

CHAPTER

14

WORK

GET THE JOB

Workers in the U.S. hold an average of
12 jobs in their lifetimes,
and more than two-thirds of those jobs come before age 30.

Source: *The Bureau of Labor Statistics*



SECTION ONE

FIND A JOB

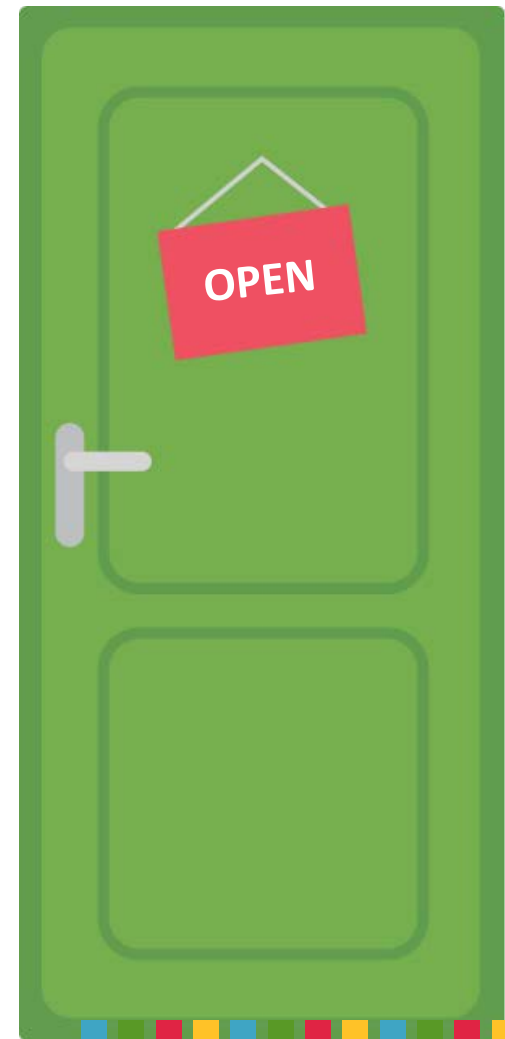
All sorts of pathways to great jobs exist. Large organizations have established pipelines, websites, and staff tasked with advertising and hiring. In smaller organizations, the job description exists solely in the mind of a business owner who is feeling a pain point and thinking about hiring someone to help. Here are four ways to discover employment opportunities.

1. VISIT YOUR CAMPUS CAREER SERVICES OFFICE

Your career services office offers planning advice, career counseling, and a dedicated group of alumni that want to see you succeed. Start early—well before your last semester—to position yourself strategically and take advantage of all that career services offers.



Watch this video from the BYU Career Center: [Career Center Steps to Success](#)



2. SEARCH JOB BOARDS ONLINE

Each of these job boards acquire their postings differently, so you'll need to perform a few searches to see which give you the most useful results and services.



Activity 14.1

Search for jobs or internships on at least three job boards. Use filters to narrow your search.

Write down a list of key skills and experience that are valued in your industry and plan out how you'll acquire those.



LinkedIn is becoming essential to professional networking. During your job search, make sure your own profile is top notch and evaluate the opportunities at companies in your industry. Read [Using LinkedIn to Find a Job or Internship](#).



Indeed is a giant job posting aggregator with advanced search functions that allow you to pinpoint job openings that match your criteria.



Monster provides a lot of useful career resources, such as job search advice by industry, salary calculators by location, and [resume help](#).



Glassdoor uses reviews from real people inside a company to give you invaluable information about company culture, the hiring process, and salaries. [Use GlassDoor in your job search](#).



CareerBuilder scans the data in your uploaded resume and recommends jobs to you. It also offers information about how you stack up against others applying for the same jobs.



If you have a specific company in mind, go through its website to see if job opportunities are posted. Check back regularly to see if new positions are posted.

3. NETWORK

Tell your network what you're looking for. Your network is simply everyone you know. Don't be annoying, but share the fact that you're looking for work. Be brief and specific about what you are looking for and what you offer. Many job opportunities are never posted because they are offered to someone acquainted with a current employee. The larger your network, the better your chances of finding a non-posted job. Research has repeatedly shown that people find jobs through "friends of friends"—distant network contacts who are aware of opportunities that are unknown to your closest friends.

