

**THE
NEW
RULES
OF
WORK**

**THE MODERN PLAYBOOK
FOR NAVIGATING YOUR CAREER**

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themuse

*In collaboration with Adrian Granzella Larssen
and The Muse's writers, editors, and career experts*

SUPPLEMENTAL GRAPHICS

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WHO ARE YOU NOW?

Of course, it's hard to shake off the urge to try to determine your life as soon as you graduate from college. We get it, because we've been there. Take Kathryn, for example. After majoring in international relations and French, she always dreamed that she would end up in foreign service or become a diplomat. Her interest in travel, her love of languages, and her natural inclination to jump in and solve problems seemed to fit exactly with the career she had imagined for herself. Yet a few weeks into what had seemed like a dream position working at the US embassy in Cyprus, Kathryn felt that interest wane. The problems her team was tackling were important, but solutions moved the needle by inches and progress could sometimes take years, requiring unbelievable patience. When colleagues noticed her penchant for offering to roll up her sleeves and get to work right away, they would laugh and suggest she consider a different field where she could make an impact more quickly. Kathryn's expectations ran smack into the realities of working in the foreign service, and she suddenly realized it might not be such a solid long-term fit after all.

It was as if a tether to her mental image of career satisfaction had been severed and she was totally adrift. "It was incredibly frustrating," she remembers. "I thought I had it all figured out, and suddenly I realized that I didn't know what I was doing for the next year, let alone for the rest of my life. I'd invested so much in a career path I was about to walk away from. It's funny to look back and remember how much I was worried I'd 'wasted' that time. But now I realize that those years were anything but. They were useful—time to test myself—and I'm not sure I'd be where I am today without them."

Alex had a similar experience. Growing up in France, a country where your high school choices still guide much of your career opportunity, she was forced to pick a direction at the age of fifteen. Between the sciences, literature, and economics, she picked the sciences. She was good at them, and they were valued highly in the French education system. Two years later, she again had to choose, this time between math, physics, and biology for her senior-year specialization. Alex chose biology and started learning about genetics by mating strains of fruit flies.

She applied to college in the United States and moved across the Atlantic to start her studies, where she declared a major of molecular, cellular, and developmental biology (a fancy term for genetics). But after many long hours spent toiling in the lab her freshman year, Alex realized that as much as she loved *learning* about genetics, she didn't enjoy the day-to-day lab work that would be a big part of her job if she continued down this road. Genetics was an interest, yes, but not the right career for her. Facing this fact was hard, but it was also a pivotal moment that forced Alex to question her assumptions and embark on a journey of exploration and learning that brought her to the consulting company where she met Kathryn. Without these two diverging paths and the twists and turns we took, The Muse might never have come to be.

The point is: often what we *think* we want in our heads is actually very different from what we can learn we want in the day-to-day experience of actually living our careers. So even if you think you have your dream career all figured out, it's really important to go through the steps outlined in the next few chapters. The goal is to dig deep enough to have a clear understanding of what kind of job or career will make you truly happy.

What's different about today's rules is that they are all premised on your having a much keener, more concrete, and more nuanced understanding of your values, interests, and motivations. This requires not only understanding what you enjoy and what you're good at, but also how these interests and skills stack up against other important personal priorities. How much money do you need to live comfortably? How much flexibility do you want in your weekly schedule? How important is your job title, the name of your company, the size of your office? What kind of impact do you want to have on the world? We're going to help you zero in on all of these variables so that you can not only succeed at defining your path, but enjoy getting to know yourself a bit better in the process!

Knowing yourself in this way is a huge part of finding the right job, by which we mean, the right job for you, right now. So in this chapter we'll address the first of what we call the Three R's: *Reflect*. And by the time you complete the exercises and steps in this chapter, you will feel much more confident in your understanding of what you are looking for in a career or

job. Even if you have absolutely no idea what you want to do with your life, these tools can help point you in the right direction. Of course, if you've picked up this book already knowing who you are and what kind of job you are looking for, that's fine, too. You will still benefit from the exercises, as the reflection will only serve to underscore your confidence and sharpen your drive. *Wherever you are, we're here to take you forward.*

It's time to develop a special kind of self-awareness: you are going to come to know yourself in an introspective yet objective way. We are big believers in looking inward before you can expect to create the outward success you aspire to.

