THE SIX-STEP CYCLE
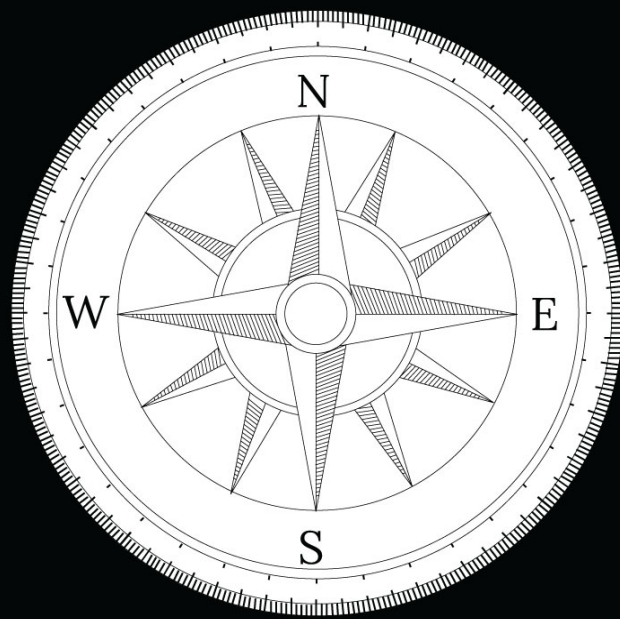
Your Guide to Getting Your Dream Job

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FIRST EDITION

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Why I wrote this book

The recruitment industry needs to evolve.

It could work better for the benefit of candidates and hiring managers.

During the many years I worked as a recruiter, I saw a huge problem: candidates don't have the experience in looking for work, and hiring managers need to evolve in how they look for candidates. None of them fully understands that these are long processes with several steps and variables, and they tend to only focus on writing a vague CV/job description and on the search phase.

The problem? They can't find each other. And if they do, many times they realize it wasn't the best match.

Let's see what they usually do wrong.

Candidates would:

- read a job ad;
- based on that ad, write a CV,
- apply for a job.
- If successful and called for an interview, maybe they prepare, maybe they don't.

The problem with this way of doing things is that:

- many times the job ad is not well constructed by the company, (because they too make mistakes),
- the CV does not contain the information the company truly wants to know,
- and the interview is a failure (because many of the interviewers are not well trained to interview)
- Plus, the candidate misses opportunities for not following all the steps in the job search process (which I'll dive into in this book).

On the other hand, companies:

- would write a job ad,
- receive applications,
- read CVs
- and call people for interviews.

The problem is that many times:

- The job ad is not well constructed, so it does not attract the candidates they are hoping to attract.
- Plus, because CVs don't have the information the company wants to know, they may leave out candidates that have a poor CV, but could be a perfect match (only that their CV does not do them justice).
- And in the interview, they don't ask the questions they really need to ask to get to know the candidate the way they need to, and the candidate is so nervous or not so well prepared that fails to communicate their true value.

Both candidates and companies do these things out of automatic or habitual behavior, or cultural inertia. They stick to established practices without critically evaluating them or considering other approaches.

The result? Miscommunication.

When I worked as a recruiter, I could see that the system was broken. But my job was limited, so all I could do was give advice. I taught candidates and companies how to go beyond the search phase, and to prepare for the entire process.

And it turned out that teaching this was what I enjoyed the most about my job. I realized I loved the educational part, and not so much the recruitment part.

So why did I write this book? Because I know both sides of the coin very well.

I understand how people who are looking for a job feel. I was once a candidate that moved to another country and started from scratch. I moved from Argentina to New Zealand with a tourist visa, studied English, got a job that allowed me to get a work visa and stay in the country

longer. I eventually became a citizen. Meanwhile, my career shifted (more on that later), and I opened my own company in New Zealand. I have now moved to the USA, to Texas, to grow the business and build more relationships worldwide.

I am a business owner. I know what it's like to hire people, both domestically and internationally, and to build teams. I've been there.

I know what each step of the process feels like, both for people who are looking for a job and for people who need to hire. And I know for sure that one of the most prevalent feelings along the process is confusion, anxiety, and frustration.

So, about the career shift. I worked many years as a recruiter, but I discovered that more than recruiting, I liked educating people on how to prepare and do well in the entire job search and candidate search process. People came to me for advice all the time, usually with the same kind of questions and problems. So, over the years, I went from being a recruiter to a coach for both candidates and companies. Now I coach to equip professionals with the tools they need to get the job they want (I call it "becoming an intrapreneur"). At the same time, I coach companies so that they can hire the professionals they need (their "intrapreneurs").

What people looking for a job tell me is usually the same:

I don't know exactly where to find jobs, apart from the most popular job portals. Also, if there are no jobs to apply for, I don't know what else to do. When I do have job interviews, I can't prepare much because I don't know how, plus I don't have much information about the role and the company. If they reject me or they don't even call me for interviews, I don't know why. I want to know exactly what I have to do to get a job. I need someone who can guide me to find the job I want.

I wrote The Six-Step Cycle to give those people a clear roadmap with specific things to do in order to get the job they want. It is my attempt to compile the advice I've been giving to each person individually year after year.

My goal in these pages is to help you remember the six steps that will take you to the job you desire: the job that will allow you to live the life you want.

In each chapter you will find these sections:

- How candidates usually feel (and why)
- How hiring managers usually feel. I invite you to step in the shoes of the hiring manager to see things from their perspective.
- Start with why. Find the reason you want to do what you want to do.
- Your user story. Give yourself a concrete task to do, so it's easier to get things done and move forward.
- What I advise you to do.
- Your deliverables. What you need to do before you move to the next step.

My hope is that when you finish reading this book, you know exactly what six steps you need to take to get the job you want, and that you remember them in years to come.

Step 1:

Create a clear vision

Most of the time,

the root of the problem of not finding the job you want

is not having crystal clear clarity of your goals.

CREATE
a clear Vision
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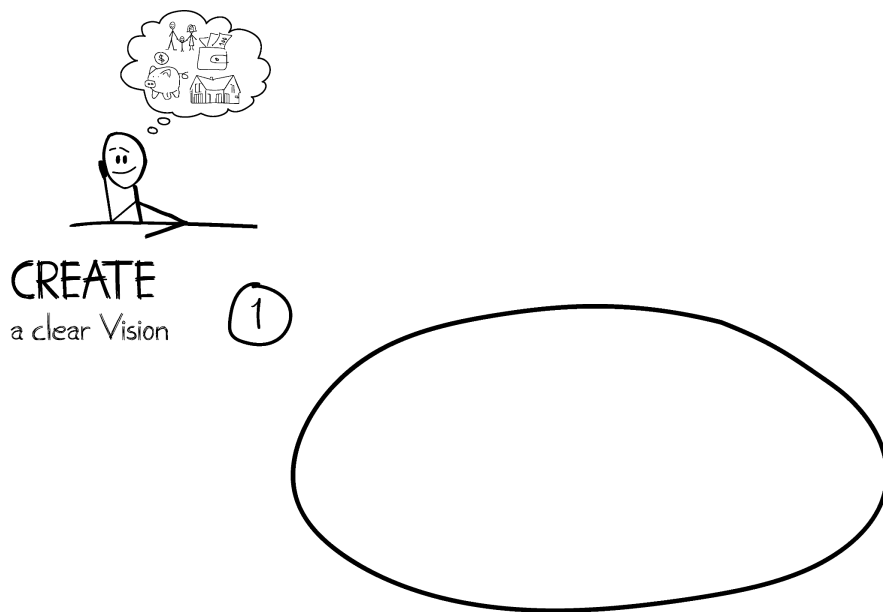
Countless times people come to me so I can help them get a job. I ask them "What do you want? What kind of job are you looking for?"

Their answer is usually something like "I want to change jobs because I'm tired of my current job", "I want a job in IT", or "I want a new challenge".

To me, those answers are the same as saying "I don't know".

It's very common: people start looking for a job without a clear definition of what they want, and why. The result is that they often fail to either find a job, or find a job that makes them happy in the long term. And this leads to not-so-pleasant emotions.

How candidates usually feel

When people come to talk to me because they can't find a job, this is what they usually tell me:
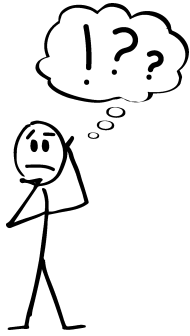
I feel lost and frustrated when I look for a job and I can't find any, because I'm not sure what I'm doing wrong. I'm trying everything I know, and nothing seems to work. I apply for jobs, but don't get replies, or I get rejected.

I need to know exactly what I have to do to find the job I want.

My question is: if you don't have a clear picture of the job you want and why you want it, how are you going to find it? How can you embark on a search for something if you don't know exactly what you are looking for?

You can't.

How hiring managers usually feel

Now, I invite you to put yourself in the shoes of the hiring manager for a minute, so you can get an idea of how they feel in this step of the process too. Remember, I am in contact with hiring managers all the time, and I know very well the other side of the coin.

In the same way you are looking for a job, the hiring manager is looking for a candidate. Ideally, they have their own clear picture, and they know exactly what type of person they are looking for. Apart from certain characteristics, like specific technical knowledge and a certain kind of personality or behavior, they are looking for someone who has a genuine desire to do the job they are trying to fill, and work for that company.

Are you that person? How can the hiring manager know?

If in your LinkedIn profile and CV you don't make it clear what you really want, then chances are you won't call this hiring manager's attention. But imagine you do, and they call you for a chat. You meet them, and they ask you: "What do you want? What are you looking for?" and you say "I

want a job in IT", or "I want a new challenge", or something along those lines. Are you going to call this person's attention? Most probably not. On the contrary, this situation will spark not-so-pleasant emotions in them.

This is how hiring managers usually feel in this step of the process:

I feel disappointed and frustrated when I read a candidate's CV, LinkedIn profile, cover letter or when I have a conversation with them and it's not clear to me what they are looking for, because if I don't know what their goal is, I don't know if they will be a good fit for the role, and I can end up wasting time and resources.

