



CHAPTER 7

WORKING AS A KRACKEL BAR

STORYTELLING, MARKETING, AND SOCIAL MEDIA

We think in story, which allows us to envision the future.

—LISA CRON, *WIRED FOR STORY*

How important do you think it is to be:

Remembered

Trusted

Persuasive

Authentic

Considered a leader in the job search process?

Creating a strong marketing campaign that sells your strengths in writing (résumés, cover letters; social media) and through your interactions with others (networking and interviewing) will be the difference between a relatively easy job search and a challenging one. Great storytelling is one of the most powerful skills you can master. As Lisa Cron writes in her excellent book *Wired for Story*:

Story is what makes us human, not just metaphorically but literally. Recent breakthroughs in neuroscience reveal that our brain is hardwired to respond to story; the pleasure we derive from a tale well told is nature's way of seducing us into paying attention.

Getting an employer to pay attention is the goal of every job seeker—not to mention the goal of your marketing campaign. Stories are the linchpin of self-promotion, and the good news is that you have been telling stories all your life. Whether you were entertaining your friends with a saga about that whitewater-rafting trip where you almost drowned or explaining to your parents the mysterious dent on the bumper of their car, you were developing plots, creating characters and dialogue, and forming compelling themes about your bravery or innocence.

With the Network of Possible Wanderings you've been developing from your Wandering Map, your collection of mindsets, your experimental wanderings, and the exercises you've completed so far, I suspect you can already see what might resonate with a prospective employer. Even though you may not know how or where you're going to use these narratives, taking the time to develop them now will help you clarify your experiences and view them in a new way.

Stories abound in college—and not just in English class. Anthropology, history, psychology, sociology, Latin-American studies, and so on, all use stories to convey meaning and information. And outside the classroom, you're recounting the legacy of the sports program, the rumors about that odd professor, ghost tales about that haunted building where something bad happened back in the day, and the rest of the folklore of your institution.

When you tell a story, you convey a piece of yourself, a snapshot of your life that allows the listener to know more about you and builds trust. Just like you needed to “show” rather than “tell” your skills in a cover letter or résumé, stories help you show the interviewer you're sincere. People distrust self-serving statements such as “I'm a good leader,” but if you follow that statement with a description of how you raised funds and created a management team to develop an evening program on global sustainability involving guest speakers and catered food, it'll be clear that there is substance behind the style.

Telling great stories in an interview can mean the difference between a job offer and a rejection letter. My first job after college was in a highly competitive retail management training program full of business, retail merchandising, and textile majors. The store had conducted over a thousand on-campus interviews, and only hired twenty-five people for their management-training program. The only liberal arts major in the program, I was told by my interviewer that the reason she hired me was the story I told in my interview about my memories of shopping in that store at Christmas and the magical experience they created for children. I explained that the experience had made me a lifetime customer and helped me develop an appreciation for how much influence the employees in the store had on the success of their organization. I told her I also wanted to create magical experiences for others.

Your ability to describe your skills, character, and experiences in a manner that compels your prospective employer to listen or keep reading your LinkedIn profile will jumpstart your career. And when you're on the job, your ability to tell the right story at the right time will impress colleagues and supervisors, settle disputes calmly, and give you the reputation of someone who is intelligent, thoughtful, insightful, and valuable. You can even build powerful long-term relationships through the impact of your storytelling.

Can you recall a story you learned from a family member, a professor, or maybe even someone at a job you held that has been memorable for you? What did it teach you? What did you learn? Why do you remember it?

Let's check out some stories used successfully in the job search:

AN INTERVIEW STORY

Chuck, a history major, was interviewing with a major snack-food company for a sales and marketing position. He didn't have much sales experience, but he could demonstrate his ability to build relationships through his leadership of his fraternity and other social experiences. Still, the employer was skeptical. What would a history major bring to a sales role?

Chuck replied: “Well, let’s take a look at your number-one selling product. Let me tell you a little about the history of that product. Did you know that when it was first introduced, it didn’t sell at all? In fact, your company was ready to drop it. And then you received an offer from a movie studio to use the product in their film. Other companies had turned them down. Your company said yes. The movie went on to be a blockbuster, your sales went through the roof, and you arguably created the most successful stealth marketing campaign ever. Your product has been a top seller since that time. See, history is all about knowing not only what happened, but why it happened. So we can either repeat it—or not—depending on the situation. I think this is very valuable in a sales and marketing role.”