To start figuring out what you want in a job or in life, it helps to start by reflecting on who you are today. One of the early steps of this process is being brutally honest with *how* you are feeling (frazzled and fearful, confident and competent, muddled but also excited?) and *where* you are (in a current job that you despise, in a current job that's fine but not quite right, out of a job, living with your parents and unable to pay rent on your own place, in between a rock and a hard place?). You're going to ask yourself a couple of hard questions, but trust us, it'll be worth it.

QUESTION 1: WHAT DO YOU VALUE?



Back in the 1970s, a few social scientists came up with a way for people to deepen their understanding of themselves by “clarifying their values.” You can probably hear a bit of that seventies vibe in the language alone. But they were onto something: clarifying our values really helps when we are trying to figure out what we want in our lives.

In the context of creating a successful career plan, the word *values* refers to what in your work provides you with meaning and purpose. That might be a deep sense of creativity, or it might be making a positive contribution to society. In many ways, your values are more important than the type of work you're actually doing; in fact, numerous studies

have shown that most people who pursue work that aligns with their values feel more satisfied *and* successful in their careers.

When it comes to charting a professional path, clarifying our own values can feel confusing. There are so many outside voices and perspectives that can clutter this very personal process: parents' expectations and advice, friends' choices, society's collective ideas about the "right" path. It's time to shut all those out. Remember, we're talking about *your* life—and *your* values—not your well-meaning mom's or dad's, not your favorite professor's, not your brilliant roommate's. They're yours, and yours alone.

The following exercise can help. We've created a list of personal values that often accompany work life; assign each value a number from 1 to 4.

- 1: Absolutely essential to me
- 2: Desirable, but not essential
- 3: Of neutral value—neither important nor unimportant to me
- 4: Not of value to me; I would prefer to avoid

Don't worry about spreading the numbers out evenly among the different categories—this isn't an exact science—but do try to keep the number of 1's to around three (which will help you with an exercise we'll walk you through later on!). Most important, though, just be honest and candid with yourself.

MISSION AND IMPACT

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social change: I want to make a contribution to society at large. | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethics: I want my work to connect directly with my own principles and morals. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service: I want to be directly involved in helping individuals. | <input type="checkbox"/> Community: I want my work to be of direct benefit to the community in which I live. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Influence: I want my work to shape and influence the thinking of others. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decision making: I want to have a meaningful role in deciding direction and policy in my field. | |

SOCIAL INTERACTION, COLLABORATION, AND TEAMWORK

- ___ Sociability: I want to engage regularly with people as part of my daily work.
- ___ Solitude: I want to work alone or mostly alone, without substantial engagement with others.
- ___ Teamwork: I want to work as part of a collaborative team on projects and assignments.
- ___ Management: I want to lead and directly supervise the work of others.
- ___ Autonomy: I want to work independently, with minimal direction or supervision.

ROUTINE

- ___ Deadlines: I want to work under time-sensitive conditions, where there is pressure to deliver.
- ___ Variation: I want my tasks and responsibilities to vary regularly.
- ___ Consistency: I want a routine of tasks and responsibilities that remains largely the same.
- ___ Detail: I want to engage in work where attention to detail, precision, and/or accuracy matter a great deal.
- ___ Flexibility: I want the ability to influence my schedule in a way that works for me.
- ___ Travel: I want to travel regularly for work, experiencing new places.

REWARD

- ___ Acknowledgment: I want to receive public acknowledgment for my professional accomplishments.
- ___ Compensation: I want my work to deliver significant financial reward.
- ___ Security: I want a position and a salary that are likely to remain secure.
- ___ Prestige: I want to work in a role or at a company that is valued by others.