What I need is that the candidate knows what they want, so I can have a better idea if they are going to be a good fit for the job I'm offering or not. Maybe, they are desperate for a job now, but after a couple of months, they will leave, because it's not what they truly wanted. And so, I will have wasted time and resources. It's too risky!
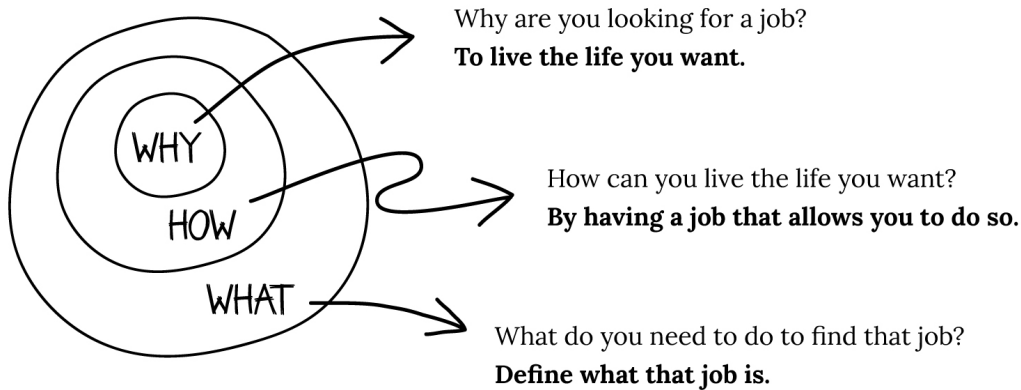
So remember: not having a clear picture of what you want doesn't help you or the hiring manager. It's frustrating for both.

Start with why

Simon Sinek, a British-American author and motivational speaker, developed a framework to find meaning in what you do. It's called the Golden Circle, and what it does is help you understand why you do what you do. It guides you to discover your purpose, the reason why you do things.

If you've never seen it before, let me introduce you to it. Start by asking yourself why you want to do something. It's the core reason. And it's not money! Money is the result. Your why is something more profound. Then you follow by answering how you do what you do. And finally, what you do to make this a reality.

Use the Golden Circle to create a clear picture of what you want. This is what it may look like:

Why are you looking for a job?
To live the life you want.

How can you live the life you want?
By having a job that allows you to do so.

What do you need to do to find that job?
Define what that job is.

Your user story

If you work in the tech industry, chances are you know very well what user stories are. But in case you never came across this concept, user stories are a project management tool used in Agile, especially Scrum. They are used to express software requirements from the user's perspective. They basically tell the development team what they need to do, what outcomes are expected from them.

User stories consist of three components:

1. The user persona. The person that will use the software.
2. The need. The action that this person wants to do in the software.
3. The benefit. What the person will gain by doing that.

And they are written in a very specific way: As a (user) I want to (need) so that I can (benefit).

I suggest you write your own user story, so you have a concrete task to do. It can look something like this:

As a professional looking for a job,

I want to have a crystal clear vision of the job I need,

so that I can have the lifestyle I want.

How do you do that? Let's see.

What I advise you to do

To get the job you want, the job of your dreams, you need to start by knowing exactly what your dream is.

Here is something important to keep in mind: your dreams change, just as your life changes. Your dream today may not be the same dream you have next year, or the year after. That's why looking for a job is a process, a cycle. It does not end. Even if you have a job you love, you may not love it in the future. So defining your dream is something you will need to do often.

To define your current dream, reflect on the following:

The lifestyle you'd like to have

What would you like your lifestyle to be like? Think about:
- In what country, city, neighborhood you'd like to live
- The house and car you'd like to have
- Your daily routine. Think about your routine at work and also your free time. Do you want to work remotely, or on premise? How much free time would you like to have? What would you like to do in your free time?
- The hobbies you want to have
- The vacations you want to take
- The healthcare you'd like to have

The income that would make it possible

Estimate how much moneywould allow you to do and have all the things you listed above.

The jobs that could pay you that salary

Find out what jobs pay the salary that would allow you to have the lifestyle you want. In New Zealand, you can find this information on https://www.careers.govt.nz/. In the USA, in https://www.bls.gov/oes/. Just look for the job you want, and you'll get an estimate of the salaries and job opportunities in that role.

The companies where you could do that job

Define in what company you can do your job by understanding if they:
- Pay the salary you are after.
- Offer the possibility of on premise, remote and hybrid work.
- Have the organizational structure that allows you to do the job in the way you want.
- Have the company culture you are after.

Your non negotiables

Your non-negotiables are your "must-haves".

They are your requirements, conditions or standards that you deem essential and that must be met without any room for discussion. It's what you consider crucial, and you are not willing to change. They are not open to negotiation or compromise. They set your clear boundaries and help establish a baseline for discussions and agreements.

It's important you identify and communicate non-negotiables clearly and early on, to avoid misunderstandings and ensure right from the start that your essential requirements are met.

Your non-negotiables can be a certain salary, the currency in which you want to be paid, the work modality (remote, on premise, hybrid), work hours, ways of working (Agile, non-Agile), after hours work, business trips, benefits, a project that is interesting to you, a boss that lets you make decisions, etc.

I suggest you spend time writing a list of about 20 non-negotiables. Stretch your mind and think of all the things you won't compromise.

Have your list handy, because apart from giving you focus, it can save you time.

Imagine you are contacted for a job that seems to be very good. You decide to start the interview process. But in the end you realize that the salary they offer is not what you wanted, or the project does not interest you. What a disappointment. You don't feel like going through with the process. The result? You will have wasted time and effort.

Your deliverable

You've reached the end of the first step of the process: create a clear vision. Before jumping into the next step, make sure you have your deliverables ready.

If you work in tech, you surely know what a deliverable is, but in case you come from another field and you don't, a deliverable is something that must be completed to meet the objectives of a project. Your deliverable here is your crystal clear picture of what you want. Make sure you write down your ideas on the following:

- I want to have a lifestyle that allows me to...
- To do so, I need a job that pays me X amount of money.
- The jobs that could pay me that salary are...
- The companies that align with my values where I could do this work are...
- My non-negotiables are...

What if you don't have the experience to get the job you want?

It can happen that you don't have the skills or experience for the job that you would like to have. If that's the case do what it takes: upskill, reskill, or build the experience by working on real-life projects. How?

Find someone who has a need that you can solve by creating a product that has users.

The project can be small: a basic website for a drugstore, or a reservation system for a restaurant.

It doesn't matter if the work is unpaid. What's important is that you work on a real product with real users. That way, you will have the opportunity to see things that don't work, that break down or that users don't understand. By encountering and solving these problems you are going to generate the experience. If on the contrary you create a product that doesn't have real users, you will not have the opportunity to find and solve real problems, and thus, you won't generate that valuable experience that employers want to see in you.

Is your clear picture ready? If so, I'll meet you in the next step: craft your value proposition.

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Step 2:

Craft your value proposition

Your value proposition is the way in which you, with your knowledge, abilities and experience,

can help the company solve their problems and make the most of their opportunities.

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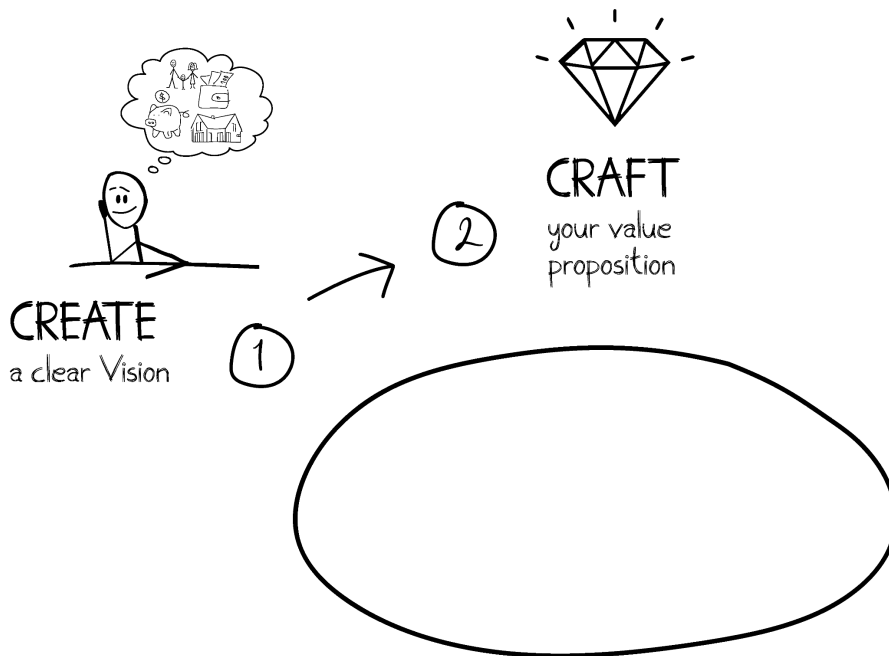
The problem I see most often, apart from people not knowing what they want, is people not knowing what their value proposition is. When they look for a job, they focus too much on making a list of their past experiences, the certifications they have, their years of experience. And with that information, they write a CV and apply for jobs. When they don't hear back or they get rejected, they don't understand why.

Let me tell you why.

Because companies want to know your value proposition. How you can help them solve their problems, and why. What you've done in the past that makes you the right person to help them.

They don't need to see a list of your previous jobs, or the certifications you have. They need to see your value proposition.

How candidates usually feel

When candidates have to explain why they are a good fit for the role they don't know what to say. And again, this triggers the not-so-pleasant emotions.

I feel disoriented, unsure and anxious when I have to explain why I'm a good fit for a role, because I don't know how to justify it.

What I need is to be able to explain confidently why I'm well-suited for the role, and give concrete examples that prove what I claim.

How hiring managers usually feel

I invite you again to put yourself in the shoes of the recruiter.

They need to find the right person for the role, and for that, they have to talk to lots of candidates. Imagine talking to dozens of people that are not able to explain how they can help. How do you think the recruiter feels?

