

HOW TO FIND A JOB IN 30 DAYS

A guide to successful
job hunting

BY
PEDRO SILVA-SANTOS



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How to find a job in 30 days - a guide to successful job hunting

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Introduction

At the end of 2014, I was invited to give a class at the College of Higher Education in Viseu because of the study of flora and fauna that my company (NOCTULA – Environmental Consultants) had been carrying out since 2009.

I hadn't taught for seven years, but I decided to rise to the challenge, relishing the chance to be back in contact with students. But on one condition: that I be given the freedom to make the students feel decidedly, but constructively, uncomfortable. I wanted to challenge them with some of the issues they will be faced with when they try to enter the job market. I hoped to share a few tips and tools they would be able to use to make them stand out from the crowd.

They gave me complete freedom to do whatever I wanted and that was when I put together and presented the first workshop "How to find a job in 30 days". In that first presentation, there were not only students in the audience, but also professional people seeking inspiration and new ideas to improve their careers, as well as retired professionals who wanted to expand their network of contacts.

During the following months, various opportunities arose and invitations came along for me to give the workshop again. In no time at all, I had passed on tips, strategies and tools, promoted debates and moments of sharing about how to get ahead in a career, with **over 1,200 people**.

Several participants actually ‘complained’ that I was sharing so much new information in the workshop that they found it hard to take it all in in one 3-hour session. Others told me they wouldn’t be able to do everything in 30 days without some sort of guidebook. And so this book was conceived! I hope it will be a **useful guide for anyone who wants to put the 30-day plan into action**, which will bring you results that most people will simply never manage to achieve, even after trying time after time.

The name I chose for the workshop, “How to find a job in 30 days”, has also been criticised and people have asked me if I guarantee jobs for all workshop participants within 30 days! This book was not written for those who expect guarantees without lifting a finger. If you think you’ll be getting a job just by reading this book, think again! That simple cause-effect relationship may never actually happen. Although there have been people who found work in under 30 days after coming to one of my workshops, I don’t want you to think I’m going to be giving you some kind of never-seen-before revelation for getting a job with **no effort at all**, whatever the circumstances.

This book will teach you little strategies **which have worked for me and which are so universal and powerful that anyone** who wants to stand out from the crowd can get **results**. If I can do

it, **anyone can!**

I am not special, nor am I any better than the next man (or woman)! I have tried and tested everything that I am going to be telling you about in these pages, so try to learn from what went well and avoid making the same mistakes that I made, which led to a few epic failures.

So how is this book organised? It is laid out so you can work on one topic per day.

For example, during the workshop I usually mention that there is no point in sending your CV to companies before you have a strong and coherent presence on the Internet. Be under no illusion, employers receiving your CV will type your name and email address into search engines like Google and if they find nothing interesting about you, but do find loads of fascinating information about other candidates applying for the same vacancy, who do you think will have the upper hand in those vital first few seconds of looking at CVs?

The idea is to work on one topic per day for one month. Check your web presence, create a profile on the professional network LinkedIn, use Facebook to stand out from the crowd, learn to write a CV, develop strategies to avoid secretaries on the phone and how to behave in a job interview. These are just a few of the things I'll be covering in the 30 days of the challenge.

Introduction

The book “How to find a job in 30 days” also has a website www.job30days.com, where you can access up-to-date information and find resources to help you organise your contacts list and download attractive CV models, among other things. All the

information is regularly updated on the site and on social media.

At the end of each day of the challenge, you will find a link to a practical webpage dealing with the topic of the chapter you have just read. Each page on the site has instructions with images which complement the text, making what is in the book more visual and easier to follow.

At the back of the book, you will find a few lined pages for you to make your own notes on anything that grabs your attention. Do use them!

You have probably thought about trying to lose weight, giving up smoking or learning something new. But you never got round to it, so you didn't see the results you were hoping for.

There is a Chinese proverb that goes like this:

“The best day to plant a tree was twenty years ago. The second best day is today!”

Today is a great day to start something new, so commit to this 30-day challenge and share the results with me by email at:

pedro@job30days.com or on social media.

What do you look like on the Internet?

When you type your name into a search engine like Google what comes up?

Make sure you do an anonymous search so that the cookies in your browser don't affect the results. This is the only way you will be able to see what other users get when they do a search of your name. If you are using 'Chrome' as a browser, click Ctrl+Shift+N to surf anonymously and you will get the same results as other users.

If in doubt about what to do, see the step-by-step images I have put on the website:

www.job30days.com/day1

Will people be able to find any information about you on the first page of results of an internet search? If someone Googles your name, they want to find articles or comments written by you or about you. Remember, they will probably also find all the offensive comments you have made on forums, blogs and Facebook.

So **what exactly are the first results you get when searching for your own name?** It's quite likely that they won't be what you were hoping for – but despair not! Among the sites, images and links that you got, I bet you found an awful lot that had nothing whatsoever to do with you, right? Were there lots of hits with the same name, but for people other than you? That is a sign your name is fairly common.

Define your “professional name”

Most people have fairly common names, which makes it hard for you to stand out on the Internet. That was exactly the problem I had when I began organising my online presence, so I decided to create my own **personal brand name**, rather like an actor's stage name.

My full name is Pedro Miguel da Silva Santos. “Pedro Miguel” must be one of the most common combinations of names ever searched for on the internet (at least in Portuguese, that is!), competing closely with “José António” and “Ana Maria”, among others. My surnames “Silva” and “Santos” are the equivalent to “Smith” or “Brown” in English, so I knew my name was doomed to certain failure from the outset. What I then did was to try out different combinations of my name with hyphens and this is what I came up with:

“Pedro Silva-Santos”

Since then, I have standardised the way I write my name on everything and everywhere and now my name appears at the top of internet searches whenever someone types in “Pedro Silva-Santos”.

I could also have used “Miguel da Silva”, by leaving out my first and last names, or even simply “Silva Santos”, which would sound great after my professional title: “Dr. Silva Santos”!

Choose a **simple, attractive combination** for your “professional name”.

Set up a good email address

Now do a search for your email address on Google. What do you get?

After you have decided on your professional name, choose the best possible combination for your professional email address. Avoid things like Smith97@... as the name is meaningless. Think about it: who is going to search for “Smith97”?

I suggest you set up a Gmail account (Google’s email service), as it’s both a credible and a powerful platform. What’s more, when you set up a Gmail account (<https://accounts.google.com/SignUp>), it automatically creates a profile for you on Google+, a social media platform I’ll be looking at on day 3 of our challenge.

If there aren’t many decent options available, you can always shorten your name. Using my full ‘stage’ name, my email address would be: **pedro.silva-santos@...** However, I felt it was just too

long and complex and would cause me too many headaches spelling it out over the phone or writing it out for people. So I tried shortening it to **pedross@...** I also know a company who only use the first and last initials of the workers' names (so Paddy Greenleaf becomes = **pg@...**), which might also work for you.

I will never forget an application that came across my desk a few years ago from a graduate looking for a job in one of my companies. The CV was pretty credible, but the email address was, to say the least, a little intriguing: pussy69...@...!

Obviously, I don't need to share the whole address with you, but I can tell you what happened next. I put the email address into a search engine and what I got back was a load of explicit photos on a blog, asking for "a lot of action"!

Had we been recruiting for an erotic restaurant, they would have been the perfect candidate for the job - and there was certainly quite a large network of followers! However, that wasn't what we were looking for at the time, and that particular CV never even made it into our database.

Your photograph and Internet Presence

Once you have standardised how you write your name and your email, it's time to choose the one **photograph that you are going to use on all the digital platforms**, your business card, your CV and anywhere else. Using the same photo across all platforms will make it easier for you to be identified in social media and in different contexts.

At first, I used this photo on social networks and my business cards:



When I gave people my card with this beach photo on it, meetings would always start with a smile. It was an **excellent way to break the ice**. However, I did later decide to change my photo so that people wouldn't think I was trying to get a job in a massage parlour or as a life guard!

