



The Careers Coach FREE E-Book

By Greg Fry



Contents

| | |
|--|----------------|
| <i>The Diary of a Successful Job Seeker.....</i> | <i>Page 3</i> |
| <i>Mr Topsy Turvy's Job Rant.....</i> | <i>Page 5</i> |
| <i>Job seekers- What are you doing to stand above the competition?. Page 7</i> | |
| <i>Is Your CV getting you Interviews?.....</i> | <i>Page 9</i> |
| <i>Interview Preparation.....</i> | <i>Page 11</i> |
| <i>How Far would you go to get your cv noticed?.....</i> | <i>Page 13</i> |
| <i>10 Networking Tips.....</i> | <i>Page 14</i> |
| <i>Contact Careers Coach.....</i> | <i>Page 16</i> |

The Diary of a Successful Job Seeker

I was **hit for six** when I found out I was been made redundant. I think I went into **complete shock** for about 6 weeks. I had been with my company for 3 years and in many ways had become a bit lethargic.



When I awoke from my dormant subdued “shock” phase **real anger** and resentment set in. Why me?...Poor me...Damn them. After a week of raging anger.....**Fear and anxiety** arrived. What if I cannot find another job? I am not getting any younger. How am I going to support my family? By this stage I was completely crippled by my own fear. Every ounce of energy I had was sucked into the Fear vacuum. My lack of motivation and my appetite for dreadful day time TV was mind boggling.

About a month later it dawned on me....It was not the Fear that was holding me back, it was the fact that my life had **no direction, no shape.....No Structure!**

From birth we are shaped into a routine and that never stops. Remember your childhood? School starts at 9am, finishes at 3.30pm, PE on a Wednesday, Dinner at 6, The park on a Sunday, bed by 8pm. Our routine changes somewhat as we grow up, but our reliance on it doesn't. I remember my last job – I had to be out the door by 8.15pm to catch the 8.20am train. I methodically checked my emails first thing and finished my day off with sales calls (which I hated by the way). I knew where I stood.

So what is my point?

Well I realised that in order to get moving again...**I needed to structure my day** and I created a rigid routine (well not overly rigid).

So what did I do?

- I **set some ground rules**. No TV on between 9am until 5pm. (Many day time sporting events were sacrificed). I ditched the kitchen table as an office and **dedicated a space specifically to work**. In fact I made myself a little office space behind the TV.(so there was no way I could look at it). This made a big difference as I was not conveniently distracted by laundry or dirty dishes that urgently needed washing.
- Bizarrely, one of my favourite times of the day was when I was commuting to and from work. This was when I planned my day and got my head focused on the tasks that lay ahead. On my way home I had the opportunity to switch off. So I started to get into the habit of going for a 30 minute walk every morning. I **grabbed some fresh air and planned my day**. At the end of the day I would go out for a quick walk around the local park and celebrate my day's successes and leave my disappointments behind. This not only made me feel much better in myself, but also lead to a much **happier household**. – I was more relaxed with my wife and children.



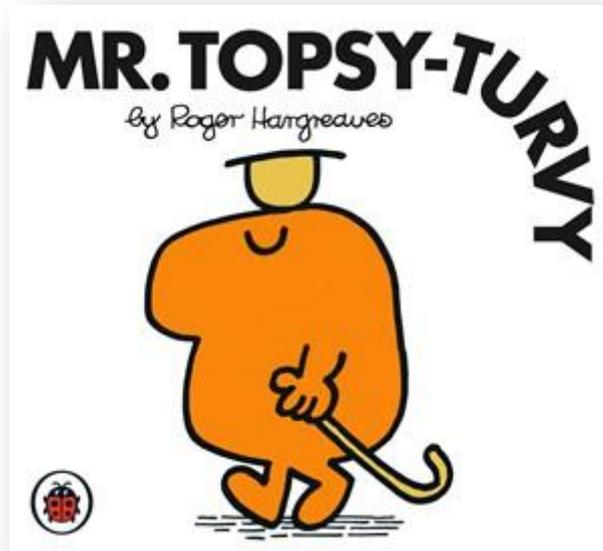
- I actually treated my job seeking seriously. I **became a proactive job seeker**. I attended networking events. I met with agencies face to face and I spent time targeting employers and sending off speculative applications. I also ensured that every application I made was followed up with a phone call. I built a **weekly timetable** and stuck to a routine.
- **I was persistent**.....many days I had to push myself to get out of bed and did not feel like being a job seeker that day. But I did it and was always grateful for my persistence at the end of the day.