A COVER LETTER STORY

Tamara was concerned about her cover letter. The job listing for a local advertising agency indicated the employer wanted an advertising major and she majored in English. How could she convince an employer to overlook her lack of the “right” major? She did so by turning it into a virtue. Here’s her cover letter story in five sentences:

“Just as in advertising, literature is about using the right words at the right time. As Mark Twain wrote, it’s the ‘difference between the lightning and the lightning bug.’ Advertising demands that you know your audience; so does literature. To be successful, advertising must grab its audience through their hearts *and* their minds; so must literature. I would welcome the opportunity to create lightning for your agency and your clients.”

A RÉSUMÉ STORY

Ashley spent a summer working at Hersheypark, a family theme park in Hershey, Pennsylvania, known, of course, for its chocolate. Her résumé looked like this:

Hersheypark, Hershey, PA

Summer 2016

Guest services representative

Assisted park guests and promoted a fun, family environment for parents and children.

This is not a great story. It’s not very interesting, and we can’t picture it. Do we know what she did? How does one promote a “fun environment”? It sounded like marketing fluff. I asked her what she really did. It turns out she spent the summer dressed in a Krackel bar costume and roamed the park, helping children find lost parents, signing autographs, giving people directions, and playing games with the kids. She even saved the life of a guest with CPR, but her favorite part of the job was watching the children’s faces light up when they would see her. “I had no idea anyone would want to run up and hug a candy bar!” she said. So we changed her job title to Krackel bar and rewrote her résumé entry as follows:

Hersheypark, Hershey, PA

Summer 2016

Krackel Bar

- Greeted more than twenty thousand families, including posing for photographs, signing autographs, and playing with children, ensuring a pleasant visit and encouraging return visits
- Located lost parents and solved numerous problems from answering questions about lodging and dining to providing CPR and quickly obtaining emergency medical assistance for guests
- Consistently maintained pleasant demeanor despite heat and fatigue; received award for highest number of positive comments from guest-satisfaction surveys

Much better story. And guess what—virtually every recruiter wanted to meet the “Krackel bar” for an interview.

Let’s stop a moment and consider what made these stories successful:

1. They were relevant and addressed the issue at hand.
2. They were focused on their audience and their purpose.
3. They were positive and highlighted the individual’s strengths.
4. They matched their strengths to the job.
5. They were short and to the point.

6. They were interesting, thoughtful, and provocative.
7. They made the storyteller a more interesting person whom the audience wants to learn more about.

These stories didn't just appear out of thin air. In each case, the storyteller took the time to craft them so they would be well received. While storytelling is a great skill to have, it's not one that comes naturally to everyone. There's a reason we write first drafts. It can take a while to hone a truly compelling story. Mystery writer Raymond Chandler once said that "a good story cannot be devised. It has to be distilled." You have to let it sit a little and refine. You have to practice it repeatedly. It will be well worth it.

No matter what career you're considering, strong writing will not only help you get the job, it will also help you keep the job and get promoted faster. That's a rather bold statement. I can hear some of you saying "Wait a minute. I'm going to be a _____. I'm not being hired for my writing ability." And you may be right. But do you think you might have to send an e-mail at some point to your supervisor? Is there a chance you will need to craft a letter to sell a product or your services? Do you dream of becoming an entrepreneur and developing your own business? No matter what field you're in, you will write; and because so few people take the time or energy to hone the craft, good writers easily stand out from the competition. And good writing will serve you throughout your career.

Want one more reason? *Money*. Good writing is consistently one of the most sought-after skills by employers. An employee who can write a great memo, send a perfectly composed e-mail, and write grants that result in funding or the perfect proposal will stand out every time. In fact, even now you're about to be "paid" for your ability to write a standout cover letter and other correspondence by landing a job, internship, or a volunteer opportunity that will lead to something better in the future.