Check out the updates on the site:

www.job30days.com/day1

Your Facebook profile

Today we are going to focus on the social network that almost everyone is on. Your former teachers, the postman, or even the cleaning lady at the local mall have probably all got an account on Facebook! Even many of the people who swear blind that they would never join Facebook, have probably got a false Facebook page to spy on their enemies or to keep an eye on what their other half is up to online and to see who they're in contact with.

I'm assuming you have already got a Facebook account but, if not, go to www.facebook.com right now and set one up before reading any more about what you should do to find a job in 30 days.

So, can we move on? Jolly good!

Now that you have a Facebook account, let me share a few tips with you that will help you stand out and get noticed amidst the **chaos of profiles on this social network.**

People seem to think that all you need to do to be easily found

on social media sites is simply join up. Well, that is true to an extent. However, merely joining up without making any useful or interesting contribution will not help you to get noticed.

We'll talk more about that on day 7 of our challenge. Today I'm going to teach you how to configure your Facebook profile to **keep it looking attractive and uncluttered**.

I often see Facebook pages full of videos of pets doing tricks or posts from other people tagging pseudo-friends in the hope of getting more hits... Think about this for a moment: what do these pages tell us about their owners? A chaotic profile page, on which even strangers can post, probably gives the impression you are sloppy and don't care about the fact you are sharing information that is of no interest to anybody, often without you even being aware of it.

When I talk about this, there is always someone who says: *"I only have FB for personal use – not for companies to look me up!"*

Oh dear – another one who has no idea about reality!

Stop trying to separate your personal life from your professional life. You can't: you only have one life, so step back into reality and quit using over-used clichés, which will get you absolutely nowhere!

I know, it's scary to realise you have been brought up to believe in an on-going battle between personal and professional life. But the good news is it only exists inside your head, and the sooner you understand that I am right about this, the quicker you will get satisfaction out of everything you do.

So, be careful about **how you come across on the Internet, especially in social media**, because it will affect your chances of success and failure. For example, I have a friend who shares nothing

on his Facebook page, at least not that he's aware of. However, every day, he is tagged in posts published by a tattoo studio whose page he follows. If you visit his page once or twice a week, it's hard not to be struck by the images of skull and cross bones tattooed on bulging arms. I am not questioning the quality or taste of the tattoo work or the artist's decision to share his pictures on Facebook and so advertise his work. The problem here is that my friend's profile is a mess, which gives a really bad impression of him. I assume that if someone is chaotic on social media they will also be a sloppy, disorganised mess in real life.

Don't let people get the wrong idea about you when they find you on Facebook. **Your profile and photo represent you even while you are asleep.** Think of them as being a digital version of you! Would you let your friends decide what clothes you put on in the morning, and run the risk of looking like a complete idiot? Of course you wouldn't! So limit the posts other people can put on your page. All you have to do is configure your privacy definitions, restrict who can see your posts and, above all, who can comment and post on your page or tag you in photos.

Have you seen my Facebook page? It has only got the information I post. Sometimes I am tagged in other people's photos or posts, but I have to approve them to make them visible on my timeline. I am the one who decides what goes on my page!

If you look at the book's website, you will see step-by-step instructions for configuring your privacy definitions so you can control who posts on your page and who can tag you in photos:

www.job30days.com/day2

Another important step is to personalise the URL of your Facebook page to make it easier for people to find you in search engines. To do this, go to “Settings”, and click on “General Account Settings” and edit the “Username” field.

A well-configured Facebook page is extremely important as it allows all sorts of connections and synchronisation with other platforms. For example, I suggest you configure a profile page **on a site called About.me** (<https://about.me/>), logging in with your Facebook account. This is a quick and easy way to write a short description of yourself, without having to set up your own site. It takes only a couple of minutes to set up as most of the information is generated automatically from your Facebook profile.

Now you have a well-configured profile on Facebook, you are ready to start sharing relevant daily content with your friends and contacts. On days 6 and 7 I will be looking at sources of inspiration you can use on a daily basis to become a star of social network sharing!

If you have any doubts about how to configure your page, check out the step-by-step images I have put up on the site:

www.job30days.com/day2

Your Google+ profile

Today we are going to explore Google+, Google's social network.

In my workshops, I do an interesting exercise. I ask the members of the audience to raise their hand if they have a Gmail account. Loads of people put their hands up.

Then I say:

“Keep your hand up if you have a Google+ account”.

And this is the funny part - practically everybody puts their hand down again.

Now, not a lot of people know this, but **when someone sets up a Gmail account, Google automatically generates a profile for that user on the Google+ social network.** Because so many users are unaware of this, there is a huge number of Google+ profiles with no photograph, no updates and, worse still, nothing but automatic posts that the users are entirely oblivious to. In one of the “How to find a job in 30 days” workshops I showed a Google+ profile of a person who had no photo and who had shared only one

video publicly - of him trying to do the infamous Gangnam Style choreography. Immediately, someone in the audience cried out, “*Oh, my God!*”

I was intentionally showing the Google+ profile and video of someone I knew was in the audience. But how did I know they would be there in the workshop? When we do enrolments for the “How to find a job in 30 days” workshops, we have access to the names and e-mail addresses of all the participants and I have fun looking for traumatic examples to pick on! I was looking for a participant’s e-mail address used to login to a Google+ profile with no photo. All it had was a username and one video of the user trying to do the choreography.

How does this happen without the user having the faintest idea? It’s possible because there is one more little detail that escapes most people’s attention... **When you upload a video on YouTube**, the world’s biggest video channel, the video **will show up on your Google+ account** if you use the same email address to log into Gmail and YouTube! “Fantastic” or “Oh, my God” are the usual reactions I get in my workshops. It’s then that the workshop participants realise they may well have YouTube videos being shared on the Google+ social network. As it belongs to Google, all the content shared on Google+ is considered to be priority by the search engine!

Many people have not yet realised that all the devices, apps and digital platforms that use the same email to login, synchronise all the content online in the cloud. Personally, I think it’s fabulous to have everything synchronised. However, I do like to know this is happening so that I can decide what is visible publicly and what is

not to avoid nasty surprises.

Have you seen ‘Sex Tape’ with Jason Segel and Cameron Diaz? The story is funny and illustrates the point I’m making perfectly. Watch it and you’ll see what I mean: a couple’s intimate video is synchronised across the mother-in-law’s iPad, and the postman’s, and so on! As well as deciding how you want to appear online, it is important you know and can control certain basic principles.

Once you have set up your profile on Google+, start organising your contacts in circles of “Friends”, “Family”, “Colleagues”, etc. You can also create other circles that suit you to keep your contacts organised. The circles also allow you to organise the emails you get from these people in your Gmail account in the same categories.

If you have any doubts about configuring your Google+ account, check out these images on the website:

www.job30days.com/day3

Setting Up a profile on LinkedIn

LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) is still the social network most people use for professional purposes. So make sure you set up your account carefully and keep it immaculate. Use it like an online CV.

Firstly, you should understand that LinkedIn is nothing like Facebook! There are no games or photo albums. You can only upload a profile picture (which should be the same one you use for Facebook and Google+), and then all you can do is describe who you are, what job you are doing, your professional experience, information about where you studied and what projects you are involved in.

Unlike Facebook and Google+, many business people, company directors and big decision makers are on LinkedIn, so use it with some regularity. I have made some excellent contacts and started business dealings on LinkedIn.

I suggest you have a look at the article I have written about LinkedIn on the site, as the images will help you understand the configuration options I'm going to be talking about:

www.job30days.com/day4

You should keep your contact details up-to-date and clearly visible (phone number, e-mail, address, Facebook, Skype name, etc...). If you give your website or blog details, click on the 'Other' option so you can personalize the way the title page appears in the contacts sections. Otherwise, they will appear as the default "Company website" or "Personal website".

Don't forget to personalise the URL for your profile page to make it easier for other people to find you on search engines. To do this, click on the "Profile" menu and under your photo you should find the option to personalise your URL using your professional name. I put .../pedrosilvasantos.

Personalise what people can see on your profile and who can see it. This way, your public profile will appear in online searches even for people who don't have a LinkedIn account and so the network will work for you, even as you sleep.

