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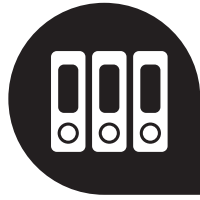
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# INSTRUCTIONS



## DEDICATION TO THOSE WHO HELPED

This manual would not have been possible without the time, effort and support of many wonderful people. In no particular order, thank you to Alison Riley, Kasen Bartels, Michael Lauer, Edgar Olivo, Carolyn Andrews, Nick Catsoules, Anisha Patel, Agata Polanska, Taylor Miller, Nicole Hartings, Amy Siemen, Kyla Bonnstetter, Brennan Allen, Mike Collette, Pavitraa Shah, Nicolette Alley, Sarah Selke, Jack and Robin Seaver, Linda Bartels, Scott Schneider, Kevin La Ra, and the team at Perfect Bound Marketing.

One of the biggest mistakes you can make is taking the advice of a person who gave up on his dreams telling you to give up on yours. I appreciate everyone above providing the encouragement to “go forth and be awesome.”



## FOREWORD

Having been born in a small Michigan town, I was raised in a family that owned a small landscaping, lawn maintenance, and snow plowing business. I quickly learned the value of hard work. That and many other personal values guided my development and educational process earning a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Grand Valley State University and then a Master of Business Administration in Global Management from the Thunderbird School of Global Management.

Attending the Thunderbird School of Global Management and having the opportunity to interact with people from many nations and cultural differences broadened my perspective. It also contributed to the development of my personal brand that has further developed through careers at the Four Seasons Hotel and Resorts, ResortCom International, Banner Health, Grand Canyon University, and the W. P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University. These experiences cultivated my entrepreneurial spirit and pushed me to create Seaver Consulting, LLC.

The Incorporate You™ manual is the result of countless self-introspective hours and my desire to help people unlock their potential. I am a Certified Professional Behavioral Analyst (CPBA) and can administer the DISC assessment as a cornerstone to helping people understand their preferred behavioral style when interacting with others. I married my knowledge of human communication and behavioral styles from the DISC assessment with an incredibly detailed career development process. There are hundreds of personality assessments and millions of career coaches, but I have yet to find a website or manual like this that allows any individual to take the DISC and then shows him or her how to take the DISC report and plug it in each step of career development. Through all of my experiences, I learned what parts of the DISC report correlate well with resumes, LinkedIn profiles, interviewing, networking, and building meaningful relationships. This manual shows you, step-by-step, how each intertwine and how to be awesome at all of this.

Congratulations! You're taking a first step toward discovering how to unlock and live up to your potential!

If you are like most driven individuals, you enjoy working with people who push the envelope personally and professionally because they want to continually improve as individuals and business leaders and make a direct impact on the triple bottom line (other people, the planet, financial profit). You are in search of a higher mission and purpose, you want to discover your unique strengths, find your true voice and create a plan to best express who you are and what you can do to achieve your goals. In short, you are ready to move from success to significance.

This manual will provide a blueprint for achieving the above and also provide answers to questions that you may have already asked yourself:

- What are my natural communication and behavioral styles? And, how do I identify each rapidly in my stakeholders?
- How do I leverage my natural styles to influence others positively?
- Do I live in a place where I truly belong?
- Are my relationships strong, beneficial, and meaningful?
- Am I able to use my talents on something I believe in, in an environment that fits who I am?
- Do I live a life with intent and purpose?
- What do I see when I envision my future?

My goal in writing this is to encourage you to live up to your potential. **I don't want to simply raise the floor of mediocrity; I want to help you raise the height of excellence in your life.** Remember, your biggest threat today isn't external, it's internal; you have to live up to your potential and consistently add value to the "common" wealth. By "common," I mean adding value to the collective whole where people all over the world can derive value from your contributions. Career distinction at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires more than incremental change; it requires you to make quantum leaps in how you generate value for those in your circle of influence. With globalization, technological advances, fracturing societal contracts, low levels of employee engagement, and individuals' needs to create meaningful and lasting legacies, you have little choice but to look at career development through new lenses. An egalitarian and positive paradigm shift is required so that your competitive advantage will be directly correlated to how much more you give in value than take in payment, how you place other people's interests before yours, and how authentically and well you serve others.

By following the Incorporate You™ blueprint, you will begin moving toward a meaningfully rich life full of relationships, emotion, health, accomplishments, passion, and innovative ideas... a life that is rich in human potential. Umair Haque, in his book *Bettersness*, describes real human welfare not merely in terms of financial wealth, but also being derived from intellectual stimulation, physical and emotional health, philanthropic giving and volunteering, ethical decision-making, and organizational stability.

My hope is that the ideas in this manual encourage you to strive for better, not just busier. I hope you learn how to "out-behave" others and positively impact people around you, better care for the planet by creating sustainable prosperity worldwide, and drive financial profit for yourself and others.



The Incorporate You™ blueprint combines three seemingly disparate key areas: an entrepreneur's business plan, personal branding, and career transition techniques, making each seem less overwhelming and more implementable. Alone, each can be daunting processes full of tasks that will take considerable lengths of time to accomplish. Splicing ideas from the three together, as done in this manual, helps minimize the time to understand and learn the lingo of each, allowing you to read each section, complete the steps, develop your personal brand, and unlock your potential.

As you learn more about the multitude of factors impacting our world and the need for defined knowledge and processes to transition from career to career faster, you will see why it is so important to take an uncommon approach to developing personal and professional well being. It is about fostering engagement in all you do. It is about fearing mediocrity, accepting what was, and leading the charge toward what will be realized. By the time you complete this blueprint, you will have accomplished:

- a personal business plan based on your DISC assessment results with clearly defined values,
- an executive summary with a resume, LinkedIn profile, cover letter and 30-second introduction,
- a marketing plan displaying your personal brand,
- an operational plan for networking and interviewing, and
- a contingency plan to ensure you learn continually and prepare for what's next.

Working through this manual will take many hours of reflective thought, identifying patterns, talking to others to help you see yourself in a different light, proactively creating learning experiences, and repeating the process as time progresses. Expecting immediate results from this manual is wishful thinking. Taking a long-term orientation to absorbing the manual's content is much more realistic and meaningful.



## FOREWORD KEY POINTS

- **Don't raise the floor of mediocrity; instead raise the height of excellence in your life.**



## WHY INCORPORATE YOU™ IS IMPORTANT

**T**hrough a series of events in my life, described in detail in the “About the Author” section at the back of the manual, I discovered my true self, realized that I wasn’t going to be around forever and made a conscious decision to make NOW count. Thankfully, I interact with an increasing number of people who are waking up to this same idea. They’re realizing that a meaningful life IS possible for them. They’re realizing that money can’t and never will buy them the passion they seek, but that discovering and living that passion (and a life lived meaningfully well) can and will make them money.

Life is not a series of events that occur to you. It is through establishing the right mind-set (thoughts become things) and your undying pursuit of living the life of your dreams that will guide you and create unbounded opportunity. Being around the right people will change you, so be ruthless with your time and select your acquaintances carefully. Jim Rohn once said, “You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with,” so surround yourself with people who believe what you believe. As required, perfect the art of saying “No” to those who do not fit your vision for your future.

Although life rarely affords second chances, you must believe that in front of you are infinite possibilities. Many people fail to have great careers because (1) they know they’re supposed to follow their interests/passions... but they don’t, (2) they tell themselves they aren’t geniuses or they don’t have special skills, or (3) they tell themselves they’re not unique... that they’re “normal.” If you look at yourself through any of those lenses, remove those thoughts from your mind and allow life’s infinite possibilities to occur by taking the brakes off your mind and what you are capable of.

**Remember, nothing replaces human contact. It isn’t and never should be viewed as a luxury.** Generate value for and be nice to all those you encounter as you never know what they’re going through.

People will not remember what you said or did, nor will they buy what you do, they remember how you made them feel and they buy WHY you do it. Incorporate You™ is a simple process to help you function like the world’s best and most well-known organizations. These organizations know how

important it is to develop inspiring missions and to get consumers to buy into them. They also spend considerable amounts of time determining what changes in the marketplace will materially affect the implementation of their strategic plans. A common analysis tool used to determine changes and trends is the P.E.S.T. analysis. Determining the Political, Economic, Social, and Technological factors that influence your business helps to lay a strong foundation for meaningful action. The same acronym can be used when thinking about your personal brand and career transition.

Following are ten political, economic, social, and technological factors that are reshaping the employment contract and will have an impact on how you develop your career.

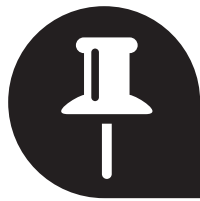
1. **Flattening organizational structure** – Throughout the Great Recession, organizations shed full-time workers and spread the work amongst the remaining employees. Although this drove productivity and record profits for many firms, they knew that they must remain smaller to be more nimble to respond to changes in the global marketplace moving forward. I recommend that you view yourself as a corporation and package your knowledge, skills, and abilities into a salable product (your personal brand) that can traverse from employer to employer without fear of loss of income.
2. **Cradle-to-grave employment is dead** – This comes as no surprise to many of you, but there are still groups of people who expect corporations to provide for them long-term. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, even Baby Boomers have changed jobs between 11-14 times in their careers. In this environment, it is recommended that you develop a thick skin and temper your expectations of what employers are going to provide in the future. The trend is toward providing less remuneration and more non-wage amenities.  
"National Longitudinal Surveys," Bureau of Labor Statistics "<http://www.bls.gov/nls/nlsfaqs.htm>."
3. **Job/Skills mismatch** – The national unemployment rate in the U.S. currently hovers near 8 percent and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. There are millions of jobs available, but not enough people with the appropriate skills to fill them. Conversely, organizations may be under so much financial pressure that they are unable to offer a competitive wage to entice the highly skilled worker. To lower the unemployment rate, training opportunities must be provided to increase relevant skills. Our nation's people, organizations and educational institutions must come together to increase the skill sets required by the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. To avoid becoming unemployed or underemployed for an extended period of time, one must continually learn from a variety of resources.  
"Skill Gap Frustrating to Employers and Workers," Jahna Berry, [azcentral.com](http://www.azcentral.com), accessed November 2013, "<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/news/articles/2012/04/10/20120410skill-gap-employers-workers.html>."
4. **Autonomy/Mastery/Purpose** – In Daniel Pink's book, *Drive*, the reader learns about how monetary rewards are becoming less important to many global citizens. More and more people are searching for work that provides a deeper, intrinsic motivation in their lives. Another great book is *The Art of Happiness at Work* by the Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler, M.D. I recommend you strive to find meaningful work that provides autonomy in daily activity, the ability to master or be great at your chosen line of work, and serve a purpose larger than your own. As an example, if your boss micro-manages you, you have too many projects to manage simultaneously, and your personal mission is to help disadvantaged youth but you work in a for-profit corporation that doesn't value the same, it may be time to reassess your role in that company.

5. **Work-life balance is a myth** – Using a justice scale as a metaphor, there will only ever be one point at which your work life and home life are in balance. It is unrealistic to strive for this point. Instead, search for meaningful engagement in your personal and professional lives. Are you excited to go to work in the morning and do you look forward to seeing your family when you get home? Trends indicate a desire by some organizations to drive productivity by placing people in jobs they are passionate about so they don't feel as though they are going to work.  
"Does Being Passionate About the Work You Do Increase Your Chance of Success?," Amy Rees Anderson, Forbes.com, accessed November 2013, "<http://www.forbes.com/sites/amyanderson/2013/03/27/does-being-passionate-about-the-work-you-do-increase-your-chance-of-success/>," "The 10 Reasons You Should Follow Your Passion And Not The Money," Eddie Cuffin, elitedaily.com, accessed November 2013, "<http://elitedaily.com/life/motivation/the-10-reasons-you-should-follow-your-passion-and-not-the-money/>," "Follow a Career Passion? Let It Follow You," Cal Newport, nytimes.com, "[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/30/jobs/follow-a-career-passion-let-it-follow-you.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/30/jobs/follow-a-career-passion-let-it-follow-you.html?_r=0)."
6. **The career ladder is now a jungle gym** – With a more disruptive, "new normal" taking hold of our society, organizations are shrinking to be more competitive. Unemployed persons are becoming entrepreneurs and challenging the status quo. Professionals aren't simply looking for a promotion; they're looking for backward or lateral moves that will help them develop complementary skills or find more meaning in non-professional endeavors. Sheryl Sandberg, in her book, *Lean In*, famously described this as the career ladder being replaced by the jungle gym.
7. **Only 25 percent of available jobs are online** – Employee referral programs have long been an inexpensive source of networked and high-quality candidates. According to ere.net, organizations are posting fewer open positions on job boards and have shifted focus to employment brand building via social media channels. Those in transition need to spend more time networking with an organization's stakeholders, online and in person, and seek the elusive referral into their dream job. Think of this as a simple equation where your chances to land meaningful work inside an employer are directly correlated with the number of people inside that organization advocating for your employment.  
"Referrals Lead; Social Media Thrives; Job Boards Survive as Hiring Source," John Zappe, ere.net, accessed November 2013, "<http://www.ere.net/2011/03/17/referrals-lead-social-media-thrives-job-boards-survive-as-hiring-source/>."
8. **Forced transparency by social media** – If recruiters want to learn more about candidates, they can easily search Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Twitter among other online sources of information. Naturally, if the candidate's social media channels have questionable or disparaging content, the candidate may be removed from consideration. It is in your best interest to ensure that all of your social media content is appropriate, is true to your personal brand, and displays how you "out-behave" others.
9. **Less than 30 percent of employees are actively engaged** – The Gallup organization has released studies confirming that roughly 70 percent of corporate employees are not engaged and some are actively disengaged. Corporations will need to rethink hiring, leadership practices, and employee recognition programs if they want to employ the best and remain competitive. As you work through your DISC results and the self-assessment sections following, take the time to identify the characteristics you desire in a company culture and be sure to conduct research and informational interviews that will help you make a match.  
"How to Tackle U.S. Employees' Stagnating Engagement," Susan Sorenson and Keri Garman, businessjournal.gallup.com, accessed November 2013, "<http://businessjournal.gallup.com/content/162953/tackle-employees-stagnating-engagement.aspx>."

**10. 关系 – Importance of relationships** – A central idea in Chinese society that is quickly gaining recognition in the West, *guan xi* is loosely translated as the connecting of and building of relationships. Its focus on the reciprocation of favors has made its way to America and you'll be able to achieve your goals faster if you understand how helping others will ultimately come back and benefit you. When you meet someone, immediately generate value for him or her before ever taking payment.

These ten factors are combining to forever change the way we work. Knowing that cradle-to-grave employment is no longer an option gives you the freedom to find autonomy, mastery, and purpose in your career. More people are choosing jobs that are project or time-based. As you build your personal brand and plan transitions in your career, think about non-full-time jobs as increasingly viable options that will provide you with more control, the ability to be engaged in multiple facets of your life, and to experience the life you deserve. Even if you have a full-time job, it may be beneficial to take on a part-time role, to start an entrepreneurial venture, or consider growing your skills through serving local charitable organizations. These so-called micro-careers help you build your personal suite of skills to be prepared for anything the 21<sup>st</sup> century throws at you.

"The Rise of Micro Careers," Peter Weddle, *careercast.com*, accessed November 2013, "<http://www.careercast.com/career-news/rise-micro-careers>."