It's a myth that writing is a gift bestowed upon only certain people. Sure, not all of us can write like Jane Austen or Maya Angelou, but the basic skills can be developed and learned by anyone. So if you're still in school and you've been avoiding those writing-intensive courses, consider taking one. Take a creative writing course

that allows you to focus on your interests, or a workshop on journaling or blogging, because practice and feedback from your professor or facilitator will be invaluable. Some colleges even offer business writing courses, which would be a great place for you to practice your technique. If you're out of school, there are still lots of options—from reading a book on business writing to taking a Web-based writing class. Your local bookstore might host writing workshops. And by the way, good writing is good writing—learning to write science fiction, creative nonfiction, mysteries, or poetry will also develop your skills.

One of the common challenges for students accustomed to writing five-hundred-word essays or twenty-page research papers is the myth that the longer a piece of writing is, the better it is. Strong writing isn't about length. It's about covering the subject and then stopping. An apocryphal story about Ernest Hemingway places him in a bar where he bet someone that he could write the shortest short story of all time:

For Sale. Baby shoes. Never worn.

He won that bet. Now, the story isn't exactly a mood lifter, and Mr. Hemingway would have arguably benefited from some of that positive mindset we discussed in chapter 3, but in six words he beautifully encapsulated character, plot, and story. You can picture it, can't you, and fill in the details yourself?

Fortunately, writing and storytelling are talents you can acquire. You're going to create great stories by using the information from your Wandering Map and the mindsets from chapter 3, such as creativity, flexibility, analysis, synthesis, and reflection. And we're going to start this process now by learning how to use a powerful story-creation tool for the job search: the SWOT analysis.

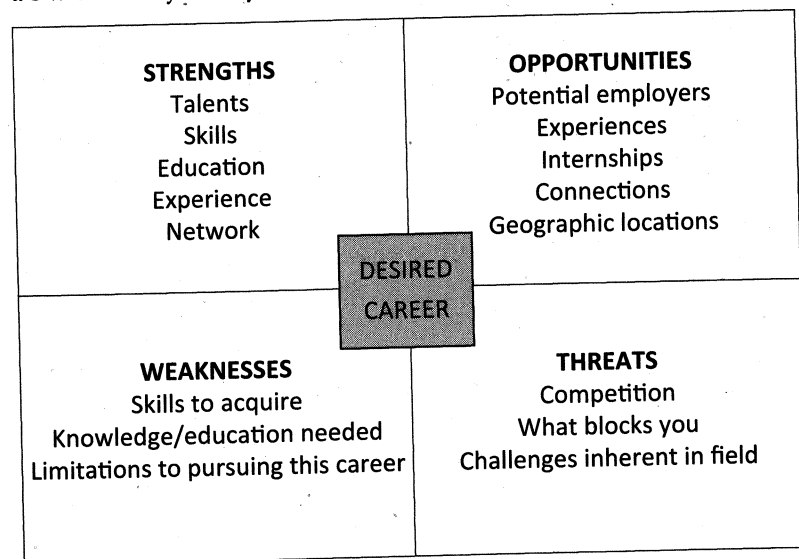
USING SWOT ANALYSIS TO PREPARE YOUR MARKETING CAMPAIGN AND STORIES

SWOT ANALYSIS

Got another blank piece of paper handy? In this step you're going to brainstorm ideas for your marketing plan and stories by combining two techniques: a SWOT analysis briefly mentioned in chapter 3 under strategic mindsets and the mapping skills you've developed throughout the Wise Wanderings system.

A basic SWOT analysis divides a problem or situation into four sections for analysis. On the left side you analyze your personal strengths and weaknesses (challenges) you bring to the situation. You own these strengths and weaknesses, so you have the power to change them. On the right side you analyze the external opportunities and threats that might influence your progress toward your goal. Threats are generally outside of your control, but you can increase opportunities by learning more about the problem or situation you're analyzing.

For your marketing campaign you will want to start by creating a SWOT analysis of your career plans as follows:



Fill in each quadrant identifying the elements as they apply to you. Note your strengths relative to the career field you're seeking. As you fill in your Weakness section, consider what actions you need to take. How could you acquire the necessary skills, knowledge, or education you need to succeed? The weakness section is a call to action.