Now I must confess my new routine only lasted 3.5 weeks, as after 5 months of unemployment I was offered a new job opportunity. Believe it or not an even better one than before. So I am now happily adopting a new routine. Bring on the drinks this Friday;)

Mr. Topsy Turvy's Job Rant

I have started to read my two little boys the Mr. Men books at bedtime. They love them and it gives me a chance to reminisce about my childhood, as I also loved them. However last night something happened to me that has never happened before.....**I had my very first Mr. Man dream.**

Freaky stuff I hear you say. Well yes, but it was a fascinating dream too. Let me tell you about it.



The dream was about a character [Mr. Topsy Turvy](#) who gets everything mixed up, upside down, inside out and back to front. (not surprisingly the very story I read the children last night). Mr Topsy Turvy lives in Happyland and seems to cause havoc everywhere he goes. He greets people he meets by saying **“Morning Good”** and wears his hat upside-down.

So anyway my dream...like Ireland the **economic climate in Happyland was challenging** to say the least and jobs were hard to find. Mr. Topsy Turvy had been **looking for employment for over 6 months** and had not had any luck. He was starting to get frustrated and even angry with his job search. His confidence was low and he was starting to feel depressed. He avoided his neighbours Mr. Happy and Mr. Nosey at all costs. One day when having a cup of tea with Mr. Muddle he decided to write a letter to the local newspaper about his job search and the lack of support he was getting. It would be the **perfect opportunity to get the anger and frustration off his chest.**

So he sat down and wrote his letter-

“To Mr. Chatterbox – the Editor of the Happyland Gazette,

I haven't been looking for a job for 6 months now. There seems to be **job opportunities everywhere.** There is a point going to recruitment agencies, after all they have vacancies to fill. I feel that they are not only looking after themselves and that they really care about me. The newspapers even have jobs advertised that I want and that I am qualified to do. Job boards seem to have unique and **up to date jobs and hundreds of them.**

People are not talking about networking not all of the time. **I know how to network. I like talking to strangers.** I do know even how to start. I think it is for me. And what's with this "Media Social"? It can help me with my job search. InLink, Bookface and Tertwit are not time consuming and are a complete use of my time.

I am a great interviewer. I always get excited about them. I believe I will get offered the job based on my great interview skills.

Get me stated on the government, the government is useful and is doing everything it can.

I wake up every day happy and motivated and always leave the house. I really love job seeking and believe I have been given an opportunity to look for something new. At this rate I am going to find a job forever.

Please don't publish this.

Regards Kind,

Mr. Topsy Turvy"

So that is my dream, the letter was published and it acted as a great motivator to the job seekers of Happyland. **Mr Topsy Turvy was hired** by the gazette as an Economic journalist and Happyland is now officially out of recession.

Okay so the letter is quite hard to read and Mr. Topsy Turvy didn't say what he meant to say. However what he has said is what most job seekers should believe if they are going to be successful about their job search. In the current market "**Positive Attitude**" is a vital ingredient in every job search success. We cannot control the economy or even how the government deals with these challenging times, but we can control our beliefs and how we view our world.

So why don't you take the Topsy Turvey approach to job seeking?

Job seekers: what are you doing to stand above the competition?

Okay it's competitive out there, lots of talent and not an abundance of jobs. That said... there are jobs and I have noticed more activity in the marketplace that I did in 2009. So if you are prepared to put the hard work into your job search success is likely to follow.



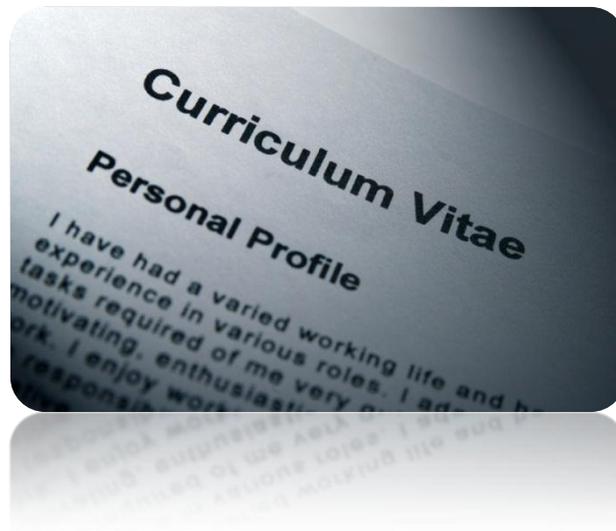
I had a recent conversation with two recruitment managers who work for leading multinational companies on what separates a great from a good candidate. Both mentioned that for every role they have to fill they will have at least 5 excellent candidates that are equally strong on paper. Very often after interviewing they are still faced with a dilemma of who is the best candidate for the job.