## **WHY INCORPORATEYOU™ IS IMPORTANT KEY POINT**

- **Nothing replaces human contact. It isn't and never should be viewed as a luxury.**



# WHAT MAKES INCORPORATE YOU™ UNIQUE

**T**he Incorporate You™ blueprint equates your personal brand to a corporate brand by bringing together the ideas of an entrepreneur's business plan, personal branding, and career transition techniques. By the time you complete this blueprint, you will have:

## **PERSONAL BUSINESS PLAN**

Your personal business plan sets a strong foundation by allowing you to see your character traits in black and white from your DISC assessment, clarifying your values and identifying your guiding purpose moving forward. Incorporate You™ features a professional, evidence-based DISC assessment (used by both small businesses and Fortune 500 companies globally) to develop your personal business plan, with consideration toward your core behaviors, motivators, and competencies; a self assessment driven by reflection; work priorities; and the development of intention and ambition statements, a value proposition, and a set of constraints.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

You will start by reviewing your professional experiences and creating accomplishment development statements using the recruiter-acclaimed S.T.A.R. format (which identifies the Situation, Task, Action, and Result of previous experiences). These statements will be used in the rest of this section of the blueprint to write your resume, LinkedIn profile, two different cover letters and your 30-second commercial.

## **MARKETING PLAN**

The development of a personal brand requires you take your intention and ambition statements and value proposition and exude them through a variety of online and in-person channels. Your personal marketing plan blueprint will describe how to accomplish this and determine whether or not those in your circle of influence are receiving the message.

## OPERATIONAL PLAN

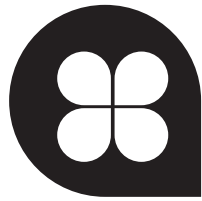
Implementation of your marketing plan is the next step in the Incorporate You™ process. This will be the guide in that implementation. Networking requires you to be ruthless with your time and you must begin with the establishment of S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely) goals. With the goals established, you can then integrate the use of best practices, a tracking form and communication tips (based on the DISC assessment) for how you tailor your communication to different behavioral styles. The operational plan also includes robust content about the interview process. You will have a process for where to gather information about your target companies, how to prepare for and make a great first impression, what to do to have a successful interview, how to tailor your communication style to the interviewer, and unique methods of follow-up.

## CONTINGENCY PLAN

The last step in the process, and perhaps most important, is the identification and implementation of a risk mitigation, or back-up plan. Creating a continual personal development plan will be the foundation for you to mitigate the risks associated with losing a job. In a society where the only constant appears to be change, you must search for your next career continually and consciously create opportunities for developmental experiences, garner additional certifications, learn how to continuously develop needed skills, and surround yourself with a rich, diverse, and trusted advisory board.







# DISC ASSESSMENT

## HISTORY

William Moulton Marsten generated the DISC characteristics of emotions and behavior and published his findings in his book, *Emotions of Normal People*, in 1928. In his book, Marsten argued that people illustrate their emotions through four behavior types called Dominance (D), Influence (I), Steadiness (S), and Compliance (C). He also discussed that the behavioral types were derived from a person's sense of self and how he/she interacts with his/her environment. Marsten included two dimensions that influenced emotional behavior. The first dimension is whether a person views his environment as favorable or unfavorable. The second dimension is whether a person perceives him or herself as having control or lack of control over his environment.

In 1956, Walter Clarke took Marsten's findings another step further and constructed the DISC Assessment as a way to help businesses choose qualified employees. John Greier made further developments in 1958 when he created the DISC personality profile and the associated patterns detailed in your report.

## THE MEANING OF DISC

The DISC model analyzes behavioral styles and helps categorize them. It is a way to describe how we do what we do. Because behavior is an integral part of who are, understanding verbal and non-verbal language is key to driving personal and professional success in an increasingly interconnected world. DISC is a universal and neutral language. In other words, it is valid across cultures and simply exists to help describe the innate differences in how people approach problems, other people, pace, and procedures. However, the purpose of understanding DISC isn't simply to know your behavioral style, but to build upon that knowledge. Bill J. Bonnstetter once said, "It's not what style you are; it's what you do with what you are."



## BENEFITS OF LEARNING DISC

Although this manual is focused on career advancement, the most important benefits of understanding the DISC behavioral styles may include:

1. **Understand Self** – Being self aware allows for better and more open communication, as well as the ability to consciously control your behavior and better match the style of those with whom you are communicating.
2. **Understand Others** – Gaining commitment from others through earning their trust by blending with their behavioral style. By understanding others' basic desires, you can then take action that will generate value for them, further endearing trust.
3. **Build Effective Teams** – People tend to judge others limiting productivity and engagement within the team. High performance can be achieved if team members understand core behavioral differences and adjust their styles accordingly.
4. **Resolve and Prevent Conflict** – Recognizing similarities and differences helps you to diffuse problems before they arise or refocus efforts on what people have in common.
5. **Career Advancement** – Much of the rest of this manual focuses on how knowledge of your style can be converted into rapidly identifying another person's style. With this information, you can then amend your verbal and non-verbal messaging to them for the betterment of your career.
6. **Exude Your Personal Brand** – Ensuring that your body language and verbiage communicate a consistent message of who you are and what you want to be known for is another benefit. Your clothing, color usage, mannerisms, and positive demeanor will make a significant impact on how others perceive you.

## DISC DIMENSIONS

Below are each of the four DISC dimensions with brief descriptions, including how people interact with their environment.

### D – DOMINANCE

Main Themes: challenge, relating to power, control, and assertiveness

People who score high in the intensity of the “D” style factor are very active in dealing with problems and challenges, while low “D” scores are people who want to do more research before committing to a decision. High “D” people are described as demanding, forceful, egocentric, strong willed, driving, determined, ambitious, aggressive, and pioneering.

Low “D” scores describe those who are conservative, low-keyed, cooperative, calculating, undemanding, cautious, mild, agreeable, modest, and peaceful.

High “D” individuals produce activity and perceive themselves as more powerful than the environment, and perceive the environment as unfavorable or antagonistic.

## **I – INFLUENCE**

Main Themes: contacts, relating to social situations, and influencing others

People with high “I” scores influence others through talking and activity and tend to be emotional. They are described as convincing, magnetic, political, enthusiastic, persuasive, warm, demonstrative, trusting, and optimistic.

Those with low “I” scores influence more by data and facts, and not with feelings. They are described as reflective, factual, calculating, skeptical, logical, suspicious, matter of fact, pessimistic, and critical.

These individuals produce activity and perceive oneself as more powerful than the environment, and perceives the environment as favorable.

## **S – STEADINESS**

Main Themes: consistency, relating to patience, persistence, and variation

People with high “S” style scores want a steady pace, security, and do not like sudden change. High “S” individuals are calm, relaxed, patient, possessive, predictable, deliberate, stable, consistent, and tend to be unemotional and “poker-faced.”

Low “S” intensity scores indicate individuals who prefer change and variety. People with low “S” scores are described as restless, demonstrative, impatient, eager, or even impulsive.

High “S” individuals produce passivity and perceive themselves as less powerful than the environment, and perceives the environment as favorable.

## **C – COMPLIANCE**

Main Themes: constraints, relating to rules, structure and organization

People with high “C” styles adhere to rules, regulations, and structure. They like to do quality work and do it right the first time. High “C” people are careful, cautious, exacting, neat, systematic, diplomatic, accurate, and tactful.

Those with low “C” scores challenge the rules and want independence and are described as self-willed, stubborn, opinionated, unsystematic, arbitrary, and unconcerned with details.

High “C” individuals produce passivity and perceive oneself as less powerful than the environment, and perceives the environment as unfavorable or antagonistic.

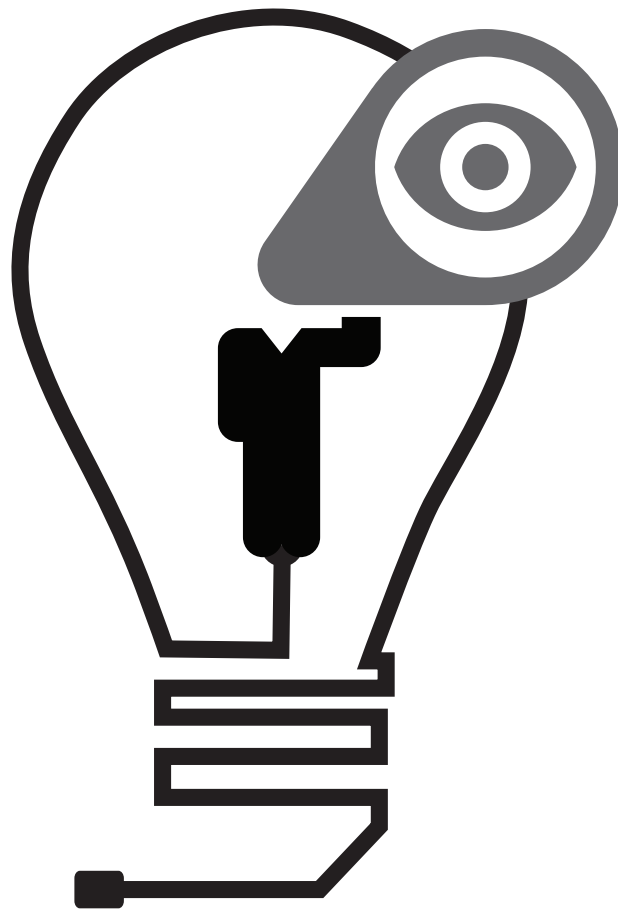
“The Universal Language DISC,” Bill J. Bonnstetter and Judy I. Suiter, Fourteenth Printing, page 37.



## INSTRUCTIONS

As a reminder, if you have not completed your DISC assessment, please visit page “v” for instructions on how to access your DISC assessment so you can complete it before continuing in this manual.





# **YOUR PERSONAL BUSINESS PLAN**





## ASSESSMENT & VALUES CLARIFICATION

In the first section of the Incorporate You™ process, it is incredibly important to set a strong foundation for the development of your brand. You do that by understanding yourself; your unique behaviors, communication style, work priorities, and unique selling proposition. Your personal business plan establishes a strong foundation by allowing you to see your character traits in black and white, fostering growth so that you can begin the process of developing intention and ambition statements, and a value proposition and a set of constraints.

### DISC PROFILE REVIEW

To begin, use your DISC assessment to answer the questions on the following pages. Please review the profile slowly and carefully, thinking about previous personal and professional experiences and how they've impacted you. Take time to reflect on your results and write down your responses.

#### General Characteristics

Review and select 10-12 keywords or phrases that best describe your skills/traits:

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## 1

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Styles that family, friends, and colleagues should and shouldn't use with you. During your next meeting with your boss or in your next interview, be sure to bring up your preferred methods of communication to make sure that the culture of the organization will be a good fit. List the traits that are most important to you to ensure that others know how to and how not to communicate with you.

[illegible]



# Ideal Environment

Review the chart in the bottom right-hand corner of your report. Then review your results and write down 3-5 industries, functions, organizations or jobs, based on the below chart, that would allow you to thrive if the organization’s culture is your ideal environment:



## Perceptions

Under moderate or extreme pressure, stress, tension and/or fatigue you are bound to act in a way that is different than how you perceive yourself naturally. When you sense yourself acting differently, remember to do something that brings you back to center. This self awareness will go a long way in interviews, when networking, or when you are working in your ideal job. Please list the self-perception items here:

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## Descriptors

The words highlighted in red, yellow, green, and blue are wonderful because they describe your core behaviors, but they are also great keywords for your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn profile. Write 5-7 in the space below:

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## Natural and Adapted Style

As you read through the descriptions of your natural (how you communicate and behave at home) and adapted (how you communicate and behave at work) styles, what keywords or phrases truly describe you. Write them here:

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## Adapted Style

What keywords or phrases describe not only your ideal work situation, but how you prefer to behave and communicate at work? List those phrases here:

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## Keys to Motivating and Managing

These two pages are full of things you want in your ideal work environment. If you are not getting some of these desires satisfied, ask your current leader if he/she can provide them to you. Or, as you are interviewing for your next role, be sure to ask questions designed to uncover whether or not your next boss, team and company culture will be able to manage you the way you want to be led. Write in space below:

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## Areas for Improvement

Take a few moments to review each of the bullet points listed and determine which you'd like to work on so that you don't hinder your own performance. This will be discussed more in the "Constraints" section later. List those improvement points that are of particular interest here:

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## Behavioral Hierarchy

What are the top five on your behavioral hierarchy? How can they be used on your resume?

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## Style Insights Graphs

On the DISC Style Insights graphs, what are you? Write the numbers below:

	Adapted	Natural
<b>D</b>		
<b>I</b>		
<b>S</b>		
<b>C</b>		

Is your adapted style close to your natural style? If not, what do you think may be causing the disparity (e.g. recent job changes, significant personal or professional stress, etc.)? Do you have any numbers in your DISC report that are 20 or more apart (e.g. your adapted D is 23 and your natural D is 53)? If you do, consider looking back at the “Natural and Adapted Style” section for clues as to why this is occurring. If you don’t, there is a good chance that you act the same both at home and at work.

**Examples** – If your natural D is 25 points higher than your adapted D, it may mean that you work in an environment that concentrates power in the hands of the few and doesn’t delegate authority downward. If your adapted S is 35 points higher than your natural S, it may mean that you work in an environment that values patience, data collection, and a relaxed culture, but your preference is for more variety and a faster pace. Any time there is a difference of 20 points or more from natural to adapted, recognition of what is causing the disparity will help to develop an action plan to bring the numbers closer together.

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# SELF-ASSESSMENT

In addition to the DISC assessment, it is also important to consider how those in your circle of influence have described you in the past or how they perceive you now. Exploring your past experiences allows you to clearly identify the moments in your life when you were the most engaged, having the most fun, and motivated intrinsically. Take time to reflect on your life and record your answers to the following questions.

**What adjectives have your friends, family, and work colleagues used to describe you?**

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**What motivates you intrinsically (makes you feel good, a job well done)?**

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**What motivates you extrinsically (financial rewards, awards, public recognition)?**

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**What are your most memorable previous professional experiences? Why?**

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**What are the top five careers/jobs that interest you professionally? Why?**

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# WORK PRIORITIES

Clearly identifying your desired career and the attributes of the position (or the desired position) you hold assists you in more specifically targeting companies and potential careers. Being in a position where you can be your authentic self will allow you to achieve goals faster, be engaged intrinsically and continually generate value for your stakeholders. Review the “Ideal Environment,” “Adapted Style,” and “Keys to Motivating and Managing” sections above as you consider your responses to the following. In your ideal career, describe the following in detail:

**Location of Your Office (e.g. how long is your commute, in major metro area/small town, size of office)**

**Total Compensation (e.g. salary, bonus, benefits, retirement, travel, expense account)**

**Daily Tasks (e.g. sales calls, spreadsheet analysis, strategic thinking, team projects)**

[illegible][illegible]



# DEVELOPING GUIDING STATEMENTS

Do you truly know and can you articulate your life's intent? And by intent, I mean your never-changing purpose, the reason you exist or your personal mission statement. If you are under the age of 35 and/or you're worth less than a few million dollars, you might feel as though the ruling class in America is writing you off. And, truth be told, they are. We live in an age of manufactured perma-crisis where solutions are simple but there is too much money being made on the maintenance of these crises. The problem for you then becomes this overwhelming feeling of having your drive, motivation, purpose, meaning, and desire being stripped right out from underneath you. Rather than choosing to resign yourself to a life of mediocrity, choose to live a life meaningfully well and full of purpose.

All of the above hit me in early 2008 like a freight train. I was nearly depressed, felt hopeless and didn't think there was anything I could do to change or control my fate. I had become so focused on receiving recognition that I neglected to think about true happiness, intrinsic motivation, and the impact that I was meant to have on society. Each and every one of us is here for a reason. Sometimes that reason doesn't smack you in the face until months or years after you'd wish it to. So, what can you do to overpower mediocrity, establish clear intent and live a remarkable life? To start, you can put in the time and hard work of self discovery, determine what you'd like your legacy to be, limit life's distractions, generate value for others, and put it all together to create remarkable guiding statements.