How much were you able to complete in the Opportunities section? If you could not identify the key opportunities or the key geographic locations for your chosen field, you need to go back to chapter 5 and do your research and experimental wanderings, in an effort to answer those specific questions.

Finally, take a look at the Threats section. The items in this section are generally things you can't control, like the job market in your field or the competition. All you can do is be aware of these factors and do your best to mitigate them. For instance, if you know that many of your competitors will have a degree in the field of employment you're seeking, and you don't, how will you compensate for that? How will you convince an employer to take a chance on hiring you? Or what is your long-term plan for acquiring the necessary education?

Let's take a look at how a Probable Life Seeker and an Intention Seeker filled out their SWOT analyses:

PROBABLE LIFE PLANNER: INVESTMENT BANKING POSITION ON WALL STREET

Jerome is interested in working on Wall Street for a large investment banking firm in the area of sales and trading. Based on what he has learned from his Wandering Map, research, and internships, here's how he filled out his SWOT analysis (see next page):

Based on this analysis, Jerome can now go back and revise some of his goals from the Probable Life plan he created in the previous chapter, and now he can start creating a powerful marketing plan. He can create stories that will illustrate his strengths and use them in his cover letters, in his résumé, and on his LinkedIn profile. He can also create stories he can use in interviews to potential employers. For instance, when he completed his Wandering Map, he realized that a key theme in his life has been strategic thinking. One of the aspects of his internship that he enjoyed the most was meeting with

STRENGTHS Summer sales job Analyst internship in Texas Strong GPA in economics Strategic thinker Able to handle stress	OPPORTUNITIES Alumni connections in NYC On-campus recruiting Student Finance Club network Summer job connections
WALL STREET	
WEAKNESSES Computer skills too basic Need more Excel experience No direct connections	THREATS Very competitive market Subject to economic events

the other bankers and learning how they thought through their strategies for investing. On his Wandering Map, the first example Jerome could find of his preference for strategic thinking was when his father taught him to play chess at age five. He identified five other strong examples of his strategic thinking skills, so now he has the basis for creating a great story.

In his interview he might say: "I've honed my strategic thinking skills since I learned to play chess at age five. I enjoy the process of looking at where something is now, where it might go, and how much I can predict that process. For example, last summer one of the projects at my internship was analyzing the trends among some small health-care providers in Houston. I was able to successfully project which ones were going to have stronger sales portfolios based on an analysis of . . ."

On his LinkedIn profile, Jerome might write: "My strategic thinking skills have helped me succeed in several environments. From winning chess tournaments in elementary school to designing a research project to accurately predicting the financial success of several companies, I have the ability to look at a product or situation from different angles, determine the factors which might promote or impede progress, and make successful decisions from that analysis. This ability is partially responsible for the success I experienced in the sales field."

Jerome will use some of these same concepts to create bullet points for his résumé, as well as sentences in his cover letter.

This example brings up an important note: you will need more than one key strength or story. Jerome can't simply put the exact same skills and stories everywhere. He will want to write stories and use examples from all of his strengths.

INTENTION SEEKER: USING MUSICAL TALENTS IN NEW YORK CITY

Jessica majored in music and has been playing the piano and guitar for as long as she can remember. She loves music, particularly arranging, composing, and theory, but she doesn't want to teach music, and she's not sure her talents are strong enough to make it as a performer. She plans to move home after graduation since her parents live within commuting distance to New York City, which is where she would like to work.

STRENGTHS Discipline Musical appreciation & talent Analytic skills Positive attitude Experience in nonprofit	OPPORTUNITIES NYC has lots of musical venues Can look at nonprofits Lots of jobs in NYC Connections through alumni
MUSIC-RELATED CAREER	
WEAKNESSES Need to evaluate talent Don't want to teach Not really clear about my plans Don't feel qualified	THREATS Competition: unemployed musicians NYC is expensive Limited jobs in music

Jessica's SWOT analysis is very revealing. When writing down her strengths, she realized that she enjoyed her volunteer positions and her summer job more than she thought. Her weakness section revealed her struggle to figure out "what to do" and how much that has been weighing on her mind. Her opportunities section revealed that she

might have more opportunities to think about—she needs to do a lot more research about what jobs she might qualify for in New York City. And her threats section made her aware that she doesn't want to be another “starving musician,” so she needs to start thinking more clearly about her future. Now that Jessica has created her SWOT analysis, she has a clear idea of where she can move forward to learn more and what she needs to do next. She realized she wasn't ready to complete a plan yet, but she was able to write new, clearer intentions, such as:

- I intend to spend the next two weeks researching music-related organizations in NYC.
- I intend to research hospitals and hospice centers for potential volunteer opportunities that will help me make new connections and network in NYC.