CHALLENGE AND EXPRESSION

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expertise: I want to work hard toward expertise and mastery in my field. | <input type="checkbox"/> Risk-taking: I want to experience a sense of risk and adventure in my work. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity: I want my work to have a strong element of creativity. | <input type="checkbox"/> Thrill: I want my work to be exciting on a regular basis. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competition: I want to work in an environment where my skills are tested against the skills of others. | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical engagement: I want my work to involve being physically active and using physical skills. |

Take all the values you've ranked as 1, or essential, and list them:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

These are the values that are most significant to you at this stage of your career. We say “at this stage” because our values don’t remain static throughout our lives. When we are in our twenties, things like glamour and thrill, a company’s mission, and opportunity for creative expression might be of the utmost importance. As we get older and maybe have a partner or children, security, flexibility, compensation, and a company’s culture might become more critical. Remember that it’s totally okay and normal for your priorities and preferences to change over time, so it can be helpful to revisit this exercise every two to five years to make sure your current path aligns with who you will have become.

QUESTION 2: WHAT’S YOUR CURRENT FRAME OF MIND?

When people sign up at The Muse, they are usually looking for something specific, whether it’s a job, contacts, opportunities, or advice. Musers are often at some turning point in their lives and are in the midst

of a bit of soul-searching. From speaking to them, we've found that in addition to taking stock of who you are from a personality perspective, it's also really helpful to know how you are feeling. Forgive the mini-therapy, and just hang with us for a few minutes as you respond to the following questions that are meant to tease out your frame of mind and take your emotional temperature:

1. On a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high), how would you rate your confidence level? Perhaps you feel confident about some parts of your life or self and less confident about others. Feel free to give yourself multiple scores for a couple of different areas of your life.

2. How do you feel today? Use three adjectives to describe how you feel physically, emotionally, or spiritually.

3. What was the last thing you did or accomplished that made you feel proud of yourself? This can be as simple or profound as you'd like. Maybe you helped bring on a new client last week. Maybe you showed up for your best friend or your grandmother. Maybe you sent out three resumes. These are all actions that one can be proud of. Don't judge yourself. Simply write down what comes to mind.

4. When did this event/achievement occur? Was it yesterday? Last week? Last month? Or years ago?

5. Do you feel the urge to change some aspect of your life? Your job? Yourself? Obviously, this is a big question that you can answer in many different ways. For your purposes right now at the beginning of this process, keep your response simple and choose one thing you wish to change. Be specific.

If you are feeling anxious or doubtful about a decision or job choice you've made in the past, don't ignore those feelings. Listen to yourself, your gut, and pay attention to what your misgivings are telling you. And if they're telling you you've made a mistake, don't panic. Remember: nearly everyone you admire has made career mistakes at one time or another. It's never too late to change courses. This process is all about learning how to adjust and pivot with wisdom and grace.

We know this process isn't easy! Self-awareness is hard. And the truth is, when it comes to deeply knowing and understanding who you are, there is no *one* right answer. But as you get closer and closer to *a* right answer, you'll start to know it. If you're still feeling confused and want

to take an even deeper dive into your values, check out our list of the best career assessments or search TheMuse.com for “career quizzes.”

In the next chapter, “Research” (the second of the Three R’s), you are going to use the values we talked through above to guide your exploration of possible career paths. You won’t have to dive in blindly; your values (and the exercises in the next chapter!) will help you break this task down into manageable steps as you narrow your interests, identify your priorities, and begin to make some practical decisions to guide your job search.

Onward!