4. PROPOSE YOUR OWN ROLE

Look for pain points in organizations around you, then **propose your own role**. If you're alert and networking, you'll see ways you can help. When you see a customer interaction done badly, or hear someone complain about a constant frustration at work, think about how you could improve the situation. Sometimes proposing to work on a limited contract to address a problem will yield an offer of long-term employment. Get in the door, then prove your worth.



Treat your job search like a part-time job. Spend time every week doing job-search activities. Regular effort yields significant rewards.

"I'm graduating in April and looking for a finance job where I can put my risk management skills to work.

Know anyone I should connect with?"

"I'm really interested in your field. I did quite well in my stats major and I'll be looking for an internship soon.

Can you recommend someone I should talk to?"

"Do you like working for Adobe? I'm loving information science and will graduate this year.

Do you know if your division will be hiring?"

SECTION TWO

APPLY

Once you've found a job that sounds like a good fit, get ready to carefully **tailor your employment materials** to that job.

USE KEY WORDS

Your first step is to search the job description for key skill words. Humans and computers search for keywords when screening applicants. You prove that you're serious and prepared when you reference and demonstrate the skills being sought. Write the **key skill words** down, stick the list by your computer, and **mention them** honestly in your LinkedIn profile, resume, and cover letter.



PREPARE PAR STORIES

PAR stands for **PROBLEM, ACTION, RESULT**. Interviewers like to ask behavioral questions to figure out how you react to challenges. Be prepared to convince them of your skills by using keywords from the job description to prepare personal stories that show problems you faced, the actions you took, and what the results were.

Your stories should be brief, engaging, and job related. Seek feedback from people you trust when coming up with your PAR stories. You may realize you have more skills than you thought.

Make a table of PAR stories like the one below, with column headings for key words, problem, action, and result.

Review it before each interview and **add to it throughout your career** when you conquer a tough challenge. You'll be instantly ready to prep for your next interview. Also, you can read it to make yourself feel better after a bad day.



Look over this [sample PAR table](#). Read over some of the examples stories to get ideas.

KEY WORDS	PROBLEM	ACTION	RESULT
Leadership	My team had been working on a project for weeks, but we weren't having success. No one was stepping up to take responsibility for our deliverables. The due date was fast approaching.	I created a schedule that would ensure completion by the due date, then talked to each person on the team to get their commitment. I put in double shifts to help a new team member get up to speed.	The team rallied behind my schedule, and we kept in close contact to complete the project on time. The professor was very pleased with our work and asked to use our project as a model.
Analytical	Our client delivered a 40-page document of required changes that made my team feel overwhelmed and discouraged.	I stayed late and created a spreadsheet showing which person could best make the changes requested and how we could accomplish them quickly.	My boss was surprised and pleased the next morning. He agreed with all my assignment suggestions and put me in charge of the team.

POLISH YOUR PROFILE

Look over your LinkedIn profile and make sure that it reflects **best practices in your target industry**. Different industries—and even different functions within industries (e.g., finance, marketing, HR, supply chain, engineering, etc.)—have different standards and expectations. Modify your headline and summary to point toward the job you want. Make sure your profile is “search optimized” by including key skills and phrases in your descriptions of accomplishments at former positions.

Find people who have the job you want and let their LinkedIn profiles inspire your content, formatting, etc. If possible, **connect** with these people **and seek their advice**. Join groups in your industry and begin engaging with the members.



ALUMNI ADVICE

“LinkedIn is absolutely necessary to getting a job.

“Because of my polished LinkedIn profile, I’ve been contacted by recruiters at Facebook, Dropbox, Houzz, and many other tech companies/start-ups. When networking, I don’t use business cards at all. I simply look people up on LinkedIn, then I ask if we can connect.”



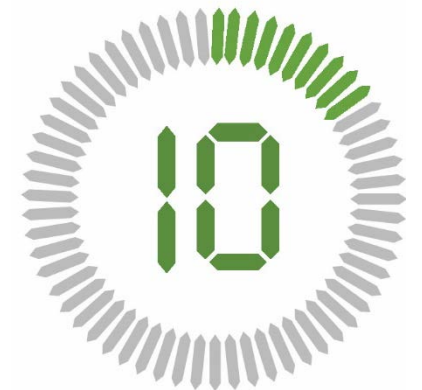
Scott Christensen
Product Designer at PwC's Emerging Tech Group,
Strategy, BYU Marriott School of Management Class of 2013

RESUMES & COVER LETTERS

The resume is not dead yet. You'll need to have a well-designed resume if you are job hunting in a traditional industry or applying to work at a conventional workplace. Even progressive companies often ask for a resume in addition to their standard online application—a resume helps them see how you present yourself when you have a blank slate.