She also started preparing interview stories focusing on her strengths, such as:

One of the biggest challenges I have faced in playing the piano is discipline. There were days when I was tired of practicing or wanted to do other things, but I taught myself to focus on the project at hand and work through any resistance until it was completed. As a result, I accomplish the goals I set out to reach and am always ready for my performances. I find that this skill has transferred over to my schoolwork—I never miss deadlines for papers, and I set aside time to study without a last-minute rush. I applied the same work ethic to my summer jobs, always completing my projects on time. In fact, my supervisor took me to lunch at the end of the summer and told me that he was impressed with my time management skills and the maturity and responsibility I brought to the job.

On her LinkedIn profile, she wrote:

Studying piano for more than fifteen years has taught me invaluable lessons applicable to the workplace: break tasks down into manageable steps; practice, practice, practice; focus on what is most important; never take the easy way out; and always

appreciate the beauty in what you are doing. Small successes can have great meaning.

Want to know the outcome? Within one month of volunteering at a hospice in New York City, Jessica made a connection that led her to a job as a development associate (fund-raiser) for a nonprofit agency supporting arts projects for talented youths.

At this point, the value of creating stories and using a SWOT analysis should be clear. The next few chapters will hone in on the specifics of writing strong résumés, cover letters, and other correspondence related to the job search, but we're going to start here by focusing on a specific type of promotion and storytelling: social media.

WISDOM BUILDER #23

KNOWING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ACADEMIC WRITING AND BUSINESS WRITING

Right now many of you are well versed in academic writing. And that's good because academic and business writing have a lot in common. Good academic and business writers strive for clarity, know their purpose, know their audience, organize their writing in a logical manner, and use the amount of space needed to adequately cover their points. Both types of writing have three key elements: format, style, and content. The table below illustrates some of their differences:

KEY CONSIDERATIONS	ACADEMIC WRITING	BUSINESS WRITING
AUDIENCE	Faculty: well-educated and knowledgeable about subject	General: education varies; sometimes unknown
SUBJECT	Topic appealing to academic world, such as humanities, history, and so on	Topic appropriate to workplace needs: job finding, promotion, informative memos, and so on
EXPECTED LENGTH	Usually lengthy: three-plus pages	Minimal: one to two pages
TONE/STYLE	Academic, formal, learned. Focus is on research/theories	Attention getting, professional, business-like, straightforward, sales oriented
VOCABULARY	Academic, formal, technical, specialized	Short words and short sentences. Can be technical or specialized but must be clear and to the point

KEY CONSIDERATIONS	ACADEMIC WRITING	BUSINESS WRITING
USE OF REFERENCES	Bibliography, sources, careful citations	Simple references—no formal bibliography, less formal citation
PURPOSE	To inform, advance, and demonstrate knowledge, research, and writing skills	To inform and inspire the reader to take action, to sell a product or an idea

Make sure you have adapted your style to your audience. Seek out examples of successful writing in your field. For instance, look at résumé and cover-letter guides online or in print to make sure your writing fits the standard for the industry you're seeking. If you're asked to submit a writing sample, make sure it fits the position you are seeking. If you are applying to work for a newspaper, do not send your forty-page senior thesis. Write something that fits what the publication produces. Always focus on what you would write if you worked at the position you're seeking.