Should you work or have worked in a company, make doubly sure you write the name of the company correctly and, if it has a

LinkedIn page, its logo will appear directly on your profile page, which will make that section look a whole lot more appealing.

Privacy

Now that you have filled in the basics of the profile, you need to configure your privacy settings carefully.

Keep these two important points in mind:

- 1 – Block people from being able to see your network of contacts;
- 2 – Make sure other people cannot see when you add a new contact or join a discussion group.

Why shouldn't your contacts list be visible?

Imagine you spend all week expanding your contacts list and a candidate for the same job vacancy as you decides to set aside a couple of hours on a Saturday morning to visit your profile, have a look at your new contacts and use the ones he finds most useful for himself. You'll basically have spent all week working for free for someone who could pinch your job!

Increasingly, your network of contacts is an extremely valuable asset, which you shouldn't simply be giving away to anyone and everyone. As the saying goes *"it's not what you know, but who you know that knows!!"*

So who can see your contacts? If you have put 'Only you' then you're a man or woman who knows what they want.

Anyone who has contacts in common with you will only be able to see the list of shared contacts. Only the other members of discussion groups you join should be able to see you in them. All

other professionals will not be able to see what you get up to every day on LinkedIn.

Instructions for making your contacts list private

To change the visibility settings, go to account settings and click on “Privacy Settings”. When you try to make changes, LinkedIn will ask you to login again with your username and password to make sure it is really you who are making the changes to your profile.

Next, you will see a page with loads of options. On the “Privacy” tab, choose “Who can see your connections” and then click on “Only you” and “Save changes”.

It is equally important to set limits on what other users can see when you visit their profile page. In this regard, LinkedIn is a very fair platform. If you don’t let others know that you have visited their page on LinkedIn, you won’t be able to see who has visited yours either, nor will you have access to visualisation statistics.

Personally, I have opted for leaving the settings so all my contacts know when I visit their page. Whenever I want to check some information without being identified, I change the settings temporarily to appear ‘anonymous’ and change them back again when I have seen what I want to see. It’s dead easy... and no one will know what I was searching for by looking at a particular profile.

After publishing your personal information and your work experience on your profile, get into the habit of visiting LinkedIn once a day to analyse what sort of activity is being generated around you. If all you do is simply set up your homepage then I can assure

you there will be no activity going on around you at all.

If in doubt about these settings, I suggest, as ever, a quick visit the trusty webpage and those oh-so-helpful images:

www.job30days.com/day4

If not, keep reading to find out about the next steps in our 30-day challenge.

Creating a network of connections on LinkedIn

Now you have set up your profile on LinkedIn, you should spend today creating and expanding your network of connections, which is one of the main reasons for being on this platform.

Remember, it's no good collecting loads of contacts of people who have never heard of you or who are in a totally different field of work to you. Like everything in life, be selective.

You can start by inviting contacts you already know and who are already on LinkedIn, like colleagues, ex-colleagues, former teachers,

people you have met in meetings, or why not the author of this book? Don't feel obliged, but if you'd like to you can add me to your connections by following this link:

<https://pt.linkedin.com/in/pedrosilvasantos>

There are several different ways in which you can find contacts:

- Send invitations to people in your email address list;
- Search for a person's name;
- Search for people who went to the same school as you or who have worked for the same companies as you.

When you go to an event such as a conference or training day, don't forget to add all the people you met to your network in the following few days. Search for their names or emails one-by-one either using the LinkedIn search tool or using Google, in which LinkedIn profiles are easily indexed. For example, if you were looking for me on LinkedIn, you would type the following into a search engine:

Pedro Silva-Santos + LinkedIn

Look for businesses of interest to 'follow' on LinkedIn, such as companies in your professional field, so you get notifications about their activities (e.g. new projects, job vacancies, training) sent to your main page. This way, you will be up to speed and be better informed than other candidates.

If you have worked previously, start by following the pages of companies where you have worked. Then look for companies in

which you know people and look carefully at the profile pages of the people in the list of workers on that company's page.

The power of endorsements

Recommendations reinforce your credibility in the professional world and are one of the best ways to get a job. If somebody likes your work, they will recommend you to other people. It's the old power-of-the-grapevine or word-of-mouth publicity.

On LinkedIn, endorsements serve exactly the same purpose: to increase the credibility of professional people. If you have worked for a company or on a project, ask your colleagues and ex-colleagues, former and current bosses to endorse your work. If you haven't started working yet, you could ask for endorsements from your former teachers, for example.

If you do get an endorsement from someone, be sure to return the favour by endorsing their work too. Do remember, though, that endorsements should be kept to professional attributes and skills, and are not meant to start personal conversations.

Be careful: Never ask someone for an endorsement if you have never actually worked with them. You will easily annoy professionals who use LinkedIn seriously by asking them to make endorsements if you haven't worked directly with them.

I have actually turned down requests for endorsements from several people with whom I have worked previously.

Why? For two main reasons:

- 1) Because I don't feel I know the person's work well enough to be

able to make a public endorsement;

2) Because, based on my previous experience of working with the person in question, I don't think their work is good enough and I wouldn't want to work with them again myself.

Since I'm not going to publicly write a destructive comment about anyone - that is not what I'd call a recommendation or endorsement - I would prefer not to write anything at all until I feel I know and trust the person sufficiently well.

How to improve your chances of being called for interview via LinkedIn

When you have found a job advert you are interested in, search the company's page on LinkedIn to see if you can find out who will be looking at the applications and doing the interviews. Whose name is in the job ad? The boss'? That would be normal for small firms (which are usually the best companies to work for!). Alternatively, does the email of the person in charge of recruiting belong to someone in the company's HR department?

As I said earlier, it is so easy to do a Google search for an email address or the name of a person and the company they work for. Try typing in something like this:

Pedro Silva-Santos + company NOCTULA

Assuming the people who are recruiting have a well-configured profile on LinkedIn, it should be easy to work out who will be

receiving your email, taking your phone call or interviewing you. If you visit the person's LinkedIn profile a few days before and after your initial contact, they will see you have visited them and are more than likely to want to find out a little bit about you too.

Luckily, at this point you have now put all your information on your profile and you've deleted that embarrassing video on Facebook from last year's summer festival, in which you remember getting to the place, but not how you lost your tent...!

Warning:

- Make sure your information is accurate and that there are no spelling mistakes on your profile.

It's unbelievable how many profiles have typing errors, which nobody has bothered to check before hitting 'post'. I have seen "Directpr" instead of "Director", and other similar mistakes and, incredibly, these sorts of errors can remain unchanged for months, which shows that the owner spends little time reviewing or updating his or her profile;

- Do not put "Unemployed" as your current occupation! If you are looking for work, put your previous job or what you trained as.

No organisation hiring on the basis of work experience will choose an applicant who publicly advertises themselves as unemployed. Any professional who is temporarily out of work or looking for a new challenge has had training and previous work experience, whether it's as an Environmental Engineer, Technician, Mechanic, or whatever.

Think about it like this, the company which will eventually hire you

must be able to see the added value you bring to their company with your training, previous positions and work experience. Otherwise, you stand no chance of being asked to go for an interview. If you are unemployed or between jobs, don't be pigeon-holed, and certainly don't put that information in your LinkedIn profile or CV!

I have been told that there are companies looking for unemployed people on LinkedIn so they can apply for state funding and hire cheap labour. Be careful - those sorts of companies don't use LinkedIn to recruit! Anyway, you should know these two things:

- 1) Companies that do this get the names of unemployed candidates from the Job Centre so they can be enrolled in the applications for state subsidies;

- 2) Most people hired with government subsidies - in Portugal, at least - are replaced with new workers after 9 to 12 months, so the company can get another subsidy.

The good news is that you are not going to want to work in a company that works on that sort of basis to hire new workers – that's one of the reasons you are reading this book!