So how do they decide? Here are 3 things they look for:

#1. Passion

This can be difficult to get across in a CV or cover letter, however it is vital that you demonstrate enthusiasm for both the company and position at interview stage. Many recruiters have mentioned to me that they have been very disappointed with the attitude, poor body language and a lack of eye contact that many candidates display at interview. Often the candidate with the strongest cv loses out to a more enthusiastic upbeat candidate. So, go to an interview with a smile and with the same **excitement** as you would have if you were off to see your favourite band or football team play! It's not a funeral folks; **this could be the beginning of a new beginning!**

Is Your CV getting you Interviews?



You may be the most qualified person for the job and excellent at interview, but if your CV is not opening doors for you....you have little or no chance of securing that job. A **CV is without doubt one of the most important tools in a job seekers arsenal!** It amazes me what little effort many people put into creating such an important document. Very often I see CVs that have been thrown together in a hurried frenzy years ago. Then to make a poor CV worse, the job seeker attaches a few lines of their most recent job and thinks their new CV is complete.

So **how good is your CV?** Is it doing it's job and getting you interviews? If the answer is no maybe it is time to give your CV a serious makeover.

Read your CV as if you are the Employer and ask yourself this question – Would I interview this person based on the information on the CV? Very often the answer is no and that is your cue to give your cv the time and attention it needs to stand out in this highly competitive marketplace.

Here are some points to consider while you give your CV that makeover:

- 1.** Who you are and what personal traits you have. What qualifications and key skills you have to **offer** the employer.
- 2.** Put a **profile** at the beginning your CV. I think this can be a great way to grab your reader's attention and I often refer to the profile as your sign post. It will highlight your unique selling points, your level of experience and your desire for the job you are applying to.

3. What separates you from everyone else? What have been **your achievements in previous jobs** and what are your **unique selling points**? 9 times out of 10 the CVs I read state the job worked, the company, the amount of time they were in the position and their duties and responsibilities. The duties and responsibilities could be taken directly from the job description and tells the reader nothing about you. However add in some key achievements that you made and suddenly your CV becomes more interesting.

4. Start with your **most recent work experience first**. Don't let the newspaper boy job be the first thing an employer sees when looking at your cv. Start with your most current job and work backwards. The same should apply to your education.

5. Read your CV and ask yourself this question. **Does my CV portray the type of role I am looking for?** Cover letters are often lost as a CV gets printed off and passed around a busy office, so your CV must clearly convey what you are looking for and why you are suitable for the role you are applying for. I recently helped someone looking for a Sales role and the bulk of his CV talked about his Accounting experience. With some light CV surgery we were able to highlight his sales experience more and play down his accounting experience. 4 interviews later he is in a Sales job he loves.

6. Make your CV as easy to follow as possible. Many employers will spend as little as 30 seconds screening a CV. So if it is not clear and easy to follow it may end up in the rejection pile. So make your CV punchy and easy to follow. Get friends and family to look over it for 30 – 60 seconds and see if it grabs their attention. **Make your CV stand out.**



What changes are you going to make to your CV?

Prepare to succeed with quality interview preparation

Imagine.....A theatre production with no rehearsals, a dinner party with no planning or even sitting an exam without studying.

An image of chaos and even disaster swirls around my head as I visualise the above. It is obvious that we need to plan and prepare before we execute our plans. But do we always plan and prepare as much as we should?

In these challenging times it amazes me how often a job seeker turns up for an interview unprepared. There are fewer opportunities out there at the present, so one must seize every opportunity we get.

So here are some questions and points to ponder before your next interview.



Do you know where you are going and how to get there?

I would suggest that you go out to the company a day before the interview, so you know exactly how to get there. I used to walk into the reception area to get a feel of the organisation prior to the interview.

Do you know the names and titles of who you are meeting?