If you're creating your own job, walking a printed copy of your resume into the office can earn you face-to-face time with key decision makers. A hand-delivered resume and cover letter can be strong differentiators in a crowded field of applicants.

Even so, most resumes get no more than **10 seconds** of attention from someone deciding whom to interview. Going through a stack of clone resumes can be mind-numbing. Make sure to set yours apart in four ways.



SECONDS

Many resumes are judged
in under 10 seconds.

Make them count.

1. DESIGN

Resume design is important, especially in certain industries. An appropriate resume in advertising, for example, might look out of place in accounting. Recruiters in every industry, however, value clean, uncluttered resumes. Spend some time looking at sample resumes online. Do a search for “[your field] resume [current year].” Notice how formatting, font, color, graphics, and spacing can have a huge impact on resume readability and credibility. Be sure you design your resume to **make it easy for the reader to access key pieces of information**, such as keywords, job titles, and dates.

Find a few that look good to you and emulate their design principles as you work on your own. If you don’t feel confident in design, this may be a great time to crack open your wallet and pay someone for help. **A great-looking resume design can keep you in the running for a great job.**

Remember that your resume may first be viewed on the recruiter’s handheld device. Check to see how your resume looks in a small format. Keep your paragraphs and sections short. Choose great fonts. Use clear headings, color, icons, and logos. Save as a PDF so your formatting is stable on any platform.



Activity 14.3

Do a search for “[your field] resume [current year].” Notice how formatting, font, color, graphics, and spacing can have a huge impact on resume readability and credibility.



Make your NAME stand out, not your email address. In your header, use a large font for your name to show contrast.



2. CONTENT

If you don't have much pertinent work experience, **highlight your education** section by listing accomplishments like

- ▶ Strong GPA
- ▶ Scholarships
- ▶ Club affiliations
- ▶ Courses completed
- ▶ Projects

If your key skills can be demonstrated through an **online portfolio**, create one. Include writing samples, projects you've worked on, code you've written, or case studies from a class. Hirers want to see what you can do.

The rest of your resume will be a listing of your work experience in **reverse chronological order**. Of course you'll list any paid work that relates to your target job or demonstrates your key skills, but **include unpaid work** if your responsibilities or accomplishments were substantial. Experiences like organizing a large event, running a donation drive, or being part of club leadership can all be valuable in demonstrating what you bring to a job.

Don't be afraid to add a **quirky accomplishment** to your resume such as "Summit County sheep-shearing champion." If your resume is memorable, you'll have a better chance of landing an interview.

Remember that the substance of your resume will often drive your interview. Hiring managers may see your resume for the first time when they sit down to interview you. As they work their way down the page, asking you questions, be prepared with something extra to say about each item. Prepare PAR stories from your resume that demonstrate your skills, interest in the industry, and cultural fit.

Perhaps most important, because business loves numbers, be sure to quantify any accomplishment you can. Numbers convey credibility and experience on resumes.



Write two quantified accomplishments for your last or current job.

Activity 14.4

QUANTIFY

Focus on results, not responsibilities. Quantify wherever possible.

Remember to take note of quantifiable successes at your current internship or job.

NO

I scooped ice cream.

Developed a social media campaign.

YES

Served 200+ customers daily, suggested method that reduced wait time by 50%.

Increased sales 25% by developing a targeted social media campaign.

FIGURE 14.2



Bad Resume

- Misspelling
- Typo
- Disorganized
- Vague
- Poorly designed

3. STRUCTURE

Because recruiters scan resumes instead of reading them, getting the structure right is critical. A **logical flow and strong headings** are key. Your name should be the first and last thing a reader notices, so make it stand out with size and possibly color. After your header, you can lead with a skills summary section or go straight to your education. Later in your career, you might list your experience first, but if you're just graduating from college, your education may be your most impressive asset. Resumes should always list your most valuable and job-pertinent assets first.



Skip the "Objective" statement. Your objective is already clear: you want the job you're applying for. Also, an objective statement is YOU-focused rather than AUDIENCE-focused.