"I feel frustrated and lost when I can't quickly understand how the candidate can help the company, because the information they are giving me in their CV, LinkedIn profile and interview falls short; it doesn't tell me what I need to know.
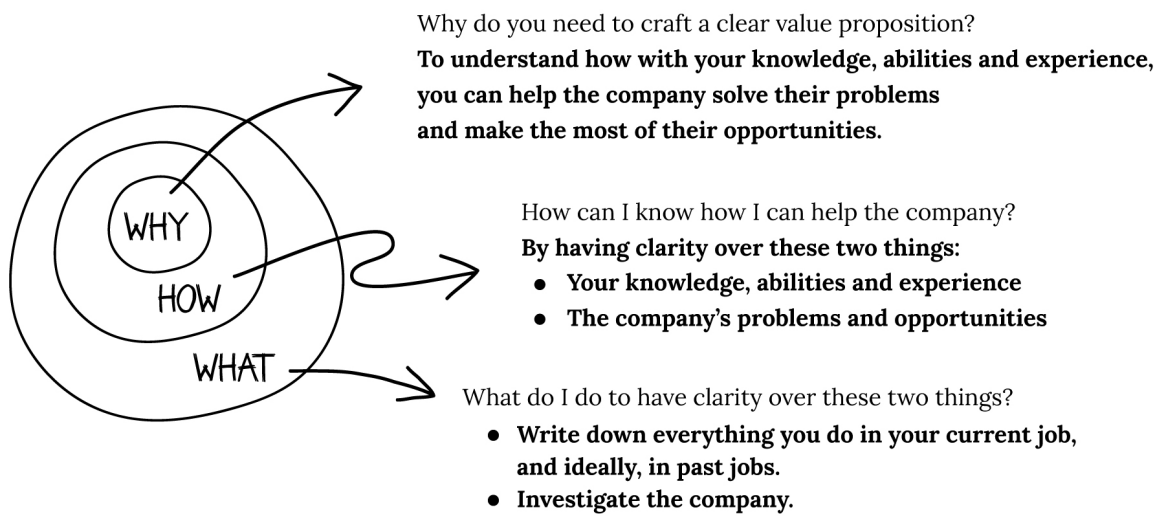
What I need is that the candidate tells me how they can contribute to the company."

Sure, it's the recruiter's job to find this out, but you'll be a step ahead if you can clearly articulate this.

Start with why

Let's do the Golden Circle exercise again.

Why do you need to craft a clear value proposition?
To understand how with your knowledge, abilities and experience, you can help the company solve their problems and make the most of their opportunities.

How can I know how I can help the company?
By having clarity over these two things:
- **Your knowledge, abilities and experience**
- **The company's problems and opportunities**

What do I do to have clarity over these two things?
- **Write down everything you do in your current job, and ideally, in past jobs.**
- **Investigate the company.**

Your user story

I encourage you to write your own, but here is an idea:

As a professional looking for a specific job in a *specific* company (specify what job in what company),

I want to craft a clear value proposition,

so that I can increase my chances of getting an interview.

What I advise you to do

Define your knowledge, abilities and experience

Start by gaining clarity over your knowledge, abilities and experience. To do so, write down everything you do in your job.

Here's an idea that will help you:

Imagine you are going to be away from work for a few days, and someone will replace you while you are gone. This person has no idea what you do: you have to explain every single detail to them, so they can do a good job. Do not omit anything that you consider obvious, because it may not be so obvious for them.

Writing everything down will help you extract the knowledge, skills and abilities that you have that maybe you don't even know you have, because they are so ingrained in you that you don't even notice. You may have hidden gems waiting to be discovered.

Something very important that I want you to know is that your knowledge, skills and experience are independent of the jobs and the companies you have worked for. Each job you've had has given you an exposure to specific industries, contexts, challenges, teams and managers that together have crafted your unique experience and set of skills. That's why I also recommend writing down everything you've done in previous jobs.

Keep in mind that knowledge, abilities and experience are not the same. Elliott Jaques explains this difference in his book *Human Capability: A Study of Individual Potential and Its Application*. Basically:

$\longrightarrow$ Knowledge is the information you have about a topic. For example, "I know the software Jira, what it's used for, and its features".

$\longrightarrow$ Ability is the capacity to perform a task correctly and with ease, because you have the knowledge. For example, "I know how to use Jira to organize my tasks and to assign tasks to my team."

$\longrightarrow$ Experience is the practice of the ability. For example, "I've been using Jira for project management for over 5 years, so I'm very confident using it".

Let me give you another example to make this more clear. Imagine you need to get your driver's licence.

You never drove a car before, but you've paid attention to people driving, and feel that you know how it works: what each pedal is used for, the blinkers, the mirrors, etc. You also know everything about traffic signs and road safety. You know everything, but have never been behind the wheel. **You only have the knowledge.**

You know how to drive. You've been behind the wheel before, but haven't driven much. Maybe just short trips, or not very often. **You have the knowledge and the ability.**

You've been driving for years. **You have the knowledge, the ability and the experience.**

Do you see the difference?

When you are looking for a job that requires you to have experience in something that you don't, you are not lost. Maybe you have the knowledge, or the knowledge and the ability, so you have something already. There are two things you can do here:

- If you are at the interview, make it clear that even though you don't have the experience, you have the knowledge, or the knowledge and the ability, and also the willingness to gain that experience.

- If you haven't applied for the job yet, generate the experience yourself. How? By working on a real project, with real users.

Let's go back to writing everything you do at work. Here is a guide to help you organize your writing. Explain:

- The company where you work; its name and what it does
- The name of your role

- The mission of your role. The life cycle of your job; all the things you need to do, from the beginning of the process, until the end
- The problems you need to solve, the tasks you need to do to solve them, and your responsibilities
- The organigram; the departments, what they do, how your role relates to others

Investigate the company

Read its website, find news articles about it, and connect with people that work there.
If you know the industry well, you will have an idea of the problems they might have and the opportunities they might be missing.

But you can tell me "Santiago, right now there isn't a specific job I want to apply to. There isn't a specific company to investigate, so what do I do?"

In that case, you should at least have an idea of the kind of job you'd like to have, in what kind of company, in what industry. Think about your ideal job and craft your value proposition based on that.

Also, remember this is a cycle, a process that never ends. Chances are that if you are reading this book, you want to get the tools you need to get a job. But maybe, you have a job and you are happy with it. Is this idea relevant to you anyway? Yes. Even if you are not looking for a job, have a value proposition defined. It's a good idea that you know exactly what problems your company has, how you can help it solve them, and how you can contribute to its success with your knowledge, skills and experience.

Your deliverable

You have reached the end of the second step of the process: craft your value proposition. Your deliverable here is —you guessed it: a clear value proposition. Take some time to complete these sentences to suit your situation:

- I know how to do *this* and *that*.
- I have the ability to do *this* and *that*.

- I have experience doing *this* and *that*. Here are concrete examples of things I've done in the past that solved this problem, and what I would do to solve your problem.
- Questions for the interviewers/company:
  - Do you have *such* and *such* problem? If so, have you tried *this* and *this* to solve it?
  - What are you doing about *this* opportunity? Have you tried *this* and *this*?

Remember: your value proposition is the key with which you open the doors to opportunities.

Have you found it? Did you write it down? If so, I'll see you in the next step: communicate your value proposition.

Communicate your value proposition

Once you crafted your value proposition,
you need to communicate it in your LinkedIn profile, CV, and interview.

CRAFT
your value
proposition

CREATE
a clear Vision

COMMUNICATE
your value proposition
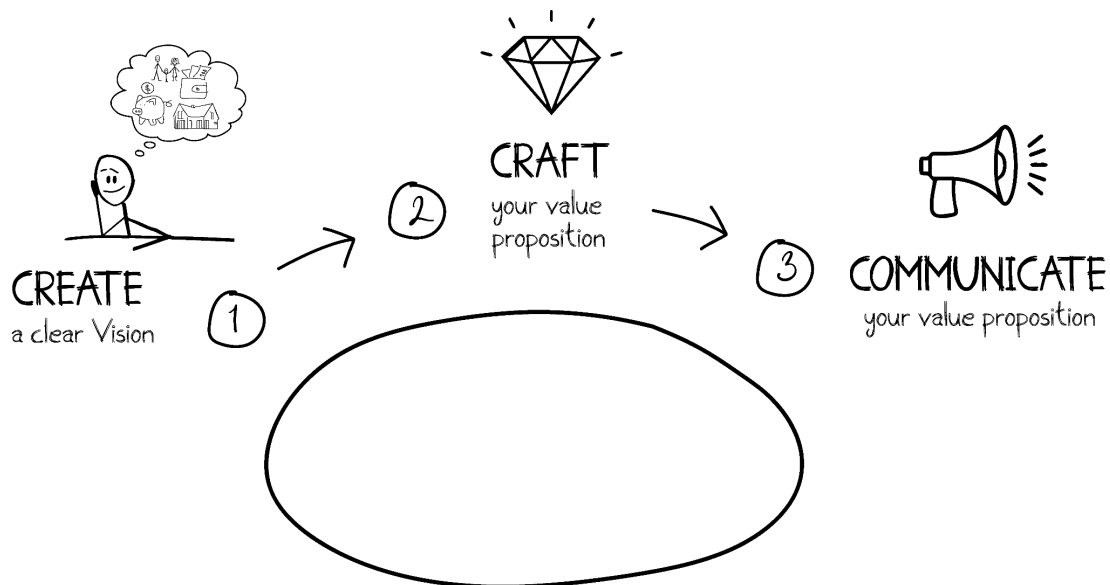
Adapt the message to fit the medium in which you communicate it. LinkedIn, your CV and the interview will call for different ways of expressing the message. LinkedIn is more general, your CV is specific to a job, and the interview is specific, but you have more space to explain.

How candidates usually feel

When it comes to communicating their value proposition...

...Most people don't.

If they don't even have a clear value proposition, how are they going to communicate it? What most people do is make a list of the jobs they've had, their years of experience, say the things they want to accomplish... That's not what companies are not interested in. The result?