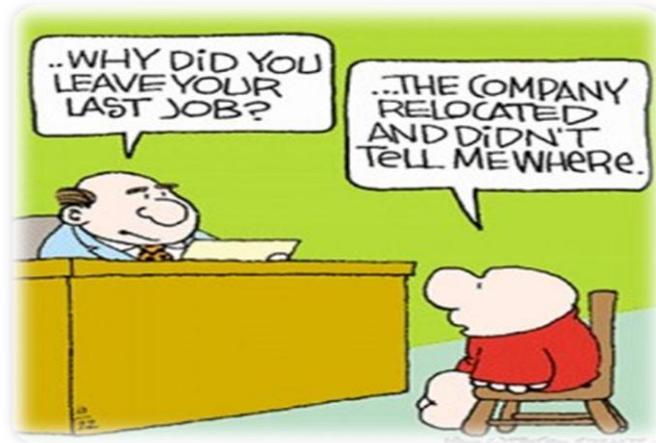
Have you where possible researched those individuals? Use the internet or even your personal network to get as much information on your interviewers.

Have you researched the company?

Again the internet is a super place for learning about an organisation. However in addition to that – Do you know of any working or that has worked in the Company that you could talk to prior to your interview. You should know exactly what the company does, who their competitors are and what the company's values are?

Do you fully understand the Job Description or do I have a detailed job description?

Always make sure you clarify any grey areas prior to interview. It will keep you from getting thrown at interview stage.



Did you write your CV?

Many people are getting their cv done up by Agencies or even CV services. Often the end result is that the CV is not written in your words and reads like a foreign document. So know your cv and make sure it represents you and not someone else.

The 3 minute you.

Know what you are going to say when asked the question: "Tell me about yourself?" Maybe practice a 3 minute answer. Highlight your strengths and achievements.

Questions at the end:

You have done a super interview and just answered the final question. The interviewer then asks you "Do you have any questions? Your mind goes blank and all you want to do is get out of there ASAP. It vital that you think up for 2-3 intelligent questions you can ask before the interview. Try not to make the questions all about you. Demonstrate your interest and knowledge in the organisation with your questions.

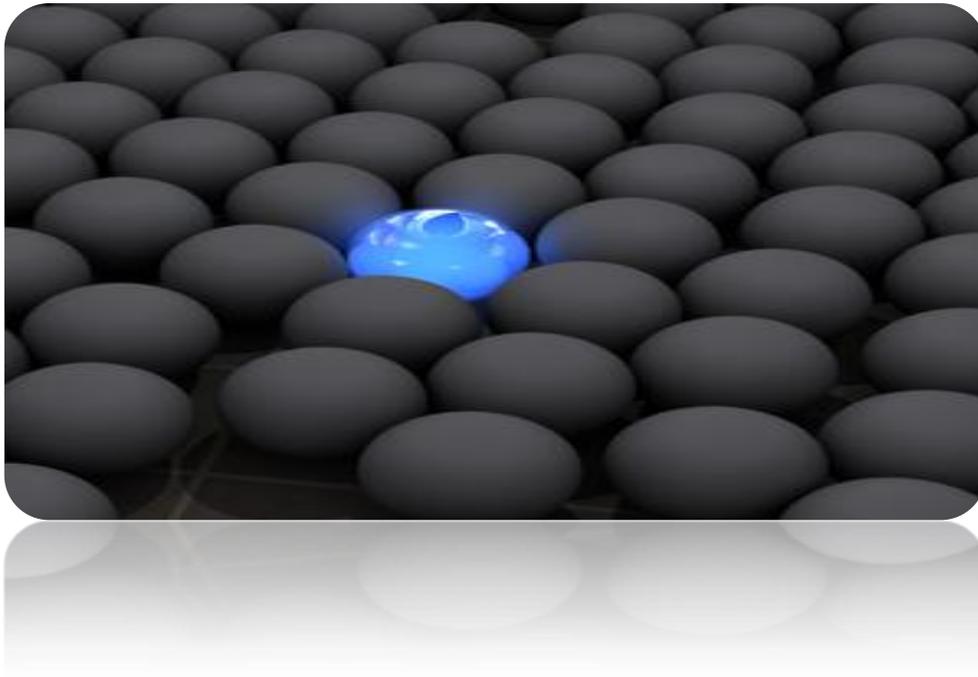
Many interviews today are competency based interviews.

Practice answering competency based questions. Eg. Tell me a time you dealt with an awkward customer.

Do "Mock" Interviews with friends or family prior to the interview and ask for constructive feedback.

Good preparation will help quash nerves at interviews and ensure that you maximise your chances of securing that position. Who knows your next interview might be the last one you have to prepare for in a long time. Good Luck!!