As we continue our slow transition out of the industrial economy into the knowledge economy, creating your reason is perhaps the most rebellious, and noble, thing you can do. Not leaving your fate in someone else's hands is empowering. Continually striving for better, faster, cheaper is simply a race to the bottom. **Simply falling victim to the downward spiral of working harder, getting poorer, feeling emptier, buying more, and working harder will not allow you to achieve your life's true intent.** Why not create an upward spiral of success where you can leave the career you dislike and transition to something that provides you with autonomy in your decision making, the ability to master your craft, and purpose in your daily activities?

Organizations use mission and vision statements and a unique value proposition to clearly relay to their stakeholders why they exist and what they do to provide value. With your personal brand, you must do the same. Writing and adhering to guiding statements will help you achieve goals, make difficult decisions, and live a life of and on purpose. Use your responses to the previous questions about your DISC profile, your self-assessment, and your work priorities to construct the following. Because of the reasons we reviewed in the "Why Incorporate You™ is Important" section, the lines between our personal and professional selves are blurring. And, as your DISC results may display, you are happiest when your natural and adapted styles are very close to one another. As you begin writing the statements below, look first from your personal perspective knowing that transparency is going to drive your natural style into your work environment. These statements are to be used for both personal and professional purposes.

## Intention Statement

This is your personal mission statement, your never-changing purpose. Why do you exist? What are you here to do? How will you make those around you better? How will you better not just what you have, but who you can become? Your statement should be short, succinct, meaningful, and able to serve you for decades to come. Write the statement so that you can memorize it and easily recite it back to others in conversation. Write it so that you are proud to say it aloud in groups (if you'd like) and that it inspires others to go through the process to write their own.

Example 1: "I exist to unlock human potential through the development of personal and professional well being."

Example 2: "To live each day as if it were my last, building meaningful relationships that last a lifetime, bringing happiness, and adding value to everything and everyone who I touch."

Example 3: "To have meaningful experiences and share lessons learned to breathe positivity into the world."

[illegible]

## Ambition Statement

This is your personal vision statement. What will you be and accomplish in 3-5 years? It helps to answer simple questions about the goals you would like to achieve in the short-term that are perfectly aligned with your “Intention Statement.” What higher-order returns do you want the world to have tomorrow that it doesn’t have today? Whose wealth (intellectual, spiritual, emotional, relational, financial, etc.) do you wish to enhance? When you accomplish these goals, you will feel fulfilled intrinsically.

Example 1: "In three years, I will be an internationally-recognized and award-winning speaker and author known for unlocking human potential."

Example 2: "In three to five years, I will have completed a masters degree, established an expanding group of new friends, and will have traveled internationally to volunteer."

Example 3: "In five years, I will have traveled to 15 countries helping children in need by teaching them self-sufficiency, resourcefulness, and an entrepreneurial mind-set."

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## Value Proposition

What do I do that no one else can? Why am I different? What is unique about me? Why do employers/clients choose me? Review your answers to the “General Characteristics,” “Value to the Organization,” and “Behavioral Hierarchy” sections above. By taking the time to think about how you compare to others who may be competing for the same jobs you desire, you can identify the series of events in your life that have given you unique experiences, character or perspective that others may not have.

Example 1: "I am an internationally known career coach and author who uses business strategy concepts and positive psychology to unlock human potential."

Example 2: “With my background in the hospitality industry, small business startups, and cultural awareness from international travel, I build relationships and create a culture of acceptance and giving.”

Example 3: "I am master's prepared, multi-lingual, and an entrepreneur who teaches others how to live their dreams through maintaining high levels of productivity and sustaining healthy human performance."

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

## Constraints

The achievement of your life's intent cannot occur if your days are so full of distractions that you can't focus on what is meaningful. Instead of letting your schedule schedule you, consciously take the time to schedule your priorities. Please try not to confuse the idea of constraints and the activities you choose to engage in with making sacrifices. On the contrary, the constraints will allow you to cut out the meaningless and focus more fully on the tasks that push you to create your meaningful legacy.

When thinking about constraints, ask yourself the following question. What do I agree to never do again because it limits my potential and prolongs me achieving my goals? Limiting your own behavior may also help you to never limit someone else in the achievement of his/her goals. Remember, you need to generate value for, not extract from, your stakeholders. By limiting select behaviors, you increase the opportunities to add value to others in your life.

In order to truly unlock your potential, you must have a keen awareness of your uniqueness and embrace limitation to drive creativity and success. It is easy to be overcome by or paralyzed by the endless choices and possibilities confronting you daily. True creativity is driven by these limitations because they are liberating and allow for a focus on experiences you find truly meaningful. Let go of outcomes, failures, imperfections... be unencumbered by results... but continue to show up for the learning process. By challenging accepted norms everyday, you create an environment akin to an upward spiral of success.

**If knowledge is the new global currency, then knowledge of thy self is the most profound and important tool for you to employ when unlocking your own potential.** By thoroughly understanding your skills, strengths, and potential and then placing constraints on yourself to not perform the tasks that don't add value to your brand, you will achieve your life's intent much faster. To spark ideas, here are two thoughts:

You must first be limited to become limitless.

Quit trying so hard to think outside box and get back in it.

To write your constraints statement, ask yourself, "What will I never do again?" Limitations on your own behavior because you don't want to prevent yourself or others from living up to your or their potential. Review your answers to the "Areas for Improvement" section above for inspiration and write three statements below.

Example 1: If you have a difficulty making decisions because you're concerned about making the "right" decision, create a constraints statement limiting your decision making time to seven calendar days.

Example 2: If you have a tendency to be argumentative and create the devil's advocate position, create a constraints statement that say that you will start a conversation by openly verbalizing three strengths of the other person's opinion.

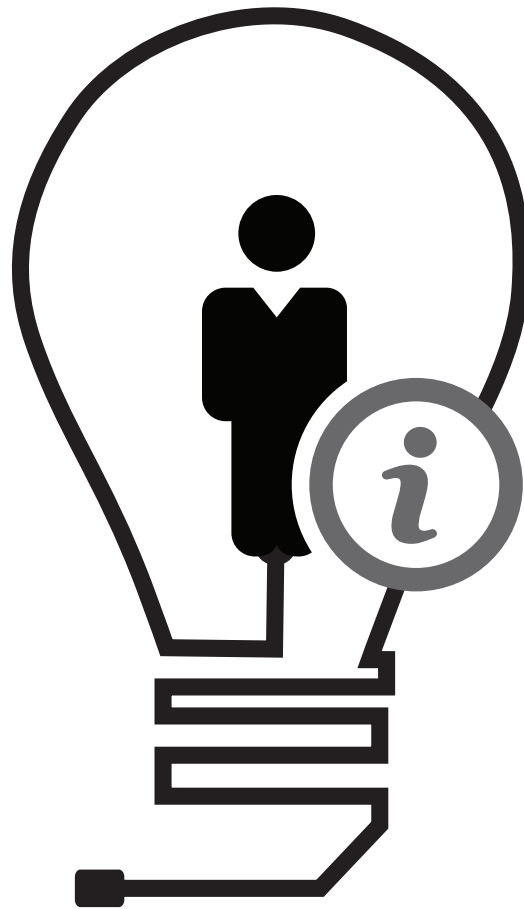
Example 3: If you have a tendency to act impulsively, your constraints statement may be focused on involving a trusted friend in decisions of higher worth or importance.

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## YOUR PERSONAL BUSINESS PLAN KEY POINTS

- **Simply falling victim to the downward spiral of working harder, getting poorer, feeling emptier, buying more, and working harder will not allow you to achieve your life's true intent.**
- **If knowledge is the new global currency, then knowledge of thy self is the most profound and important tool for you to employ when unlocking your own potential.**



## **YOUR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**







## ACCOMPLISHMENT DEVELOPMENT STATEMENTS

In the second section of the Incorporate You™ blueprint, you will take what you learned about yourself through reflection, assessment, and the development of your guiding statements and apply it directly to the creation of accomplishment development statements. These statements are the perfect way to detail exactly how you impacted an organization in a positive way.

It is good practice to reflect on your experiences to see how you can best use them to sell your unique value proposition to a potential employer. The best resumes, cover letters and 30-second commercials use these statements to tell stories about how someone accomplished goals and drove quantifiable results to the organization's triple bottom line. It will be beneficial for you to use this outline to come up with three to seven accomplishments for each of your previous employers. These statements serve as the foundation for the bullet points on your resume. Not all of them have to be used on your resume, but it is good practice to have great examples ready to be used in your cover letters and in your 30-second commercial.

When you are developing accomplishment statements, use the acronym **S.T.A.R.** to help share your successes.

**Situation** – What was the opportunity/challenge/problem presented to you? What was the context? Did you use specific tactics to assess the situation?

**Task** – What were you asked by your leader to do? What was the scope of the project assigned to you?

**Action** – What specific actions did you take to help bring resolution to the opportunity/challenge/problem?

**Result** – What was the outcome of the action you took? Can you quantify your effort? Providing a sense of the scale of your work and the resulting impact truly helps to show how you will be able to drive accomplishment for a future employer.

Here is an example of the STAR format and resulting bullet point for your resume.

**Situation:** Through system wide change in the health care industry, many positions (i.e. health unit coordinators, medical transcriptionists) were no longer needed due to the implementation of electronic medical records.

**Task:** In an effort to offer the employees whose positions were being eliminated ongoing employment in other roles, I was asked to enroll them in a transition program and prepare them for their next jobs in or out of the employer.

**Action:** To assist the affected employees, I conducted orientations to the program and trainings on how to write effective resumes and cover letters. I also provided individual coaching, conducted mock interviews, and connected the new program participants to recruiters who could introduce them to hiring managers.

**Result:** Through excellent individual service, I was able to double the number of placements inside the employer from 10 to 20 over a rolling six-month period. By placing the individuals faster, I was able to save the organization \$100,000 in expected total rewards payouts.

Combined, the success story could look like this on your resume:

- Managed the employee transition program, conducted orientations, trainings and individual coaching, resulting in doubling the number of employee placements from 10 to 20 and saving the organization over \$100,000 in the first six months of 2010.

The following questions should be used as a guide to remind you of events, both personal and professional, which may be used in the development of your statements.

- What work have you completed that others would consider “under promising and over delivering”?
- How many people have you led, managed, trained or mentored? What were the results?
- Have you been recognized and/or received awards or bonuses for superior performance?
- Have you submitted a suggestion that was implemented by your organization? Did it save the organization money, make it money or mitigate its risk?
- What goals have you exceeded? When? By how much? How did you do it?
- Have you been asked to lead a temporary project? What was the outcome of your work?
- What specific knowledge, skills and abilities do you have that few others from your industry/function have?
- Have you ever streamlined a process or procedure?
- What events or activities have you coordinated for your organization?
- Have you received a promotion and/or salary increases in less time than normally expected?
- Have you volunteered for extra duties or special assignments?
- Have you assisted colleagues in becoming better employees, more productive, more cooperative?
- What languages do you speak? What level?
- What boards of directors have you served on? What did you accomplish?

- What charitable organizations are you involved in? What have you done?
- What certifications have you held or do you currently hold?
- Have you been trained on and do you now have specific computer skills?
- What terms would others use to describe your “soft skills”? Your communication skills? Your leadership skills?
- At school, what extra-curricular activities have you participated in? What are the names of the groups and dates of engagement?
- In which countries are you authorized to work? Have you traveled or worked abroad?
- How do you continue to educate yourself about global and local trends affecting your line of work?

STAR stories may be created for each accomplishment (bullet point) on your resume, as the basis for interview responses and to set the foundation for a strong cover letter and 30-second commercial. Ideas for your STARS can be found in previous versions of your resume, how others describe you, self-reflection, and performance appraisals. Utilize the template to create 5-7 STAR stories you can utilize in a variety of settings.

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## RESUME

Enhancing your resume can help you progress to the next stage in securing your dream position. Effective resumes do not land you the job; they simply open the door so recruiters will invite you for an interview. The best resumes include the following in the accomplishment development statements:

- **keywords** that match those on the job description,
- the **scope** of your previous responsibilities, and
- quantifiable **results** that entice recruiters to want to learn more.

## KEYWORDS

Recruiters and other HR professionals are constantly inundated with hundreds of resumes for one position. To save time, organizations explicitly state what they are looking for in their job descriptions, train staff to ensure the candidate meets minimum qualifications, and look for preferred qualities (specific keywords) when narrowing the list of viable candidates. You must look at every job description you are interested in and tailor your experience to the minimum requirements listed. **To increase the chances of your resume reaching the top of the proverbial pile, take three job descriptions of your ideal next job and select 10-12 keywords from each that are important to or are repeated in the descriptions.** Highlight them or write them down so that you can insert them into your resume. You can then tailor your resume to that industry/function/company and job by using those keywords throughout your accomplishment development statements to best explain your valuable experiences. Here is a generic General Manager job description from monster.com where the top keywords have been highlighted.

Description: **General Manager**

General Manager Job Purpose: Obtains profit contribution by managing staff; establishing and accomplishing business objectives.

### General Manager Job Duties:

- Increases management's effectiveness by recruiting, selecting, orienting, training, coaching, counseling, and disciplining managers; communicating values, strategies, and objectives; assigning accountabilities; planning, monitoring, and appraising job results; developing incentives; developing a climate for offering information and opinions; providing educational opportunities.
- Develops strategic plan by studying technological and financial opportunities; presenting assumptions; recommending objectives.
- Accomplishes subsidiary objectives by establishing plans, budgets, and results measurements; allocating resources; reviewing progress; making mid-course corrections.
- Coordinates efforts by establishing procurement, production, marketing, field, and technical services policies and practices; coordinating actions with corporate staff.
- Builds company image by collaborating with customers, government, community organizations, and employees; enforcing ethical business practices.
- Maintains quality service by establishing and enforcing organization standards.
- Maintains professional and technical knowledge by attending educational workshops; reviewing professional publications; establishing personal networks; benchmarking state-of-the-art practices; participating in professional societies.
- Contributes to team effort by accomplishing related results as needed.

Skills/Qualifications: Performance Management, Staffing, Management Proficiency, Coordination, Coaching, Developing Standards, Financial Planning and Strategy, Process Improvement, Decision Making, Strategic Planning, Quality Management

"Job description," monster.com, accessed November 2013, "<http://hiring.monster.com/hr/hr-best-practices/recruiting-hiring-advice/job-descriptions/general-manager-job-description-sample.aspx>"

In addition to repeating this process for other job descriptions to help relay your technical competence, you will also create a better, more personally branded resume if you go back to the keywords and phrases you wrote in the "General Characteristics," "Value to the Organization," "Descriptors and Behavioral Hierarchy" sections and insert them (10-12 again) throughout the summary, key qualifications, and experience sections of your resume.

## SCOPE

The experience section of strong resumes speaks not only to how well something was done but also to the quantifiable scope of the work. It is much easier for a recruiter to form a mental picture of an applicant's experiences if the bullet point states "managed a project team of 12, with a \$250,000 budget..." versus "managed a project team." Find ways to show things such as the size of your budget, the size of your team, how many projects you had running simultaneously, the size of your company, times you were under budget, etc. Explain experiences in such a way that a recruiter can understand the breadth and depth of your work and envision you in the role before they meet you.

## RESULTS

Quantifying results of your work can be difficult, but it is very important. A strong bullet point on a resume begins with a past tense action verb, describes the action taken, and details the impact of that action. An average bullet point may be: “increased annual sales.” A strong bullet is: “increased annual sales by 25 percent year-over-year, exceeded stretch targets and secured \$500,000 of new revenue.”

The following pages provide additional detail to develop a world-class resume, including what to name the Word document, formatting guidelines, appropriate length, what not to include, a list of past-tense action verbs, and a resume template.

A strong resume functions as a forward-looking document and a sales brochure for your knowledge, skills, abilities and promise for the future. Here are a few tips that will ensure your resume stands out from the crowd.