4. GRAMMAR

This is where a tiny mistake could cost you a future job. One careless error in grammar, spelling, or punctuation gives employers an easy "no," and your resume may quickly be tossed into the recycling bin. Run your resume by several skilled editors until you're sure it's error free.

COVER LETTERS

Your cover letter is your “human voice” approach to the job. It gives you the opportunity to name drop connections you may have within the company, briefly list your differentiators, and promise more proof in an interview. To make your cover letter a great ambassador for your skills, pay attention to these eight tips.



Read [the before and after cover letter to Google: Cover Letters Before & After](#)



Read [How to use the job posting to create a cover letter](#)

COVER LETTER TIPS

1. If you're printing, use the same well-designed letterhead as your resume. Make sure the two documents look consistent and professional. In an email, brand yourself with a signature that includes your LinkedIn address.
2. Follow correct letter format, or use a strong subject line in email (use *Proven Recruiter for HR Position instead of simply Application*), then get right to the point. You only have a second to capture attention.
3. Keep your AUDIENCE focus. This message is not really about you, but about how you can help the company. Demonstrate that you know what the employer wants and are ready to provide it.
4. Tailor it. Each cover letter and resume you send out should be tailored to the specific job you're applying for. Do you know anyone in the company? Drawing attention to personal connections can have a profoundly positive impact on your chances.
5. Be real. Make sure you don't sound like a robot. Have pity on the poor applicant screener. Use your wit to craft a human-sounding letter with vivid language. Be honest and confident. Now is not the time for false modesty.
6. Show, don't tell. When you make a skill claim, support it briefly with a concrete example. You don't need to give too many details—save those for the interview.
7. Make sure your grammar and spelling are impeccable. Enough said.
8. Be brief: no more than one page if printed, 3-4 paragraphs on email.

SECTION FOUR

INTERVIEW

Putting in time to prepare for your interview is crucial to your comfort and success.

You've already researched your industry. Now you need to know something about the organization you're interviewing with, the target position, and the person you're meeting with.

CULTURAL FIT

One of the most intangible, and important, factors to hiring is finding a "cultural fit." Managers want employees who are as enthused about their organization as they are themselves, who work similarly, and who share a sense of humor when things get tense. To peek inside the workplace and begin to understand the culture, check out your target organization's profile on [Glassdoor](#). You'll learn from current and former employees how the interview process is conducted, what's really expected of new hires, and how much trust they have in management. This can be extremely useful information.



[Infographic Interview Intelligence](#)



[The 8 Best Questions to Ask in an Interview](#)

PRACTICE

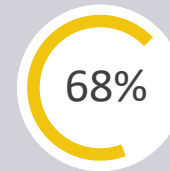
After you've done your research, grab a smart person and practice, practice, practice. Hand them a copy of your resume and something to eat. Get them to ask you behavioral questions so that you can **practice answering smoothly and confidently** with PAR stories.

You may feel uncomfortable asking someone to practice an interview with you, but practicing your PAR stories at least three times will give you a level of confidence that sets you apart from your competition. **Ask for candid feedback.** Be open and appreciative. Video record yourself to see if your mannerisms, posture, and voice all support the image you are trying to portray.

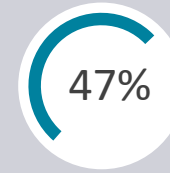


Look over these [sample interview questions arranged by skill.](#)

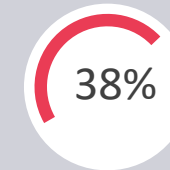
MOST COMMON NON VERBAL INTERVIEW MISTAKES



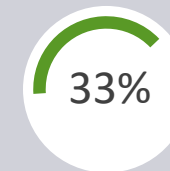
Failure to make eye contact.



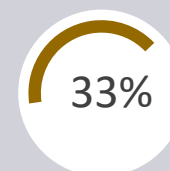
Having little or no knowledge of the company.



Lack of a smile.



Bad posture.



Fidgeting too much.

**90
SECONDS**

How soon 30% of the interviewers know whether they will hire the applicant or not.

Based on a 2012 survey of 2,000 bosses. CareerGeekBlog.com.
<http://www.careergeekblog.com/2012/01/06/what-happens-in-job-interview/>



INTERVIEW FORMATS

Interviews are conducted in various formats, depending on an organization's resources, the job level, and location.