How Far would you go to get your CV noticed?



I have always thought that a **video link on a cv or cover letter** can be a way of getting prospective employers to notice you. And what I mean by video link? A link to a video of yourself looking as **sharp as an axe** where you highlight your strengths, experience and that **“value”** you can bring to an organisation. This serves as an addition to a cv or resume, but is by **no means a substitute**.

However the very thought of broadcasting ourselves seems **very uncomfortable** and most of us hate the sight of a video camera pointing in our face.

So how about a compromise? Would you consider recording a Podcast instead? (Check out AudioBoo.fm). A quick **“Elevator” pitch** highlighting the reasons why an employer would be lucky to have you as an employer. You could name the Podcast something creative like – **“Why you should Hire Greg Fry”**. **Add the link to your cv/resume** and even to your **LinkedIn Profile**.

Here are some of my thoughts on Audio – [Podcast yourself](#)

So what do you think? **Are you ready to be creative about your job search?**

10 Networking Tips for Job Seekers

Networking is a necessity for a job seeker in today's challenging marketplace. Over **60% of all jobs in Ireland are now being filled through networking and recommendations.**

A mentor of mine recently made a comment which made me sit up and take note. "Greg he said...your business looks great.....your service looks great...but who knows you are out there?" I have not stopped networking since! So **an employer will never find you unless they know you exist.**



Here are 10 tips that I hope will assist you with your Networking efforts:

1. Know your network- I was amazed at the number of people that I had connections with already when I started networking. Spend some time to write down all the contacts that you have that could potentially assist you with your job search. Examples- friends on Facebook, college friends, secondary school contacts, members of your local sports club, neighbours, family friends, family and ex work colleagues etc. It was only when I wrote these contacts down that I realised how big my network was. Keep adding to your network weekly and be creative– bus stops, train stations, hotel lobbies, and airport lounges can all be good places to make good contacts. I recently got a new client referred to me from my local Spar cashier.

2. Know yourself and your objectives – It is impossible to tell others who you are and what you do if you are not sure yourself. Decide on how best to describe your “business self” and clearly state what type of role you are seeking. Try to design a 90 second message (often referred to as an elevator pitch) and practice it regularly. This will ease the nerves and ensure a clear message is conveyed when meeting a new contact.

3. **Be Positive** – The majority of job seekers are lacking confidence and have a pessimistic attitude towards their prospects in the job market. Seize the opportunity to be positive and upbeat when networking. You will shine above your competition.

4. **Go to the right Events** – Ask yourself “Who do I want to meet and who are the people that can help me find employment?” Then find out what events they attend. Ask existing contacts if they have any advice or even better if they know the people you want to meet and can introduce you.

5. **Prepare before the networking event** – If possible study the guest list prior to the event and decide on who you want to meet. Practice your elevator pitch.

6. **Dress to impress** – First impressions last. Make yours count.

7. **Bring Business Cards** – Every job seeker should carry business cards. The cards should state your name contact details and area of expertise. This will ensure you never miss out on a valuable connection.

8. **Don't network with friends** – You are more likely to make meaningful contacts if you go to events alone. The temptation to find a corner and talk to your friends may be too much.

9. **Listen** – The best way to build a relationship with people is to show a genuine interest in them and what they do. They are far more likely to be interested in you if you are interested in them. Also, the information they tell you may be invaluable.

10. **Follow up and stay in contact with contacts** – Always follow up with your new contacts. Many people will send an email the day after a meeting. Make an effort to stay in regular contact with your network and meet up with them face to face whenever possible.

Contact Details:

The Author: Greg Fry



Greg Fry has over 10 years Recruitment experience in the Irish and US markets. He holds a Diploma in Business and Life Coaching and a Marketing degree. He runs a company called Careers Coach and assists people with their career transition. In these challenging times Greg believes that in order to excel in life and business we need to think and act smarter than before. Today's job seeker can find employment if they take a proactive approach. Areas that Greg specialises in include: Career Coaching, Career Guidance , Group Coaching courses (including - Finding Employment in challenging times) , Marketing yourself, Interview preparation and techniques, Self Improvement, CVs, Using Social media as a business tool, How to start your own business, Leadership skills. More information at: www.careerscoach.ie <http://www.careerscoach.ie>

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Need Help or Have a Question?

Contact Greg Fry on 087 2039855 or by email on greg.fry@careerscoach.eu

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