SPOTLIGHT

ONWARD

...the doors are open

January 2021

Professional Association of Résumé Writers & Career Coaches

From HQ

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> "Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act. There is no other route to success."
>
> -Pablo Picasso

I recently read that instead of New Years Resolutions we should enact instead "Goal Setting" at the New Year. That really resonated with me because Resolutions can seem like there is something wrong with a person. But Goal Setting can help us to achieve what we want from our careers and businesses and perhaps even personally.

One of our goals for 2020 was to host an in-person conference in the Fall. We had to make the hard choice to put those plans aside as we watched, along with all of you, the pandemic events unfold. However, we also watched, along with all of you, how it is possible to still create vibrant, exciting opportunities even under these circumstances.

To that end, I'm happy to share that we are looking forward to **THRIVE 2021!** Developing Opportunities, Advancing Excellence, April 20 - 21.

We wrestled to create a theme that was respectful of the struggles that many have had this past year, the incredible value our membership can add for job seekers across the globe, and the indefatigable spirit of the members we have met this year.

Having moved well past our milestone of our 2,000th member this year, we feel "Thrive" captures what our members are feeling about their vocation in the new year. We hope you will join us in celebrating excellence, recognizing our strengths, and embracing opportunities in front of us.

We are stronger together.

In This Issue

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Certifications: PARW/CC offers certifications in Résumé Writing (CPRW), Interview Training (CEIP), Career Coaching (CPCC), and Career Empowerment & Motivational Professional (CEMP). These three credentials represent the majority of a client's career needs. Certification demonstrates that you have tested and met the industry's standards to provide these services. As you add these certifications, members tell us that they book more client business and can also charge a higher fee.

The Spotlight: This monthly publication is full of excellent educational articles, written by experienced professionals. You will receive a reminder at the e-mail you provide on the website when the Spotlight is released to the website.

Submission Guidelines

Article Topics: Any subject related to résumé writing, interviewing, and/or career coaching, including: Sales & Marketing, Management, Pricing, Formats, Interview Techniques, Profit Centers, Internet and Technology Resources and Techniques, etc.

Feature Article Length: 1,000 word maximum.

Submissions Format: Set in Word or Pages. Please do not apply any formatting (no tabs, indents, bullets, lines, forced spacing, etc.). You may use the return key and bold to differentiate paragraphs and headings but please keep the font and the size the same throughout. Avoid using ALL CAPS.

IMAGES: We will happily source relevant images, but if providing your own, they must be a minimum of 1MB in file size. Include them as attachments, not embedded in the document. Embedding in the document reduces their quality. Images with a file size of KB are not acceptable. Note: All images become the property of PARW.

The PARW/CC Spotlight is published monthly by The Professional Association of Résumé Writers & Career Coaches. We invite our readers to submit articles and materials pertinent to the industry for publication in The Spotlight. Send correspondence and article submissions to:
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DEVELOPING OPPORTUNITIES

THRIVE! 2021

ADVANCING EXCELLENCE

April 20 & 21

PARWCC's Thrive! 2021 embraces the accelerated pace of change in our industry. There's never been a better time to come together, share mind shifts, and new practices as we plot the industry's path into uncharted territory and historic need. Be in the room as we adapt and emerge on the cutting edge of our essential profession.

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Acronyms and Jargon Can be Great KPIs

Acronyms and jargon are much more than kinds of “abbreviations.” They are almost languages all by themselves.

We should use those “languages” as best we can. After all, clients pay us to employ language very powerfully to make their value visible and irresistible. Want to do that very well? Let’s start with acronyms. Go far beyond just thinking of them as collections of letters. Use them to evoke emotion and make strong cultural connections fast.

We must be articulate when we speak “acronym,” if we are to use that “language” to communicate with our clients, and on their behalves, very well.

We must know the culture the acronyms represent, what deeper meanings they have for decision makers.

That was as true two thousand years ago as it is today. You may see one of the oldest acronyms when you look at a crucifix.

Above Jesus’ head are these letters INRI. That acronym stood, in Latin, for I: IESVS = Jesus, N: NAZARENVS = Nazarene, R: REX = King, I = IVDÆORVM : of the Jews. The connotation was just the opposite of the literal meaning, the denotation.

Even then, there was another, older, powerful acronym: SPQR: Senatus PopulusQue Romanus. Translated literally is means “The Senate and People of Rome.”

But the connotations were far more powerful. Even the illiterate knew what those letters stood for. If you were a Roman citizen, they represented rights, power, and influence. If you were a Jew living in Judea, they meant oppression, tyranny, cruelty.

Because the acronyms are much more valuable than just some kind of shorthand, understanding them and using them well offers great payoffs for you, your practice, and your clients.