FUNCTIONS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academics & Teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising & Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative & Support | <input type="checkbox"/> General Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business & Strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare & Medical Practice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consulting & Advising | <input type="checkbox"/> HR & Recruiting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative & Design | <input type="checkbox"/> IT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data Analytics & Data Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing or Advertising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Editorial | <input type="checkbox"/> Operations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> PR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering (Software,
Mechanical, Electrical, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Product & Project Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship & Innovation | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales (Corporate, Retail) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance & Accounting | <input type="checkbox"/> Science/R&D |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media & Community |

INDUSTRIES

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising & Agencies | <input type="checkbox"/> Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture & Design | <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement & Security |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts & Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing & Industrials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Client Services & Consulting | <input type="checkbox"/> Media & Publishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer | <input type="checkbox"/> Military |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education (K–12, Higher Ed) | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit and/or Social Good |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy & Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Pharma & Biotech |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment & Gaming | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fashion & Beauty | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Staffing & Recruiting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food & Beverage | <input type="checkbox"/> Tech |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government & Policy | <input type="checkbox"/> Telecommunications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel & Hospitality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Journalism | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation & Logistics |

FUNCTION SHORTLIST	<i>Value 1</i>	<i>Value 2</i>	<i>Value 3</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			
INDUSTRY SHORTLIST			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

FUNCTION SHORTLIST	<i>#1: Flexibility</i>	<i>#2: Compensation</i>	<i>#3: Creativity</i>
<i>1: Sales</i>			
<i>2: Marketing</i>			
<i>3: PR</i>			
INDUSTRY SHORTLIST			
<i>4: Journalism</i>			
<i>5: Tech</i>			
<i>6: Finance</i>			
<i>7: Travel</i>			

CHLOE'S MUSE GRID

SHORTLIST	#1: Flexibility	#2: Compensation	#3: Creativity
1: Sales (Function)	High geo flexibility (can usually find work anywhere), remote & flex work usually possible	High compensation: Sales are usually some of the highest paid employees within a company, though starting salaries can be low, and you have to earn commission	Medium to low: Many salespeople don't get to create products, only sell them. Start-ups are pretty similar—though sometimes have opportunities to work with product team on product updates/features, which is cool. Consultative sales can be pretty creative
2: Marketing (Function)	Medium. Most companies have marketing staff but switching jobs can be harder. Consulting work definitely possible	Low: Marketing is usually lower compensated until senior leadership is reached (unless you have a sought-after specialization)	High: Marketing allows for a high degree of creativity in most jobs
3: PR (Function)	Medium. Hours can be long close to a launch, but seems cyclical. Also pretty high geo flexibility for companies (not so much for PR firms—big cities mostly)	Medium: PR firms pay reasonably well, but PR at a company might not	Medium: Seems to depend a lot on the company, job can be very schedule/organization oriented, or work more closely with creative/marketing teams. Not sure where to put this, but also get to work with journalists . . . sort of cool since I no longer think journalism itself is an option
4: Tech (Industry)	Medium to High. Geo isn't all that flexible, but day-to-day hours are. Long hours but can make your own schedule	Medium: high compensation in some larger tech firms but lower salary for start-ups. Best-paid employees seem to be engineers	High: Tech allows for a high degree of creativity in most companies; a lot of innovation in this space. Lots of opportunity to build things at start-ups
5: Finance (Industry)	Medium/Low: Finance jobs often require long hours in the office, though there are exceptions	High: overall, high compensation across the board!	Low: seems like a pretty traditional industry
6: Travel (Industry)	Medium: lots of travel flexibility, which is cool! But not a huge number of companies I'd be interested in working for	Medium: depends on role, but isn't a big perk across the board	Medium/Low: seems like a pretty traditional industry, unless you're at a newer/smaller company
7: Rejected: Journalism (Industry)	Medium/Low: Journalism jobs often require long hours, though there are exceptions	Low: Journalism is not a career most people enter for the money!	Medium: Writing is inherently creative, but depending on the type of journalism some journalists report they feel like they are too beholden to the 24/7 news cycle or to press releases

JOB TRACKING WORKSHEET

NAME OF COMPANY	POSITION	CONTACT	DETAILS ABOUT THE COMPANY, POSITION	APPLICATION AND RESUME NOTES	MY CONTACTS AT THE COMPANY	INTEREST LEVEL (1 TO 5)	STATUS / NEXT STEPS

YOUR RESUME EDITING CHECKLIST

Are you ready to send your resume out into the world? Our editor in chief, Adrian Granzella Larssen, put together a resume-editing checklist to make sure:

LOOK AT THE BIG PICTURE

- Does this sell you as the perfect candidate for the types of roles you're seeking?
- Are there any gaps between the experience on the page and the experience required for the job?
- If so, are there ways in which you could bridge those gaps?
- What makes your experience stand out among other, similar candidates?
- Does the top third of your resume serve as a hook to get the hiring manager to read more?
- Is there anything on your resume that doesn't need to be?