## NAMING YOUR RESUME

Make it as easy as possible for someone else to quickly identify the document as yours. Potential, easily identifiable names include:

LastnameFirstname.docx

LastnameFirstnameResume.docx

FirstnameLastName.docx

FirstnameLastNameResume.docx

Lastname,Firstname-Resume-Date.docx

FirstnameLastname-Resume-Date.docx

## FORMAT

Please reference the resume template as you consider the below formatting guidelines. These guidelines are provided to help meet the dual purpose of spotlighting your value and credentials while keeping your document in an easy-to-read, professional format.

- Margins – Between .5” and 1” on all sides, be consistent
- Fonts – Fonts like Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri; three sizes – 20, 16, 10
- Name – Size 20, bold, add credentials after name
- Address – Physical location, personal phone number, personal email, LinkedIn public profile URL (it is recommended that you place your name and contact information in the header of the document)
- Section Headings – Size 16, bold
- Summary – Size 10 (for all below sections), five lines or less with keywords that you pulled from your DISC profile
- Dates – Listed on the right side of the page
- Company Names, Locations, and Job Titles – List the company name on the first line, your position on the second
- Job Descriptions (bullet points) – Accomplishment development statements from the previous section that start with a past-tense action verb show the scope of your responsibility and the results or impact of your work; these are filled with keywords from the three job descriptions of your ideal job and keywords from your DISC profile

- Languages – Be accurate in your assessment since you may be tested in an interview
- Computer Skills – Avoid listing common software
- Activities – Show how well-rounded and diverse you are by listing philanthropic activity or professional association memberships

## LENGTH

- One to two pages in length; if two pages, you must be able to fill at least half of the second page
- Individuals with 10-plus years of experience should have a two-page resume
- Individuals with less than 10 years of experience should keep the resume to one page

## WHAT NOT TO INCLUDE

- Salary history
- References
- Social security number
- Slang
- Photographs
- Health status
- Personal information – age, gender, marital status, religion
- Acronyms – without denoting what they stand for first
- Explanations for leaving previous employer
- Personal pronouns – I, we, us, they
- “References available upon request”



## THE PROCESS FOR SUCCESS:

1. There are many templates to choose from, but to get you started, you may use the following template as the foundation of your resume and transfer the content from your current resume.
2. Begin all of your bullet points begin with a past tense action verb from the following suggestion chart; try to use as many different verbs as possible.
3. Find three job descriptions of your ideal next job and select 10-12 keywords from each that are important to or are repeated in the descriptions; highlight them or write them down and begin inserting them throughout the summary, key qualifications and experience sections of your resume.
4. Return to previous pages of this manual where you wrote keywords and phrases in the “General Characteristics,” “Value to the Organization,” “Descriptors and Behavioral Hierarchy” sections and insert them throughout the summary, key qualifications and experience sections of the resume.
5. Review the entire resume for flow, consistency, spelling or grammatical errors.

Action verbs that add impact to persuasive resume bullet points:

Management / Leadership Skills	Communication Skills	Research Skills	Technical Skills	Teaching Skills
Administered Analyzed Consolidated Coordinated Delegated Developed Directed Evaluated Expanded Facilitated Formulated Oversaw Organized Planned Prioritized Recommended Spearheaded Supervised Transformed	Addressed Arbitrated Arranged Collaborated Developed Drafted Explained Interpreted Negotiated Persuaded Promoted Recruited Translated Wrote	Clarified Collected Critiqued Diagnosed Evaluated Examined Extracted Identified Inspected Interpreted Interviewed Investigated Organized Summarized Surveyed Systematized	Assembled Built Calculated Computed Designed Devised Engineered Executed Fabricated Maintained Operated Overhauled Programmed Repaired Solved	Adapted Advised Clarified Coached Communicated Coordinated Developed Enabled Encouraged Evaluated Explained Guided Instructed Persuaded Trained

Financial Skills	Creative Skills	Helping Skills	Clerical Skills	Verbs Showing Accomplishment
Administered Allocated Analyzed Audited Balanced Budgeted Calculated Computed Developed Forecasted Managed Marketed Planned Projected Researched	Conceptualized Created Customized Designed Developed Established Founded Illustrated Initiated Instituted Introduced Invented Originated Planned Revitalized	Assessed Assisted Clarified Coached Counseled Demonstrated Diagnosed Educated Expedited Facilitated Familiarized Guided Motivated Referred Represented	Approved Catalogued Classified Collected Compiled Generated Monitored Operated Organized Prepared Processed Recorded Screened Specified Systematized Tabulated	Achieved Convinced Expanded Improved Increased Pioneered Reduced Resolved Strengthened Upgraded

Business Communication, 6th ed., Mary Ellen Gaffey.



# YOUR NAME

Street Address, City, State or Country, Zip Code; Phone Number; email@email.com; LinkedIn URL

## SUMMARY

Briefly provide highlights of technical skills that make you qualified for the job you are seeking. Review what you wrote down in the “General Characteristics,” “Value to the Organization,” “Descriptors and Behavioral Hierarchy” sections and insert those keywords here, in the key skills section, and in the experience section.

## KEY QUALIFICATIONS

Skill 1	Skill 2	Skill 3
Skill 4	Skill 5	Skill 6
Skill 7	Skill 8	Skill 9

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Name of the company OR Position Title**

City, State, Country

Position Title OR Name of company

Month/yr – Month/yr

- Briefly describe your key accomplishments utilizing metrics – begin with past tense action verbs
- Briefly describe your key accomplishments utilizing metrics – begin with past tense action verbs
- Briefly describe your key accomplishments utilizing metrics – begin with past tense action verbs

**Name of the company OR Position Title**

City, State, Country

Position Title OR Name of company

Month/yr – Month/yr

- Briefly describe your key accomplishments utilizing metrics – begin with past tense action verbs
- Briefly describe your key accomplishments utilizing metrics – begin with past tense action verbs
- Briefly describe your key accomplishments utilizing metrics – begin with past tense action verbs

**Name of the company OR Position Title**

City, State, Country

Position Title OR Name of company

Month/yr – Month/yr

- Briefly describe your key accomplishments utilizing metrics – begin with past tense action verbs
- Briefly describe your key accomplishments utilizing metrics – begin with past tense action verbs
- Briefly describe your key accomplishments utilizing metrics – begin with past tense action verbs

## EDUCATION

**Graduate School Name**

City, State (Country)

Degree: (M.A., MBA, etc.)

Graduation month, yr

- Leadership, projects, awards

**Undergraduate School Name**

City, State (Country)

Degree: (B.A., B.S., etc.)

Graduation month, yr

- Leadership, projects, awards

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Languages:** Primary (Level – e.g. Native); Secondary (e.g. Fluent); Others (e.g. Conversant)

**Computer Skills:** Relevant computer skills (e.g. HTML; SPSS)

**Activities:** Relevant activities (e.g. President of Investments Club; Volunteer for Amnesty International)



## COVER LETTER

**Y**ou may say, “I’ve heard recruiters are so busy they don’t have time to read cover letters.” For the initial screening of candidates in large organizations, this statement may hold true. However, the true value of a cover letter may be apparent when you have made it to the top of the candidate pile and the recruiter is attempting to get the top three to the hiring manager. As the recruiter reviews the top six or seven candidates, he may review the cover letter for additional information that will match you with the desired skills in the job description and set you apart.

Here are a few best practices when developing an impactful cover letter.

- Do your homework – Learn as much as you can about the organization, especially the main character traits and skill set the company is seeking for the role.
- Be professional – Ensure that language and examples you use to sell yourself do not belittle your previous employer; if you do this once, the recruiter knows you may do it again.
- Avoid spelling and grammar mistakes – Spell check and have a colleague proofread the letter.
- Express long-term interest in working for the organization – Turnover costs organizations roughly 150 percent of an employee’s salary to fill the position; confirming for them that you are seeking a stable place of employment will help ease their minds about you as a viable candidate.

So, what does an excellent cover letter look like?

### STRONG COVER LETTERS

- Tell your story in a less-rigid format
- Show the employer how much you want to work for them
- Separate yourself from other applicants
- Restate the job requirements and match your skills to those requirements

- Avoid too many personal pronouns
- One page long
- Customized for each company you apply to
- Address a specific person; if you don't have a name, leave the intro line blank
- Top of page should match the top of your resume
- Check for spelling or grammatical errors
- Include language from your DISC profile

## COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

- Addressing the wrong person or generically addressing a department
- Telling the employer what they can do for you
- Neglecting to back up statements about your skills
- Mass mailings
- Attaching personal photographs
- Explaining why you left your previous employer
- Handwritten letters (great for follow-up or thank you, not for cover letters)

## PRINTED VERSION OF COVER LETTER

### Header

The top of the cover letter should be identical to the top of your resume. Whatever format you choose; ensure that it is easily replicable. This section should have your name, address, phone number, personal email address, and LinkedIn public profile URL.

### Contact Information

Insert the day's date, insert a blank line and then insert the organization's name and address, as well as a person's name and title.

### Paragraph One

The best way to start a cover letter is to address a person specifically. To say "To whom it may concern" sounds nice, but there is significant value in knowing enough about an organization to address one person professionally. The next step is to state very specifically what position you are applying for and how you found out about it. A sentence expressing your sincere interest in the position is also helpful.

### Paragraphs Two and Three

With all of the information you know or have compiled on your target company, it is now time to take what you learned and pair it with three of your accomplishments. Your accomplishments should

directly correspond with three major “pain points” or needs the organization has. You want to prove to the person that you can save the organization money, make it money, or reduce its risk. **The items you list should not be straight from your resume, they should be different results or enhancements of a bullet point from your resume.** Be sure to use language from the “General Characteristics,” “Value to the Organization,” and “Descriptors” sections of the DISC assessment that is succinct and clearly states how you will reduce their challenges or enhance their business outcomes and goals.

## Closing

To properly close the letter, restate the position you are applying for and sincerely thank the person for his/her time. Establish a specific follow-up date, seven to ten business days later, and state how (in person, email, telephone) you will reconnect with the person. Provide a warm and complimentary close with your name printed and a handwritten signature.

## EMAIL VERSION OF COVER LETTER

### Subject Line

Include the job title and your name

### Salutation / Paragraph One

The best way to start a cover letter is to address a person specifically. Just like the paper-based cover letter, to say “To whom it may concern” sounds nice, but there is significant value in knowing enough about an organization to address one person professionally. The next step is to state very specifically what position you are applying for and how you found out about it.

### Paragraph Two

With all of the information you compiled on your target company, it is now time to take what you learned and pair it with three of your accomplishments. Your accomplishments should directly correspond with three major “pain points” or needs the organization has. You want to prove to the person that you can save the organization money, make it money, or reduce its risk. The items you list should not be straight from your resume. They should be different results or enhancements of a bullet point from your resume. Be sure to use language from the “General Characteristics,” “Value to the Organization,” and “Descriptors” sections of the DISC assessment that is succinct and clearly states how you will immediately add value.

## Closing

To properly close the letter, restate the position that you are applying for and sincerely thank the person for his time. Establish a specific follow-up date, one to two weeks later, and state how you will reconnect with the person. Mention that you have attached a copy of your resume. Include your name, phone number, email address, and LinkedIn public profile URL.



## 30-SECOND COMMERCIAL

There are many places where a strong 30-second commercial, or elevator pitch, will help you land a job. A version of it could be included in a cover letter, certainly at networking events, when cold-calling organizations, and when attending career fairs. A great 30-second commercial is typically delivered right after an introduction and is a forward-thinking statement about what you can do, what you want to do, and the value you can bring to the organization.

As the old saying goes, you never get a second chance to make a first impression, and this is a great tool to help get started on the right foot. What better way to make a great case for your employability than to deliver an introduction about yourself completely tailored to the person you are speaking to?

It takes humans only seconds to make an initial judgment about someone they are meeting for the first time. It is your job to “wow” your new acquaintance with your physical presence first (e.g. firm hand shake, confidence, speaking clearly, smiling, eye contact, humility) but then to hit a home run and land your dream career with a tailored 30-second commercial that explicitly states what you can do for the organization.

When meeting face-to-face, the first step is always to get the other person talking about him/herself. By asking open-ended, thought-provoking questions, you will get him to release information that may not normally be discussed and would help you help you, help him. **Try to keep him talking for three to five minutes and make mental notes of the things he says that you may be able to assist him with professionally.**

Once you have learned what challenges or opportunities exist in that organization, you must take your standard 30-second commercial and tweak it to meet that organization’s needs. If it is delivered clearly and concisely, you will make a great first impression.

After you’ve delivered your commercial, hopefully it will have sparked thought on how your knowledge, skills, and abilities may be able to benefit the organization. This will lead to a more in-depth

conversation, similar to an interview, where you will have the opportunity to impress interviewers with your previous accomplishments. Be sure to follow-up regularly to continue to add value and show how you can help the organization mitigate risk, make money or save money.

Here is a proposed framework you can use to best relay your intention, ambition, and value proposition. I encourage you to practice this in your mind, in front of a mirror, with friends or work colleagues, by recording it on video, and at networking events.

**I am a...** (state who you are/what you do in a single sentence)

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**My strengths include...** (describe your transferable technical skills and soft skills from the “General Characteristics,” “Value to the Organization” and “Descriptors” sections of the DISC assessment and the type of work you can deliver... being sure to select the adjectives that apply to their business)

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**I have a...** (include credentials and how they can be applied)

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**Most recently...** (list recent accomplishments that you developed in the “Accomplishment Development” section and placed into your resume that support what you want to do)

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**I now am seeking...** (provide a visual description of your ideal position, review the “Ideal Environment,” “Adapted Style,” and “Keys to Managing and Motivating” sections of the DISC assessment and the “Work Priorities” section for appropriate verbiage)

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**I can add immediate value to your organization by...** (list an opportunity they disclosed that the company has, and how your experiences and strengths can work to bring it to fruition)

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**Bring the 6 components above all together to compose your primary 30-second commercial and write it out in its entirety:**

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## LINKEDIN PROFILE ESTABLISHMENT

Your goal is to have a LinkedIn profile that is 100 percent complete. LinkedIn is an invaluable piece of online real estate that will help you tremendously in landing your dream career because it allows your stakeholders to learn about your accomplishments and skills 24/7. One options is for you to take each section of your resume and copy it, word for word, to the equivalent section of the LinkedIn profile. As more applicant tracking systems allow you to one-click apply with your LinkedIn profile, it is helpful to have your resume and LinkedIn profile match.

- **Photo** – Use a recent professional photo, within the last year or two, from the chest or shoulders up.
- **Name** – Ensure that it is the same as what is at the top of your resume with credentials after, maiden name in parenthesis if needed.
- **Headline** – This is a branding statement and what people will see in searches, be concise and memorable by using keywords from your DISC profile, your resume, function, and/or industry.
- **Public Profile URL** – As close to your name as possible, [www.linkedin.com/in/firstnamelast-name](http://www.linkedin.com/in/firstnamelast-name), can be used on the top of your resume, business cards, websites.
- **Contact Information** – Insert a personal email address, phone number, and address (if you choose); up to three websites
- **Summary** – You only have 2,000 characters and this could be in executive biography format, a strengths/skills-based format or simply your resume summary copied over, include language from the “General Characteristics,” “Value to the Organization” and “Descriptors” sections of the DISC assessment .
- **Experience** – Take content from your resume (company names, dates worked, bullet points) and replicate on your profile word for word, you only have 2,000 characters per experience section.



- **Organizations** – Insert the name of the organization, your role, dates, and a brief description of what you did to generate value for the organization.
- **Certifications** – These add credibility to your brand, include the name of the organization providing the certification, the acronym, and the dates the certification is valid.
- **Volunteer Experiences and Causes** – Insert the name of the organization, your role, dates, and a brief description of why you're interested and passionate about the cause.
- **Languages** – Name the language and your proficiency level.
- **Skills and Expertise** – You can insert up to 50, take all of the skills from the key qualifications section of your resume to get started.
- **Education** – Name the institution, your degree, the dates you attended, and any extra-curricular activities you participated in.
- **Interests** – Include hobbies outside of work so people know how to connect with you and form a deeper, more personal relationship.
- **Recommendations** – Start with three to have a 100 percent complete LinkedIn profile, I encourage you to set a goal to seek more monthly, you can also give recommendations first and then receive one in return.
- **Connections** – Seek additional weekly.
- **Groups/Associations** – Join for knowledge sharing and access to influential decision makers, it is also helpful to post and comment in these forums weekly.