Wandering Off

WHEN STORYTELLING GOES AWRY

As powerful a skill as storytelling is, there are some common mistakes you can make that will undermine the value of your narrative. Watch out for:

- Stories that are superficial, trivial, too long, or too personal. Ask yourself if the story is worth the time it will take to tell. Make sure you're not giving the employer TMI (too much information).
- Stories that make you sound arrogant or superior. "One day the front-desk person called in sick, and I had to take over for her. I couldn't believe they asked me to answer the phones. I expected something more challenging than that."
- Boring linear stories: "This happened and then I did this, and then this happened." Are you asleep yet?
- Stories that are too brief and superficial without producing any specific evidence. "I'm a hard worker, as you can see."
- Stories that evoke negative emotions like fear, guilt, or sadness. Keep your stories uplifting. Remember the positive mindset in chapter 3? For the most part, you want your stories to fit that style.
- Stories that are irrelevant, don't answer the question, or don't relate to the position you're seeking.

WISDOM BUILDER #24

CORPORATE STORYTELLING: WHY YOUR EMPLOYER WILL CARE ABOUT YOUR APPRECIATION FOR STORYTELLING

Storytelling is used daily by corporations, government and non-profit agencies, and even small businesses. Because stories can so powerfully influence, control, and even manipulate behavior, they are an indispensable tool. Advertising, marketing, and public relations help organizations build their reputation and share a curated image and identity with the public. Storytelling can convey a large message in a small package: an illustration of a loving mother holding her smiling infant with a jar of baby food superimposed on a lower corner tells a complete story without saying a word. Millions of dollars are spent developing brands, logos, and marketing assets for just this reason.

CEOs and other business leaders use storytelling to convey the organization's mission or meaning to employees, board members, customers, clients, and stockholders. They try to capture the imagination of their audience, using both reason and emotion, and present themselves as credible and reliable and competent, perhaps even visionary.

Storytelling can help workers better understand the value of their work, bring them closer together, and build community. It can be used to promote the beliefs or customs of an organization and even to control or influence employee behavior. The new employee who is told about someone who expressed her dislike of her job in an elevator, not knowing the president of the company was standing behind her, quickly learns to be quiet in any setting where she doesn't know who might be listening. The supervisor could have simply said, "Watch what you say about the company," but the story carries an emotional impact and gravitas that compels the listener to absorb it. Stories can help workers figure out how the company prefers to solve problems, how open the people in charge are to alternative points of view,

or even whether they need to be at work exactly at eight o'clock or whether it's OK to wander in at nine. Stories have power, and a smart new employee (you, perhaps?) listens closely to their coworkers and managers and carefully reads the company's public relations material—a gold mine of knowledge and information exists in those narratives.

DEVELOPING A SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN FOR YOUR JOB SEARCH

"Build it, and they will come" only works in the movies. Social media is a "build it, nurture it, engage them and they may come and stay."

—SETH GODIN

The most public display of your writing and storytelling skills will be your social media presence. A well-crafted social media campaign can be a powerful core element of your career search. Stories abound of individuals who have found jobs, internships, and other connections through Twitter or LinkedIn. The point of social media is engagement and conversations, and by creating strong profiles, you are encouraging employers to find and interact with you. It is also one of the best ways to connect with alumni not only from college, but from high school as well. To ignore social media is potentially cutting yourself off from a world of connections and could make your search much more difficult.

An excellent social media campaign is smart, relevant, interactive, and reflects your brand (you at your best). Your brand is your image: everything from your résumé and cover letter to your interview outfit to online presence. Taking time to think about your brand will help you focus on your key strengths and give you confidence in the job search. To put it simply, analyze yourself in terms of the marketplace, identify what will be the most effective presentation of your talents, and promote that. Start by going back over your Wandering Map for threads and themes you want to highlight. Review your résumés and cover letters to make sure they are targeted to the career plans you've created. Make sure you're selling your accomplishments, not just your skills. What value will you bring to an organization? How will you help them save or earn money? Identify the three key items you want an employer to know about you. All of this information will be helpful in determining what you want to post on your profiles.

You probably know that most employers are going to Google your name to see what information about you is online. This can be either

great or terrible—it's in your hands. For the most part, you will be successful if you stick with the most popular sites: Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. And if you only have time to focus on one site, the best choice is likely LinkedIn. But you can and should check out any new sites that you see your friends or colleagues using, as well as special-interest sites like Pinterest. The trick is knowing which sites the individuals and organizations you want to reach are using. Once you can identify that, you will know where to focus.