Jargon, too, can be a two-edged sword. It does more than make conversation in a culture more efficient. It establishes affiliation and credibility. It implies wisdom. But that only happens when we use it on our clients' behalf properly to connect with potential hiring officials and mentors.

However, use jargon, even "correctly," with people outside the group and the effect is just the opposite. Listeners become confused and embarrassed. **Communication is derailed.**

Two examples spring to mind: doctors and lawyers. That's not pejorative. It's a fact of life. Attorneys are so used to, so bound by, court-tested language, they lapse it without thinking. Doctors fall into the same trap.

Avoid that snare even before you start to write. Ask these questions:

1. Who will read your words?
2. What do you want them to do as a result?
3. Will unfamiliar jargon and acronyms torpedo your client's success?

Could your words immediately redline the résumé, cover letter, and LinkedIn profile you worked so hard to write and for which your client paid considerable money?

Cover letters addressed to the true hiring decision maker are more effective when you fold in acronyms and jargon naturally. A covering email using that approach, addressed to an HR professional, could stop the conversation before it began if your client wasn't an HR professional herself.

Use acronyms and jargon as marketing tools. Our clients make their first impressions in minutes. That's also true when we communicate with potential clients. Use their acronyms and jargon appropriately and you'll form an instant bond.

An example may help. A Navy Captain reached out to ask me how I might help him transition to a civilian career that would be as successful as his time on active duty. After I visited his LI profile, I wrote back to him: "I agree: you really have been successful! Were you promoted BTZ?"

Here's what those words meant to him: instantly, almost subconsciously. "This guy knows my culture. He knows when every officer who signed up in a given year would usually have been promoted. When he saw my rank and dates, he knew at once I moved up faster than others. That's why he asked me if I had been promoted BTZ ("Below the Zone)."

I'll spare you the details but being below the zone means the Navy put him in the top few percent. So, when he said he was promoted BTZ, I responded: "BZ!" (Spoken as "Bravo Zulu"). That's Navy lingo for "well done!"

Acronyms, used in the right context, help me build trust right away. You can do the same. Learn how people in your target markets speak and think.

Professional organizations—those composed of, and serving the needs of, a given career field—can help. Visit their websites. Scan their trade journals. You'll find both sprinkled with jargon and acronyms. The context will guide you to use both in the right ways.

Acronyms are the ultimate "KEY WORDS" ... they truly connect

Come across an acronym you don't understand? Here's a great starting point:
https://www.acronymfinder.com/

Don't just read the "definition." Enter it in your browser to find examples of it in use. Then make that acronym a search term to learn even more. Soon you'll be speaking your clients' languages almost like a native. See how it appears in news stories and commentaries.

Acronyms are growing very fast in our industry as the C-suite expands. Our clients come to us using those acronyms without thinking twice.

Please don't be embarrassed by asking them for a definition. Granted, these meanings are not set in stone. Worse yet, some acronyms that appear identical are very different. My CIO is a Chief Innovation Officer. That's something quite different from a CIO who is a Chief Information Officer. Looking through my records last year, I found myself serving a CDO (Chief Data Officer), a CXO (Chief Experience Officer), and a CCO (Chief Culture Officer).

When your clients slip into jargon and acronyms, ask what they mean, not just in denotation but in connotation as well.

Sometimes the subtly will amaze you. Here in the South, we use this phrase often: "Bless his heart!"

Sounds like a compliment doesn't it? Here's what it really means: "That person isn't too bright!"

Acronyms are the ultimate "key words;" they truly connect. They are far more powerful than the usual collection of traits and adjectives that apply to every career field under the sun. Acronyms build credibility. **They built trust.**

The effect can be dramatic when your documents go directly to the hiring decision makers, as you know they should.

Therefore, make your clients part of your QA (you know: Quality Assurance) system. Ask them to be sure you're using their jargon and acronyms correctly.

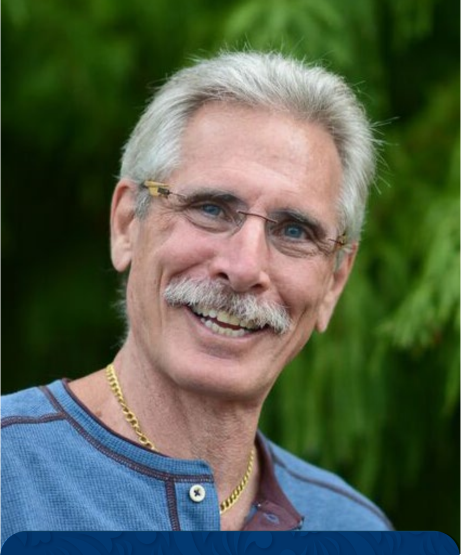
A senior prison warden reminded of that recently after I drafted his package. I had used the words "convict" and "inmate" interchangeably in his résumé and cover letter. My client was quick to correct me.