Silence. Rejection. And the not-so-pleasant feelings.

I feel frustrated, discouraged, disappointed, and demoralized when nobody contacts me, because I don't know what I'm doing wrong. I believe I'm a right fit for the job, but I'm not getting invited to interviews.
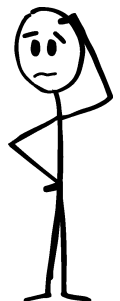
I need to know what to do in my LinkedIn profile and CV so I can be offered the chance to get an interview."

How hiring managers usually feel

Once again, let's do the exercise of putting yourself in the recruiter's place. How do you think they feel in this situation? It's usually something like this:
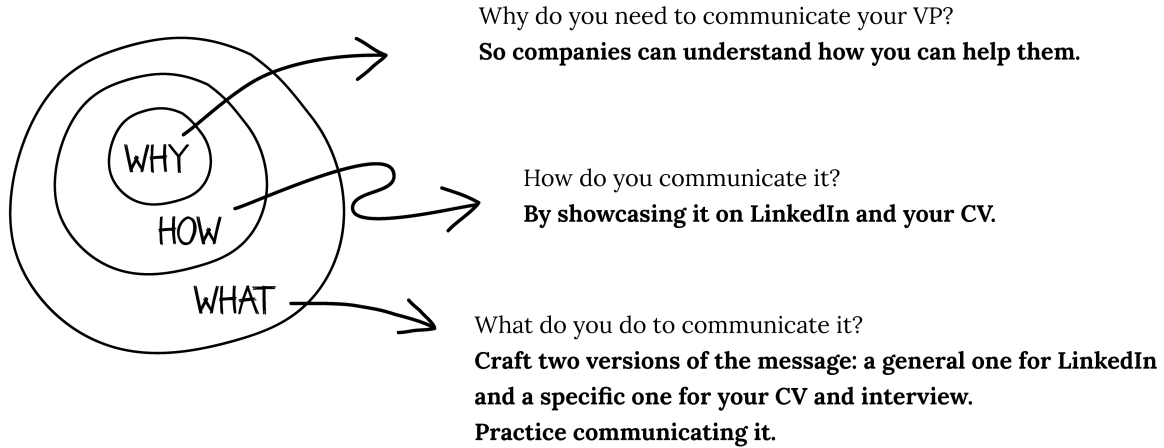
I feel bored, frustrated, and overwhelmed when I read dozens and dozens of LinkedIn profiles and CVs and I don't know who to contact, because I cannot find the candidate's value proposition, so I don't know if they have what I'm looking for. For me this is a waste of time.

What I need is to quickly find the candidate's value proposition when I read their LinkedIn profile and CV.

Start with why

To get your ideas in order, use the Golden Circle.

Why do you need to communicate your VP?
So companies can understand how you can help them.

How do you communicate it?
By showcasing it on LinkedIn and your CV.

What do you do to communicate it?
Craft two versions of the message: a general one for LinkedIn and a specific one for your CV and interview.
Practice communicating it.

Your user story

Here's an idea. Adapt it to your personal needs!

As a professional looking for a specific job in a specific industry (complete with the job and company you want),

I want to make it easy for companies to understand how I can help them,

so I can increase my chances of getting an interview.

What I advise you to do

First, start by making sure your LinkedIn profile showcases the image you want to portray.

Your LinkedIn profile is a window to your professional self that is open 24/7 for all the people around the world to see. Make sure you are proud of it.

This may sound obvious, but make sure your profile is complete and looks professional.

Second, in "about" make it clear how you can help companies solve their problems. Don't focus on what you want to achieve, focus on what you can do to help. Why? Because it makes more sense to the hiring manager reading your profile.

Imagine you have a business and want to attract clients. What are you going to tell clients in order to attract them: what you want to achieve as a business, or how you are going to help them?

How you are going to help them.

As a candidate, do the same. Don't say what you want to achieve. Tell companies how you are going to help them.

Here's a video that will help you polish up your LinkedIn profile:
▶ Software Developer CV & LinkedIn Profile: Step-by-Step Guide

Third, create content. Write articles and posts that showcase what you have been learning, the progress you've made. Take it as a diary where you record your professional journey.

Creating content on LinkedIn is very important. It helps you to have a digital presence, communicate your value proposition, gain credibility in your industry, generate connections and open the door to new opportunities. And that's not something you should do once in a while, but always.

Publishing content only when you are looking for a job may help a little, but it is not ideal, and will not bring you long-term benefits. Content creation is like compound interest on an investment. The important thing is not to do it at the right time, but to be consistent and have permanence over time.

Think about a brand and its advertising. If you always see advertisements for a brand, you will get to know it better and trust it more than a brand you have never seen. Even if you are not planning to buy, you see it, you get to know it. When you need the product, it is very likely that you will choose that brand and not another one you have never seen.

Take your content creation as your marketing campaign.

Fourth**,** do networking. Connect with people who have more experience in your field, such as mentors, and ask them questions that both show your knowledge and help you learn more. This can benefit you in two ways. On the one hand, you make connections and let these people know what you know. So maybe, if opportunities arise in their companies, or if they hear about opportunities somewhere else, they can refer you, because they already know who you are and what you know. On the other hand, their answers to your questions can help you learn from their experiences and gain their advice.

Find more insights on networking in this video:

▶ Developing Connections: A Software Developer's Guide to Networking Success

Fifth, continue by polishing up your CV. Your value proposition has to be specific here.

Start by making it 100% clear in your professional profile what your value proposition is. Don't say what you want to achieve. Say how you are going to help.

Don't assume that the person reading your CV will know how to relate your previous experience to what you can do in this role you are applying for. Give concrete examples of problems you have solved before. Relate the tasks you did in previous jobs and the problems these tasks solved to the tasks and problems of the job you want to apply for.

Follow by making it absolutely clear under each work experience how you work. Don't just list the tasks you performed and the technologies you used. Companies want to know if you have knowledge of the industry and its methodologies, what your technical knowledge is, and how you work.

Do you know how teams work?
What different roles do?
How to relate to them?
Are you a team player?

Don't just say so. Give examples of situations that prove your point, that explain who you worked with and how. Make it clear that you understand what the different roles in a team do.

You may have little experience, but if you know all this, people reading your CV will know that the learning curve will be shorter.

Forget about making a list of your skills and experience on your CV. That is obsolete. What works today is communicating your value proposition: make sure you communicate it clearly both in your professional profile and in your work experience.

You also need to communicate your value proposition in the interview, but we'll see that in the following step.

Your deliverable

This is the end of the third step of the process: communicate your value proposition. Your deliverable here is:

$\longrightarrow$ a LinkedIn profile and a CV that communicate a clear value proposition

$\longrightarrow$ ideas of what topics to write about to create content

$\longrightarrow$ what to ask when networking.

Take some time to complete these sentences to suit your situation:

- My general value proposition for my LinkedIn profile is…
- I will create content on *this*, *this*, and *this* topic to showcase my value proposition. (Brainstorm your own ideas.)
- When I network, I will ask people *this* and *this*. (Think about what you can ask that shows your knowledge, but with a genuine desire to learn. You don't want to ask questions just to show off what you know!)
- My specific value proposition for my CV is…

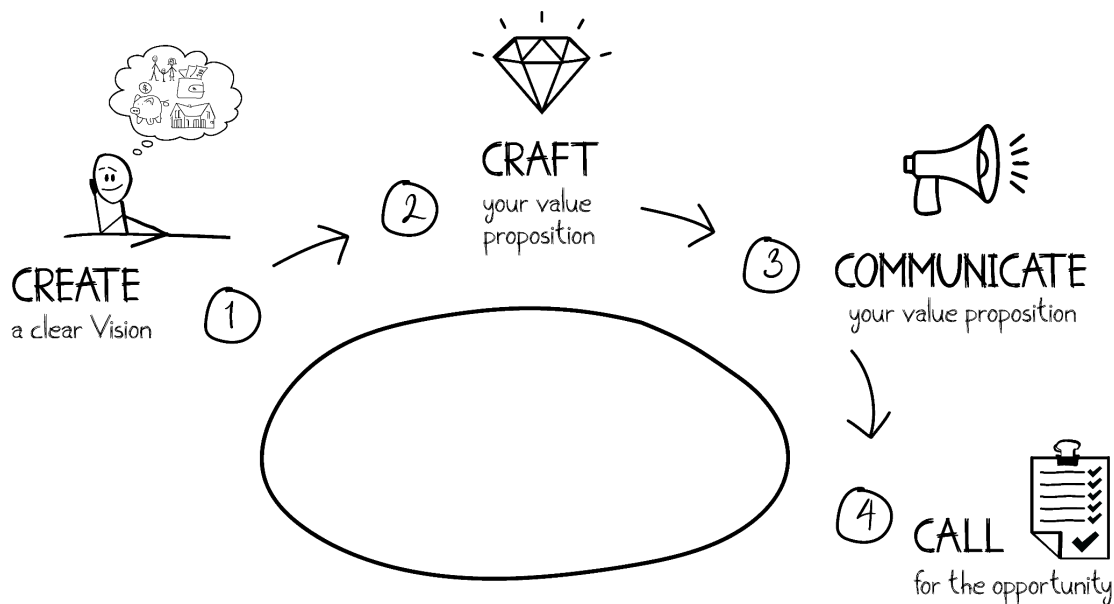Have you communicated your VP in LikedIn and your CV?

Do you have content ideas?

Do you know what to ask your network?

If so, I'll see you in the next step: call for the opportunity.

Call for the opportunity

Do everything you can to get an interview.

This is not "apply for a job", sit on the couch, and wait to see if something happens. This is about using all the resources available to get the opportunity.

How candidates usually feel

A lot of people come to me in despair because they've done "everything" to find a job, but they haven't been able to do it. When I ask them "what have you tried? Tell me everything you've done to find a job", they usually say something like "I applied to three jobs in Seek (or Indeed, or LinkedIn), but I haven't received any answers. I don't know what else to do". And as you can imagine, they don't feel great about it. This is what I usually hear:

I feel discouraged, hopeless, disheartened, and frustrated when I apply for jobs but all I get is silence or rejections, because apart from applying in job portals or on LinkedIn I don't know what else to do.

