adding capabilities matching the field of your interest.

► What good books have you read lately?

To answer this question, ideally, read up on a book that resonates with your skills and field of premium positions, but don't just name the book as your answer; you need to build positive points as a candidate. Talk about how certain areas of the book are relevant to your field and demonstrate how they could really make a positive difference for the company in which you are applying. Build your worth by showing your value.

EXAMPLE ANSWERS:

Poor answer: I read a book criticising the leader of our country because I don't like that side of politics.

Neutral answer: I enjoy reading science fiction and similar books to help me relax.

Better answer: I enjoy many genres of books and I also studied a lot of literature at university, but a recent book that I really found invaluable was 'Traction: Get a Grip on Your Business' by Gino Wickman, which provided me with great insight about going beyond project management and deep into the vision for an organisation's growth, creating a strategic bullseye that all projects are judged against. I find the tools and assessments in this book vital to help any leadership team know if teams are working on the right projects to achieve the company's vision and goals. Because when you have the right target (vision) with the right people to enact it...you get traction and I intend to bring the value connected to these skills to this position.

SUMMARY: Books are generally connected to your personality and to your ambitions. There are many great books from philosophy, science, economics, business to personal development that can qualify as worthy titles. The important thing is to present yourself as intelligent 'thinker', so your response should also include value-adding benefits to the company.

OTHER COMMON QUESTIONS IN THIS CATEGORY:

1. What are your outside interests?
2. What interests you about this job?
3. What are your greatest strengths?
4. What makes you unique?
5. Why are you looking for in a new position?
6. Why have you had so many jobs?
7. Why are you leaving (or have left) your current position?
8. What are your outside interests?
9. Who has inspired you in your life and why?
10. Would you lie to protect the company?
11. What are your greatest weaknesses? / What could you do better?
12. What could you improve about yourself?
13. What are your goals? / How long would you stay with us?



PROCESS RELATED QUESTIONS

Every interview has questions that allow you to showcase your skills, qualifications, experience, achievements etc. and these questions are your best area to create a great impression of yourself. Some questions are to demonstrate a solution to a problem; others are to check if you really have the skills etc. that you say you have. Here is an example:

► What do you do to ensure meeting project estimates?

Prepare examples in advance of your approach in which you managed costings and resources effectively and, if possible, achieved the outcome on time and under budget due to your skills. Depending on the role, you may need to include relevant terminology to demonstrate your methodology.

EXAMPLE ANSWERS:

Poor answer: I worked on a project once in which I just needed to write down the expenses involved. Nobody every said I was spending too much.

Neutral answer: My last team used our company software to determine the expenses we would be allowed to have for the project. We selected the resources we needed, plus timeframes and the software calculated the costs. We always slightly over estimated the expected costs so that we would finish under budget.

Better answer: Budgeting, resourcing and tasking are complex issues, so my team needed to outline all the key milestones and outcomes to generate a critical path. We then looked at whether certain non critical tasks could be shifted to a later project in order to focus on the main product required for implementation and minimise scope creep. We discussed the various options with all the stakeholders and reached a firm agreement on the project scope.

SUMMARY: Show that you have the skills and experience for the role by demonstrating real world examples with positive outcomes. Include your solutions to technical issues that needed to be overcome, but don't make the mistake of including a non technical problem (e.g. personal conflicts) when talking about processes.

OTHER COMMON QUESTIONS IN THIS CATEGORY:

1. Can you work under pressure?
2. What do you worry about and why?
3. What makes you angry and how do you deal with it?
4. What do you see as the best way to improve processes?
5. When you're faced with several paths of action, how do you choose one?
6. Tell me about your approach to delegation.
7. How do you respond to constructive criticism?
8. What's the most difficult part of being a (job title)?
9. Tell me a time when someone made a decision that you did not agree with.

ADDED VALUE QUESTIONS

There are a range of questions that are specifically looking to identify the business value you offer to the company.

These questions are also targeting whether you have additional value-adding qualities on top of your technical capabilities and personal qualities to match the job specifically and any other kind of benefit to the company that you would bring.

This is your opportunity to sell your other skills and to show your value is higher than just the position on offer, which may enable the role to be customised to better suit you and facilitate the opportunity to command higher compensation etc.

Importantly, it's your chance to stand out from the other candidates and you need to take every opportunity to show the interviewers why they should not only choose you, but prefer you over the other candidates.

Example questions are:

► Where do you see yourself five years from now?

This is a chance to show your long term value to the company by indicating how you will develop your skills etc. and use that growth to further benefit the company. You want to demonstrate that you see yourself achieving personal and professional goals as well as enhancing the company objectives. This question is a chance to show your vision, your expectations and your capabilities in helping take the company forward, which can improve your own opportunities.

