



In each of her magazines, Oprah devotes a page to something new that she has learned; something that she knows “for sure.” Here is my take on the things I know for sure as a career practitioner.

1. **Writing has the power to influence.** Whether that influence is for good or bad depends on how well the content addresses the needs of the reader, and on the quality of the writing! A powerfully written resume marks you as a viable candidate; an ineffective resume gets tossed in the trash.
2. **A good resume alone won't always do the trick.** The hard truth is that every career transition has three components, and each one must be strong. These are as follows: effective job search skills (to bypass the efforts of the masses), a powerful resume (gets your foot in the door), and polished interview skills (lands you an offer).
3. **You need to work your resume.** The best actors improvise in reaction to another character, with great effect. Similarly, your resume needs to be adjusted in relation to the job posting to which you apply. Change the resume's heading and key words and phrases (especially in your profile), and prioritize bullet points. If you need to do more than that, you likely need two fairly distinct resumes.
4. **H.R. isn't the best place to go when making contacts.** HR facilitates the hiring process, but

the divisional management makes the final hiring decision. After all, they best understand the needs of the position, the challenges the new hire will face, and which candidate will best fit in with the existing team. This leads to the next point.

5. **A phone call is more effective than an email.** If you really want a particular job, try to connect with the person doing the hiring. Don't call HR; call the Finance Manager, I.T. Supervisor, Customer Service Manager—the person to whom you would be reporting. And be ready to sell your value, not tell your work history. Qualified programmer applicants, for example, will all have programming experience, but how many have worked on a \$10M project, became the “go to” person for complex problems, or won an award for a knock-out solution? Sell, don't tell.

6. **The greatest indicator of workplace success is how well you get along with your boss.** A head hunter/colleague swears by this. And it makes sense. After all, if you get along with your boss, likely that means that he or she accepts your ideas, accommodates work/life balance challenges—all those little things that make work close to stress-free. During your interview, make sure you interview your soon-to-be boss too. Ask questions and try to get a sense of whether you like this person or not. I once ignored my instincts, took a job, and sure enough, within a week I had quit: didn't like the boss at all and couldn't see myself working successfully with him.

#### **My last point is the most vital:**

I have found that very few people have any idea of how to sell their value. The ability to convey your value as an employee can have a profound impact on career management. This powerful career management tool—of knowing your value well enough to convey it with strength and conviction—has wide-reaching uses. It is effective, no necessary, in resumes, interviews, performance appraisals, creating a 15-second pitch or elevator speech...career growth is almost impossible without it. I will save this topic for next month's newsletter to do it justice.

Please feel free to share my newsletter with friends, family, neighbours, colleagues. And don't forget that your \$20 Gift Card to Tim Hortons, Chapters, Williams, Wal-Mart, Canadian Tire, wherever, is ready to mail with referrals that turn into clients! It has become quite popular!

My thanks for your ongoing support and interest, Stephanie ☺

p.s. As always, I welcome suggestions and questions.