



# Career matters



**Save time &  
effort by  
following these  
steps**

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## **Guide to an effective job search**

By Julie Harding, Director of Career Matters, the Career Consulting, Training & Outplacement company

As a Career Consultant I often see a lack of clarity regarding career objective and career brand holding back professional people. In particular, they are unclear on their values and drivers as well as their transferable skills and strengths.

This leads to an ineffective job search as well as an unfocussed CV, LinkedIn profile and poor interview preparation. It therefore takes longer to find a new position and results in a greater number of rejections, causing lower confidence levels and less self-motivation. It can be a downward spiral that is hard to surmount.

So how do you determine your career objective and your brand? Follow these 10 tips and you will make your job search much more effective.

# Determine your job objective & brand

Think long & hard before you prepare for your job search

1. Think about your values. These are the principals by which you live your life. Make a list of your top five or six values. Think about what characteristics or ways of behaving make you feel good, for example, someone who values honesty will feel happy when they tell the truth, and uncomfortable when they lie. Search online for a list to help you.

2. Consider your drivers. Make a note of what motivates you to be who you are and pushes you to succeed. These could be something like self-development, achievement or recognition.

3. Identify your transferable skills and your strengths. These are the 'Unique Sales Points' that set you apart from other applicants. They may be a mixture of hard and soft skills, knowledge and experience (expertise in a particular area or across broad sectors). Work out which of your strengths you think your potential employers want, and make sure you describe them as they do. A review of job adverts and job specifications will help with this.

4. Determine your job search objective before writing your CV. If you had no monetary or other constraints, what would your professional career be like? What would your next role be? Note all your ideas. You might then have to refine them according to your constraints, but you will have a better idea of where you want to go. Research what routes you can take to get there. Once you have determined your objective, you can structure the content of your CV around it. If you write your CV without having a clear objective in mind, it will come across as unfocused. Tip: don't write your objective on your CV, you'll see it on some 'resumes' for employment in the USA, but it's not appropriate for the UK market.

5. Think of your CV as a marketing brochure. Imagine yourself as a product, employers as customers, and your CV as a brochure about you. Market yourself through your CV. What are your features and benefits? What makes you unique? Make sure to convey this information in your CV and that the key points are highlighted near the top.



*Your transferable skills and your strengths are your 'unique selling points'.*

# Target your CV & prep for interview

## Target your CV for the specific role & organisation

6. Use your CV to get an interview, not a job. You don't have room on a 2-3 page CV to go into detail about every achievement. Strive to be clear and concise. It is likely that the reader will skim read it for just 20 seconds initially. The purpose of your CV is to generate enough interest in you to be invited for an interview. Use the interview to provide a more detailed explanation of your achievements and to land a job offer.

7. Speak their language. Review job adverts for positions that interest you. Use the key words listed in these adverts to match them to bullets in your CV. If you have missed any key words, add them. Job titles change with trends. Match them.

8. Know your market and your worth. Do more research. Work out which employers recruit people in the sort of role you are seeking. Determine whether there is a problem you could solve for an organisation using your skills and experience. Understand how much the market pays for those skills and experience.

9. Send your CV to employers. Recruitment and job seeking is a numbers game. You will increase your odds every time you submit your CV. Use a three-tiered approach. Apply for some jobs that appear to be beneath you. They might be more than they appeared to be once you interview for them. Perhaps once you have your foot in the door you can learn of other opportunities or will be promoted quickly. Apply for roles that seem to be at your level now. You will get interviews for some of those; see what you think of them. Try for some jobs that seem like a stretch. Hopefully you'll rise to the challenge and will learn lots of new skills. Don't rule yourself out.

10. Prepare thoroughly for the interview. Research the company again. Review the media, website, accounts filed and employer reviews on Glassdoor or Indeed. Think about what questions you would ask based on the job spec if you were the manager or director recruiting for the role. Think of examples where you have achieved something similar. In the interview, be yourself. People buy people, and by that we mean they choose someone they like, trust and value or respect. So, let them see the real (positive) version of you.



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**Book an initial  
call or free CV  
review:**

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## Your Personal Career Consultant

Career Matters' Director, Julie Harding, delivers personal and professional Career Consulting, Training & Outplacement Services (support for those at risk of redundancy).

Whether you need help with CV Writing, LinkedIn Profiles, Cover Letters or Interview Coaching, we can help advance your career. With prior experience as an award-winning Recruitment Consultant, Julie helps clients improve their prospects by 'positioning' and 'branding' them for their chosen career sector. She then writes targeted CVs and LinkedIn profiles and coaches them effectively in interview technique.

Based on a personal approach that combines her writing experience and background in recruitment, Julie takes a genuine interest and has helped hundreds of clients from trainees to senior executives / directors improve their prospects and fast-forward their careers.