I need to know what I have to do and how, so I can get offered an interview.

Think of a different but similar situation for a moment: someone who wants to lose weight and get fit.
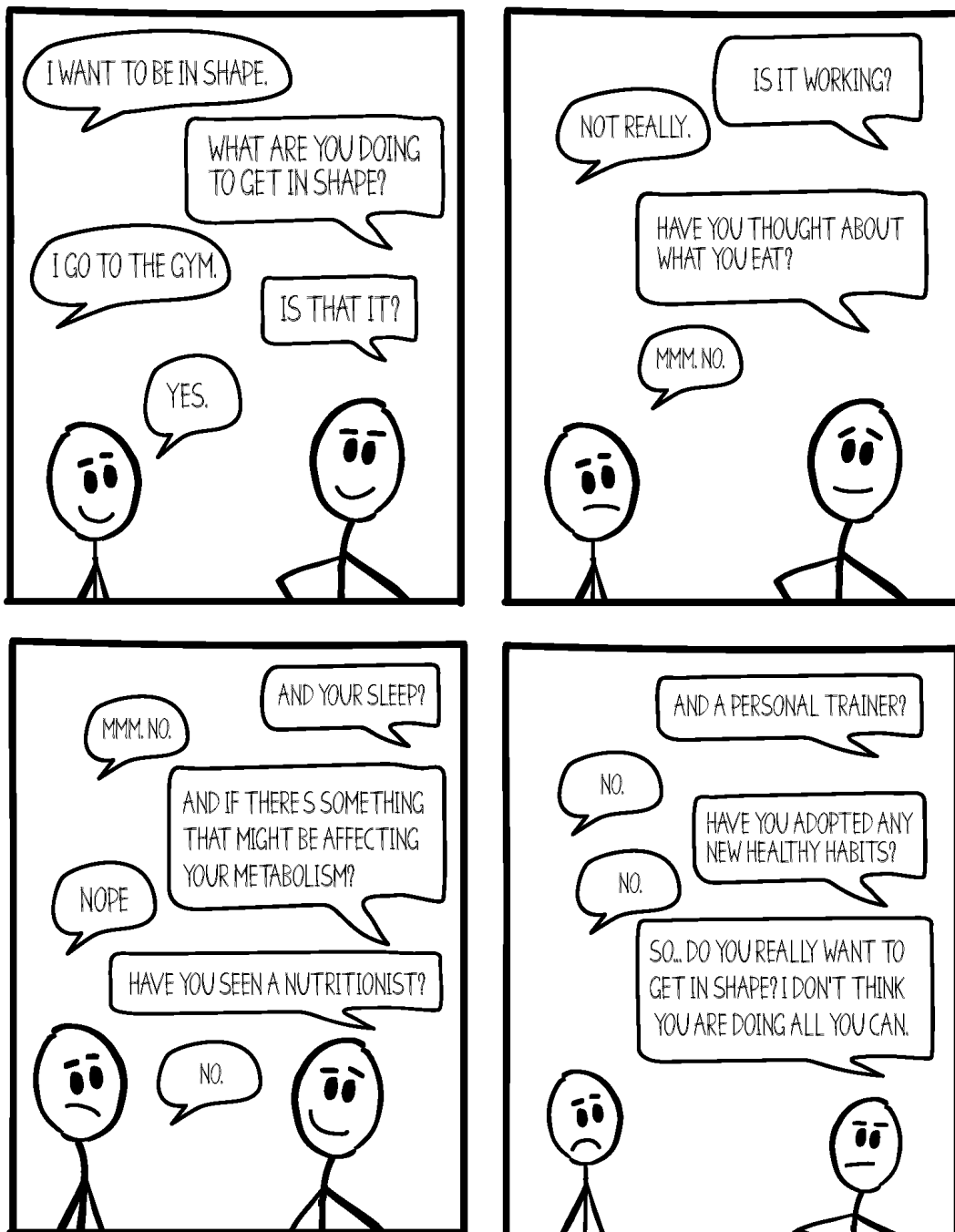
Do you get the idea? Applying for jobs you find in job portals is not all you can do.

How hiring managers usually feel

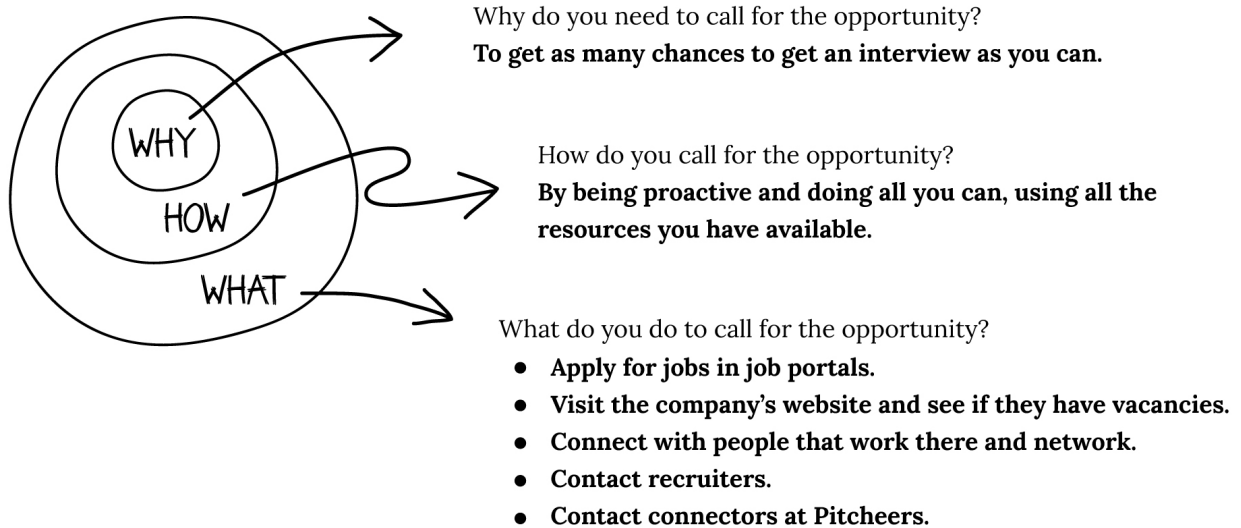Once again, I invite you to think about how the hiring manager feels.

I feel hopeless, challenged, daunted, frustrated, and overwhelmed when I need to look for a candidate with such and such characteristics, because it's not easy to find them, and I usually end up wasting a lot of time searching and talking to the wrong people.

What I need is a way to quickly find the candidates that have the characteristics I'm looking for, and that are looking for a job like the one I have to offer."

Start with why

Get your ideas into perspective with the Golden Circle.

Why do you need to call for the opportunity?
To get as many chances to get an interview as you can.

How do you call for the opportunity?
By being proactive and doing all you can, using all the resources you have available.

What do you do to call for the opportunity?
- **Apply for jobs in job portals.**
- **Visit the company's website and see if they have vacancies.**
- **Connect with people that work there and network.**
- **Contact recruiters.**
- **Contact connectors at Pitcheers.**

Your user story

Give yourself a specific task by writing your own user story. It can look something like this:

> As a professional looking for *a specific job* (complete with the specific job you want, or type of job)
>
> I want to call for job opportunities in jobs I'm interested in,
>
> so I can increase my chances of getting an interview and eventually the job I dream of.

What I advise you to do

Use all the resources you can think of.

⟶ Apply for jobs in job portals.

⟶ Visit the websites of the companies you are interested in and see if they have any vacancies. If so, apply directly at the company.

⟶ If there aren't any vacancies, find people who work there that you can connect with, let them know who you are, what you know, and that you are looking for a job and are interested in working there. If you build a genuine relationship, you increase your chances of getting an opportunity there in the future. I will make emphasis in genuine, because you don't want to talk to people just to get something from them.

⟶ Let your network know you are looking for a job. They may know of an opportunity that is not in job portals or LinkedIn. Take networking seriously, so that you have better chances of receiving opportunities. The bigger the network and the more the relationships, the more chances you get.

⟶ Contact a recruiter. Any recruiter?

No.

1. **A recruiter who specializes in the area you are interested in**

There are recruiters who specialize in the IT industry. But this is not enough. Identify recruiters who specialize in the specific area you are interested in: software development, product management, cloud infrastructure, UX/UI Design, testing, etc.

2. **A recruiter who specializes in the positions you are interested in**

There are recruiters that focus only on product owners, software developers, UX/UI designers, etc. Contact the one who focuses on the positions you want.

3. **A recruiter that is in the country or city you want**

Now, what do you say when you approach them?

Communicate your value proposition.

Don't say "I'm looking for a job. Here is my CV. Let me know if there are any opportunities."

You have to communicate your value proposition. When you make your value proposition clear to the recruiter, you make it easier for them:
- to represent you, because you are clear about what you want and what you have to offer,
- to identify which of their clients they could match you with.

The message has to be very concrete. For example:

"I'm a full stack software engineer. I work with React and Node remotely for the US. I'm looking for a salary in between X and X. I am fluent in English. I am willing to relocate. Here is my CV. In case you want to know more because you have an opportunity, I'm open for a chat."

Leave your Calendly. That way, it's easy for the recruiter to contact you.

Clear message, clear expectations.

$\longrightarrow$ Go to Pitcheers.com and see if there's a job you like. Even if you don't see anything that catches your eye, set up a meeting with our connectors to tell them what you're looking for.

I suggest you keep track of your applications somehow. Here's the application tracking system we created at Pitcheers. Feel free to make a copy and use it yourself.

Your deliverable

You've reached the end of step four: call for the opportunity. Here the deliverable is a plan of all the things you will do to get the opportunity. Take some time to write down your plan.