Once you have done everything in your power to make yourself look as good as you can on LinkedIn, you need to analyse the results you get and the progress you're making. An interesting tool for this is the "Who's Viewed Your Profile?" tab on the Profile menu. As the name suggests, it's a list of people who have looked at your profile. Could they be potential employers? Someone who could put you in touch with the person in charge of recruitment in a particular company? If you think your professional experience could be useful to any of these people, you should send them a personalised

invitation to join your network of contacts. On day 11 of our 30-day challenge I'll give you some useful model texts you can use to invite these professionals to join you on LinkedIn.

I suggest you visit the book's webpage where you'll find a few more tips for creating and managing your network of connections on LinkedIn:

www.job30days.com/day5

Recommended daily reading

It is often said that **you are what you read**, so you should be reading creative articles regularly on a daily basis and keeping up with the trends and recent discoveries that are revolutionising the world as we know it.

Until recently, only those with money to travel had access to new cultures and innovative ideas. Today, it is incredibly easy to follow the ideas and opinions of great influencers such as Sir Richard Branson, the fascinating businessman and billionaire who started the Virgin group.

In October 2012, LinkedIn created a group called “**Influencers**”. I think the name is brilliant! They asked “Influencers” to write regular articles giving their point of view in thematic channels, as part of a news channel called “Pulse”. “Pulse” channels have articles on subjects such as “Leadership and Management”, “Great Ideas and Innovation”, “Entrepreneurship and Small Businesses”, “Social

Networks”, and much more.

You can subscribe to “Pulse” channels for free and get all the updates and news sent straight to your LinkedIn homepage. Read the article on the website to see how to subscribe to Pulse channels:

www.job30days.com/day6

Personally, I prefer to read “Pulse” articles on my phone using the “LinkedIn Pulse” app. Download it and see what you think. I started reading 3 or 4 “Pulse” articles each morning at breakfast and after a while I realised this flow of daily information was helping me to think more creatively. Suddenly, I wanted to try out new projects; I was putting into practice strategies to organise and manage my time better; I was more comfortable when I approached people I had never previously met...

Reading “Pulse” articles changed the way I dealt with life and business, and it has altered the way I think and how I face up to new challenges.

I recommend you read inspirational stuff on a daily basis. It will be a source of inspiration to help you construct the **best possible version of yourself, the one that will make you stand out in any crowd!**

On the website I regularly share more recommended daily reading channels:

www.job30days.com/day6

Sharing useful content on social networks

Why should you share interesting ideas to stand out on social media?

We all like to know about the ideas and opinions of the people we look up to. People who post interesting content on social networks quickly become popular and others will want to follow them. If you share fascinating content online, which can be read even by people who don't know you, it will show you read and find scintillating ideas before the masses do; it will show you are inquisitive and, above all, that you are decent sort – as you choose not to keep it to yourself!

Now that you have your profiles on three social networks working for you, and your name is going to start appearing in online searches, you need to share useful content on a daily basis.

I expect you're thinking, *"I don't have time to produce content to share on social media!"* But I didn't say anything about starting to write!

All I am asking you to do is to share the content other people have already produced. It's as simple as clicking on a few share buttons that nearly all sites have now, and if you are already logged

into your account, you are ready to roll! In less than 30 seconds you'll be sharing content on Facebook, Google+ and LinkedIn. Amazing, isn't it?!

Be warned! Since most of your friends don't know how to use social media for professional purposes, you'll be on the receiving end of all sorts of abusive comments like, "*Got nothing better to do than spend all day on Facebook?*" Stand firm! That happened to me too!

Don't forget, your friends can always block your posts if they really want to. When I bump into friends and acquaintances in the street they often ask me about certain projects and events I have been involved in recently. How do they know what I've been up to? It's simple. They know because I make a point of sharing my work on social networks.

- I don't share photos or information about my private life;
- I never write anything negative;
- I don't get involved in controversial issues.

I simply share information that may be an inspiration for other people. This is the same philosophy we use on the NOCTULA Channel website: "*... what matters, should be shared!*"

You may be asking yourself, "*Doesn't he have any opinions about Government policy?*" or "*Doesn't anything annoy him?*" Yes, of course there are things that annoy me, but I choose not to write about them on social networks!

How to find a job in 30 days

Refuse to be one of the digital era's "angry" people and **choose to inspire change rather than provoke indignation!**

Don't forget, whenever you find an article on an interesting

subject, share it with everyone. If you don't want to spend time searching through lots of different sources, remember that LinkedIn pulse channels share several articles a day. So, make no more excuses for not sharing relevant and interesting content!

I also suggest that you give your personal touch to the things you share on social media. If you look, you'll see that when I share something I always include a short phrase such as, *"I love this project"*; *"Great! I want one of these..."* This detail attracts people's attention to the article I am sharing and makes it that little bit more interesting and personal. Anyone who knows me will tell you I like to give news enthusiastically. So if all I did was to share something on social media without showing any sort of emotion or personal engagement, people would think it was just another share. Whenever someone shares or comments on something you have posted, leave them a comment, a smiley or at least a 'like' so they can see it's not just another meaningless share. People like to know you have spent time with them.

Another way of becoming **known in the digital world** is to interact with other people's shares in groups, pages, sites or blogs that you follow, whether they are people in your list of contacts or not.

For the first few days or even weeks, you will probably not get much interaction from people on your posts, but as time goes on people in your contacts will start to see you are active and interesting and they will all want to follow you.

You can visit the site to learn a little bit more about this topic:

www.job30days.com/day7

Why does everything keep changing...?

Ever since I was little I remember hearing my parents say things like, *“These days, things are terrible...”*, *“These youngsters are up to no good!”*

And now I’m grown up, I still hear them saying the same things!! *“Things are terrible...”* and *“Things just go from bad to worse!”* That said, now it’s not only them, but people of my generation who make these sorts of comments.

Does that mean nothing has changed since the 70s? I think you’ll agree that just about everything has changed in that time, right? So why is it that people from different generations seem to be perpetually depressed, year after year?

It’s much easier to blame the world around us than to keep on facing the fear of doing things differently. People are formatted to complain and lay the blame on others rather than to see that the problem actually lies with them!

The world is in a state of constant change. What works today, is obsolete tomorrow. A great idea today may make no sense at all tomorrow, and so we must learn to embrace ongoing change because it's part of the process of evolution. Even if you refuse to change, the world keeps on spinning and you run the risk of very quickly being left behind!

Technology has developed so fast in the last two decades that everything we took for granted has all but disappeared. Companies don't stay big forever. There is no longer one way of doing things, and above all, unlike in my parents' day, **jobs no longer last forever.**

Today, I suggest you take the time to read a little book which I hope will help you to rethink how you deal with change. **“Who moved my cheese?”** is a story with four characters (two mice and two humans), which shows us that the way we react to changes and the decisions we make can lead us to success or disaster. Despite the fact critics fail to understand quite why so many people love Spencer Johnson's little book, saying it is little more than a collection of clichés and common sense, millions of people around the world have read it and have witnessed the great changes it has brought to their lives.

Questions such as, *“What would you do if you were not afraid?”* and suggestions like, *“Smell your cheese frequently so you know when it is getting old”*, personify situations we live out in our day-to-day lives, and which we often ignore as we are living happily in our comfort zone.

But in a constantly changing world be ready, because, *“They are always moving your cheese”*.

The moral of the parable is that you **should anticipate change and adapt quickly.** That will make sure you are one of those people

for whom it seems that everything always goes well – and for whom adversity never knocks on your door.

Look at the video of this story here:

www.job30days.com/day8

Read inspiring books

I hear a lot of people saying that they don't like reading. I didn't used to like reading either – especially some of the rubbish we had to read at school!

Today, I want you to go to the nearest book shop and look for an inspiring book. If you can't afford to buy it, sit down and read it in the shop! Here are a few suggestions that I am sure will make a difference and help you move up to the next level:

- ***Dream Year* by Ben Arment**

Are you sure you haven't been putting your dreams to one side for too long? Have you been stuck in the same job for ten years because you have to pay your mortgage? This book is a guide that will teach you to change your life around in just 365 days.

• **Networking by Filipe Carrera**

This is a book the author describes as a guide to “professional survival”. It’s full of simple tips to help you use your contacts list successfully.