## LINKEDIN BEST PRACTICES

Here are ten best practices that will certainly help you develop a 100 percent complete profile, establish your personal brand, and drive opportunities to you in the form of job opportunities or new clients for your business.

1. **Import your resume word for word into LinkedIn** – Taking this step will ensure consistent branding from your paper-based resume to your online resume. Potential decision makers won't get conflicting images of who you truly are if what they read on paper matches what you have on your LinkedIn profile. Also, newer more advanced applicant tracking systems now allow you to apply for positions with your LinkedIn profile only. It saves you considerable amounts of time in having to not upload or type in your resume as you may have done on less advanced tracking systems.
2. **Upload personal videos, pictures, etc.** – LinkedIn now allows you to illustrate some of your greatest achievements in the form of graphic images, compelling videos, and innovative presentations. This is a great way to stand out from the crowd. Under each employer in the experience section, upload at least three pieces of new content to display your accomplishments.
3. **Turn Off Activity Broadcasts** – In the privacy and settings area of LinkedIn, you can turn off basic activity broadcasts (e.g. when someone endorses you, you make a minor change to your profile) so when people see your name or content, they are only seeing the thought leadership that you want to post and put out there.

4. **Job Search Socialization** – Establish a saved job search on LinkedIn’s job portal, indeed.com, and on simplyhired.com’s portal. On LinkedIn and simplyhired, you can see who in your network knows someone inside the company with the job opening. Once you know who to speak with inside your target company, ask your 1<sup>st</sup> level connection for an introduction so you can conduct an informational interview with the connection inside the target company.
5. **Leverage 2nd Level Connections** – LinkedIn’s own research suggests that 85 percent of job opportunities come out of a person’s 2<sup>nd</sup> level connections. It is important to be active in asking your 1<sup>st</sup> level connections for introductions to people in their network affording you the opportunity to conduct informational interviews. As mentioned previously, ere.net cited studies that show that 25 percent of open jobs are posted online and that 75 percent are filled via networking into your target organizations.
6. **Post Content Daily** – Post content that exudes your brand, such as (1) interesting and thought provoking quotes, (2) timely stories that add value to your connections, (3) comment on others’ posts in groups or on your connection’s walls, (4) ask open ended questions inviting engaging discussion, and (5) time your messages to be delivered either between 7 a.m.-9 a.m. or 11 a.m.-1 p.m. on weekdays when LinkedIn users are most likely to read them.
7. **Find Alumni Tool** – Utilize the Find Alumni (mouse over the Network tab at the top) tool to reach out to new connections in your target cities, companies, and functions. Once you’ve selected the five to ten companies you would really enjoy working in, reaching out to other alums of your school who currently work there is a great way to establish a network of supporters inside your target companies.
8. **Success Patterns** – By identifying the steps that a person has taken in his/her career to get to the job you desire, you’ll be able to compare his/her skills against yours to determine what you may need to develop in order to be ready for your next/ideal career. Find five individuals in your ideal job and review their work histories.
9. **Interests Section** – Use the “Interests” section as an icebreaker when connecting with someone for the first time, if their profile mentions that he/she likes to play golf, and so do you, open your conversation with the person on the topic of golf. It will help break the ice and get a robust conversation flowing naturally.
10. **Endorsements** – Your top five endorsed “Skills & Expertise” are a good window into how others perceive you. If you are unsure of what your personal brand is, review the top five skills you’ve been endorsed for as they may equal your personal brand.
11. **Personalized Messages** – Personalize all connection requests by detailing what you are following-up on, mention a shared connection (person/interest) and close with a suggestion for developing a further connection. Customization of all communication via LinkedIn is highly recommended.

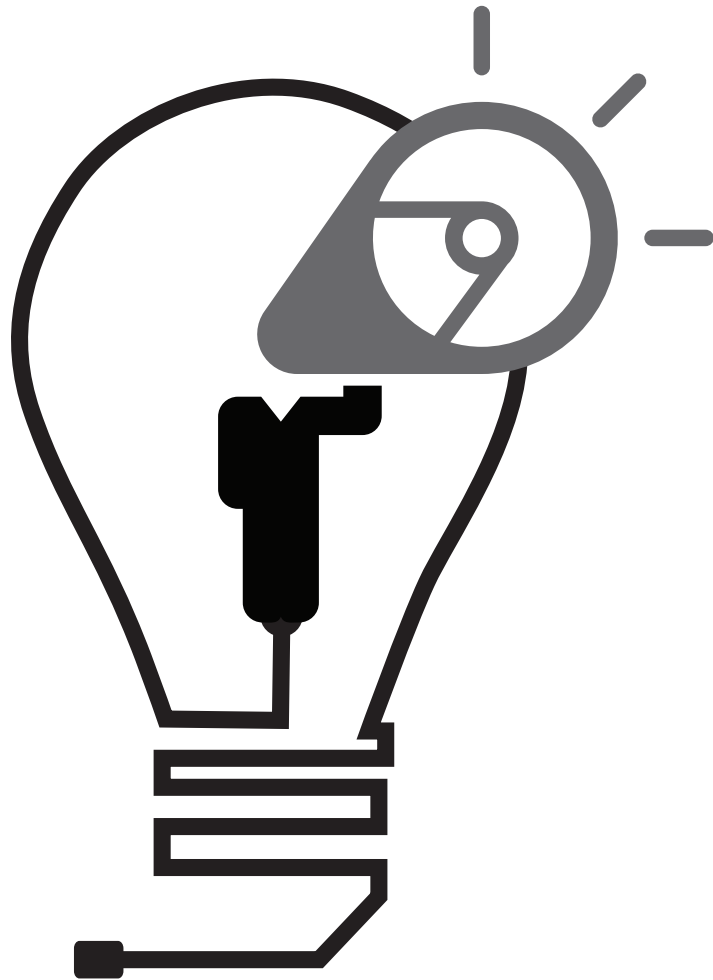
Above all else, be on LinkedIn to generate value for your connections.



## YOUR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY KEY POINTS

- To increase the chances of your resume reaching the top of the proverbial pile, take three job descriptions of your ideal next job and select 10-12 keywords from each that are important to or are repeated in the descriptions.
- The items you list should not be straight from your resume, they should be different results or enhancements of a bullet point from your resume.
- When networking with an individual, try to keep him talking for three to five minutes and make mental notes of the things he says that you may be able to assist him with professionally.





# **YOUR MARKETING PLAN**





## PERSONAL BRANDING

In the third section of the Incorporate You™ blueprint, you will take the next step using your business plan and executive summary to live your personal brand both in person and online. Moving from success to significance requires a different level of thought and action around how your personal brand is similar to a corporate brand.

I've heard it said on many occasions that your personal brand is what other people are saying about you when you are not in the room. Reputations are volatile and consistency in attitude, physical appearance, behavior, communication, color usage and how you generate value for others is crucial in cementing in others' minds what makes you unique.

Trust is earned by predictable behavior. To be trustworthy, you must be open to connectivity, very transparent in how you live your in-person and online lives, and constantly turn your generosity into a currency. You are the maker of your fortune. There is no third party entity inhibiting you from achieving your goals and living the life of your dreams. So, exude your personal brand consistently and remain open to all possibilities.

At a higher strategic level, you can develop and understand your brand with the following process:



**Your Intention Statement** – Please pull from “Assessment and Values Clarification” section in this manual on page 14.

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**Your Ambition Statement** – Please pull from “Assessment and Values Clarification” section in this manual on page 15.

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**Qualities of Your Ideal Position** – Please pull from “Assessment and Values Clarification” section in this manual on pages 11-12. What were the desired attributes of the position? Which attributes will allow you to be your authentic self, allow you to achieve goals faster, be engaged intrinsically and continually generate value for your stakeholders?

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## IN-PERSON BRANDING

Being visible online is critical to the growth and development of your brand because you can reach a wide and diverse audience of colleagues, recruiters, and decision makers quickly. It is important to pair that exposure with high-quality contact with people face-to-face. Because you do not get a second chance to make a first impression, it is imperative that you develop and manage your personal brand for face-to-face meetings as well. The previous section helped to create your personal brand at a higher strategic level. What follows is a focus on the more tactical day-to-day actions you can take to ensure your stakeholders see you living your brand.

I have a 25-year old client who works in financial services. After she and I had two introductory meetings and I guided her through the Incorporate You™ process, she decided to make changes in her in-person brand. She wasn't getting the respect she thought that she deserved at work. I discovered that she used to dress business casual and didn't hold the certifications that her employer valued. We developed SMART goals for her to ensure she could change her stakeholder's perception. She watched the video described below and slowly upgraded her wardrobe to include business professional attire with the two colors that best exemplified how she wanted to be perceived in others' eyes. She also set aside a specific number of hours each week to prep for two certifications that gave her the credibility she needed to achieve her personal mission and goals. Just a few short months after being passed up for the promotion she really wanted, she now holds the certifications, wears colors that exude her brand, received a different promotion, and has colleagues approach her about how she developed her brand and if she'd be willing to help them.

As you construct your personal brand and exude it in person, consider the following as best practices to live your intention, ambition and value proposition statements.

## Plan the Work, Work the Plan

In the next section we'll discuss the importance of setting SMART goals for networking. The same process applies to how you want people to perceive you based on physical appearance, how you build relationships, and how you plan to live your intention and ambition statements. You must take the time to write down SMART goals for each of the following best practices.

Review your DISC assessment, specifically the "Value to the Organization," "Communication Tips," and "Keys to Motivating and Managing" sections for concepts or ideas that you can live daily. By outwardly showing these traits, you'll further entrench in the mind of your stakeholders what your personal brand is.

## Live Guiding Statements

Earlier in this manual, you were asked to develop guiding statements based on the DISC and find distinct ways to include those statements and ideals into your resume, cover letter, 30-second commercial and social media profiles. Being significant requires you to take this one step further and live your ideals every day. You must leave a stamp of the unique you with every person you touch. You must follow up and generate value for those in your circle of influence by making connections between decision makers, sharing meaningful stories from the media, treating connections to coffee, sending handwritten cards, and customizing your messaging to display your personal brand.

## What Color is Your Brand?

Watch the "What Color is Your Personal Brand" video on YouTube by Reach Personal Branding and William Arruda. As you are watching the video, pay close attention to the adjectives that describe each color. Choose one or two colors that match the descriptive terms from your DISC report and best describe how you want to be perceived in the eyes of your stakeholders. Include those colors in your business cards, your websites, your company logo, and in the colors you wear in public. Color evokes certain emotions and it is imperative that your personal brand be associated with a color that appeals to your core values.

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## Consistent Physical Appearance

Naturally, one of the best ways to build your brand is to dress appropriately for the occasion. Regardless of the profession you choose, it is recommended that you always dress for the part you desire to have. One mentor of mine even told me to dress for the job I want in the future, not necessarily the one I already had or was seeking. When it comes to business networking and interviewing, I encourage you to error on the side of over dressing. People will begin to perceive you as in the role before you even hold that position.

**Creating and living your personal brand helps you move from levels of success to higher levels of significance because visibility leads to credibility, which leads to trust.** Your ultimate goal in this process may be through living your intention, ambition and value proposition, you audit your stakeholders and they respond by describing you with the same words you used in your guiding statements.

As an example, you hire a career coach to help you develop your guiding statements and he provides encouragement and suggestions on how to live them. After three months of you living your brand, you ask your coach to go to a representative sample of your friends, work colleagues, and LinkedIn connections to ask specific examples of how you've been exuding your intention, ambition and value proposition. If what the coach hears is in line with your guiding statements, then you've done very well to live your brand and you should keep going. If there is inconsistency between your guiding statements and how your stakeholders perceive you, it may be beneficial to conduct a gap analysis with your coach so that you can course correct.



## ONLINE PERSONAL BRANDING

During the last few years, it has become increasingly difficult to find meaningful employment as evidenced by high unemployment rates. Job seekers are forced to find creative ways to stand apart from the crowd, including having robust social media profiles.

I've read many success stories online about what candidates have done to leverage social media to land their dream careers. One story is about Felix Delgado and his desire to work as a Marketing Intern for SeatGeek, an online portal that helps find deals on sports, concert and theater tickets from hundreds of sources. He was not having luck through submitting his resume on SeatGeek's careers portal. So, he created a custom ticket with a QR code printed on it that routed people who scanned the code to a specially made website where he gave reasons why he was the best fit for SeatGeek's opening. He was offered and accepted a job.

Another story I've read is about Brayden Young. He wanted to work as a Sales/Marketing Manager at Krispy Kreme. Like Felix, conventional methods of submitting Brayden's resume to the Krispy Kreme jobs portal were not fruitful. So, he opened a Twitter account "@HireMeKrsPyKrme" and sent Krispy Kreme Twitter messages and built up a following of thousands of people who began advocating for Krispy Kreme to hire him. Eventually, Brayden's creativity and persistence paid off when he was offered the job.

Regardless of how creative you are, consider the following best practices when developing your presence on the World Wide Web.

### **Be Consistent Across Mediums**

Take time to have a professional headshot taken and use that image across all your online outlets. For your experiences, ensure that each outlet uses the same language so if recruiters only visit one site, they won't miss a piece of information that could land you the job. Consistency in message helps to

build credibility which leads to trust. Being a trusted resource will position you quite well for that next step in your career.

## **Manage Your Brand**

Scour your social media accounts and the web to ensure there are no pictures, videos, or comments that potentially could be disparaging or risk compromising your character. If there is potentially damaging information, delete it or ask your connections to remove the information from their outlets. You do not need to risk losing your dream position merely because you forgot about being tagged in a picture of an event that happened two summers ago. Search your name on Google monthly or considering establishing a Google Alert on your name. With a Google Alert, any time your name is found in a new web page, you'll be sent an email.

## **Include Links**

Regardless of which social media you choose, be sure to include links to your other social media outlets and causes you're passionate about. If there is a video of you on YouTube volunteering, link to it. If you use Twitter and believe the message you are projecting is beneficial to your career, link to it. If you are a member of an industry association that will establish you as a credible expert, link to it. Your goal should be to link to as many outlets as necessary to share your story and display how you will be a valuable asset to a company. Although not every individual can afford to hire a professional video expert, do consider the quality of the videos you're sharing. If you are using amateur equipment, for instance, consider strong lighting and backgrounds that avoid excess clutter and optimize locations that portray a professional and inviting environment.

## **Generate Value**

After your profiles are established, be sure to update them regularly. Please see my best practices for LinkedIn in the previous section. Additionally, stay active in posting relevant information about your expertise so others, especially decision makers, can see you have knowledge that will help the companies they're representing achieve goals faster. If possible, use the SMART goal template as a guide to develop your strategy. Join groups on LinkedIn and follow companies on Facebook and share relevant content. On Twitter, re-tweet information so you are influencing a wider audience. Share impactful articles from trusted news sources that display and further your brand. The value you add to those around you will help position you as someone who can walk into a job and make an impact on day one.

## **Be Proactive**

As you update your profiles regularly, be sure to seek new connections in all channels, and ask for recommendations on LinkedIn. Be sure to engage others on LinkedIn by endorsing and recommending your connections before they request it. They will be incented to reciprocate. As a result, your profile will grow and be at the top of more searches. If others do endorse you, also consider sending a personal thank you acknowledging their effort. It's a great way to build relationships and keep your name at the top of their minds the next time they are asked for recommendations for various positions.