- ▶ In-person
- ▶ Video call (Facetime, Skype, Hangouts)
- ▶ Recorded video (HireVue)
- ▶ Phone

Here's what you need to know about them:

IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS

Face-to-face interviews are still the gold standard. Lots of information (most of it non-verbal) flows back and forth in this sort of interview. When you're offered a seat, take out a pen and paper to make notes. Taking notes helps you look alert and capable. It also helps you remember points you'd like to bring up.

Your interviewer will probably start with an "ice-breaker" question. Be prepared for the classic **"Tell me about yourself."** Give a brief personal pitch that you've practiced so many times you don't even need to think about it. Connect your background and strengths to your target job.

Once you get talking, remember to breathe. Your interviewer wants you to succeed. Help her discover that you're the perfect candidate; that will make her job much easier.

VIDEO CALL OR REMOTE INTERVIEWS

Video call interviews are becoming much more common. They're an inexpensive way for companies to quickly assess the capabilities, suitability, and fit of candidates. In addition to the tips above, follow these steps to improve your video interview performance.

SET UP

- ▶ Become familiar with the technology so you won't be flustered if it fails. Try out at least two services so you can switch if necessary.
- ▶ Compose a backdrop. Make sure your interviewer sees you in a clean, simple environment.
- ▶ Orient the light toward your face or to your side, (not above or behind you). Strong overhead light can make you look spooky. Natural light is the most flattering, so try to sit facing a window.
- ▶ Make sure the camera is at eye level. Place your laptop on a stack of books so that your interviewer isn't looking up your nose.
- ▶ Double check the interview time and time zone.

ON THE DAY

- ▶ Choose a solid-colored shirt and make sure it's pressed. Wrinkles show up more on camera. If you need to wear a white shirt, wear a suit jacket over it.
- ▶ Maintain a fairly constant distance from the webcam.
- ▶ Don't drum your fingers or use the keyboard to type notes during your call. Sensitive microphones will magnify every sound.
- ▶ Look at the camera, not the screen. Don't try to stare at it constantly, but do look directly into it when you want to emphasize a point or convey sincerity.
- ▶ Smile! Exude energy, confidence, and optimism.



ALUMNI ADVICE

“I work from home, so all of my business communication is through phone, IM, and email.

“Sometimes we have video conferences, and I've noticed it's important to make sure the backdrop you choose looks professional. Set yourself up in front of a blank wall, a clean bookshelf, or a whiteboard; avoid your kitchen, a messy storage area, or family pictures.”



Katie Stone
Alumni Specialist at Western Governors
University, Recreation Management
(Therapeutic Recreation), Class of 2012

PHONE INTERVIEWS

Phone interviews are a little nerve wracking because of limited feedback from your interviewer. You can't see a reassuring nod or smile to tell you you're on the right track. In addition to securing a quiet spot and double-checking your interview time, these two simple tricks will make a big difference in helping you come across as calm, confident, and upbeat.

1. Remain standing and walk around
2. Smile (even if no one's in the room)

Even if people can't see you, you will sound better if you're smiling, moving, and well-dressed than if you're slouched on the couch in your pajamas. Also, moving helps you shed stress.

INTERVIEW DAY

You've done your preparation and the big day is finally here. Don't worry. You'll rock this. Having confidence will improve your performance, so do what you can to feel invincible. Read through your PAR stories to remind yourself how awesome you are, press your shirt (details make a difference), and leave an extra half hour for traffic.



Dress for success: [The new grad's guide to dressing for a job interview](#)