In his world, "inmate" means snitch. To many, it's a derogatory term. "Convicts," on the other hand, feel they rule the roost. They live by the "Convict Code," a set of social conventions where the slightest misstep can be deadly. An inmate just wants to serve his time; a convict will kill you if he ever gets the chance.

If the warden hadn't caught my error, the style of his documents wouldn't line up with his background. I would have sowed doubt when I was supposed to be helping him build credibility. He would never have made it to the interview. (And yes, he did get the job.)

Did I violate my own rule when I introduced an undefined acronym in the title? If I did, it was to reinforce how to use acronyms well.

If you use acronyms and jargon well, you'll have great Key Performance Indicators.
You know: KPIs.



Attention Leaders of Higher Education:

It's Time To Be Part of the Solution

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Try to imagine a company like Pfizer investing 17 years and millions of dollars, successfully developing a drug to cure cancer, but having no marketing plan. Or imagine, if you will, Ford Motor Company spending 17 years and millions of dollars, developing self-driving automobiles – with no marketing plan when they come rolling off the assembly line.

You can't. In fact, you'd expect these companies to have exciting, kick-ass marketing campaigns in place to achieve their goals. Yet, leaders of higher education in America don't understand this.

For the typical person in the US, the scholastic assembly line begins with kindergarten (maybe pre-school), and continues through high school – 13+ years. Then college is next, requiring another several years and tens, if not, hundreds of thousands of dollars more. Then, the student comes rolling off the scholastic assembly line as a new college grad.

Yet, the vast majority of graduates have no clue what to do next. They have no inkling how to secure the jobs they went to school to attract, or how to manage their careers throughout their lives. *There is no marketing plan.*
—It's beyond irrational—

Leaders of higher education help create the demand: if we don't go to college, we won't amount to much. They eagerly take our money without regard to consequence and thus, student debt is at a staggering all-time high. And they require a multi-year commitment and investment in time and money to attain a degree. For all of this, we receive a nicely framed parchment diploma and a cap and gown.

After some 17 years on the scholastic assembly line, students come rolling off as exciting, valuable new products, with absolutely no idea and no training on how best to:
1) leverage their education
2) optimize their wisdom, and
3) secure employment over a lifetime to build wealth
and live rich and rewarding lives.

The vast majority of graduates have no clue what to do next.

The Only Reason We Invest in Higher Education

The only reason most people attend college or university is to enable them to secure better jobs. Yes, there's sex, drugs, alcohol, rock n' roll, and all those sideshows. But in the end, the investment of time and money in higher education is made for only one reason: to land better jobs at better pay – over a lifetime. **Period!**

In my case, by the time I entered the University of New Hampshire (UNH), I had been on the scholastic assembly line for 13 years (K-12). I knew how to read, write, and learned enough math to know how to budget and build a net worth.

The only reason I went to college, was to gain additional wisdom that would lead to better job opportunities and greater pay. And yet, when I graduated UNH in 1976, I had no idea how to write a résumé or secure employment. I never entered or even contacted the campus career resource center and they never contacted me. So I struggled badly because I was never taught how to conduct an exciting, upbeat job campaign. I was left to search and hunt on my own – activities full of fear and pain. And my struggles lasted for more years than I care to admit.

Sadly, the Most Underutilized Department on Campus

The numbers are all over the place, but most research indicates that fewer than 20% of all students ever visit their college career resource facility. However, conflicting statistics run rampant. For instance, NACE, the National Association of Colleges and Employers, states, "Among the Class of 2017, 85.6 percent of students who had begun the job search had visited the career center—either at its office or on its website." But hold on – how can this possibly be impressive?

According to NACE, some 85.6% of graduating students "visited" the school's career resource website for a short time or spent a few minutes with a career advisor. After 17 (+/-) years of attending classes, doing homework, taking tests, cramming for finals, stressing over grades, report card anxiety, time spent in detention, filling out applications for college, and the crushing cost to attend higher education ***…the marketing plan for 85.6% of students consists of an inconsequential visit to the website or an advisor?***

Excuses and Stagnation

"Jay, the problem is, if you think it's political in Washington DC, it's worse in higher education. It takes 7 committees and 4 years to change anything, including a light bulb."

This comment was stated to me a few years ago by a well-respected Michigan leader in higher education. But I have heard this over and over again stated in different language throughout the years.