- I will apply for jobs in *these* job portals.
- I will apply for jobs in *these* companies.
- I will network with *these* people.
- I will create content on *these topics*, to generate interest in myself.
- I will tell *these people* I'm looking for a job.
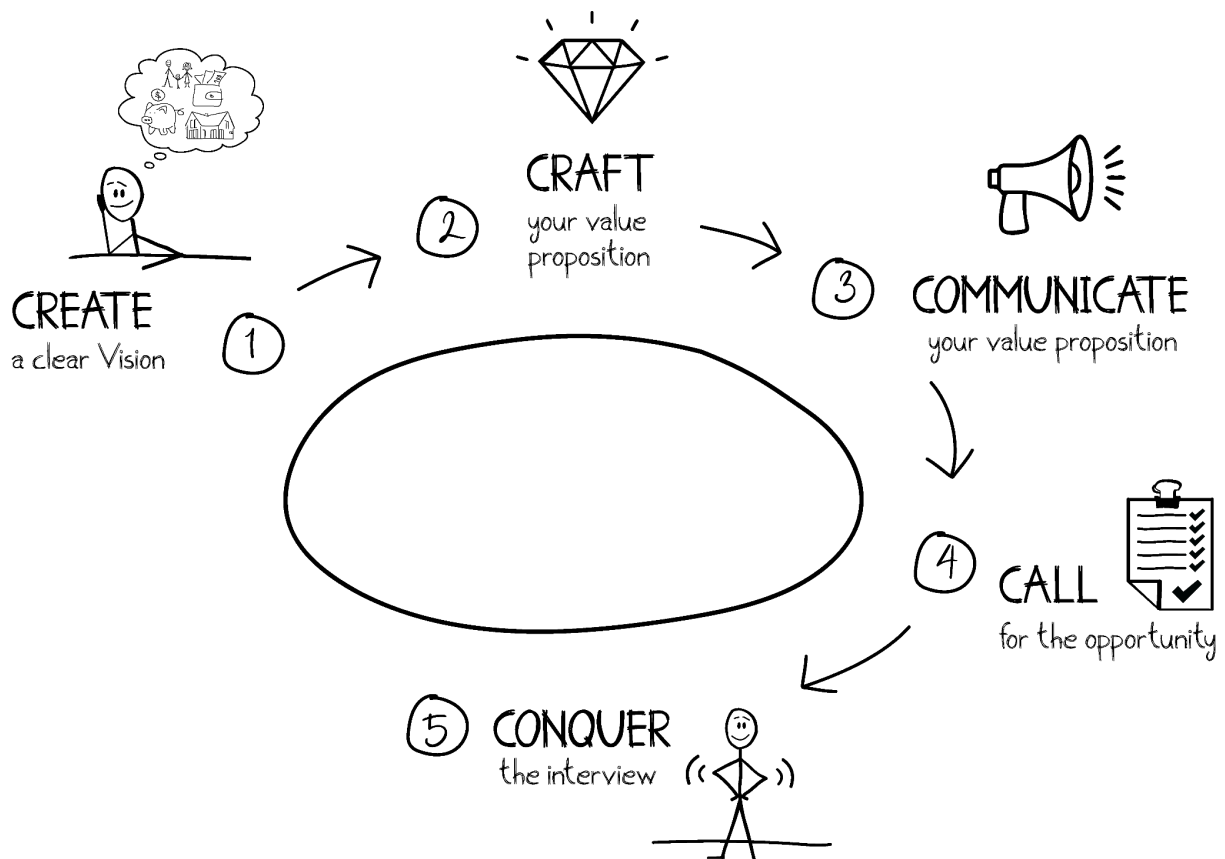- I will contact *these recruiters*.

Do you have a plan? If so, I'll meet you in step 5: conquer the interview.

Conquer that interview

Prepare well. Show you care.

CRAFT
your value
proposition

CREATE
a clear Vision

②

①

③ COMMUNICATE
your value proposition

④ CALL
for the opportunity

⑤ CONQUER
the interview

Please don't go to the interview unprepared. It's like going on a date without having taken a shower after you've played a game of football. You won't make a good impression.

How candidates usually feel

Interviews make people nervous. There are exceptions, but that's generally the case. Especially if the interview is in English and the candidate is not a native English speaker. But even for native speakers, interviews can be nerve-wracking. And that's because an interview is an evaluation, and there are many variables involved. "What do I say? How? What if they ask me something I don't know?" And again, the not-so-pleasant feelings emerge:

I feel anxious, nervous, and uncertain when I go to an interview because I don't know what to say that's helpful for the interviewer.

What I need is to have a clear idea of what to say, and how.

How hiring managers usually feel

Let's see the other side of the coin: what the person holding the interview usually feels:

"*I feel disappointed, frustrated, puzzled, confused and bored when in the interview I can't quickly understand the candidate's value proposition, how they work, what they know, how they behave, because what they are telling me does not give me that information.*"
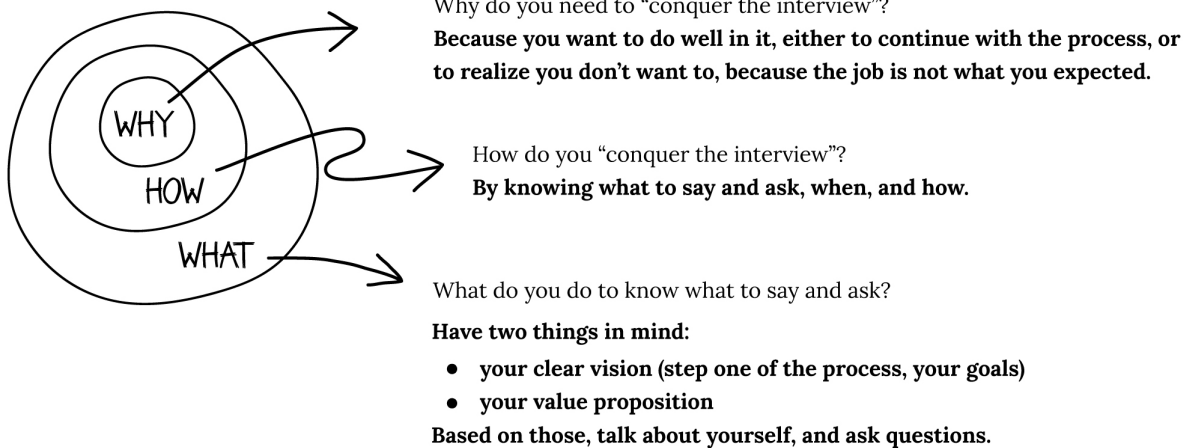
And if the person struggles with English: "*I find it hard to understand what they say, so we can't have a fluent conversation. And what I do understand is not very useful; it does not tell me what I need to know.*

What I need is that they give me concrete examples that prove what I need to know (and that they can have a fluent conversation in English)."

Start with why

As usual, I suggest using the Golden Circle to organize your ideas. Adapt it to your own situation, but it will look something like this:

Why do you need to "conquer the interview"?
Because you want to do well in it, either to continue with the process, or to realize you don't want to, because the job is not what you expected.

How do you "conquer the interview"?
By knowing what to say and ask, when, and how.

What do you do to know what to say and ask?
Have two things in mind:
- **your clear vision (step one of the process, your goals)**
- **your value proposition**

Based on those, talk about yourself, and ask questions.

Your user story

Here is an idea you can adapt to suit your situation:

> **As a professional going to a job interview,**
>
> **I want to confidently express what I know, and ask what I'd like to know about the company,**
>
> **so that I can either be invited to continue with the process, or realize early on that this job is not for me.**

What I advise you to do

→ Investigate the company, the interviewer and polish up your value proposition.

→ Get the technical aspects in order. Camera, light, angle, sound. This is VERY important. Don't underestimate it.

$\longrightarrow$ Make sure you are well presented. (If you played a game of football, shower please!)

$\longrightarrow$ Practice expressing yourself in the three main parts of the interview:

- In the first part, you'll have to talk about yourself and why you are interested in the job. Be prepared to expand everything you mention.
- In the second part, you'll have to talk about your knowledge of the industry, the methodologies, and your technical knowledge. You may be asked behavioral questions as well.
- In the final part, you'll have the chance to ask questions. Think of questions that showcase your knowledge and experience. Do not waste that opportunity.

$\longrightarrow$ After the interview, follow up. Send them an email thanking them for their time. Maybe you can ask a question you forgot to ask during the interview.

Be prepared to do all this in English.

Here's a video that will help you prepare for an interview:

▶ Software Developer JOB INTERVIEWS: What to do before, during and after

Your deliverable

This is the end of step 5: conquer the interview. Your deliverable here is a well-prepared story.

Careful: I'm not saying you need to memorize a story. No. You have to think beforehand of the questions they'll ask you and the things you want to say (regardless if they ask you or not), and practice articulating your answers. Don't memorize anything.

Take some time to write down your ideas about these points:

- When asked to:
  - talk about myself, I will say…
  - explain why I'm interested in this job, I will say…
  - talk about my knowledge of the industry and the methodologies I use, I will say…
- I will practice answering *this* and *this* common behavioral questions.
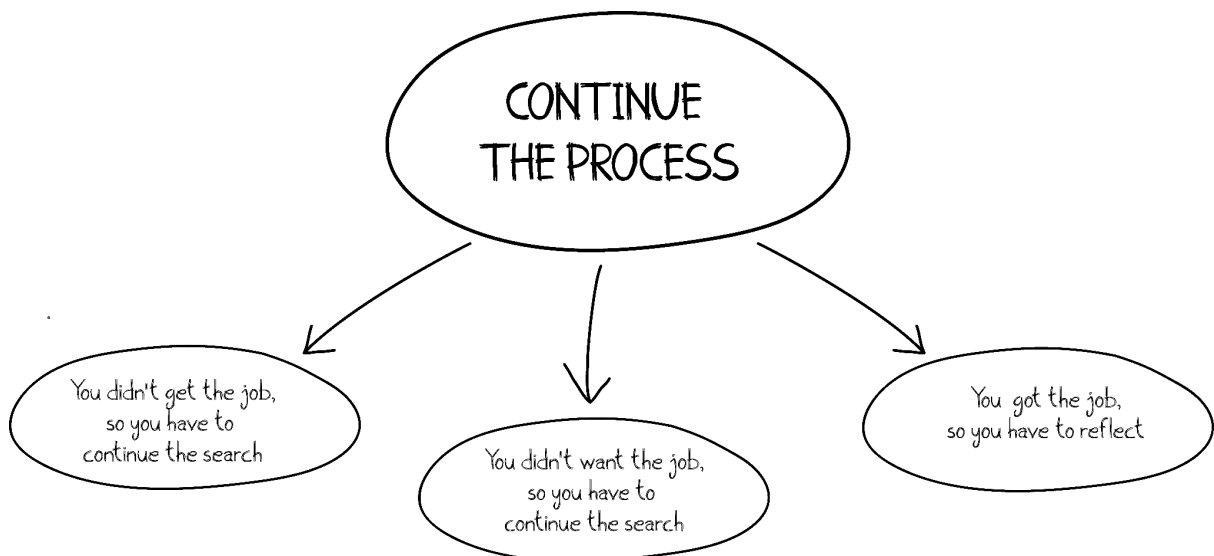- At the end, I will ask *this* and *this* question.