SCRUTINIZE THE BULLETS AND DETAILS

- Is this the strongest possible language you could use?
- Can anything be said more clearly? Or in fewer words?
- Is there any language or acronyms that someone outside your company or industry wouldn't understand?
- Could anything benefit from examples?
- Can anything be quantified? Can you show a benefit?
- Are any words used over and over? Can they be replaced with more creative language?

FACT-CHECK

- Are the companies you worked for still named the same thing? Still located in the same city?
- Are your position titles accurate?
- Are your employment dates correct?

- Are all of the numbers and percentages you use to describe increases, quotas, budgets, savings, and achievements (reasonably) accurate?

PROOFREAD

- Are there any typos? Wrong word usage?
- Does each bullet point end with a period (or not)? Either is fine; just be consistent.
- Are you using the serial comma (or not) throughout?

MAKE SURE IT LOOKS NICE

- Does the page look visually appealing?
- Is the page overly cluttered?
- Is the font size too small? Is it difficult to read?
- Are the font size and format for each section consistent?
- Does the layout make sense?
- Is your contact information easily findable?

Finally, look back to the application instructions. Did you include everything that was requested? Failing to follow the instructions is a huge red flag to hiring managers—after all, if you can't follow instructions now, how can they trust that you'll do so once you're on the job?

Once your resume is finished, save it as a PDF. Unlike a Word document, the PDF format will maintain the exact layout and style that you selected, so what you see is what the hiring manager will see.

SAMPLE RESUME

Want a look at how it's done? We worked with Muse career coach Jena Viviano, who transformed this Muser's resume into a polished new version.

Melissa Warren
Salt Lake City, Utah 801.555.7428 missymelissy000@yahoo.com

Education

Skillcrush

- Currently enrolled in three-month Web Designer certification program

Utah State University

- Participated in classes for online program in Communication and Leadership

NRCSA Immersion Program – Lisbon, Portugal

- Traveled throughout Portugal and lived with a family in Lisbon studying the Portuguese language.

Experience

Lincoln Musical Leadership School (LMLS), Salt Lake City 2001–PRESENT

Development Officer

- Cultivate, solicit, and steward a portfolio of major gift prospects with the ability to secure significant gifts in support of LMLS' mission to be the leading source and teacher of musical skills and leadership.
- Assist with the implementation of a comprehensive strategy for the appropriate acknowledgment of donors and steward-ship of gifts and reviewing foundation and personal proposals connected to major donors.
- Create, Organize, and implement regional donor events and oversee two Event Steering Committees
- Part of fundraising team that successfully raised over \$25 million for Campaign LMLS
- Assisted in putting together LMLS 50th Anniversary events
- Assisted in a silent auction
- Worked with donors to create scholarships focused on diversity and financial need.
- Build relationships with schools and community organizations within my region

Marketing Projects Liaison

- Networking and researching to allow the local community to be introduced, on diverse levels, to the LMLS mission. This Project was focused on building professional relationships in the Salt Lake City community with a focus on educational systems, police/fire departments, government agencies, and local non-profits.

Marketing Project Coordinator

- Planned a statewide event called Singing for the Nation. Responsibilities included talking with local schools and after-school programs to do development outreach, scheduling speakers, creating a budget, overseeing interns, reserving facilities, planning student projects with teachers, and planning media and advertisement.

Event Coordinator

- LMLS Summer program. During this time I was responsible for driving a twenty-four-passenger school bus from Salt Lake City to Portland OR alone for LMLS. Wrote the initial proposal for a LMLS program in Ecuador.