EXAMPLE ANSWERS:

Poor answer: I hope I will be a manager by then, maybe doing your job.

Neutral answer: I believe I will still be here. I'm not sure what role I will be in, but I expect that I will have gained experience and moved into a higher position.

Better answer: My hope is that during the five years, I will have added significant value to the company in performing my role to the best of my abilities. As mentioned in my CV, I have considerable experience in this field and I intend to do the best I can to achieve every single target. At some point in the future, let's say five years, I would like the opportunity to use my experience in this company to encourage and motivate newer employees and help maintain a strong work ethic and culture in the company in a business development role.

SUMMARY: Outline your intentions and initial value and build a long term role for yourself. The future role you seek may not currently exist, so show your full range of capabilities to allow for career progress to be identified in order to not stagnate or be forgotten.

OTHER COMMON QUESTIONS IN THIS CATEGORY:

10. What additional value do you bring?
11. Describe your philosophy of leadership in a few sentences.
12. Would you describe yourself as a details person or a big-picture person?
13. When innovation has been needed, how do you go about making it happen?
14. “The Salary Question” – How much money do you want?
15. Why aren't you earning more money at this stage of your career?
16. Aren't you overqualified for this position?
17. How do you see yourself fitting into the organisation?
18. Describe a project you decided to start on your own.



STRATEGIC SKILLS & FIT QUESTIONS

High level positions are more than just task oriented. They have a strategic 'high level' element to them, such as goal setting, direction, methodology and so on. For positions that include these elements, you can expect certain questions in which you can demonstrate your abilities to manage projects etc.

An example question is:

► What would your responsibilities be in this position?

This is a chance to show your vision for the role and how you see your value benefiting the company, as well as your longer term goals. As a specialist with a solution to the company's needs, you are expected to drive the results and guide the company in the function you are responsible for.

EXAMPLE ANSWERS:

Poor answer: I will do whatever you want me to do.

Neutral answer: I need to learn more about the company and its needs before I can know this. I don't yet have all the information.

Better answer: I see my responsibilities in this role to create pathways that lead to growing business and boosting profit in a Sales environment. In particular, to manage sales teams and develop and implement effective and innovative processes that lead to targets being met.

SUMMARY: Outline your vision that defines the role as you see it. You're the specialist so make it clear what you intend to do and the outcomes you intend to provide.

OTHER COMMON QUESTIONS IN THIS CATEGORY:

1. How do you keep yourself up to date on changes in this industry?
2. Are you a leader or a follower?
3. How would you describe your leadership style?
4. How do you define success and how well do you measure up?
5. Give me an example of your creativity (analytical skill...managing ability, etc.)
6. During the first days in the job, what changes would you implement immediately?
7. What would your first 30, 60, or 90 days look like in this role?
8. What do you think are the most important qualities and qualifications?
9. Do you have the stomach to fire people and have you had experience?

ELIMINATION QUESTIONS

Elimination questions are designed to get candidates to talk about their negatives and to help the interviewer identify which candidates to eliminate. Never make a negative statement, because they will more likely reflect badly on you than on those you criticise. Criticising past employers or colleagues is a warning sign that you may behave the same way towards a new company. These questions should still be treated as opportunities to show your value:

► Tell me about a situation when your work was criticised.

Shrugging your shoulders at this question by saying that you have never been criticised for your work seems to be the easiest thing to do, but it would be foolish to do so. Do not let go of this chance of describing your calm and agile nature. Remember, if you shrug off this answer, the interviewer will think of you as lying or not worth considering for the job.

EXAMPLE ANSWERS:

Poor answer: I can't think of anything. I usually do great work and everyone is satisfied.

Neutral answer: There was one time in which my boss thought I hadn't done enough research into a project, but I felt it wasn't necessary because I found out what I needed to do the project. I told him that it was a waste of my time to do more research.

Better answer: I was tasked with a project that had a hard deadline, but in order to do the task, I needed to research the options. My manager was of the opinion that it would require a complex investigation to validate a solution, however my experience indicated otherwise, which didn't sit well with him. My role was the Project Leader and the responsibility to resolve the issues fell on me. I researched similar projects and found a suitable option that was available to use and successfully completed the project by the deadline. In the end, my manager congratulated me for my outstanding work.

SUMMARY: This category of questions requires a demonstration of your ability to overcome adversity and achieve a positive result in order for you to maximise your impression on the interviewers. Choose some areas in which the result was or will be positive. Do not provide negative answers. They will not help you win the position.

► Why are you leaving (or you left) your current position?