Do you have the resources to express yourself confidently in the interview? Do you know how to answer the most common questions? Can you do all of this fluently in English? If so, I'll meet you in the final step: continue the process.

Step 6:

Continue the process
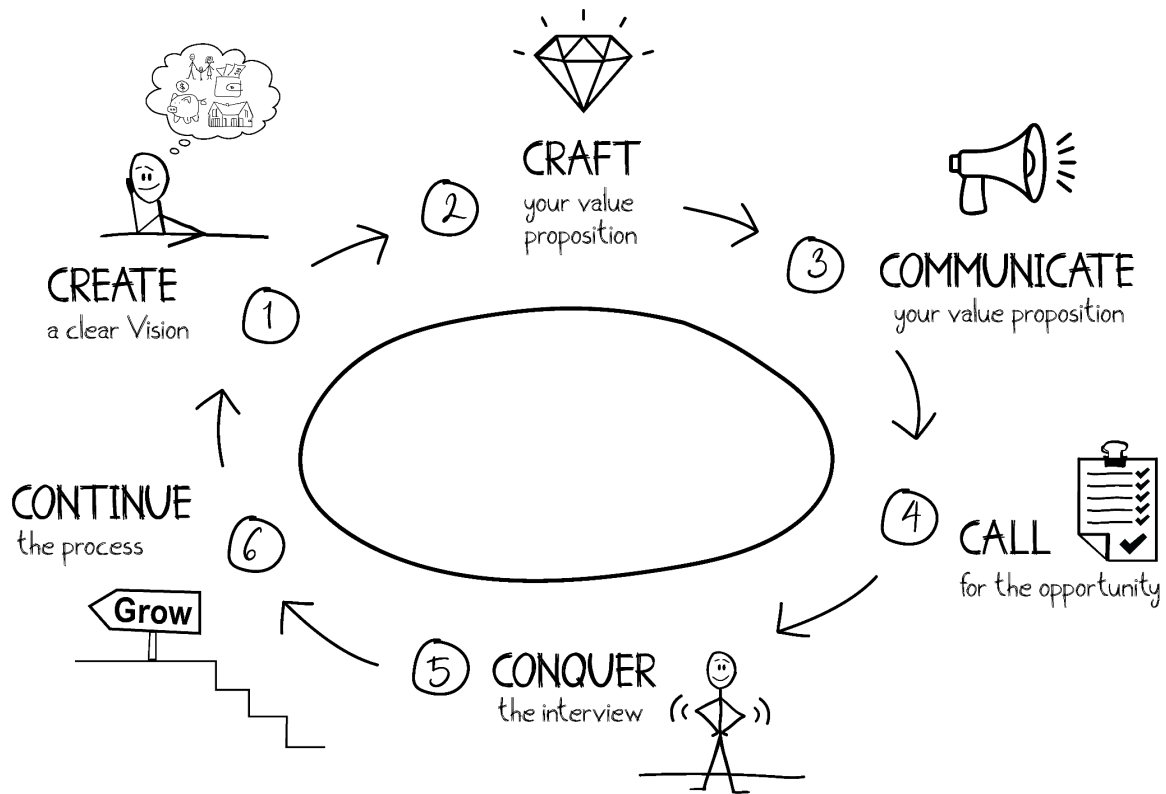
Whether you got the job or not, the process continues. Let's see how.

You didn't get the job

Didn't pass the interview? Here are some possible reasons why.

$\longrightarrow$ **You don't have the knowledge they are looking for**

You get to the final instance, but there, they realize that your knowledge about the subject is not as deep as they expected.

It can happen that you get to the final interview without ever having been solid in the process. You didn't convince them, but they let you go on to the next stage, just in case.

What can you do?

To prevent this from happening, do your research before the interview to gather all the information you can about the role you are applying for:
- the technologies you'll be expected to use
- the problems you'll be expected to solve
- how quickly you are expected to solve them
- the challenges you'll face
- what will be expected of you

Make an objective analysis of what the company needs and what you can offer. If you have enough information, you can be objective and see how close or far you are from what the company wants. If before the interview you realize you are in fact far from what the company is looking for, go to the interview anyway. Say you notice a gap, but that you want the challenge. Ask them if they are willing to help you learn.

If you can't find beforehand all the information I suggested, use the first interview to ask questions in order to find it. Here too: in case you realize you are far from what the company wants, if you are really interested in the challenge, let them know. Make it clear that you understand there is a gap, but that you are willing to learn.

In any case, consider these factors:
- how quickly and easily you can add value

- if your learning curve is going to be too steep
- if you have concrete examples of having solved problems like the ones the company has, to show that even if you don't have the experience in that specific thing the company wants to solve, you do have the capacity, because you have solved similar problems before.

Here, the role of communication is monumental. The challenge is not in being able to do something, but in being able to communicate it and for it to be perceived as value. You can have a lot of value to give, but if you can't communicate it in a clear and tangible way, and the other person does not perceive it as value, you're not going to get anywhere, or at least not where you want to get.

Remember: one thing is the value you can give, and another very different thing is the value the other person perceives you can give.

That's why I recommend that you work on improving your communication skills. For that, you will need a lot of awareness and reflection.

$\longrightarrow$ **You don't have the skills and experience they are looking for**

Maybe they call you because you have keywords in your CV, but in the interview they realize that you don't have the skills and experience they are looking for. Maybe, at the first interview, you don't know how to explain your skills and experience.

What can you do?

Deepen your knowledge of the technologies you use. Many people use technologies and tools without having a deep knowledge. Start by deepening your knowledge of the ones you are going to include in your CV.

Deepen your knowledge of the methodologies you use. Technologies are not the only keywords sought. Some companies are looking for experience in certain methodologies, such as Agile.

Deepen your knowledge of the companies. Demonstrate an understanding of the challenges faced by startups and large enterprises.

$\longrightarrow$ **You are asking for more money than they are willing to pay**

It can happen that you make it to the final stage, and you don't get selected because you're asking for more money than they're willing to pay, and another candidate with similar knowledge, skills and experience to yours is asking for less money.

What can you do?

In this case it is key to understand what your non-negotiables are. If salary is a non-negotiable, then it is important to address this early on in the interview process. There is no point in doing five interviews only to be left out at the last one because you will be too expensive for them.

On the other hand, it is important to understand what market or industry is likely to pay you that salary.

$\longrightarrow$ **They don't like your personality, your attitude**

You may have the knowledge, skills and experience, but your personality and attitude may not be what they are looking for.

What can you do?

You have to find the place where that personality and attitude fits. For example, there are companies that want someone who will take the world by storm.

It is important that you work in a place where you feel comfortable and can be yourself.

Now, you have to understand if you can have room for improvement in terms of your interpersonal and communication skills. Good communication is increasingly important in every job, regardless of role and seniority.

$\longrightarrow$ **The selection process is messy**

There are too many interviews, e.g. five, and in several interviews they ask questions that have already been asked. New people are added to the interviews, and they ask the same questions again from a different angle, and add their opinion.

There are a lot of people involved. It's common practice to get the whole team to interview, because everyone has to get along. So, a lot of people can give their opinion on whether they liked the candidate or not, often without a firm basis.

What can you do?

Sometimes you can choose which selection processes you are willing to go through. If you have the possibility to choose, you can decide not to do the processes that do not convince you.

But if you like the company or if you can't choose and the process is extensive, take it as an opportunity to get to know all the people you would work with and see if the company is really for you.

$\longrightarrow$ **It's not about you, it's about the interviewer**

Example: A tech lead needs a senior developer (you). The tech lead interviews you. You pass. You do the coding challenge. You pass. The dev manager interviews you. You pass. The CTO interviews you. You don't pass.

Why? Because he wants to hire someone "different". The CTO doesn't suffer from the lack of a senior developer on a day-to-day basis.

What can you do?

Sometimes, it's not up to you. There can be a disconnect between what the tech lead needs and what the CTO thinks his or her team needs.
To avoid this, dig deeper with questions. Ask the tech lead what the CTO's vision is, and what they want to achieve with this position.

If in the end they say no, because of a disconnect, perhaps it is better not to have stayed than to join a team that has poor communication.

Anyway, for one reason or another, you did not pass the interview. Here's what I advise you to do:

$\longrightarrow$ First, ask for feedback. That way, you'll get information on what you can improve.

$\longrightarrow$ Second, continue the six-step cycle. As Novak Djocovic says, we all have moments of doubt, of rethinking whether we are good or not, whether we can, whether we have the strength, but the difference between champions and the others is how quickly champions get out of that moment of doubt and rethinking. And this is where, if you are clear about the steps to follow, it is much easier to get out of those moments.

You didn't want the job

Did you realize at the interview that the job is not what you expected? Take notes to remember what to ask first in future interviews. Maybe redefine your non-negotiables.

You got the job

Continue polishing and communicating your value proposition.