Once again, *“it’s not what you know that matters, but knowing someone who knows!”*

• **Never Eat Alone by Keith Ferrazzi and Tahl Raz**

How often have you been in a city for a few days for meetings or looking for new opportunities, or even enjoying a few day’s holiday, and you’ve eaten all on your own every meal time?

According to the writer, *“the dynamic of a contacts list is like a hopeful trying to make it as a Hollywood star: invisibility is worse than failure.”*

The same is true when in breaks during a conference. Keith Ferrazzi says, *“The breaks are not the time to take a break. The breaks are when the real action starts at a conference”*.

• **Rework by Jason Fried and David Heinemeier Hansson**

Hard work, urgency to get things done and endless meetings... it’s all wrong!

If you are not open to radically changing how you think and work, then you’d be better off not reading this book because it’s just going to annoy you – a lot!

“Ignore the real world”, “Take a nap” and “Your estimates are useless!” are just a few of the chapter headings in the book, which I think is brilliant.

• ***30 Something and Over It* by Kasey Edwards**

This is a provocative guide book which gives advice on what to do when you wake up in the morning and find you never want to go to work again.

Brilliant!

• ***Mob rules: What the Mafia can teach the legitimate businessman* by Louis Ferrante**

A fantastic book written by a former member of the Gambino gang, who read his first book and learnt to love reading during his time in prison.

The author makes use of surprising sayings such as, “*walls have ears*” or “*3 can keep a secret if 2 are dead*” to show how we can progress in our careers legally without falling in to traps.

• ***I hate people* by Jonathan Littman and Marc Hershon**

Do you know people who take up your time and try your patience but don't know how to get rid of them? This book teaches you how to deal with situations like these, keeping your mental health intact and improving your productivity.

• ***Best practices are stupid* by Stephen M. Shapiro**

The author argues that most of the time we stifle innovation and research markets asking the wrong questions!

This book shows that, “*It’s not the fittest who survive but the most adaptable*”, “*Asking for ideas is a bad idea*”, “*Failure is always an option*”, “*Innovation is child’s play*” and “*The know-it-all doesn’t exist*”.

A great book to get you thinking differently.

• ***The Monk who Sold his Ferrari* by Robin Sharma**

This is the true story of a tough and famous lawyer, who was a complete workaholic and ended up having a heart attack. After recovering from his near-death experience, the lawyer decides to change his life for good.

An inspiring book for those open to a little self-discovery!

• ***What got you here, won’t get you there* by Marshall Goldsmith with Mark Reiter**

Have you ever felt you have simply stagnated? However hard you try, you just can’t get out of a rut and it’s not your fault?

You should read this book to see that you have fallen into the trap of “*21 habits that won’t let you move on*”.

Stop “*passing the buck*”.

Stop “*refusing to say sorry*”.

Stop “*being stuck in the past*”.

Stop “*having favourites*”.

Stop “*making excuses*”.

Stop “*taking credit for what isn’t yours*”.

• ***Zero to One* by Peter Thiel with Blake Masters**

This is the book for people who love creating new things; things that haven't yet been created but which will change everything as we know it.

The legendary Peter Thiel, co-founder of PayPal and the initial investor in a number of well-known companies (including Facebook, LinkedIn and Airbnb), explained on a short course at Stanford University how he had been repeatedly successful in life. One of the students secretly shared his notes on the internet. However, after millions of visualisations in just a few days, he had to ask Peter for permission to continue publishing them.

And so the book was born – it's a sort of improved version of the notes taken by the student (Blake Masters)!

• ***The 4-hour Workweek* by Timothy Ferriss**

I first read this book in 2009, when I began my own environmental consultancy firm. I thought it was brilliant, but at the time I was a little confused by some of the topics because I didn't have a good enough grasp of the need to rewrite the rules of work to save time and be able to develop new ideas, rest and do what I felt like doing!

I read it again in 2015 and realised how much I had grown up over the years. I work less now than I did in 2009 and the results are much better! We have to get away from the idea of hard work, which is so ingrained into our psyche from childhood, and start working in a way that is more intelligent and better organised.

Contrary to what people say, this book does not encourage

laziness, but is an inspiring book that forces us to question everything we have been taught.

I also highly recommend regular visits to Tim Ferriss' blog for the latest updates:

www.fourhourworkweek.com/blog

• ***Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less* by Greg McKeown**

I wish I had read this sooner!

“Do you feel like you are constantly busy, but get very little done?”

“Do you do what other people want to keep them happy or just to avoid problems?”

As life goes on and we keep saying “*Yes*” to everybody, we take on more and more responsibilities, there are more people we have to keep happy and more people around us placing demands on our time and seeking our attention... until at some point we realise we are up to our necks in chaos and feel like there's no way out.

“Essentialism” is a movement that teaches us to identify what is not truly important, and to do less, but much better!

• ***The Art of Social Media – Power Tips for Power Users* by Guy Kawasaki and Peg Fitzpatrick**

I had the pleasure of being a *beta reader* for this book. It's essential reading for anyone looking to use social media to launch their personal brand, to share information about the services you offer or the products you sell, etc...

Have you ever asked yourself how celebrities share content on social media several times a day? Do you think they spend their days doing nothing but updating their pages? And on top of that, how do they manage to write a daily personal blog and regularly be seen at events enjoying a cool drink overlooking the sea?

With the existence of so many social networks these days it is easy to feel lost. This book teaches you where to make your presence felt, how to optimize your profile and how to create and share great content regularly with minimum effort – among many other topics which are common factors meaning that some people get heard in this “noisy digital world” and others stay in the shadows.

• ***Eliminate the Chaos at Work – 25 Techniques to Increase Productivity*** by Laura Leist

Almost everyone seems to complain that they are very busy and very short of time.

Be careful not to fall into the traps mentioned by the author of: *“Everyone is busy; not everyone is productive”*.

How to create rules to manage emails automatically?

How to create model emails?

How to deal with distractions from instant messaging and alerts that keep popping up on your electronic devices?

How to block your tasks?

How to manage the paperwork you left on your desk over 6

months ago?

How to use “To”, “Cc” and “Bcc” effectively in emails?

Learn to be more organised in your work and you will see that you can actually do more, with less effort. You’ll start finding time to read, to think, to go to the gym or even to see your boyfriend or girlfriend...! I used to be extremely disorganised with my work, so trust me, I know exactly what I’m talking about!

You’ll find more good reading material here:

www.job30days.com/day9

Check everything you have done so far

In only 9 days you have organised your presence in the digital world and laid down a foundation that will lead to your success. I guarantee that most people you know will never even get as far as this, unless, of course, you lend them the book!

Today, slow down the creative rhythm of organising your online presence and take time to check everything you have done so far. This **detailed, reflective process** should ensure you that correct any errors which have gone unnoticed thus far.

Also, use this time to take a critical look at all the information you have put online. Cut out long, over-complicated descriptions which might put off a potential recruiter. Remember that all the information should be clear and appealing at a glance.

After logging into your social networks, you should:

- Carefully check that your photo, name, personal bio and work experience are coherent and free of spelling mistakes;
- Check that everything you have published is well-written and error-free. When you find mistakes, edit the text for each share and correct them;
- Click on all your links (*e-mail, site, blog, etc...*) and make sure they take users to the right place;
- Make sure your contact details are correct across all platforms;
- Check your information appears correctly in web searches or whether you need to make any corrections;
- Check your privacy definitions for each social network and make sure everything is working the way it should be;
- Visit other professionals' profiles and see how they present themselves online. Copy and adapt the styles that work best for you and don't get all moral about this suggestion! Remember, you should always be aware of what works for other people so you can adapt it to your own context;
- Check your professional status is correctly configured on LinkedIn;
- Check that you have blocked access to your contacts list and daily activities on LinkedIn (e.g. new contacts you have added, groups you have joined, etc...);
- Make sure your profiles on social networks have enough relevant and interesting information made public so that a recruiter can find out about you before an interview;

- Make sure your previous work experience is linked to the companies you worked for and that you have this properly configured on social media so the company logo shows next to each job you have done. Obviously, if the company has no page set up on social networks, the logo will not appear automatically;
- Make sure you have correctly personalised the URL with your name on each network (...com/pedrosilvasantos).