But here's what is exciting. Higher education could lead the charge in changing how we all perceive the workplace—how to enter and thrive in it. **Here's how:**
There must be a mandatory semester-long career management course required before anyone graduates and receives a diploma; one that is marketing, not search driven.

A Word about Freshman English

In May of 2020, The Best Schools posted an online article: College Courses That Should Be Mandatory: (). They include: Nutrition, Automobile Maintenance, Budgeting, Cooking, First Aid, Etiquette, Insurance, Negotiating, Social Media Safety, Stress Management, Taxes, Survival Skills.

Ah, survival skills.
Is career / workplace management not a survival skill? Where is the one critical course that instructs all academic graduates – high school and above – how to master the skill of workplace management? How to optimize one's investment in education?

When I attended UNH (back in the 70's), I was required to take Freshman English. I believe most institutions still require Freshman English for a 4-year program (bachelor's degree). Even if one is not majoring in English. Why?

To be accepted into UNH, I had to take the standardized SATs. As you know, one of the two SAT exams is English. I was accepted into UNH because, among other attributes, my SAT scores were acceptable. Including English! So why did I need to take Freshman English?

Why not eliminate Freshman English, move this open slot to the junior or senior year – and transition it from Freshman English to:

How to Attract and Keep Good Jobs?
Career Management For a Lifetime.

Give a Fish – Teach How To Fish

College grads experience a number of emotions when they graduate. The first is excitement. Then comes fear. For many, sheer terror. Once the pomp and circumstance is over, feelings of loss, uncertainty, and inadequacy of knowing how to confidently market themselves replaces excitement. **Fear rules!**

Over the decades, most college and university career centers prided themselves on giving students a fish, rather than teaching them how to fish. They would bring employers on campus to help match students to jobs. What ever happened to teaching students how to fish – how to take personal responsibility, incorporate discipline, and plan and execute their own exciting and proactive job campaigns?

What is Job Search?

It's long past the time when we need to view the job search not as a search or a hunt, but as a well-run marketing campaign. Most universities have business schools and most colleges have business programs that address marketing and marketing strategies. And marketing classes teach specific methodologies and processes to effectively and confidently promote, market, and sell products and services in competitive free market arenas.

And isn't this what we want college grads to do upon graduation: to use specific strategies and processes to effectively and confidently promote, market, and sell themselves in competitive free market arenas – to land great jobs at good pay?

The Consequences Are Staggering

We graduate college, but have NOT been taught self-marketing skills to ensure we land great jobs. As a consequence…

We accept jobs we'd rather not work at.
We have too much month at the end of the money – and have to live with our parents.

We remain in toxic and demeaning jobs because we have no idea how to get out of them.

We work with bosses who under-appreciate and underpay us, but we suck it up and remain unhappily in them because we have no idea how to change our destiny.

We place our health and relationships in jeopardy because we are miserable at work and it's hard to be a loving, upbeat person after a day of hell in the office.

The consequences?

Author Neal Donald Walsch might have said it best.

"By the age of 40 or 50, most people have given up on their grandest dreams, set aside their highest hopes, and have settled for their lowest expectations or nothing at all."

This is NOT why we send our children to institutions of higher education!

Initial Recommendations:

All colleges and universities must mandate a full semester course be taken in self -marketing / career management - for a lifetime.

The program must be presented by professionals who understand branding, value propositions, and how to conduct exciting, proactive job campaigns (not searches).

The process / curriculum must be understood and supported by alumni associations, to help alumni in the workplace well after college.

It's time for higher education to step up to the plate and to play the key role it was meant to play, i.e., to ensure all graduating students are well equipped, scholastically to land great jobs and most importantly, to show them how to land and keep them. It's time leaders of higher education became part of the solution.

Please Note: This essay is directed at top leaders of higher education and not career resource center directors and staff. I have consistently acknowledged and honored career resource center efforts, despite underwhelming support from leadership.

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Plan for Contingency Planning

Typically January 1 is a day for proclaiming New Year's Resolutions and making goals for the New Year.

The Oxford Dictionary states that a resolution is:

a firm decision to do or not to do something;
the quality of being determined or resolute.

Resolution means determination, purpose, decision, intent, aim. Many people resolve to lose weight, start exercising, start or finish an educational degree or certification, launch a businesses, start a family, save money to purchase a house, and more, at the beginning of a new year. A majority of New Year's resolutions are never met.

Don't just declare a resolution, rather write goals and resolutions – and write the action plan. Plans, especially business plans are important for those that own career coaching businesses.