Remember that this is a six-step cycle, a process that never ends. So even if you are not looking for a job at the moment, it's always a good idea to know:

$\longrightarrow$ What your goals are, because they can change with time. Your life circumstances change, so your ideal job will change too.
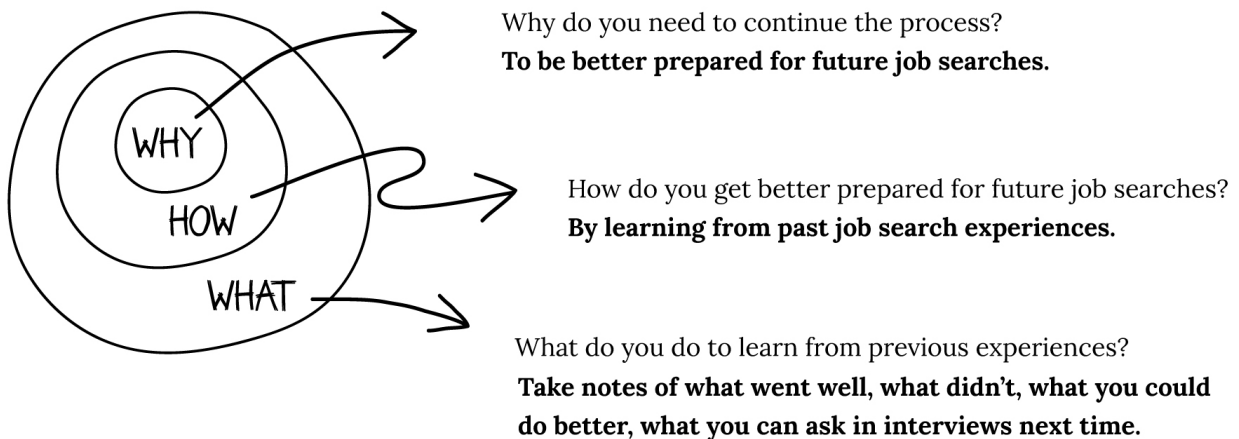
$\longrightarrow$ What your value proposition is, so you have better clarity of how you can help the company, and how you can improve your skills as well.

$\longrightarrow$ How to communicate your value proposition in your LinkedIn. This platform is useful not only to find jobs, but to use as a diary to track your progress, a source of information about your industry, and a place to meet people you can learn from. Having a well-crafted value proposition in your LinkedIn will help you attract the right information and people.

$\longrightarrow$ How to conquer interviews. It doesn't have to be interviews. It can be meetings. Go to meetings well prepared. Know what to say and ask. The advice I give for interviews applies to meetings too.

Start with why

The last Golden Circle can look like this:

Why do you need to continue the process?
To be better prepared for future job searches.

How do you get better prepared for future job searches?
By learning from past job search experiences.

What do you do to learn from previous experiences?
Take notes of what went well, what didn't, what you could do better, what you can ask in interviews next time.

Your user story

Here's an idea:

> **As a professional who has just finished a job interview,**
>
> **I want to understand what went well, what didn't, and what I can do better next time,**
>
> **so that I can have a better experience in the future.**

Your deliverable

You've reached the last step of the roadmap: continue the process. Your deliverable here is a checklist that will help you reflect on the experience. Take time to write down the following:

- This is what went well in the interview:
- This is what didn't go well:
- This is what I could have done better:
- This is what I can ask in a future interview:

You completed all the steps!

Remember: The Six-Step Cycle is a process that never ends. You'll always be in one of these steps. The more you go through it, the better you'll get at it.

After reading this book, you have the knowledge. Now work on developing the ability and the experience!

But before I let you go...

Your epic

An epic is another project management tool used in Agile. It is a large piece of work that, in order to be completed, needs to be broken down into smaller pieces: user stories. This is a very simplistic way of explaining it, since there is much more to it. But for the purpose of this idea, it's enough.

Your epic: Get the job that allows you to have the life you want

The user stories to help you achieve that goal:

Create a clear vision

As a professional looking for a job

I want to have a crystal clear vision of the job I need

so that I can have the lifestyle I want.

Craft your value proposition

As a professional looking for a *specific* job in a *specific* company,

I want to craft a clear value proposition,

So that I can increase my chances of getting an interview.

Communicate your value proposition

As a professional looking for a specific job in a specific industry

I want to make it easy for companies to understand how I can help them,

So I can increase my chances of getting an interview.

Call for the opportunities

As a professional looking for a specific job,

I want to call for job opportunities in jobs I'm interested in,

So I can increase my chances of getting an interview and eventually the job I dream of.

Conquer the interview

As a professional going to a job interview

I want to confidently express what I know, and ask what I'd like to know about the company,

so that I can either be invited to continue with the process, or realize early on that this job is not for me.

Continue the process

As a professional who has just finished a job interview

I want to understand what went well, what didn't, and what I can do better next time

so that I can have a better experience in the future.

After reading this book, I hope you can see how only focusing on the search part of the process (writing a CV and applying for jobs) is not enough. There are other steps that shouldn't be ignored.

The truth is that both professionals and companies do lots of things through intuition, out of habit. They just do things the way they've always been done. Most of them aren't aware of this, and when you aren't aware of what you are doing, you can't improve it, you can't communicate it.

I hope that now you are aware.

I hope you know and remember the six steps involved in the process.

And I hope the not-so-pleasant feelings are gone, and that you can say:

I feel empowered and confident when I have to look for a job, because I know exactly what to do in each step of the process!

Happy job search!

How I can help you

Today, if you don't evolve fast and adapt, you will be replaced by a robot or software.

The key to staying relevant in the changing world of work, especially in technology, is to be an intrapreneur. Being an intrapreneur means being in control of your career, being adaptable and constantly generating opportunities for yourself.

Job hunting (what we looked at in this book) is part of being an intrapreneur, but it is just that: a small part.

In my coaching sessions, I guide you to:

$\longrightarrow$ Find, define and communicate your value proposition. Together, we identify your unique strengths and develop a clear and compelling message that resonates with employers, communicate it effectively and ensure it is noticed.

$\longrightarrow$ Explore tools and strategies to help you adapt to constant change.

$\longrightarrow$ Develop key skills such as critical thinking and assertive communication to maximize your impact in any organization.

$\longrightarrow$ Plan your career. We start by identifying your career goals and mapping out a strategic plan to achieve them.

$\longrightarrow$ Understand the job market. We analyze market trends and identify the areas of greatest demand and opportunity.

$\longrightarrow$ Generate opportunities. We explore strategies to innovate within your company, expand your professional network, seek development opportunities and advance your career.

My talent lies in helping you discover and present your talent in the best possible way. As a talent acquisition expert, I understand the challenges companies face and what they are looking for in candidates. This dual perspective allows me to bridge the gap between your skills and the needs of companies. If you're ready to take a step forward in your career, [book a call with me.](#) I'm here to help you!

How I can help you

THE SIX-STEP CYCLE

Your Guide to Getting Your Dream Job
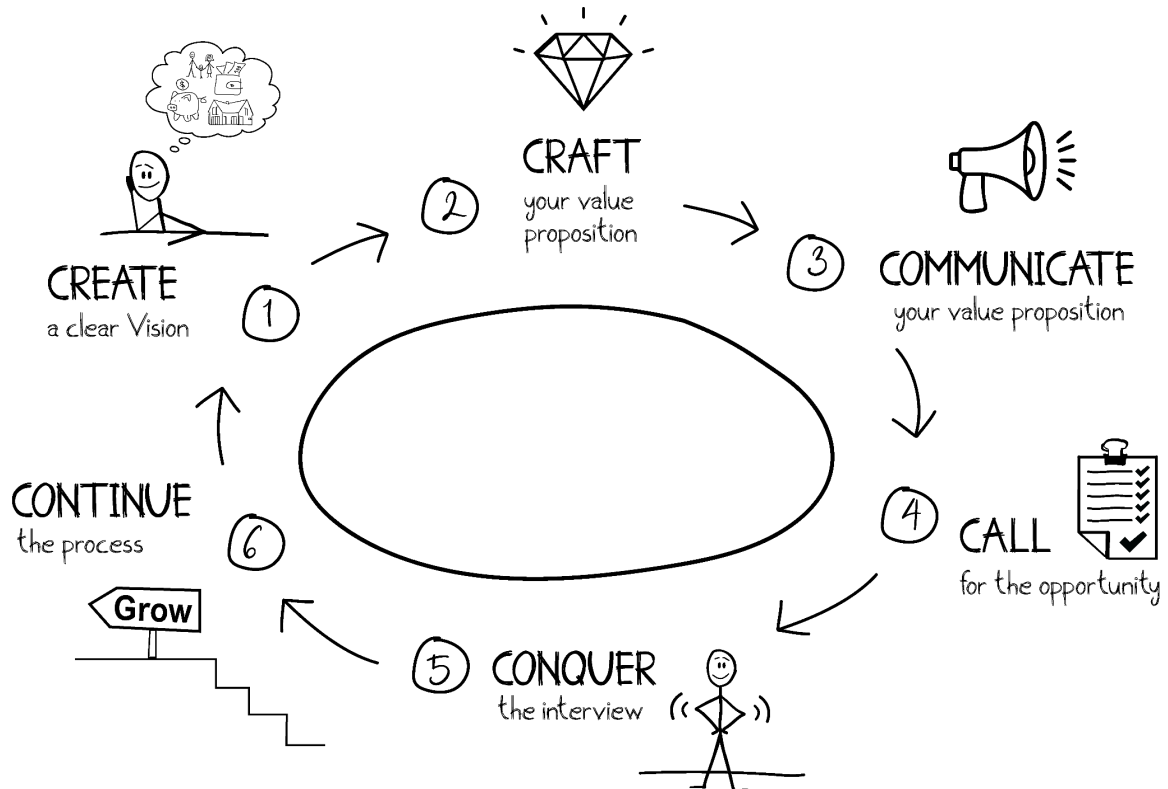
I hope that after reading this book, you know exactly what six steps you need to take to get the job you want, and that you remember them in years to come.

All the best in your job search!

Santi López Guiñazú