I suggest you read the article on today's page of the site too, as the images will help you understand more easily where all these options can be found:

www.job30days.com/day10

Create an email signature & standard texts

How many emails are sent everyday with no information about the sender's contact details?

So many lost opportunities, which could be making you stand out in a crowd! It is so annoying when you want to phone someone who has sent you an email, only to find they have neglected to give you their phone number! All you can do is to send them an email requesting the information.

What a waste of time!

If you really want to be contacted about a job vacancy, why would you make it difficult for the person potentially offering you the job? Make it as easy as possible for them to speak to you.

If you have just spent the last 10 days building your presence on the internet, now you should create an email signature that allows future employers to see your photo, phone number and pages on social media.

Every email you send will be working for you!

I sense I can hear you inner voice saying, “*Do I really have to put a photo in my email signature?*” Well, let me answer that with another question:

How many emails have you received with the sender’s photo in the signature?

I bet I know the answer!

I honestly don’t understand why people have no problem whatsoever sharing silly photos of themselves on social media, and yet when it comes to sending emails they get all funny about it. Do you want to miss out on opportunities to make yourself stand out from the crowd?

You can see my email signature on the website:

www.job30days.com/day11

Amazing as it may sound, you don’t need to have any great knowledge about design or programming to get an email signature like mine. There are free tools out there to make it easy for you to create an email signature with all the bits you need. For example, at **www.wisestamp.com** you can create an email signature in under a minute!

After choosing the sort of signature you want, type in your information and attach a photo, copy the code and paste it into the signature fields in Gmail, Outlook or any other email software. **Warning:** make sure the photo you use in your email signature is the same one you have used on all other e-platforms (social media and so on).

See the images on the website to help you create your email signature: www.job30days.com/day11

Standard Texts

As well as an email signature, you should create a Word document with standard texts, which you will use in various repetitive tasks that you'll have to perform from here on. This will systematise things and make you more efficient.

For example, you will need to personalise a message to send invitations on LinkedIn, so the recipient knows why they should accept you in their list of contacts. Here is an example I use:

Dear Sir/Madam/Mr. Brown,

I would like to become part of your network on LinkedIn as I think my company, NOCTULA, works in areas that may be of interest to you given the projects you are managing

Best regards,

Pedro Silva-Santos

And when another professional accepts your invitation, or invites you to join their network, you should send them a thank you note. Here are some general messages I use regularly, and all I have to do is change the name of the person I'm writing to:

Subject: Thank you

Good afternoon Catherine,

Many thanks for adding me to your contacts list on LinkedIn. If I can be of any assistance to you with anything related to environmental consulting, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Best wishes,

Pedro Silva-Santos

Website: www.noctula.pt

Email: pedross@xxxxxxxx.pt

Tel.: +351 232 XXX XXX

Also visit my book's website: www.job30days.com

If you are thanking someone who is closer to you, use a suitably more informal style and say something friendly like, “*I hope things are going well with the project!*” This makes the message more personal, which is more appropriate when writing to a friend or acquaintance.

Here is another example, based on the previous text:

Subject: Thanks

Hi Catherine,

Thanks for adding me to your LinkedIn contacts.

Hope things are going well with the projects.

If you need any help with anything to do with environmental consultancy, just let me know!

All the best,

Pedro (Silva-Santos)

Website: www.noctula.pt

Email: pedross@xxxxxxx.pt

Tel.: +351 232 XXX XXX

Also visit my book's website: www.job30days.com

You will have noticed I always add a signature with my contact details and suggest they visit the book's website. It's just another way to let people know about my work!

I keep these texts in a Word document and whenever I need to send an invitation or thank you note I copy and paste and just change the name of the person I'm writing to.

To make the note more personal I might add something else. I suggest you have a look at the person's Facebook or LinkedIn page, Twitter feed or their company website where you'll always find some

little nugget of information you can use to personalise the note. Has the person recently changed jobs, for example? Use the information to improve your message by wishing them good luck, for instance.

This way of making your network of contacts grow requires some work, because you have to respond to each request one by one. However, after a while you will start to reap the benefits.

Think about it: how many people do you know who do this? Almost nobody, because it takes time and effort. Become a master at doing what others don't do, or don't want to do, and you will see that it is another way to be seen in a crowd!

I imagine that people who invite me to join their network on LinkedIn must think it strange that I only accept the invitation a few days later. The truth is, I like to dig around a bit and find out who they are and to see if I have any skills that might be useful for them or if they could be useful for me. Only after this initial investigation do I accept the invitation and send my 'standard reply', duly adapted to the new contact.

Decide what you want to do

Society has needs that must be fulfilled and that creates job opportunities. Education, health, food, transport and communication are just some examples of basic human needs. So for them to be made accessible to people, someone has to work in these fields.

Apart from the basic needs, there is an endless list of goods and services in demand that are often missed by job seekers. Here are a few examples of jobs which might seem odd but that market needs have turned into opportunities for work:

- In Tokyo, there are people who are employed to get as many people as possible onto the trains on the Underground. They are known as “people pushers”;
- On some golf courses, there are people employed to fish golf balls out of lakes at the end of each month;
- Deodorant companies employ teams of people to test the smell

of people's armpits when testing new products.

I recommend having a look at some of the world's strangest professions here:

www.job30days.com/day12

I decided entirely on purpose to start with the weirdest jobs in the world, to help you see that there is an infinity of possibilities out there when it comes to potential professions. The problem is that job seekers are often only looking for the most obvious ones!

Before writing up and sending off your CV in response to job ads, as I am sure you have done on numerous occasions, stop and think about what you are really passionate about. Think about what you are good at and try to see how your skills fit something society really needs.

Technology has moved on too fast for comfort, making us more efficient and meaning that human beings no longer have to do repetitive tasks. Traditional jobs are disappearing... never to be seen again! We will never go back to the old ways!

Remember the days when you paid motorway tolls to someone who had been cooped up in a tiny booth all day long? In a few years' time, electronic devices will have done away with most of those sorts of jobs and will soon be done with the rest of them! Why? Because we have found quicker, easier ways to pay tolls.

When I talk about this in my workshops, somebody always asks something like:

“What about the job that’s been lost? Some people have probably never done

anything else!”

Let me give you some news that you might have missed: **There is no longer such thing as a job that lasts forever!** Get real!

Never again will you be able to start a job when you are twenty and retire doing the same thing, the same way. It may sound sad, but it's better than spending the next 40 years doing exactly the same thing in exactly the same way! Fortunately, that has changed and it has brought about more opportunities for growth.

I can't imagine doing the same job for decades on end to then be left counting out every last penny of my pension to make sure it lasts till the end of the month once I'm done! Let's be realistic about this. Nobody really wants such a boring life! However, I do still see a lot of people taking the easy way out, doing what they have always done, exactly the same way they have always done it, putting off until tomorrow the decision to get up and actually do something better with their life!

Our parents were brought up on the idea that hard work gets results and putting a little aside for a rainy day. That is how my parents brought me up, but there came a time when I realised that just wasn't going to work for me or for the vast majority of people around me.

By way of example, let me tell you a personal story to get you thinking about the need to adapt if you are to survive in today's world. My father was made unemployed when car sales plummeted even before the world economic crisis hit our country in 2008/2009. At the time, we were all in a state of shock, but I remembered then that ever since I was a boy my father had always said he'd like to

make films and edit videos, so I set about looking for audiovisual companies that would take him on for free for a couple of months. I proposed to the companies that they should give him training in filming techniques and video editing and in return my father would help out with whatever needed doing.

I clearly remember how the conversation began with each of the companies I contacted:

“This is going to sound a little strange, because usually parents try to find work for their children, but I’m actually doing the exact opposite.... I’d like to ask you to give my father an opportunity”.

The experiment actually went very well! My father began filming weddings, editing the images and making DVDs to give to the happy couples. Later he was sent to film school parties at Christmas and on International Children’s Day, carnival parades and all sorts of events. It’s hard to believe that Mr. Santos from the car repair shop had become a “reporter”, lost his pot belly and was happier than ever!