Plans in 2020

One thing I learned about planning for things / events / desires / "your special word" in 2020 – is have a contingency plan. I planned to get married – we selected June 20, 2020 as our wedding date. It was the summer solstice and my husband loves solstices and all things lunar – so it made perfect sense to select that 'perfect date' for our wedding. I printed 'save the date' cards with the wedding date of June 20, 2020 – and sent them to 95 people. I ordered stemless wine glasses that would serve as the glasses for all beverages. I created a logo with our initials and the eternity sign, and included the date, June 20, 2020. I purchased napkins with the date of June 20, 2020 and used the same Diane & Mike logo. I purchased wedding invitations with the date, June 20, 2020.

Then, Covid-19 struck. And because the lockdowns were still in motion in late May and everything was so uncertain, we decided to move the wedding date to August 8, 2020. Instead of purchasing new invitations, glasses, and napkins, I sent the original invitations with a note that said our wedding date was changed to 8/8/2020. We asked people to call or text us to RSVP. We told our invited guests that we would keep them informed if the date needed to be changed again.

As the date neared, we monitored California's rules for gatherings. The host was an epidemiologist, so we let him make the final call to hold the event in his yard, or not. I did not change the glasses or the napkins. We decided, that in our hearts, June 20, 2020 was our "special" wedding date.

Most of the guests that had originally planned to attend who were from out of state, did not attend. Our elderly parents were not able to attend. So, the number of attendees went from 93 to 40. *I will tell you – that not a single person cared that the glasses, invitations, napkins, or other printed materials said June 20, 2020 during our wedding on 8/8/2020. All in attendance were there to celebrate the moment.*

What I did learn – is that it is important to be flexible in life, adaptable, and have a contingency plan. None of the changes in our life, work, or wedding were controllable, due to Covid this past year. What was controllable, were our attitudes and contingency plans.

Contingency Plans

We moved the wedding date from June to August, and we made a decision to get married on August 8, 2020 no matter what. We monitored the Governor's mandates for gatherings – and certainly we did not want to put anyone in health jeopardy.

We laughed a bit, cried and fussed a bit, and decided to move on. We developed contingency plans:

Contingency 1: Move the date from June to August. Use the same items that were purchased for the June date.

Contingency 2: If the August date was scrubbed – we had two choices: get married at the same venue with only the hosts and preacher; or move to the beach, and get married with two friends and the preacher; and bring hotdogs and smores for the fire pit.

Contingency 3: Get married on August 8, 2020 and hold a reception in 2021.

The wedding was absolutely beautiful! And perfect, because we enjoyed every moment. We did not let circumstances control the day. We resolved to get married and be happy despite Covid and the circumstances of many of our family and friends not being able to attend. We had a Covid table at the entrance with masks, hand sanitizers, antibacterial wipes, and tissues.

Contingency Planning in Businesses

So, I realized, that contingency planning is just as important for business. Is there a back-up plan, if needed, if business is down?
Sixteen of my scheduled trainings were cancelled on March 17. That was just with one contractor. I was to travel all across the country to train job seekers and career coaches in career management, résumé writing, federal résumés and applications, and job search. I normally fly 100K flight miles a year.

In response, I shifted gears. I purchased new video equipment, ring lights, other bright lights, and learned various video platforms. I transformed the full-day in-person trainings to virtual trainings. Sounds easy – just teach in front of a computer screen, instead of in a class room. However, it is not easy at all.

Engagement is key. Without engagement, the class is bored, dissatisfied, and evaluations are lackluster. This is not to say that I am a stranger to leading online / virtual classes. However, when this is the only choice, and attendees are "zoom meeting-ed out", virtual classes are hard work.

I had to condense seven hours of live training into two- or three- hour virtual segments, with exercises and possible breakout rooms, fully engage the attendees, and ensure positive course evaluations.

So, instead of letting circumstances control the training situation, I shifted gears, adapted, and designed new on-line training options. I did not plan for this, but I adapted.

***Side note:** Several of the key competencies that I adopted this year, are key leadership competencies that I use with my executive leaders in the Senior Executive Service (SES). Those leadership competencies include adaptability, flexibility, resilience, strategic thinking, strategic planning, and vision.

Business Planning and $$

There are many other things we plan for in business that go off-course. Early in my business, I planned to pay my quarterly estimated taxes every quarter. My accountant, however, was not helping me estimate my taxes monthly, and as such, I ended up with a shocking tax bill at the end of the year.

I shifted my planning, and I hired a bookkeeper who reconciled my account and estimated taxes each month throughout the year. I learned how to save 30% of every dollar made into a designated account. At the end of the tax year, I am always within a $1000 window for taxes – and sometimes it is down to the penny, which is completely acceptable and doable. From these experiences, I adapted and learned to save 30% off-the-top, no matter what. If I make $100, I save $30. I transfer that money automatically – it is habit. If there are left over funds at the end of the year, I use that money in my business contingency account – for new equipment, web development, marketing, conferences, education/certifications, and other potential business expenses.