Don't be shy to answer this question. It's normal for people to move around, particularly ambitious people, but be careful to provide positive reasons and also to demonstrate that you left your previous job in a better situation than you found it. You are looking to convince the interviewer that they are lucky to have found you and you would bring real benefit to their company, rather than seeing you as a liability. Never say bad things about your previous company, job or boss. It reflects worse on you than on them.

EXAMPLE ANSWERS:

Poor answer: I was bored in my last job and the salary wasn't very good so I thought I would try to get a job where I can earn more money.

Neutral answer: My last job was repetitive and didn't allow me to exercise all my skills, so I decided to change.

Better answer: My last position as an Account Manager was very interesting and I had a lot of success. It developed my skills in various capacities such as forecasting and leadership, which is where I see myself being best placed now. My management experience would be very valuable to help this company reach its targets in 'new business', which is a key responsibility of the advertised position.

SUMMARY: Leave a positive flavour that your previous experience brings to the new company. The interviewer is trying to understand if you are a results-getter or someone who is unstable and undesirable. Answer the question but turn it around to show that you are bringing value to them. Just like football players are 'sold off', because they are underperforming and end up going backwards in their career, the better player ones are a 'prize' to any new club. You need to demonstrate you are a 'prize' player.

OTHER COMMON QUESTIONS IN THIS CATEGORY:

1. What are your greatest weaknesses?
2. Tell me about something you did – or failed to do – in a previous job that you now feel ashamed of.
3. Aren't you overqualified for this position?
4. Describe your ideal company, location and job.
5. Why have you been out of work so long?
6. Could you have done better in your last job?
7. Tell me about the most boring job you've ever had.
8. Where could you use some improvement?
9. I'm concerned that you don't have as much experience as we'd like in...
10. Do you have the stomach to fire people? Have you had experience firing many people?
11. Why have you had so many jobs?



UNEXPECTED QUESTIONS

Interviewers know that many answers have been thought about and prepared in advance, so they sometimes ask unexpected questions to get a feeling of how an applicant thinks in real time.

Here are some examples:

1. *Why **SHOULDN'T** I hire you?*
2. *On a scale of 1-10, how **weird** are you?*
3. *It's 11:20am now, at exactly this time next year, what are you doing?*
4. *Is it better for your work to be perfect, but late, or so-so but on time?*
5. *How would your current boss describe you?*

How do you answer such questions? What is their purpose? The first step is to understand the real intention of these questions so that you can prepare a positive and value-adding answer that you believe fulfils the real meaning behind the questions.

Some questions catch you totally by surprise and seem illogical, but it's still vital to use them to sell yourself in a positive way.

In the case of questions such as Q1, you can prepare an answer by firstly creating a normal response as though the question were 'positive' and then changing it to have an opposite meaning (e.g. change 'if' to 'unless' as in the first example answer).

In the case of Q2, you should use your response to highlight that you are not boring (e.g. not 'weird') by scoring yourself low, but are very creative and demonstrate the value your 'weirdness' (enthusiasm/creativity) can bring to the company.

The interviewer may be looking for answers that:

Question 1. - show you aren't lying (e.g. 'There are no reasons' is an unrealistic answer); and can show your ability to think without preparation.

*Example: 'You really shouldn't choose me if you aren't looking for a **high value project specialist** who will strengthen your business and improve the market position of the company by modernising internal infrastructure. The quality of my work is clear and will save the company far more than the investment.'*

Question 2. - show your ability to see the value of any particular skill, even unusual ones:

Example: 'I am probably only a 9, because nobody is perfect, but my weirdness is connected to my awesome creativity and that is why I have always been so successful.'

Question 3. - show your ability to be analytical and visionary:

Example: 'I hope that I will be employed here and, if it is a working day, I expect that I will be sitting at my desk with a year of experience behind me and doing work that I enjoy while benefiting the company.'

Question 4. - show your ability to prioritise:

Example: 'I believe that if the deadline is not arbitrary (i.e. it is vital), then the task needs to be completed according to the schedule and to the best quality possible. If the deadline is arbitrary or of limited importance, then it can be better to go slightly past the deadline in order to provide higher quality.'

Question 5. - show your own perception of yourself and how you imagine others see you as well as your self confidence:

Example: 'My current boss probably sees me as an effective team player and he is happy to collaborate with me. Together, we have achieved many strategic outcomes, due in no small part to my specific skills in the projects we have worked on together.'

There are many other 'unexpected' questions that range from psychology to conspiracy checking in their purpose that you may encounter.

In each case, take your time to try to analyse the true meaning behind the question by understanding that the answer lies in showing your business acumen and to develop a positive answer that demonstrates your professional skills and potential value to the company.

I truly hope that you have found the information, tips and tips in this book helpful and inspiring.

Following this programme means taking control of your future. Success is in your hands. Good luck!

Yours in career specialisation,


Philip Le Motté
Building career specialists