Forget everything you had ever taken as a given when it comes to work. Open your horizons and grab your opportunities. Your initial training can’t be allowed to limit what you do forever.

Think about what you would LIKE to do...and go for it!

Remember: if you don’t know what you are looking for, you will probably never find it.

I imagine you can hear that inner voice telling you, *“I’m too old to be hired”, “I have always done the same thing and I’ll never be able to change”, “It’s not easy”, “I scared I’m going to fail”.*

People only fail to do what they want to do because they convince

themselves they can't do it (which is ridiculous), or because other people convince them they can't do it (which is even more ridiculous!).

I recommend you watch "The Intern" with Robert De Niro and Anne Hathaway - I'm sure that'll get you thinking differently!

Updates for today's topic can be found here:

www.job30days.com/day12

Define where you want to be in 5 years' time

In the workshops “How to find a job in 30 days” I always ask the participants where they want to be in 5 years' time to get them thinking about their long term goals.

Think about the analogy: When a plane takes off it has a route mapped out to go from city A to city B in an estimated time of X hours and Y minutes. Obviously, there are many things that could force the plane to deviate from its planned course. There might be a storm, an engine might fail, the plane could be hit by a missile and everyone could die – anything could happen! The same will happen in your life, but that should not be used as an excuse not to plan what you want to do in the future.

In the next 5 years do you hope to get a new job, start your own firm or work for a non-profit organisation?

After you have thought about what you want to do and defined what you would like to achieve in the next 5 years, start to set yearly goals you will need to reach on your way to the ultimate goal. What

do you want to achieve in one year? What will you have to achieve in years 3 and 4 so that your big goal can be reached in year 5? Be even more disciplined: set 6-monthly goals on your way to the big one. Write everything down in a journal and commit to starting to work on your goals today. In 5 years you will have changed for the better, you will have become a specialist in something you really like, you will become rich, **you will achieve whatever you want** and everything you are willing to fight for.

I regularly get emails from people who have been to the workshops and who want to commit to changing with me. Feel free to do the same!

Send an email to **pedro@job30days.com** with the subject line:

“In five years’ time I’m going to be...”

Be warned that I will ask you at regular intervals what you have been doing to reach your goals!

Don't forget that to reach these goals you also need to surround yourself with the right sort of people. If you want to start a company or have an idea for a new business, go to training sessions, go to events and ideas competitions, as these are great opportunities to meet people who have the same objectives, and who can help you to learn and develop.

At some point, **you may realise you are surrounded by the wrong crowd!**

My parents taught me a popular saying that I'm sure you know too: *“Show me who your friends are and I'll tell you who you are!”*

When I was little, the saying was used to warn against getting in with the wrong crowd. As I grew up, I began to realise that the people I spent time with on a daily basis had a strong influence on me and what I achieved. Author James Altucher's famous line, *"You're the average of the five people you spend your time with"*, makes perfect sense and it is simply a more elaborate way of saying the same thing my dear parents used to say.

Do your friends spend their time talking about football and getting angry with the world around them? Do they live lives of envy and gossip? The answer is to slowly move away from these people until they stop missing you.

As well as that, don't get involved in FB groups like "The Angry on Facebook", "The Unemployed", "The Outraged..." Joining these groups on social media will only make you even more angry and outraged, which I doubt will improve your chances of finding a job. Nor will it do you any good at all.

Do you know any pessimists who spend their days feeling sad, sharing all their hatred on the internet, who are also really successful in life? Of course you don't! So why allow yourself to be surrounded by people who hold no hope for the future? Just because they were childhood friends or family? I know it sounds shocking, but more often than not you don't actually need to change your goals in life, just the people around you! Believe me!

I recommend you continue your reading on the subject of this chapter with the article on the site:

www.job30days.com/day13

Create your own business card

Although we live in an age of ever-increasing technology, it is still important to have something physical to identify you, which you can hand to people when networking. It's good to be able to give your card to a potential employer or business partner.

Most people use email and their smartphone to keep a record of new contacts and a few people use electronic cards (vCard), which are usually sent from Outlook.

When I started my consultancy firm, I initially decided not to have business cards and sent all my contacts by email to all my potential clients. While this was extremely practical, I soon realised that I was somehow excluding myself from one of the rituals that always take place at the start of a meeting: **the proud exchange of business cards.**

As I had no card to exchange, I always had to explain that as we work in environmental consultancy, NOCTULA had opted to

keep its carbon footprint to a minimum by sending contacts by email! Although the excuse went down well with clients, I realised I was missing an opportunity and chose to do the exact opposite. Instead of explaining why I didn't have a business card, why not start explaining why our cards are so different to other companies' cards?

Right now, you must be thinking, 'I'm looking for work not trying to find new customers!' But it's exactly the same thing. **Your employer will be your client and will pay you a monthly salary for your services.** How many job applicants introduce themselves to their potential employer with a business card? I'll let you guess the answer to that!

So, I decided that I had to create a card that would be something personal. I looked for ideas online and found some pretty original ones. Before you read on, have a look at some of these inspiring ideas on the site:

www.job30days.com/day14

I hope you enjoyed some of those.

Personally, I got pretty excited with what I found and I loved the idea of making a card that is actually useful – for example, the bicycle shop owner's card can be used as a handy tool. I also liked the idea that underlies the divorce lawyer's card – the same information repeated on the left and right hand side of the card, separated by a dotted line, so divorced couples can cut it in half and keep half each... Many of the ideas I found were catchy, but I needed something for NOCTULA that would stand out from the rest.

I noticed that nearly all the cards I was given in meetings were pretty much identical, and almost none had a photo. I decided not only to put a photo on mine, which is sadly still very uncommon practice on business cards, but to be even more provocative than that... I used a photo of me on the beach with my hair dripping wet!

Here was my first business card:



And yes, as you can see, there was also something on the back of the card rather than the usual standard blank space. From then on, meetings always began with a bit of fun and relaxed banter because of the photo on my business card! **I had succeeded in gaining additional attention because of my card**, but I later decided to try something different. I stopped using the seaside photo and used a more professional-looking one and added some visual icons instead of text (e.g. icons that symbolised my presence on social media), but I was still unsure what additional use to make of the card.

I spent a lot of time in formal meetings with new clients or business partners and it eventually dawned on me that people perform a standard sequence of actions when they are given a business card. In

case you have never noticed this ritual, this is what you should do on being handed a business card:

Step 1: Take the card and raise it slowly to the height of your eyes;

Step 2: Look carefully at the card for 2-3 seconds while listening to the other person, gently nodding approvingly;

Step 3: Slowly turn the card over to see if there is anything on the back, being careful not to show any sign of frustration should there be nothing;

Step 4: Place the card on the table and leave it there until the end of the meeting, at which point it should be meticulously put away in a card holder.

What I noticed was that when someone was looking at a card, the person immediately opposite them would react if there was something on the back of the card. The natural reaction of this person was then to turn the card over and have a look at the back. Based on this behaviour, I thought I might be able to do something to create surprise.

I thought:

- What would happen if the person who saw the back of the card in your hand turned over their card to find it had something different?

- What would happen if the back of each card was different?

- What would happen if I chose to put slightly bizarre images and a strange question on the back of the cards?

These were ideas I decided to try out, but I still wanted to go further. I finally came up with a concept in which the images on the

back of the cards were strange enough to leave people wanting to know the answer to the question that went with them. From then on, most meetings began with a discussion of the images and questions on my cards, which obviously meant I had to explain so as not to come across as a complete nutter!

What I tell people when I give them my card is this:

“If you Google the question you’ll find the answer quite easily. Surprisingly, the first result you get is the NOCTULA website, where you will see that the services we offer are the answer to what you are looking for.”

Day 14 - Create your own business card

Here are some examples of my business cards:



The questions are:

- How does an animal cross a motorway?
- What is sustainability?
- How do we know what an animal's habits are?
- Is this world lost?
- ... and what if we should run out of water one day??