Field Instructor

- Instructor for LMLS, managed up to thirty-five students for four-week programs. Teaching leadership, communication, judgment, and decision-making, conflict resolution, along with singing skills.

Bravo Communications, Washington DC 2009

MusicNOW Film Project Intern

- Responsible for the research of future directors and films for the festival, reviewed seed grant applications for photographers and documentary film directors, assisted in preparation and management of events and film screenings, and collaborated with other departments to develop avenues to bring the MusicNOW Film Project mission to new audiences.

Caremore Inc., Salt Lake City, UT 2008–2009

Consultant

- Provide health screenings, review screening results with employers, and assist in tailoring a next step wellness plan to be reviewed by the corporation as part of the organization's health and wellness consulting service to provide

Referrals

- Provided upon request

MELISSA WARREN

Salt Lake City, UT | 801.555.7428 | melissa.sophia.warren@gmail.com

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lincoln Musical Leadership School (LMLS), Salt Lake City, UT (2001–Present)

Development Officer

- Cultivate and steward a portfolio of 250+ major gift prospects (\$20k and above) in 21 states, helping LMLS remain the leading source and teacher in musical skills and leadership
- Implement a comprehensive strategy to appropriately acknowledge donors and keep them engaged
- Contributed to fundraising team that raised over \$25M for Campaign LMLS from 2010–2014
- Assisted in creating, organizing, and implementing events across the country, including LMLS 50th Anniversary, raising over \$26k in one weekend
- Built relationships with schools and community organizations to facilitate interest and access to LMLS in underserved communities; created various scholarships with cooperation and support of donors

Marketing Projects Liaison

- Broadened awareness of the LMLS mission to the Salt Lake City community via networking
- Built professional relationships in the Salt Lake City community, focused on educational systems, police and fire departments, government agencies, and local non-profits

Marketing Project Coordinator

- Planned a 400–person statewide “Singing for the Nation” event, overseeing 20 volunteers
- Coordinated with 40 local schools and after–school programs in an effort to complete development outreach; would schedule speakers, oversee up to 3 interns, manage budget, and partner with teachers to spread awareness
- Planned and coordinated the LMLS program in Ecuador; established the partnership between the National Singing Foundation and LMLS

Bravo Communications, Washington, DC (2009)

MusicNOW Film Project Intern

- Researched directors and films for the festival, reviewed 300+ seed grant applications for photographers and documentary film directors, and assisted in preparation of 13 events and film screenings
- Collaborated cross–functionally to develop awareness program, bringing the MusicNOW Film Project mission to 10,000 new viewers

Caremore, Inc., Salt Lake City, UT (2008–2009)

Consultant

- Provided health screenings as well as actionable plans for employers to create wellness plans in their businesses

EDUCATION

Utah State University – Communication and Leadership; Remote

NRCSA Immersion Program; Lisbon, Portugal

Skillcrush; Web Designer Certification; Remote

SKILLS + INTERESTS

Microsoft Office, fundraising, travel planning, entrepreneurial spirit, volunteerism, singing

The Perfect Cover Letter Template

By Lily Zhang

So what does the perfect cover letter look like? Here's a helpful template showing how to structure a letter that includes all the elements we mentioned above:

Dear [name],

[Anecdote that talks about why you're applying to the position.] Which is why I would like to express my interest in the [position title] position at [company]. My interest in [field] has taken me from [experience] to [experience]. I believe that my passion for [aspect of your field or background], strong commitment to [aspect of your field or background], and interest in [aspect of your field or background] make me an ideal candidate to join the [department] staff at [company].

As a candidate, here's what I could immediately bring to the table:

An effective [descriptor that reflects transferable skill #1]: In my role at [previous job], I [action or accomplishment]. I was also able to showcase my [skill] abilities as a [role] in [project name] project by [what you did].

A disciplined [descriptor that reflects transferable skill #2]: I have always displayed my careful approach to [job duty] by [action]. At [previous company], I frequently [action]. In addition, I had the opportunity to [action or accomplishment], which further shows my dedication to [aspect of your field].