## Personal Website / Blog

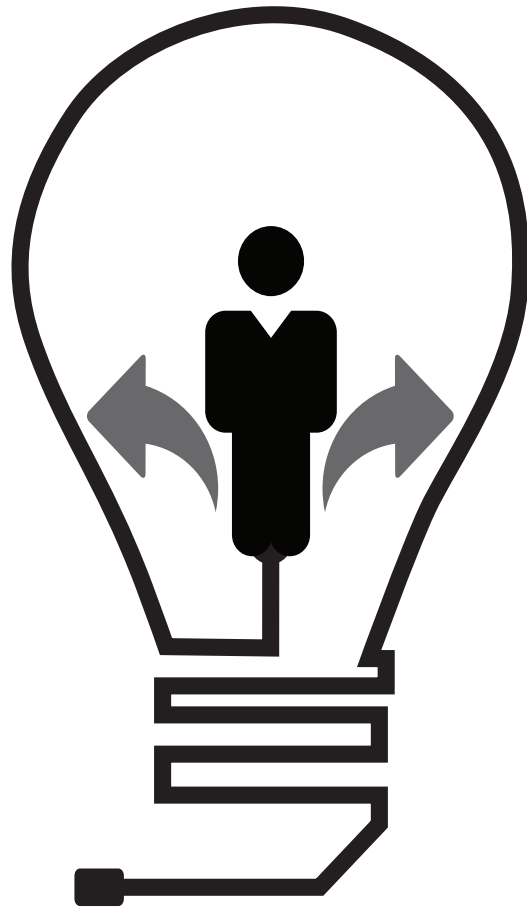
If you don't already have one, seriously consider the development of a personal website that distinctly displays your personal brand, chosen colors, and includes considerable keywords and content from your DISC profile, accomplishment development statements, and guiding statements.



### YOUR MARKETING PLAN KEY POINT

- **Creating and living your personal brand helps you move from levels of success to higher levels of significance because visibility leads to credibility, which leads to trust.**





# **YOUR OPERATIONAL PLAN**





## NETWORKING

In the fourth section of the Incorporate You™ blueprint, you will take the next step and build upon your personal brand through applying the principles in face-to-face interactions. What follows are best practices for networking, DISC profile-based communication tips, and unique methods to effectively communicate with others based on their core behaviors.

### Build relationships in the four channels of professional networking:

1. **Informal** – This includes generic networking events (e.g. outings with family or friends, volunteer efforts, sporting events) that are not industry specific, but are established with the express intent on you blindly meeting new people.
2. **Formal** – Professional associations govern this channel; think the Project Management Institute for PMP, the Society for Human Resource Management for PHR and SPHR, or the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants for CPA.
3. **Business Development** – There are networking organizations, such as LeTip and BNI, who charge fees to become members. These channels provide very formal opportunities to offer leads or receive referrals.
4. **Online** – Through the various social media outlets you can establish a meaningful presence that will allow you to communicate and add value non-verbally.

### Build Relationships

As you operate in the four channels, you must leverage your memorable 30-second commercial that allows you to relay your personal brand succinctly. Managing your brand means displaying a consistent brand and having multiple people perceive you the same way. If you own a small business or are in transition, have a personal business card that includes your brand colors and contact information.

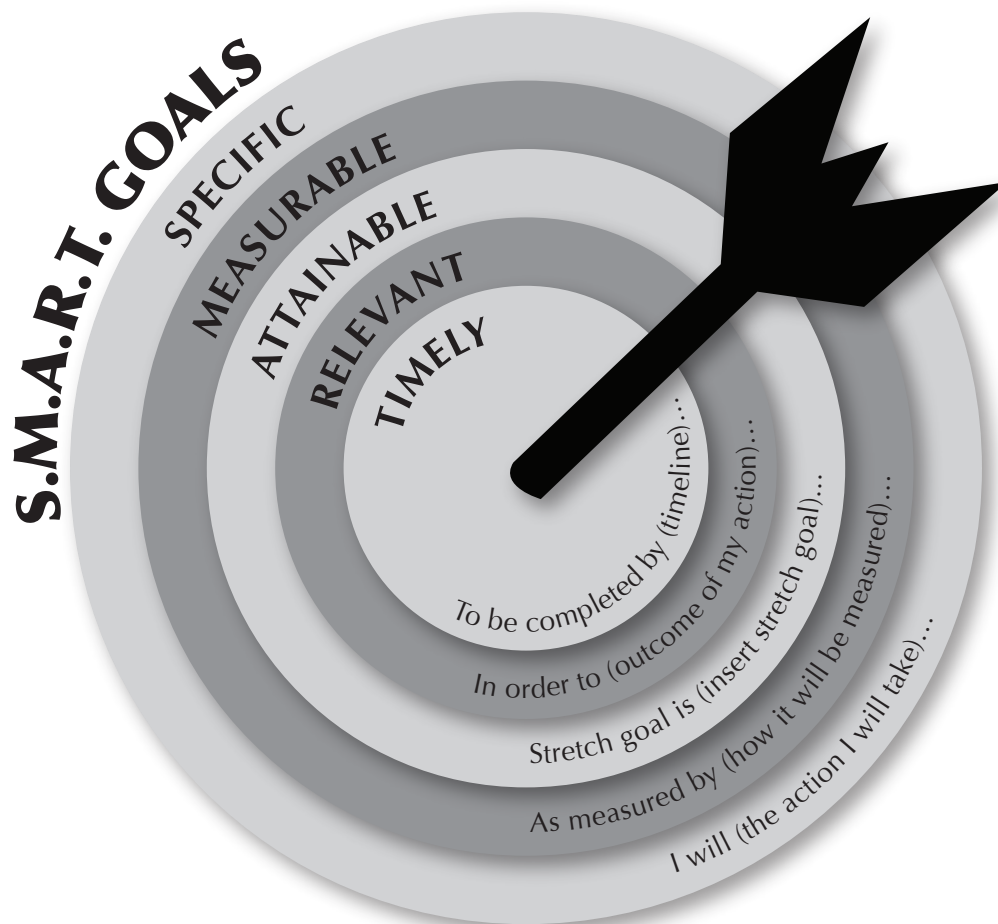
As was mentioned in a previous section about 30-second commercials, listening actively will help establish you as a true servant leader.

## Invest Time

Spend five (or more) minutes per day sending personal and meaningful messages to your stakeholders. Perhaps your SMART goal would be to touch 25 people per month via emails, LinkedIn messages, phone calls, text message or handwritten cards. Your goal is to generate as much value for your stakeholders as possible. You want to leave a unique stamp of you on every person you touch. This may go without saying, but expressing appreciation or gratitude to a colleague who makes a strong introduction or generates potential leads for your goals is incredibly important. It reminds that person of your value system and elevates your credibility as an impeccable professional. Please use the SMART goal template to help you in the development of your personal goals.

## SMART GOALS

Goal setting is a powerful motivational tool because it provides purpose, challenge, and meaning towards the achievement of your ambition and intention statements. Without this purpose and accountability, you may not take the action necessary to accomplish your goals thereby letting yourself down. Below is an easy-to-use template that will allow you to set specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely goals.



**MY  
S.M.A.R.T.  
GOAL**

I will (the action I will take)...

...as measured by (how it will be measured)...

...stretch goal is (insert stretch goal)...

...in order to (some outcome of my action)...

...to be completed by (timeline)...

**To Achieve My Goal, I Will Need:** write down your needs to complete this goal.

**Knowledge**

**Skills**

**Resources**

**Alliances**

**Actions**

**Other**

**4**



## COMMUNICATION TIPS

Over the following few pages, you will be given specific tips on how to identify a person's communication style and adjust your communication to him or her accordingly. Humans tend to associate with and trust people who are similar, so you want to be astute at understanding and tailoring your behaviors and communication styles. As a result of adjusting your style, it is fair to assume you will grow your circle of influence and make positive impressions on those you interact with in various environments. The following chart, from TTI, Ltd., displays each of the four DISC profiles, how to identify each and what to do to communicate to them effectively.

In addition, please reference the DISC assessment section at the beginning of this manual for further clarification and ideas about how to rapidly identify a person's style. Two questions you can ask the person, or determine through general conversation, that help to determine a person's core style are:

### **1. Are you task or people-oriented?**

Task-oriented – D and C

People-oriented – I and S

### **2. Are you introverted or extroverted?**

Introverted – C and S

Extroverted – D and I

After you've identified a person's core behavioral style, you can adjust your communication to match his or her style in three different scenarios. Being respected for your communication ability is essential to becoming significant.



## COMPLIANCE

When communicating with a person who is dependent, neat, conservative, perfectionist, careful and compliant:

- Prepare your “case” in advance.
  - Stick to business.
- Be accurate and realistic.

Factors that create tension or dissatisfaction:

- Being giddy, casual, informal, loud.
- Pushing too hard or being unrealistic with deadlines.
- Being disorganized or messy.

## DOMINANCE

When communicating with a person who is ambitious, forceful, decisive, strong-willed, independent and goal-oriented:

- Be clear, specific, brief, and to the point.
- Be prepared with support material in a well-organized “package.”

Factors that create tension or dissatisfaction:

- Talking about things that are not relevant to the issue.
- Appearing disorganized.
- Leaving loopholes or cloudy issues.

## STEADINESS

When communicating with a person who is patient, predictable, reliable, steady, relaxed and modest:

- Begin with a personal comment—break the ice.
- Present your case softly, nonthreateningly.
- Ask “how?” questions to draw their opinions.

Factors that create tension or dissatisfaction:

- Rushing headlong into business.
- Being domineering or demanding.
- Forcing them to respond quickly to your objectives.

## INFLUENCE

When communicating with a person who is magnetic, enthusiastic, friendly, demonstrative and political:

- Provide a warm and friendly environment.
- Don’t deal with details (put them in writing).
  - Ask “feeling” questions to draw their opinions or comments.

Factors that create tension or dissatisfaction:

- Being curt, cold or tight-lipped.
- Controlling the conversation.
- Driving on facts and figures, alternatives, abstractions.

### Make a List of Contacts and Identify Their Styles:

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## HIGH D – DOMINANCE

- **30-second commercial** – Deliver your elevator pitch quickly and don't be afraid to use hand movement and bigger gestures; it will peak their interest. Focus your statements on quantifiable results and goal achievement.
- **Conversation** – As you lengthen the conversation, ensure that emotions are kept at bay and you don't dominate the conversation. High Ds need to feel as though they “won.” Be very logical in what you offer to do for him or her and don't be bothered by the consistent interruptions or pre-planning their next response. Keep your distance and do not touch a High D.
- **Follow-up email** – Whether LinkedIn request, email or handwritten note, be short and sweet. Be direct and to the point. Quickly identify and relay opportunities for you to deliver new and unique skills to him or the organization.

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## HIGH I – INFLUENCE

- **30-second commercial** – An initial introduction to a High I can take longer than 30 seconds. Because they enjoy long conversations, do not be afraid to interject personal statements. Feel free to use big gestures with your body and more facial expressions. They'll let their guard down and trust you faster.
- **Conversation** – High I individuals are always looking for fun experiences. Get them talking about their fun-filled memories... and be sure to share yours as well. They have a warm, people focus, so ask questions (and refocus them if they go off on a tangent) related to optimism and hope for the future. As you share your story, talk about your family and aspirations for meaningful change in the community.
- **Follow-up email** – Be sure to send the LinkedIn request, but a lengthy email or handwritten card will mean more to a High I. Share another personal story or two to build trust and optimism about the future.

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## HIGH S – STEADINESS

- **30-second commercial** – Meeting a High S for the first time, you can take a relaxed approach to sharing your story. They are great listeners and will allow you to verbalize your value proposition and what's in it for them. They will use smaller hand gestures to make specific points, so feel free to do so yourself. Show sincere interest in them as people.
- **Conversation** – High S individuals are introverted by nature, do not like change and enjoy traditional products and services. Ask about their goals, the extra effort they put into projects and ensure there is a logical order to your questions. As you share more about your story, show empathy and give examples of how you follow rules to accomplish your goals.
- **Follow-up email** – Send them longer LinkedIn requests, emails and handwritten notes that thank them for their time and for listening. Write a sentence or two about something personal or family oriented that came up in your initial conversation.

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## HIGH C – COMPLIANCE

- **30-second commercial** – Your elevator pitch to a High C should be direct and simple. State explicitly what you have done and provide solid data to back up your claims. They will fold their arms and touch their chin, but will make few other gestures. Keep your body language in check as a result.
- **Conversation** – As you dive into the conversation, it is important that you present your credibility by looking at issues from multiple angles. High C individuals are rule followers and love organization. Talk with them about the small details and the collective impact of a topic on the greater whole. You can share stories of yourself as an objective thinker and diplomatic in your approach to accomplishing your personal goals. Allow them their personal space during the conversation.
- **Follow-up email** – After the networking event, send a LinkedIn request, email, and handwritten note that are short and include useful data about a topic you covered in your previous conversation.

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# INTERVIEWING

I stopped counting the number of executives I know who are content in their work who still interview with other organizations regularly. They don't do it because they want to change employers, they do it because they want to ensure their interviewing skills are current. In the knowledge economy, whether or not you are ready to search for new employment, interviewing well is paramount to continuing to have meaningful success in your career. Below are tips that may help you keep your skills current so when it is time to transition from one employer to another, you'll be confident and prepared.

## STEP 1 – GATHERING INFORMATION

How do you gather information about your target companies so you can best prepare for the job search process? Secure meaningful information from a variety of online and in-person sources. It is recommended that you review and do the following.

### Company Websites

Organizations are shifting away from posting jobs on job boards and are spending more time on creating content on their own pages. You'll likely find videos of employee testimonials, honest customer reviews, helpful information about benefits and company culture, and content sharing their vision for the future.

### Annual Statements/Reports

Whether you check with the Securities and Exchange Commission or find the annual statement on the company's website, they're treasure troves of information. You will learn about programs and services that will be relevant to your job. You'll also find information about the organization's strategic plan, which will be very helpful as you pitch how your hard and soft transferable skills will help the organization make or save money.

## Social Media

LinkedIn and Facebook allow organizations to post jobs on their company pages, thereby limiting the need for job boards. Keeping an eye on the conversations occurring on a company's wall will be very helpful when you are interviewing and the interviewer asks, "What do you know about \_\_\_\_?" You can also receive numerous leads on positions through the various social media channels; so get engaged with as many as you can.

## Job Boards

Although sites like careerbuilder.com and monster.com are used less often, aggregators like simply-hired.com, LinkedIn, and indeed.com are still relevant. Not only will you learn about open jobs, there will be marketing material about the company that may be insightful. There are also numerous niche job boards set up specifically for specific industries. A simple Google search of "niche job boards" and the name of the industry or function you'd like to work in will help you tremendously.

## Customer Reviews

Websites like yelp.com or google.com aren't typically known for their job search functionality, but I love to read reviews because it helps to provide a complete picture about how the company provides customer service in good times and bad.

## "Venting" sites

These sites may not always have objective reviews, but glassdoor.com and jobvent.com help to provide anonymous insider information about total rewards packages, interview questions commonly asked, and photos of life at the company.

## Industry Reports

Organizations, such as Dun & Bradstreet and Hoovers, provide very detailed insider information about an organization. You can use the information during any part of your job search process.

## Building Relationships

The more people you know equal the more people who can refer you into the companies you are targeting. Employee referral programs are extremely valuable tools to an organization as they typically provide qualified candidates with a built-in network. It is suggested that you get out to multiple networking events each week and make two to three meaningful relationships at each one. Through general conversation you will learn about openings not posted and whom to talk to to secure the interview.