Also, for planning purposes, it is important to have an emergency savings – in case the printer or computer breaks.

Business Planning & Adjustments

It is important to set goals and map a written action plan. Within the action plan needs to be time for adjustments. The activities of the business need to be reviewed at certain times, e.g., when things happen, like Covid; at regular intervals to analyze Return on Investment (ROI), and make changes to marketing dollars and activities; at the end of the year to analyze ROI and make plans for the next business year.

As you evaluate activities and monies spent, prepare an action plan, and set goals, also reach out to a colleague, spouse, partner, or expert to be your accountability partner. I always ask for advice and guidance from those I trust and respect.

As you plan for 2021, remember to also plan for contingencies. Stuff happens that we cannot control – but we can certainly be prepared to adjust, shift gears, and take a new path. Our goals, or the way that we reach our goals may change a bit, but our vision will remain the same and only be enhanced.

If you decide to make a New Year's Resolution for 2021, claim the positive and reach for the stars.

| EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE |

As always, Best Wishes for a healthy, positive, and prosperous New Year!

PA
RW
CC

John Suarez
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Career Ready

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The Name of the Game

Vince was on a good run. He'd spent the last four years working as a corporate attorney with an early-stage tech company, and he wanted to leverage that experience to latch onto another rising star. Familiar with the pace and the all-encompassing legal jurisdiction required to advise the business owners through all phases of go-to-market preparation, Vince prided himself on being both an operations guy and a legal expert.

There was nothing extraordinary about the chronology of his career: his recent four-year stint, a previous four-year stint with a different high-profile law firm, and in between he had a cup of coffee as a contract attorney that served as a placeholder more than anything else. So we had plenty of ammunition to work with spanning his last 10 years of experience.

Outside of that, a few challenges emerged: **1)** there were several list-intensive elements; **2)** a one-page presentation would have been very crowded; and **3)** a second page would not have been very full using traditional margins and font sizes. This was the perfect recipe to try a two-column format.

If you're familiar with my work, you know that I tend to prefer horizontal lists because space can be more economized that way. But using a two-column format, I WANT the lists to extend vertically on the page (not necessarily in alphabetical order, although I chose to do that this time).

By using the smaller left-side column for three lists on the first page, and two lists on the second page, that information occupies a great deal more space. It also allows me to start the body of the résumé just to the left of center page, also occupying more overall space, but more importantly allowing me to frame only the most recent job experience on the first page.

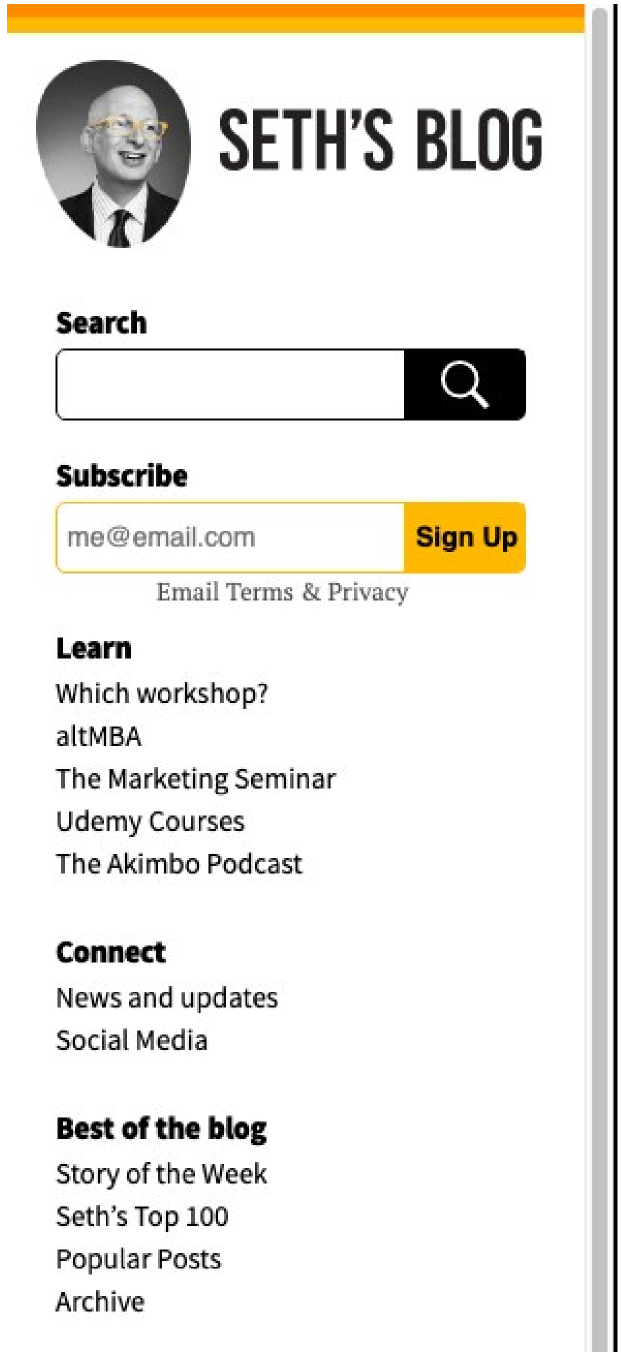
The short-tenure contract job that starts the second page is almost an afterthought, which is exactly what I want. I used arrows for the left-column bullets, with traditional rounded bullets in the right-side column. Throw in some shading, a little splash of color, and strategic use of both vertical and horizontal lines with a lot of justified text…just the right amount of spice to fill up two pages.