A passionate [descriptor that reflects transferable skill #3]: Everything I have engaged in so far has all been driven by my keen interest in [aspect of your field]. Even as a [previous role], I made sure to dedicate some part of my day to [action]. It is this passion that has driven every one of my career decisions thus far.

I look forward to contributing my skills and experiences to

the [position title] position at [company] and hope to have the opportunity to speak with you further about how I can be an asset to your team.

Sincerely,
[Your name]

Of course, you can (and should!) insert your personality, creativity, and knowledge of the company into your letter, Zhang says, but this framework is a helpful way to convey your most relevant transferable skills to the recruiter (making his or her job a whole lot easier). Don't bother walking through your entire career path and justifying every professional decision you made. Do the hiring manager (and yourself) a favor, and let your skills speak for themselves.

A TEMPLATE FOR POLITELY FOLLOWING UP ON A JOB APPLICATION

Not sure what to say? Use this template to take all of the pain out of the process.

Subject: Following up on [position title] application

Body:

Hi [hiring manager name],

I hope all is well. I know you must be busy, but I recently applied to the [position title] position, and wanted to check in on your decision timeline. Upon seeing/hearing about [new development or news at the company] I am that much more excited about the opportunity to join [company name] and help [bring in new clients/develop world-class content/anything else awesome you would be doing] with your team.

Please let me know if it would be helpful for me to provide any additional information as you move on to the next stage in the hiring process.

I look forward to hearing from you,

[Your name]

INTERVIEW CHEAT SHEET

We know we covered a lot in this chapter. So here's a cheat sheet summing up all the things you need to prepare before you go in and nail those interviews! (For a printable version visit themuse.com/thenewrules.)



Company: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

Who I'm meeting with: _____

WHAT I LOVE ABOUT THE POSITION

The (specific) things about this company and position that make it a great fit for me

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

WHAT SKILLS I BRING TO THE POSITION

The key skills and experiences that make me perfect for this job

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS

Questions the interviewer might have about my background, and how I'm going to tackle them

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO HIGHLIGHT

My specific projects and achievements that relate to this job and highlight my skills

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

QUESTIONS TO ASK

Things I don't know about the job or company, but want to ask during the interview

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

NOT TO FORGET

Contacts I have at the company, fun facts about my background, or anything else to mention!

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

POST-INTERVIEW NOTES

FOLLOW-UP NEEDED

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

SEND THANK-YOU NOTES TO

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

WHAT I LOVED

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

WHAT I DIDN'T LOVE/POTENTIAL RED FLAGS

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

IN-PERSON INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

- Directions to where I'm going
(don't always count on GPS)
- Cash *(for parking, gas, transportation, emergencies)*
- Three or more copies of my resume
- Work samples or portfolio
- A notepad and pen
- A list of references
- My Interview Cheat Sheet *(duh)*
- Business cards *(if you have them)*
- My phone *(charged and turned off)*
- A granola bar or other snack *(to avoid getting hangry right before game time)*

PHONE OR SKYPE INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

- Time has been verified (taking into account time zones) as well as phone number, and who will call whom
- Equipment is working properly and ready to go (including a fully charged phone)
- Desktop (both literal and virtual) is cleared of mess and distractions, and notes are on hand (but out of sight in the case of a Skype interview)
- An appropriate professional outfit is selected and crisply ironed

EMERGENCY KIT (BECAUSE, HEY, YOU JUST NEVER KNOW)

- Tissues
- Stain remover
- Brush or comb
- Advil
- Umbrella
- Band-Aids
- Phone charger

1-3-5 TO-DO LIST

TODAY



I WILL ACCOMPLISH . . .

1 BIG THING

3 MEDIUM THINGS

5 LITTLE THINGS

High five!



By prioritizing the skills you need, you'll know what to tackle first and what to keep on your radar as you consider professional development opportunities in the future.

NOW	

2 TO 3 YEARS	

4 TO 6 YEARS	