## Informational Interviews

Probably the most important tool is conducting informational interviews. Through in-person networking, or connecting on social media channels, ask people inside your target companies for 15-minute informational interviews. **Prepare 7-10 questions that will shed light on company culture, but be sure to provide valuable insights into how you can help them achieve their goals.**



## THE PROCESS FOR SUCCESS:

- Gather five pages of information about the organization, department and interviewer from the above sources.
- After you've gathered the information, commit the most important facts to memory.
- Rehearse answers to common questions like:
  - "Walk me through your resume."
  - "Tell me about yourself."
  - "What are your strengths and weaknesses?"
  - "What do you know about our organization?"
- Review your STAR statements and how they can be incorporated into potential interview questions.
- Review your DISC assessment and the items you wrote down in chapter one of this manual, know your differentiating experiences (STARs) inside and out, and be able to parlay your intention, ambition, and value proposition seamlessly throughout the conversation.
- If you have few connections in your target organization, attempt to build a network of people in the target organization who talk about your experiences and how they may be beneficial. The more people talking about your positive influences on past organizations and companies, the better.
- Write down 7-10 questions you would like to ask the interviewer. Ideally, you want to learn if the organization's culture is going to be a great fit for your natural style. Questions will be formulated around and based on your responses to the following content from chapter one of this manual:
  - Value to the Organization
  - Ideal Environment
  - Keys to Motivating and Managing

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## STEP 2 – MAKE A MEMORABLE FIRST IMPRESSION

Princeton psychologists Janine Willis and Alexander Todorov conducted experiments showing that it only takes 1/10 of a second to form a judgment about someone else. That is an incredibly short window of time. To ensure you are starting off on the right foot with a person you need to impress, below are tips for the hour after the 1/10 of a second expires that allow you to wow him or her even further. For clarity's sake, the recommendations are focused on meetings with businessmen and women where you have reasonable time to prepare.

*"Snap Judgments Decide a Face's Character, Psychologist Finds," Chad Boutin, princeton.edu, accessed November 2013, "<http://www.princeton.edu/main/news/archive/S15/62/69K40/index.xml?section=topstories>."*

### Educate Yourself About the Other Person

As was suggested in step one, use and review the five pages of content about your target company. Drill down to the individual by reviewing his or her LinkedIn profile. If you share connections with the person, contact your shared connections and ask for advice or further information. You can search the web for additional news articles, blog posts, or editorial stories. After you have collected information, form a mental image of the person and attempt to visualize your first interaction.

### Be Early

Every person you meet has a different concept of time and many fall in line with their culture's norms. Americans have developed such fast-paced lives that nearly every minute of the day counts, making it that much more important to not be late. To be respectful of others' time, ensure that you: fly to your destination the night before an early morning meeting; allow extra time on busy highways for traffic delays; and arrive at least 15 minutes early. When you arrive, take a few extra minutes to get to know the receptionist and be sure to turn off your electronic device.

### Present Well

If a picture is worth 1,000 words, what does the picture of you look like? Gentlemen – did you get a haircut, shave, and have your suit free of lint and wrinkles? Ladies – is your hair appropriately styled, your jewelry conservative, and your suit free of lint and wrinkles? Begin with a firm and sincere handshake, make eye contact, and stand up straight (pinch your shoulder blades together) to set a strong foundation. Remember, 93 percent of human communication is non-verbal, so don't over-analyze any one statement. What is being said verbally is a fraction of what is actually being "said".

*"Mehrabian's Communication Research," accessed November, 2013, "<http://www.businessballs.com/mehrabiancommunications.htm>."*

### Remain Positive

Regardless of what is being said or how you think the meeting is going, remain positive. Exude confidence, be attentive, be courteous, and use the other person's name repeatedly. If adversity is making its way into the meeting, resilience in character will score huge points. No matter what is said or done, remain positive. Your character will not be compromised and you'll be remembered for that for years to come.



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- This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



## STEP 3 – SUCCESSFUL FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS

Successful interviews require you to connect immediately with your interviewer. One of the fastest ways to do that is to identify his or her DISC behavioral style and amend your behavior to match the interviewers. The following chart details suggestions for what to look for when meeting and communicating with the interviewer.

	Email Exchange	Initial Introduction	Appearance of Office	During Conversation	What to Do/Say
<b>D</b>	Direct, results-oriented	Will walk fast	Status conscious, has a large desk, efficiency	Sizable hand movement, big gestures, leans forward, will multi-task and interrupt	Don't ramble, don't chit chat about personal things, present facts logically, refer to results, talk win-win
<b>I</b>	Warm, people focus, wordy letters	Weave when walking, may run into things	Lots of piles, memorabilia of experiences, "showy" products	Big gestures and facial expressions	Support their dreams, allow time for socializing, talk about people and goals, ask for their opinion
<b>S</b>	Long letters with lots of information	Walk at a steady, easy pace	Family snapshots, "homey" atmosphere	Small hand gestures, will lean back and have hand in pocket	Start with personal comments, show interest in them as a person, listen well, present case logically
<b>C</b>	Direct with appropriate data	Walk in a straight line	Graphs, charts, very functional	Little to no gestures, arms folded, one hand on chin	Be prepared and direct, look at all sides of a decision, don't overpromise results, prove your point with data/facts

If you are still unsure about the person's behavioral style, asking specific questions may help to provide clarity. The section headings in the following chart should be the main component of your questions. As an example; you could ask the person what he or she does to unwind from a long day or week at work (relieving stress). If he or she responds with an answer related to playing sports, hiking, or other physical activity, the person may be a high D on the DISC scale and you would be able to tailor your communication appropriately.

	Rules	Risk Taking	Love Change	Decision Making	Relieving Stress	Favorite Read
D	Tends to break; the end justifies the means	Yes	Yes	Quick decision makers	Physical activity, preferably of competitive nature	Executive book summaries
I	May not be aware and break them unintentionally	Moderate	May not notice it	Both quick and slow	Interaction with people	Fiction, self-improvement books
S	Will follow time-tested, proven rules	Needs preparation, doesn't like change	Needs preparation, doesn't like change	Slow	Rest time/sleep	Popular stories, fiction and non-fiction
C	Works by the book, knows and follows the rules	Very low	Concerned about effects of change	Very slow	Alone time	Non-fiction technical journals

Considering your already strong background in work ethic and communication skills, take the time to commit the ideas in the above charts to memory. It will help you distinguish yourself from other candidates and allow you to shine.

## 4



### THE PROCESS FOR SUCCESS:

- It is your job to connect immediately with the interviewer by identifying commonalities between yourself and the interviewer about careers, hobbies or ties to other people in your communities.
- Most interviewers ask behavioral-based questions as they are attempting to use past action to predict future performance; make sure that your success stories match well with what the interviewer needs.
- Answer all behavioral interview questions in the STAR format. If you explicitly state, “The Situation was...,” “The Task our team was given was...,” “The Action we took was...,” and “The Results of our work included...” it will be considerably easier for the interviewer to follow along and take notes.
- Whatever you do, do not answer in generalities; do not say “I would...” or “I think...,” say, “The action I took...” or, “I did....” You must show specific action. Tell stories that show how you exceeded expectations with previous employers or projects.
- It is important to stay positive; smile as often as you can.

- As the interview comes to a close, be sure to ask your prepared questions and express your interest in the job. Oftentimes, the thing that separates one candidate from another is his willingness to explicitly state interest in the role and how he would best help the organization make money, save money or mitigate risk.
- No matter what you do, do not lie about anything. Compromising your character in an interview foreshadows how you may behave negatively while employed with the organization.

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## STEP 4 – FOLLOW-UP

After the meeting has finished, it behooves you to show appreciation for the other person's time. You are more than welcome to send an email thanking someone for meeting with you, but can you find another distinctive way to do it as well? Could you send a handwritten card? Yes. Could you record and email a brief video of yourself thanking him or her? Sure. Whatever it may be, make sure that it shows you listened and that you were willing to take the time to go above and beyond. The process below is one you can use after an interview or after you've met a new connection that you'd like to stay in contact with.

### Know Your Recipient

Tailoring the note to his DISC profile and to something very specific about the recipient will help to build your credibility. It will also show you were willing to reflect on previous conversations, take the time to truly understand the person, and draft a meaningful and memorable message. If, during your conversation, you learn that the person loves volunteering, send him the names of organizations that are welcoming new volunteers. If you learn that the recipient is looking for schools to further his education, include business cards from your connections at educational institutions that may be a good fit for him.

### Provoke Thought

A handwritten note is meant to be a relationship builder. It should also generate value for the recipient's life. Find unique quotes and write them on the inside of the card. The quotes that you include

should be selected with great care because you want it to be relevant and to get the person to think about the message you're sending. Also consider quotes that leave little room for interpretations that could be perceived as offensive or pushy.

### **Inspire Positive or Soften Negative Emotions**

Depending on preceding circumstances, you may have to become (metaphorically) a cheerleader or a shoulder to cry on. If extending positive emotions, be sure to go above and beyond with your praise or kudos. Use an exclamation point. Inspire hope with encouraging language. If softening a painful situation, show empathy with a warm apology, an encouraging quote, or a brief story of success in overcoming an obstacle. In either case, it is important for you to show you can help mitigate bad situations and that you can promote and support accomplishments.

### **Be Brief**

According to Dootenotes, Inc., 75 percent of the six billion pieces of mail sent annually are placed in the trash unopened. They also found that the average person receives 52+ emails per day. These two facts show that your recipient may have little time to absorb your message. So, be brief and ensure that you keep your handwritten note to less than 100 words.

As you continue to grow and manage your career, don't be like every other job seeker who sends follow-up emails based on a template found on the web. Be memorable. Leverage the personal brand you developed in a previous section of this manual and live your intention, ambition, and value proposition statements by providing unique experiences when you interact with the world.

## **4**



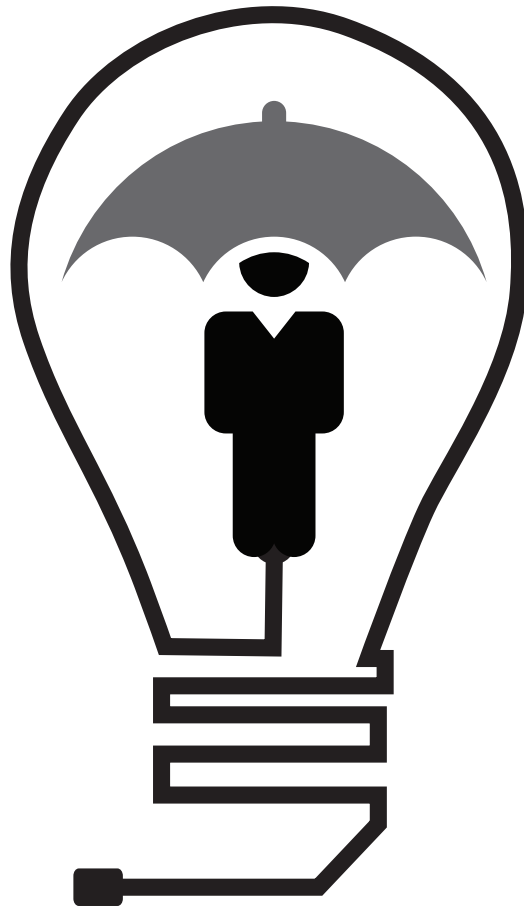
### **THE PROCESS FOR SUCCESS:**

- Send a follow-up email within 24 hours; be sure to include words of sincere appreciation and comments about unique moments or comments from the interview.
- Send a handwritten thank you note with specifics from the conversation.



### **YOUR OPERATIONAL PLAN KEY POINTS**

- **For Informational Interview — Prepare 7-10 questions that will shed light on company culture, but be sure to provide valuable insights into how you can help them achieve their goals.**



# **YOUR CONTINGENCY PLAN**





## YOUR CONTINGENCY PLAN

Perhaps the most important part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century career search is recognizing that it is never ending. Too many people quit looking for work as soon as they find work. However, the basic constructs of the relationship between business and labor have drastically changed. Business is no longer an environment providing cradle-to-grave employment. Many institutions have become extractive in that they use a resource (earth or human) and quickly discard its remains. You've probably noticed the flattening of the world's leading organizations, pervasive out-sourcing to countries with cheaper labor, and the push for more part-time and contract labor domestically.

In more ways than one, the knowledge economy is asking you to become a consultant with your own brand. Instead of handing that brand to an institution that treats you as a disposable resource, safeguard your brand and proliferate it. When you choose to work for an institution, maintain your personal brand within the institution's cultural boundaries. And, although you've garnered employment, your employment situation could change rapidly, so continually search for your next opportunity. You don't want to be perceived as a job hopper, so be sure that every position you hold is different from the previous in that you have a new title, are accomplishing greater things, and are expanding your personal suite of skills.

### Update Your Success Stories

As you finish projects or accomplish major goals, update your accomplishment development statements, resume, cover letter, and 30-second commercial to reflect your new success. Recruiters and hiring managers love to learn about and talk to individuals who are change makers. Use your accomplishments to help them (or any of your connections) envision you in an open position. Remember, your goal is to be referred into a meaningful job. Reactively applying for a position is a thing of the past. Being referred into a great position is 21<sup>st</sup> century recruitment.

## Network

It is very important that you continually add value in the four channels of professional networking. Whether in the informal, formal, business development or online channels, you must be continually active showing your thought leadership. If one member of your network sees you as a leader and having the potential to add value through making his organization money, saving it money, or mitigating its risk, you'll be referred into meaningful jobs. Please remember that adding value to others is not a tit for tat game. Don't do something for someone with the expectation that he has to give something to you in return immediately. People will see right through you and your personal brand will be tarnished.

## Build Relationships

Through a defined process of networking and spreading your brand, you will have significant opportunities to build long-lasting and meaningful relationships. With a proactive approach, having the right motives, showing appreciation, and adding value to those around you, you'll be top of mind as organizations open positions. The Chinese call this *guan xi* (关系) and are masters at building their network and mutually beneficial relationships.

As mentioned previously, only 25 percent of available positions are actually posted online. Use the above tips to ensure that you are proactively referred into the other 75 percent of openings. It is important to note that the process isn't so much a discovery of new careers but in looking at the job search process with new eyes.

As you devote time and work diligently to develop your skills and career, consider engaging in the 10/20/70 model, make education center to your growth, garner certifications from institutions that exude your brand, continuously develop through counselors, consultants, mentors, and coaches, and create your own advisory board.





## 10/20/70 Model

Only 10 percent of your learning will occur by reading content online or in a book, or by attending a formal class or training. The next 20 percent comes from others in your circle of influence, mentors that you communicate with regularly, or your personal advisory board. The vast majority of your learning, 70 percent, will be derived from challenging experiences that occur both on and off the job. Please use the next page to take notes on your next steps.

### CHALLENGING EXPERIENCE PROCESS

Sue Ashford (Harvard) and Scott DeRue (Michigan) developed the *Mindful Engagement* process in 2012 as a way to help leaders get the most out of the experiences they go through. The following three-step process will ensure that you take the right approach, create opportunities for action, and use a structured process for reflection.

- 1. Approach** – Because you get what you expect, it is imperative that you establish a positive mind-set and SMART goals. You must also have a learning mind-set where you constantly seek new challenges and feedback from a wide variety of people. Remember to take risks, fail fast, and be persistent in the face of obstacles.
- 2. Action** – What you do determines what you get as an outcome, so be proactive in trying to create opportunities and diverse experiences where you can experiment with what works best for you. This will allow you to repeat the behavior moving forward and get you closer to your goals.
- 3. Reflection** – Follow a structured process each time you reflect, being sure to focus on a few critical issues that will make the learning impactful. Take time to reflect as close as possible to when the event occurred and do not be afraid to go back and act on that situation again quickly.