When I was finished, Vince actually wanted to see a one-column presentation as well. I was happy to oblige, but then I was back to horizontal lists and plain-Jane formatting. Perhaps the conservative leanings of the legal industry make this a better choice. For a two-column format, the original was pretty tame to begin with in my opinion. And besides…why do people still try so hard to fit in when the name of the game is learning how to stand out?

When the introduction of ATS systems almost demanded a more generic approach to résumé writing, those of us who were gut-punched had a hard time reconciling the desire to be creative with the new rules for doing what was best for the client. Those ATS systems in 2021 are now more sophisticated and capable of supporting formats that stray from vanilla formulas, sometimes quite dramatically. I'm going to spend more time playing that game this year.

In his December 17 blog post, Seth Godin uses the game of Monopoly to describe how some of that lost artistry can be reclaimed:

> *"We invent all sorts of trappings and decide that the trappings are our work. They're not. There are only a handful of games that most people decide to play... games that have boundaries, other players, connections and outcomes. You can switch from one set of trappings to another much more easily than you imagine, particularly if you focus on the basic building blocks of your game instead of the outward appearance. If someone takes away your playing piece, don't fall into the trap of deciding you can't play a game any longer. If someone tries to persuade you that the game is to make as much money as possible, realize that they need more insight and imagination. Whenever you can, it might pay to seek to create a game that works for you and for those you seek to serve. Because those games are the sustainable ones and the ones that you can play for a long time to come."*



Vince Utney, JD/MBA

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Key Skills/Practice Areas

- Commercial/Civil Litigation
- Contract Law
- Corporate Governance
- Data Analytics
- Document Review
- Employment Law
- Federal Securities Laws
- Indemnity
- Intellectual Property
- Internal Controls
- Legal Research/Writing
- Legal Strategy/Solutions
- Limitations of Liability
- Quarterly Reports
- Regulatory Compliance
- SaaS
- SOX 404
- Valuations
- Venture Capital

Business/Technical Strengths

- CaseLogistix
- Client Service
- Complex Assignments
- Debt/Equity Financing
- MS Office Suite
- Project Management
- Relativity eDiscovery
- Risk Management
- Strategic Planning
- Team Leadership
- Westlaw

Bar & Court Admissions

- State Bar of Michigan, 2009
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, 2013

Versatile Corporate Attorney | Business Advisor

- Recent experience as legal counsel for a software and professional services company that operates and invests in early and emerging startup cloud-based software companies.
- Highly collaborative and team-oriented; regularly interact with Boards, C-suite, sales & delivery teams, external/opposing counsel, audit/tax planning officials, and limited partners/investors.
- Early background in complex civil/commercial litigation with primary focus on securities fraud class actions and breach of contract disputes.
- Broad commercial knowledge; skilled at translating complicated legal language and issues into simple business terms.

Legal Highlights

- Successfully negotiated $5 million SaaS contract for a $3 billion fully-integrated Michigan health care delivery system.
- *Karmanos v. Compuware Corp.:* Achieved a $16.5 million judgment for wrongful termination and cancellation of vested stock options; the largest arbitration award for an employment case in Michigan history.
- Settled and released all claims for a potential $2 million age discrimination and retaliation suit; resolved dispute for $60,000.

Professional Experience

DOGMA TECHNOLOGY, LLC, Birmingham, MI | 2016 to Present
Venture operator and investor focused on creating and operating cloud-powered software businesses.