Keep in mind that social media is constantly changing and evolving. New apps and sites spring up daily, and some will last while others will fade quickly. No matter what sites you use, always remember that you don't own or control them; they could disappear tomorrow. And if they shut down, so does whatever you posted. And once you create something on another platform, you can't always control when or if it is removed. Even if you remove old posts or pictures, they can sometimes be found through archives. Always keep a copy of your social media information (such as your LinkedIn profile) in a Word document or other secure location, so you can re-create your profile on whatever new outlet has appeared.

Google alerts can be your best friend during the job hunt. Set a Google alert for your name, and you'll get a notification whenever your name appears on the Internet. Much of the time the alerts will be benign, and maybe not even relevant, but every now and then your name might pop up in an unexpected place. You can also set an alert for any organization where you'd like to work. You will get a notification every time it is in the news, and will be able to follow their latest updates—information that can come in handy during an interview. Malika, a Spanish major interested in the fashion industry, set an alert for her favorite designers. She spotted a report that one of them was starting a new line and opening an office in New York City. Because she also followed that designer's Twitter feed, she immediately Tweeted "Congratulations!" and complimented the designer's line. One of the designer's assistants was monitoring the feed and responded. Long story short, Malika ended up with a coveted summer internship with the designer's office.

Are you ready to dive into a job-search-related social media campaign? Here is a step-by-step guide for crafting a social media campaign that will promote you at your all-time best.

Social Media Campaign Strategy

1. Start by Googling yourself. If you have a common name like "Bill Smith," try Googling your name with your current city location, or with the name of your school or other identifying information. That will help eliminate false results.
2. Notice what shows up and adjust accordingly. Do you have any "digital dirt"? Digital dirt is anything online that does not portray you in a positive light. This might include pictures of you in less-than-professional clothes, partying, or posting comments that would not be well-received in a professional setting. If you find this type of digital dirt, clean it up. Keep in mind that the definition of "professional" varies according to your field. What is professional at a bank will be different from what is professional for the fashion industry. That's why it's important to know your industry inside and out.
 - a. Remove any controversial pictures.
 - b. If your friends have posted the pictures, ask them to remove them.
 - c. If you use social media for fun, lock down those sites. Restrict who can view them, and make sure your security settings are tight. You can keep using social media for fun, just don't make it public.
 - d. If your digital dirt comes from a source you can't control, use your own social media to counter it. For instance, LinkedIn has strong search engine optimization (SEO). By creating and using your LinkedIn account regularly, that link will be more likely to pop up first on any Google search of your name, thus reducing the likelihood others will see less-flattering items.
 - e. Digital dirt can also take the form of sloppy social media content such as misspelled words or blurry pictures. Make sure you proofread everything you post and that all pictures on your public sites are professional.
3. If you have no other social media, you should have a LinkedIn account that is professional and up-to-date. LinkedIn has a lot of resources for college students and young professionals. Check

out their videos and helpful information about making the most of your profile.

4. Decide who and where your target audience is. Are you seeking a job in student affairs? Create a Twitter feed and start following the student affairs sites at colleges that interest you. Re-tweet their Tweets, and "heart" the ones you like. The sites will see that you are following them and will likely follow you back. You can do the same with individual people in the field of work you're seeking. Want to be a writer? Start following the Twitter feed of authors you like, as well as general writing-related Twitter feeds. Engage in conversations with them.
5. Set up your social media sites with the goal to inform, help, and connect with others in your field. What could you post that would be interesting and informative? This is not the time to post photos of your breakfast (unless you're planning a career in the food industry, and it's a really great breakfast!). Instead, share articles, relevant news items, and other pertinent information. Look for positive content that solves problems, as well as information that points out potential problems.
6. Follow the leaders in your field, whether that is their blog posts, Twitter feeds, or other sources. Stay abreast of what the key discussions are in your field. Read the best and most prominent writers.

CREATING YOUR PLAN

On the next page you will find an outline for developing a social media plan. The most important questions to answer are: Why am I doing this? What is my purpose in creating my sites? Is it to connect with specific employers? Am I trying to become known in a field? Keep your goals in mind as you fill out the Resource Guide and Social Media Job Search Plan on page 233. The form has one bullet point after each entry; you will want to create your own form and enter as many bullet points as needed. Make your plan reasonable and doable. You probably can't keep track of more than a few sites, so choose carefully and use them regularly. Try not to disappear for weeks at a time.

SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCE GUIDE

The career field I hope to work in is:

INFORMATION ABOUT MY CAREER FIELD:

Key employers in my field and their websites:

Typical roles and responsibilities in this field:

Personality characteristics, skills, and education needed for this field:

KEY SOCIAL MEDIA CONNECTIONS

Facebook pages related to my field:

Twitter feeds related to my field:

LinkedIn resources related to my field:

Key bloggers/blogs related to my field:

Professional organizations related to this field:

Websites for job listings related to my field:

MY SOCIAL MEDIA JOB SEARCH PLAN

My goal for using social media is:

The key elements of my brand to promote are:

The social media sites I plan to use include:

My strategy for using the sites will be:

My timeline for using social media is:

Additional ideas or thoughts about promotion through social media (optional):

WISDOM BUILDER #25

WHERE ARE YOU ON THE JOB SEARCH LEARNING CURVE?

A popular theory holds that there are four stages to learning:

1. Unconscious incompetence (where you don't know what you don't know)
2. Conscious incompetence (you now know what you don't know and are completely overwhelmed)
3. Conscious competence (you know it but you have to concentrate to do it)
4. Unconscious competence (you know it so well you can do it without thinking)

You probably went through these stages when you first learned to drive a car: remember how easy it looked when you watched your parents drive? And then you got behind the wheel for the first time, and suddenly it seemed as if you had a million things to remember at once? You started driving, but you had to focus intensely on everything. After a while, though, you could drive without thinking about it all: in fact, sometimes you arrive at your destination and can't recall how you got there!

So why do I bring this up in a section about designing the path to your future? Because preparing for the job search is one of the hardest tasks you'll undertake, and despite the thousands of books and websites dedicated to the process, most college students do not follow even the basic instructions.

Many of the tasks related to the job search (writing a résumé, creating a cover letter, answering tricky interview questions) seem relatively easy. After all, a résumé is only one page, and you've handled interviews for summer jobs, so how hard can it be? That's "unconscious incompetence." You don't know what you don't know.

Then one day you sit down and try to write a professional résumé and you quickly discover there's a lot you don't know. You have to craft bullet points, and the formatting doesn't make sense. That's called "conscious incompetence" because you now know what you don't know. You now realize it's going to take much more time than you thought to write that résumé. And that's the hardest stage of learning because unless you are really motivated, you are likely to give up. So when you hit that moment of "conscious incompetence" instead of giving up, get help. It is the perfect time to check in with your career center or someone who can help you get through that stage.

Soon, after you've practiced your interview skills, and you've created a good résumé, and you have well-crafted social media, you'll be in "conscious competence" where you will know what to do. And if you're lucky, by the time this process is all over, you'll be in "unconscious competence" and able to handle any curveballs the job search might throw your way.

CHAPTER 8

YOUR WANDERINGS ON ONE PAGE

WRITING YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Richard Hendricks: It says here on your résumé that from 2010 to 2011 you "crushed it"?

Applicant: That's actually an old résumé. It should also read that I crushed it from 2013 to present.

Donald "Jared" Dunn: So are we to understand that you did not "crush it" in 2012?

Applicant: There was a medical situation preventing me from crushing it to my usual standards. So I had to take some time off until I was able to crush it at 100 percent, at which point I resumed crushing it full-time.

—FROM *SILICON VALLEY* TV SERIES, 2015 EPISODE, "THE LADY"

Most employers can eliminate more than 75 percent of their candidates with a brief glance at their résumés. A well-written résumé will both beautifully encapsulate your experiences and be a bridge between you and the interview.

Résumés have their own special rules and methods of construction that are different from virtually any other form of writing. So much advice is conflicting and creates confusion or, dare I say, résumé chaos? For every employer who says "Job objectives are unnecessary," you'll find another who says "I won't read a résumé that doesn't have a job objective." For every résumé guide that says "The résumé must be one page only," another says "Two-page résumés are fine." I've always told my students to spell everything correctly because spelling errors stop the job search. But I've heard employers say "Oh, I overlook the occasional spelling error on a résumé if the candidate is