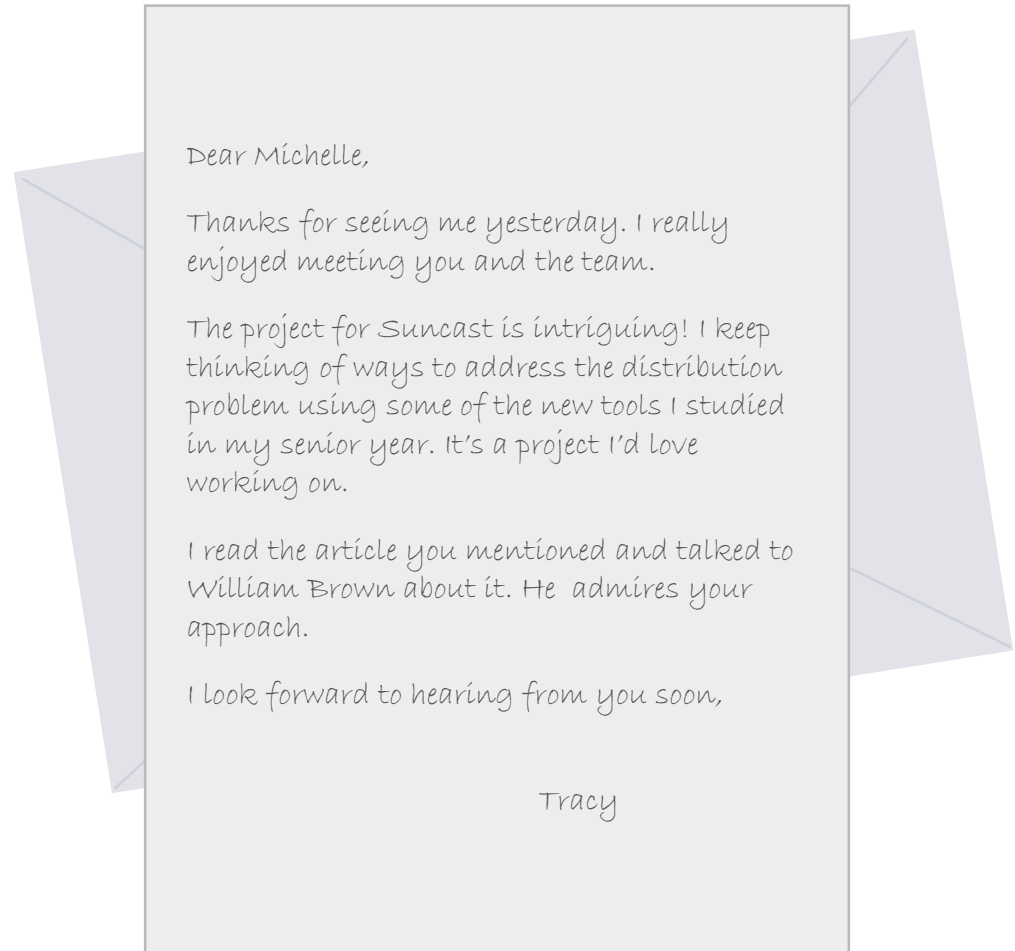


SECTION FIVE

LAND THE JOB

FOLLOW UP

Shortly after your interview, write a thank-you note (email or handwritten) expressing your appreciation for the meeting. Something like the example in Figure 14.4 will remind your interviewer what you talked about. Briefly connect your skills to the new understanding of the job you obtained through the interview. Reiterate your interest and your suitability. Show that you've followed up on any suggestions that your interviewer made.



Dear Michelle,

Thanks for seeing me yesterday. I really enjoyed meeting you and the team.

The project for Sunecast is intriguing! I keep thinking of ways to address the distribution problem using some of the new tools I studied in my senior year. It's a project I'd love working on.

I read the article you mentioned and talked to William Brown about it. He admires your approach.

I look forward to hearing from you soon,

Tracy

FIGURE 14.4

ACCEPTING & NEGOTIATING

If all goes well, you'll be extended an **offer**, which sometimes has a time limit attached. Take some of the time you are given to think about whether the job and company are a good fit for you. Consult with your mentors and significant others.

Much has been written about salary negotiations, and they are beyond the scope of this book. You should definitely do your research and negotiate for an offer that reflects both your value and your values. **Successful negotiations** at this point are **not all about money**. You can negotiate vacation, relocation benefits, working from home, team assignments, etc. Your subsequent salaries will all rest on the foundation of your first one, so getting your salary and benefits package right makes a lot of sense.

If you don't receive an offer, don't get discouraged. Everyone has more interviews than offers. **Use the experience as an opportunity** to learn what you can do to succeed next time. Ask what advice your interviewer would give you for future interviews, and what skills or experiences the successful candidate possessed that you should gain. Then get to work improving your chances of landing your dream job.



IN CONCLUSION

Landing a job that challenges and supports you is a great accomplishment. Now go to work and use the principles you've learned throughout this book to communicate your ideas with clarity, brevity, and power. Solve problems, manage projects, and lead teams with skill and insight. As you do, you'll be given new opportunities and new jobs. Make them count. Do good in the world.



LEARN MORE

Suggestions?
Click **HERE**



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LEARN MORE



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