As you identify the skills you want to develop, engage the 10/20/70 model to learn the skill from a variety of resources around you. Then, use the *Mindful Engagement* process to proactively foster a

learning mind-set, take meaningful action in challenging and diverse experiences, and then set aside time to reflect on what went well, what could've improved, and what your next steps are. By expecting to learn, challenging yourself to take action, and deliberately reflecting on how to take action next time, you will establish yourself as a 21<sup>st</sup> century leader much more rapidly.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL EXPERIENCES**

When it comes to professional development, there are multitudes of ways to enhance your skills. Learning from other people, enduring hardships, structured training, off-the-job experiences, and challenging assignments are five impactful ways to prepare you for what's next. Of the five, working on challenging assignments will be the skill builder that will steepen your learning curve and best prepare you for the next step on your career ladder.

### **Challenging assignments are the best teacher because of the following:**

#### **Teaches the Subtleties of Leadership**

As a new leader, you may understand the budget process, who to go to for marketing assistance, or how to garner approval for something on your capital wish list. But, have you had to delegate tasks from large projects to your direct reports and then mentor and influence those people to accomplish your goals? As a leader, are you great at coaching others for results? In the face of unrealistic deadlines, will you operate with character putting the needs of the business and others before yourself? Leaders constantly expand their network to include very smart people. Do you feel comfortable doing that? The subtleties of leadership, I've only listed a few, are the foundation of a strong leader. I encourage you to push the envelope so you are learning something new every day.

#### **Forces Us to Look Within and Reflect**

By nature, I am a fact finder, meaning that I look to the past to learn from events or mistakes to specifically build a plan for the future. Although it may take me longer to arrive at a destination than my colleagues who are quick starts, I feel more comfortable knowing I did my homework and have verifiable data to back up my plan. After every meeting, project implementation, or heated exchange, take a few minutes to reflect back on what was said (taking into account non-verbal cues), what was done, and what opportunities were missed to complete tasks more effectively. Internalize your findings and do your best to implement the next time you have an opportunity. Also share your learnings with those around you so that they can be better at their jobs as well. If you want your organization to become a learning organization, sharing lessons learned will help to break down barriers and start conversations.

#### **Teaches Us About Our Limits**

After multiple 70-hour work weeks, you are well aware of your time commitment to your job and how it is affecting balance in your life. Challenging assignments will help you learn when you are about to break. They teach you when to leave your desk and go for a 15-minute walk to clear your head and refocus. They will teach you how to know when your body needs more than that cup of

After you have had opportunities to prove yourself through boundary-stretching assignments, you can be sure that your stakeholders have noticed. Not only does the extra work you've done raise your value to the organization, but it shows a willingness to go above and beyond that can be relied upon in the future. Challenging assignments will steepen your learning curve and help you achieve your goals faster. Through focused effort, you will be putting yourself into roles that will push you mentally, physically, and emotionally. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

- 1. Training – 10 Percent** (formal education, professional certifications, continually participating in seminars, webinars and other workshops that expand your knowledge and help you see situations in a new light)

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[illegible]

3. **Challenging Experiences – 70 Percent** (projects that stretch your skills, working with difficult people or across international boundaries, personal hardships, learning new functions, off-the-job experiences)

[illegible]



## ADVISORY BOARD

Whether we like to admit it or not, we are greatly influenced by those closest to us. They can affect multiple aspects of our lives, but most importantly how we think. Because thoughts have the ability to become things, you must carefully select who is on your proverbial advisory board. The development and distribution of what you generate and add to the “common” wealth depends on it. When I am delivering my Incorporate You™ packages and seminars to clients, I often challenge them to think about who they have in their inner circle and how frequently they tap into the collective wisdom. Corporations have advisory boards with regularly scheduled meetings. Why shouldn’t individuals employ the same strategy to unlock their own potential?

**Here is a sampling of things you should consider as you create your personal advisory board.**

- 1. Determine the Objective** – What is the purpose of and the value the individuals in your inner circle bring to your personal and professional development? What are the established SMART goals to ensure that your career transition or personal branding plan are working well? Each person you entrust should have a clear sense of your goals and what they are being asked to do to get you there faster.
- 2. Select Individuals with Diverse Skills** – You may have three to five mentors/members of your board and they should have strengths that complement your weaknesses. You should select these individuals based on their skills, accomplishments, values structure, and willingness to push you outside your comfort zone.
- 3. Compensate Them** – Out of sheer respect for his/her time and tutelage, find unique ways to compensate the persons that are contributing to your growth. Simple things like gift cards, buying

him/her lunch, reimbursing for travel expenses or contributing to causes he/she may be passionate about will go a long way for continued assistance.

4. **Meeting Agendas** – Walk into every meeting with a defined purpose and succinct agenda. Perhaps you have a big presentation coming up and you need advice about delivery and follow-up. Send your board member an agenda so that he/she can prepare and bring helpful hints/tips/advice/stories that will drive the learning home for you.
5. **Mentor Assessment** – As relationships run their course, do not be afraid to slowly remove underperforming members and replace them with individuals who have the experiences you need to go to the next level. Continual reassessment of your goals and who can best assist you as you make quantum leaps in your career will be vital to you impacting the triple bottom line.

As you gather valuable information from people on your advisory board, be sure to serve on others' boards and pay it forward as well. There is no higher purpose than to share the stories of success with others who can use the knowledge to change the world.

“Your life does not get better by chance, it gets better by change.”

– Jim Rohn

Live up to your potential, generate value for others and change the world.

Organizations use boards of directors or advisory boards as an additional means of guidance and support for the uncertain road ahead. As you develop your brand, it is important that you select 3-5 individuals who can serve as a sounding board for you as you encounter hardships, challenging assignments, and strategic decisions. The people on your personal advisory board can be both personal and professional acquaintances. To best utilize their time and knowledge, I encourage you to meet with them once per month being sure to take specific notes about what you learned and how you thanked him or her after the meeting.

**Name and Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**His/Her Skills/DISC Profile** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Why You Chose** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_







# CONCLUSION





## CONCLUSION

**M**oving from success to significance requires that you consciously search for your higher mission and purpose, that you discover your unique strengths, find your true voice, and create a plan to best express who you are. By taking the DISC assessment and following the Incorporate You™ blueprint, you can move down the path towards a meaningfully rich life full of relationships, emotion, health, accomplishments, passion, and innovative ideas. You can strive for better, not just busier. You can “out-behave” others and positively impact people around you, create sustainable prosperity world-wide and drive financial profit for yourself and your stakeholders.

By walking down this path of both personal and professional development, the Incorporate You™ process is a logical tool for self discovery and establishing a meaningful career. You followed a path from understanding your natural behavior profile in the DISC assessment to creating a brand image and building a corporation, as an analogy for your professional life. Throughout your career you will see how this unique system evolves and can be refined each step of the way. You have grown through each step of the process:

- Your Business Plan
- Your Executive Summary
- Your Marketing Plan
- Your Operational Plan
- Your Contingency Plan

With full self-examination, reflection, and introspection, you completed the development process by thinking strategically and acting tactically. You have learned that in using this process, you may be able to avoid potential errors. You’ve learned how possible failures in your career can occur:

- Strategic errors in the process
- Marketing mistakes

- Overlooked competitive threats
- Technology failures

You've seen how developing a contingency plan and securing an advisory board completed the process that supports your growth and success and creates an environment for you to live up to your potential. I don't want to simply assist in raising the floor of mediocrity; I want to help you raise the height of excellence in your life. Remember, your biggest threat today isn't external, it's internal. You have to live up to your potential and consistently add value to the "common" wealth. Career distinction at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires you to not make incremental change; it requires you to make quantum leaps in how you generate value for those in your circle of influence. A positive paradigm shift is required in that your competitive advantage will be directly correlated to how much more you give in value than take in payment, how you place other people's interests before yours, and how authentically and well you serve others.

"My advice as you embark upon this journey is for you to discover your personal mission, find a career that you would die for...and then live for it."

— Michael S. Seaver



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I was raised in a small town in Western Michigan. Montague has a population of roughly 2,500 and its claims to fame are being the home of the world's largest weather vane and Miss America 1961, Nancy Fleming, was born there. Besides these two facts, Montague is like most other small towns. The people work hard. They are values-driven. The family unit is important. Younger residents respect their elders. Folks go to church on Sundays. Like many people raised in small towns, Montague natives seem to be “born” with strong values and a superior work ethic.

For me, the Midwest was a great place to experience childhood because parents instinctively taught their kids the value of hard work. Whether they worked in a factory, farmed land, or owned a business, they learned early that 40 hours is what everyone does. They must do more to become indispensable.

No where is that more evident than in a small business owner's mind-set. My grandfather started our family's lawn maintenance, landscaping, and snow plowing business in 1953. To this day, I still credit him for making the most profound impact on my life. If it wasn't for my grandfather and my father teaching me the value of hard work, my path could never have led me where it has today. My father bought the business in 1987 and still runs it.

I still look distinctly on the early '90s as a transformational time in my life, both in terms of the lessons I strive to repeat and some I hope to modify. I started working for my dad in the seventh grade. Most of my friends had the weekends to travel, play pickup games of basketball at the township park, or go to the movies. My free time was spent differently. My cousins and I worked on Saturdays. The summers were no different. We worked, and we worked hard.

Shortly after getting my drivers license, my father allowed me to practice plowing snow. Before I knew it, I was plowing commercial and residential properties for the family business. My day started at 1 a.m. I remember plowing from 1 a.m. to 7 a.m. on snowy mornings, rushing home to get ready

for school, practicing basketball after school, grabbing a quick bite to eat before homework, and then sleeping. And then doing it all again the next day.

One would have thought transitioning from a colder climate to one of the nation's warmest would have been an adjustment. Ironically, parts of it were identical – at least when it came to the work. I moved to Phoenix in 2003, shortly after earning my bachelor's degree from Grand Valley State in Grand Rapids, Mich. I took a job as a front desk agent at the Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale Residence Club. Within two weeks of training, I was expected to speak intelligently about metro-Phoenix and the cultural activities available to guests.

I've never read so much, asked so many questions, or put more miles on my car learning. To make the transition from the small town with very little diversity in activities and events to the then sixth largest city in the nation with enormous lists of coveted attractions was very difficult. But, the lesson I learned in Montague helped me become sufficient at guiding our guests to restaurants, sporting events, and golf courses that made their stays memorable. The hard work paid off; so much so that I accepted a promotion after only six months.

A few years after settling in the Phoenix area, I realized an advanced degree could further support my long-range career goals. I was fortunate to get accepted into the master's of business administration program at the Thunderbird School of Global Management, an internationally recognized institution ranked number one by the *Financial Times* and *US News & World Report*. I thought I was going back to school better prepared for corporate America. What I didn't realize is how small the world really was – and how much of it could be represented in a classroom of less than 30 students.

There were days in grad school where I probably interacted with people from 40 different nations and cultural backgrounds. This experience exposed me to knowledge and moderate fluency with a second language and the ability to spend several weeks studying abroad in China. Because of my experience in this program and my study of the Chinese culture, I have a sincere appreciation for the Asian work ethic. Watching and working with the international students was wildly inspiring and pushed me to be better than I ever could have been. Some of the students from this culture would study 11 hours every day. I followed suit. I went all in; sleeping three to four hours per night, identifying tutors who were willing to barter services and working for the school's Career Management Center as a Peer Career Advisor.

Most students have a goal of completing an internship and landing a full-time role with a Fortune 100 company. Riding that bandwagon, I submitted applications to Johnson and Johnson, Proctor and Gamble, Chevron, Exxon Mobile, etc. I interviewed with Cisco Systems, General Mills, Amazon.com, Target, and Talisman Energy. I had lengthy conversations with recruiters, hiring managers, and vice presidents from these companies and they all came back to "Michael, we like your drive, personality, and leadership potential, but you don't have human resources experience." I was determined to develop the necessary skills to be worthy of a different response.

Through a series of ideal introductions, I was fortunate to gain an unpaid internship at nationally recognized Banner Health, a large inpatient and outpatient healthcare provider, working in the Talent Acquisition Department for a woman I'm grateful to call one of my dearest mentors.

After completing my third trimester at Thunderbird, I returned to Banner Health's Career site and looked for work. Much to my delight, the Sourcing Program Manager position opened in the Talent Acquisition Department. This position was responsible for managing the on-boarding process, new employee orientation, and the employee referral program. I applied and was thankfully offered the role. Accepting the position at Banner Health before my grad program was finished meant beginning a full-time career while also juggling my remaining credit hours. The payoff was handsome. I graduated from the Thunderbird School of Global Management in August 2010, passed the Society for Human Resource Management's (SHRM) Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) exam in December 2010, and accepted additional responsibilities at Banner on January 1, 2011.

In my new role as the Director of Talent Sourcing at Banner, I continued to manage the above-mentioned programs, the career transition program (providing outplacement assistance to employees affected by reductions in force), and a staff of five in the Sourcing department responsible for headhunting highly critical clinical roles. As my time was spread thin over four system programs and leading the transformation of a department in need of a new identity, I realized I was never going to be great at any one of the activities I managed. It hit me like a ton of bricks. I began to loathe the drive into the office and the monotony of completing the same tasks day in and day out. I needed inspiration to help me focus and provide light on a new path.

Someone then suggested that I read Daniel Pink's book, *Drive*. My "A-HA" moment arrived. A sincere focus on finding a meaningful career where I could have autonomy in my work, be able to master one craft, and feel as though my work is connected to a higher purpose was what I needed. I began a process of self-introspection and reflection. I looked for and identified patterns in my life over the previous 12-18 months. I realized that I was being told "no" repeatedly in my corporate job. I disliked the drive to work. The boss I loved resigned. Banner decided to restructure the entire HR department. My personal relationship began to fall apart.

Conversely, I was being told "yes" to being an entrepreneur and career coach. I held a degree from the number one international business school in the world and authored a business plan in my capstone course. I was raised in an entrepreneurial family and could lean on many of those experiences. I found deep intrinsic meaning working in the career management center at Thunderbird and helping people all over the world unlock their potential. I lost track of time when meeting with people one to one. I had significant experience in the employer and employee side of career transition. I volunteered my time teaching classes at Junior Achievement and served on local boards of directors designed to help people in career development. I loved creating process and finding ways to help others see the patterns emerge in their own lives. Once I connected the dots, the next steps became obvious.

While in my role at Banner, I incorporated Seaver Consulting, LLC and began coaching clients. As I developed my Incorporate You™ process, I began to see the power of what I was doing for people, but also the writing on the wall of my position at Banner. Through the reorganization, I sensed that the majority of the staff were not going to have homes in six months time. So, I resigned my position on October 1, 2011. I told myself that my fear of mediocrity was greater than my fear of entrepreneurial failure.

Entrepreneurship is incredibly difficult. I expected it to be, but didn't know I would make as many mistakes as I did, fail so much, and be forced outside my comfort zone so rapidly. The feelings of

despair, questioning life's decisions, and having to course correct monthly steepened my learning curve tremendously. Over the next year, I worked with clients all over the United States, became certified in the administration of the DISC assessment (I am a Certified Professional Behavioral Analyst, CPBA), published my first book, *Fearing Mediocrity*, continued to enhance my trademarked process, and reassessed my skill set. I realized that one to one coaching was only going to get me so far, so I began teaching intrapreneurship and strategic human resources courses at Grand Canyon University. The lesson planning, student interaction, and public speaking experience was exactly what I needed to continue building confidence.

In December 2012, I was blessed with the opportunity to work as a career coach at the W. P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University. I felt an incredible connection to the school because of Dr. Michael Crow's vision for ASU. The school's eight design aspirations aligned almost perfectly with my personal mission and brand. Being an MBA, I also loved the fact that I was going to be able to support other experienced, intelligent, and driven global leaders. They think the way I think and I connect with the students on a very deep level because we have so much in common.

Separate from my work at W. P. Carey, I began to secure more clients, more speaking engagements, and encouragement to take the Incorporate You™ process and convert it into a manual that anyone can use to unlock their potential, identify their personal brand, and understand career transition better. So, I married my knowledge of human communication and behavioral styles from the DISC assessment with an incredibly detailed career development process which has become the Incorporate You™ blueprint.