Legal Counsel | Oversee all company and affiliate corporate transactions, intellectual property, litigation, and corporate governance. Draft and review corporate contracts such as NDAs, SaaS agreements, master services agreements, referral and reseller agreements, and professional services contracts. Serve as Corporate Secretary to companies under the MadDog umbrella; oversee all internal and external compliance-related matters.

- Coordinated the formation of a ~$27 million venture capital fund, including addressing and securing insurance requirements and back-office efforts for initial rollout of capital call notices.
- Advised internal stakeholders on all legal aspects of making portfolio company investments (completed 10 to date); avoided >$300,000 in annual fees based on review, analysis and recommendation to avoid an unbreakable software license agreement.
- Created template Reseller and Referral Agreements from scratch, eliminating need and costs of involving outside counsel.
- Tailored website terms of use and privacy policies to specific company requirements.

Heidi Scott Giusto
PhD

Career Path
Writing Solutions

Start 2021 with a Strong LinkedIn Profile

LinkedIn is the networking platform for professionals. With 660 million individual users and 30 million businesses on the platform, it's safe to say a presence on LinkedIn is necessary for almost everyone. Here are tips you can use directly—or pass along to job seekers.

Develop a Clear Strategy

Many people have profiles on LinkedIn because ... they know they are supposed to. This strategy is not adequate. Simply put, there are too many opportunities in LinkedIn for professionals to sit on the sidelines.

Here are a few questions to help you or your clients and students develop a LinkedIn strategy:

- What is your goal for using LinkedIn? Getting a new job? Networking? Professional development?
- How often can you plan on actively using LinkedIn? Every day? Once a week?
- How will you grow and nurture your network?
- What topics will you post on? How will you ensure you post regularly and add value to your network? (Hint: creating a posting schedule can work wonders.)

Stay Current on New Sections and Other Features

LinkedIn made changes in 2020, so users should be aware of these updates to take full advantage of the platform. Overall, LinkedIn is trending toward becoming more of a mobile and content platform; it is best to not think of your LinkedIn profile as a static document or simply an "online résumé." Some of the more prominent changes include the following:

"Featured" section. This section helps make your profile more dynamic because you can "pin" posts, websites, and other media you would like to feature. This section appears directly below the "About" section, meaning it is prime real estate in your profile that appears even before your work experience.

Stories. In the mobile app, you can record and view Stories similar to Instagram Stories. This is a new way to share content using videos.

Name pronunciation. In the app only, LinkedIn users can record a pronunciation of their name but have the option to listen to the recording in both the mobile and desktop versions. This is particularly helpful to ensure proper pronunciation of a person's name when an online connection converts to a conversation or interview.

#OpentoWork profile photo banner. If you have not seen this feature yet, it is a green banner that encircles a user's profile photo with the words "#OpentoWork." I am not in love with this feature for two reasons. First, I've heard recruiters say that this banner does not influence whether they will look at a person's profile. So, at least in my small sample, it doesn't seem to prompt more views by people who are looking to fill roles. Second, it feels desperate to me. In the same way I don't instruct candidates to write "Actively seeking new opportunities" in the headline section immediately under the profi3le picture, I cannot yet promote use of this feature. I will continue to monitor it and perhaps change my mind later if I hear positive feedback. (Please reach out to me on LinkedIn to share your experience with this feature; I'd love to hear others' input.)

Enhance Visual Appeal

No one should have a visually boring profile! There are many easy ways to make a LinkedIn profile "pop" aesthetically. Here are a few:

Use a professional profile photo. This one is a must. Making sure you look professional and approachable is a key way to improve your profile. You can solicit unbiased feedback from sources like Photofeeler.

Frame your profile photo. A nice way to make your profile photo stand out is to add a border. The site Profile Picture Maker enables users to do just that.

Emphasize text using bold or italics. You can selectively choose words to make bold or italicize in your profile or posts by typing your text into a "fancy font generator" and then copying and pasting it into your profile. (There are many fancy font generators online.) You can also experiment with different fonts, but I recommend sticking with bold and italics. Less can be more with this approach; remember that if everything is in bold or italics, then nothing stands out.

Customize the background banner.

You can use a stock photo, a photo you've taken, or use a design tool to brand your background banner. Canva is a great tool that allows you to customize a background image and include text on it; there are countless design options using Canva's free version.

Takeaway

LinkedIn's newest features ensure that it will continue to offer incredible value to active users, even for the majority of people who do not pay for a Premium account. The suggestions above merely touch on the ways either you or your clients and students can use the platform to stand out from the crowd in the year ahead.

"You can call me dude or keep the poneytail . . . pick one."

There is
no scarcity of
OPPORTUNITY
to make a
living at what you
LOVE;
resolve then to
Make. It. Happen.

Happy New Year!