You must be wondering how on earth we manage to make NOCTULA appear at the top of the results of a Google search. It's simple! We used all the techniques I have been talking about up to now to make sure the content on NOCTULA is well classified by search engines... and now we have this tool working for us while we sleep!

Too good to believe? Try googling this question from the back of one of my cards (obviously, our site is set up to work in the Portuguese market, but it would work for any language):

How do animals cross motorways?

What results do you get? Where is NOCTULA? At the top?

The image of an animal on a zebra crossing in the middle of a motorway is completely bizarre and makes you think! It's nuts to put a zebra crossing on a motorway - and wild animals don't use zebra crossings (except for zebras, of course!!) But, seriously, how do animals cross land that has a motorway running through it, which is completely fenced off for safety reasons?

The image and the question are enough to **arouse people's**

curiosity! The answer they find will satisfy that curiosity and teach people something they didn't know about the bridges and tunnels over and under motorways, built to let animals cross safely. You will also find out how my company is informing road authorities about the best locations for these crossings during the project and construction phases, and you will have access to some of the studies we have carried out. Get the idea?

After handing out my cards in a meeting, other people's cards tend to get ignored! No offence, and excuse the lack of modesty, but life is good for those of us bother who look after these little details!

Oh, yes! I nearly forgot to mention that I normally have to give several cards to each person in the meeting because they love the way they are all interconnected.

In short, business cards are a must, but they have to make a difference. Otherwise, they won't be working for you and will probably end up in a rubbish bin! Get inspired with these business card ideas on the site:

www.job30days.com/day14

Learn to break the ice with strangers

When I was at university, I had a friend who was a specialist at breaking the ice with girls! He developed this great technique: he'd walk up to this gorgeous chick he wanted to meet, full of confidence and say, *"You're Celia's sister aren't you?"*

He always got it wrong, because nobody had a sister called Celia! Confused, they would look at him and say, *"You must have confused me for somebody else!"*

Jokingly, he'd reply, *"Whoops, sorry. You look just like someone I know, with your gorgeous hair and your beautiful face... I could have sworn it was you! My apologies for being so forward."*

The girl would smile and turn away, spend the rest of the day thinking about the encounter and feel all warm and bubbly. The trap was set!

Over the next few days, whenever my friend saw this supposed Celia's sister, he'd wave discreetly, smile and give her a wink and say,

“Hi”. Days later, if he bumped into her in the corridor he’d say, in that ever-so-friendly manner of his, “*Tell Celia I’ve got two tickets for the cinema on Saturday night!*”

No more would be said and they’d each go their own way, smiling from ear to ear. The rest, as they say, is history... And today, my friend really is married to one of ‘Celia’s sisters’!!

You too will have to get used to talking to strangers quite often. Yes, I know your parents have told you a million times not to speak to strangers, but that’s not what I mean! As a child, it’s one thing, but you’re not 10 anymore and nobody is going to kidnap you! At some point we all have to learn to speak to all sorts of people, especially strangers – but remember to speak to everyone, whatever their social status. Show genuine interest in people, whether it’s the waiter who brings your coffee or the cleaning lady at the shopping centre. **Widen the scope of people who know who you are** and what you do. One day you will reap the benefits of this.

I recommend this article on the site, which goes into more detail on this subject:

www.job30days.com/talk-with-a-stranger

Think of a way to start a conversation with anybody, but be you and don’t be offensive or too flashy.

In the article above, there are some great ways to break the ice with people you don’t know: talk to people as if they were your uncle or aunt! Forget the fact you don’t actually know the person! That was the technique used by my university friend to get to know ‘Celia’s sister’.

If you meet somebody famous, talk to them as if you didn't recognise them. Imagine they are your cousin. Famous people are so used to being bothered and hassled that they have very little patience with people who recognise them in public. If they get the feeling you don't know who they are, they are more likely to will lower their guard and start speaking to you more naturally.

It's so easy, isn't it!

Keep up to date on this topic at:

www.job30days.com/day15

Tips for getting noticed

If you have already started doing all the things I have talked about so far, you will soon be standing out from the rest of the crowd.

Think about it:

- How many people have filled out their profiles properly on social networks?
 - How many people read and share good content?
 - How many emails do you get with a full signature, including a photo, all contacts details and links to social media?
 - How many people personalise their LinkedIn invitations?
 - How many people thank others for accepting their invitations on LinkedIn?
 - How many business cards have you seen with a photo on them?
 - How many people do you know who have married one of Celia's sisters?
- ... and the list goes on and on!

I expect the answer to these questions is few people or none!

Today is a special day. It's the day on which you are going to sit down and think about everything you have done so far and how it makes you different from the competition.

Enjoy the simplicity and subtlety of that difference. You may have noticed that **being different doesn't take all that much more effort than being the same as everyone else.** You'll have seen that being different doesn't mean being flashy, it means paying attention to details which may have gone unnoticed, and feeling good when someone says you're different!

I have chosen to write my name with a hyphen, and that makes a difference. I chose to grow my hair long and grow a beard because it looked good when I played my guitar and sang in a rock band. The rocker look – or the 'Jesus' look, as some people call it here in Portugal – also makes me different and it doesn't go unnoticed. That said, if the look didn't sit naturally with me, it would come across as something strained or false when I meet people.

I'll never forget the day when I met with a large company client for the first time in my office. He looked me up and down and you could see him thinking, "*OK, get me the boss!*"

He certainly wasn't expecting the owner of the company to look like I did: a 'Jesus' look alike, who came to the meeting with no suit or tie.

The result of the meeting was that we won the contract and became consultants with the company on several new projects.

Be honest. Be spontaneous.

Look after your appearance. Keep your skin clean and free from

becoming oily. Keep your lips and hands hydrated – it's horrible shaking hands with people whose hands rip your skin off because theirs is like sand paper.

Ladies, you should be careful with your nails – if you varnish your nails, keep them looking good.

As for your personality, leave your mark wherever you go! Don't be afraid to give your opinion, but avoid getting into arguments with idiots who just want to be negative about everything. That's true for everything you publish online too. However much you hate the government, don't share that opinion publicly. It'll only start a chain of reactions that will bring nothing new, and still fail to topple the government! The same goes for religion, conservation, animal rights, football and other hot topics. Don't start arguments just to get the attention. If you need someone to give you attention, get a dog or join a dating site!

See how ideas are shared on the NOCTULA Channel:

www.noctulachannel.com. It's all done in a way that contributes to clarify and spread ideas with the aim of informing. People who write on the NOCTULA Channel, share their passion for and love of innovative ideas and projects, in the hope of helping others to develop better-informed opinions, without shocking or provoking readers to respond rudely or aggressively.

From this moment on, you are going to change – you are going to stop criticising just because others criticise, you are going to stop complaining just because everybody else is complaining and you will no longer have the patience to listen to others mouthing off about this, that and the other! It is possible that you might lose a few friends along

the way if you can no longer put up with their whingeing and whining, but that is the way it has to be - they will not help you to achieve anything worthwhile in life. Don't worry about your future ex-friends, they'll find plenty of other people to listen to their whingeing ...

Dare to think, feel and behave truly differently and you will achieve truly great things!

Read more about this topic on:

www.job30days.com/day16

Prepare and practise your 'elevator pitch'

The CEO of one of the companies you'd like to work for is working out in the local park. What a great opportunity to go and have a word to break the ice! If you are in any doubts about how to do this, go back and read day 15 again!

www.job30days.com/day15

I'm sure you've been in the situation before when quite by chance you've bumped into someone you would actually really like to talk to. But what tends to happen?

You get all flustered and lose your cool. You say nothing for a while as you try to sort out your thoughts in your head in an attempt to make some sort of sensible conversation. Even then you manage to think of nothing remotely intelligent before the other person turns away. At best, you might say something, but then spend the rest of

the day thinking you should have said something else or you forgot to mention something.

Now, I’d like you to imagine, if you will, that, unlike most people, you have actually succeeded in getting the attention of the person you want to speak to, but you’ve come unstuck when they ask you, “*What do you do?*”

Normally, people’s answers to this question are pretty feeble and never grab the listener, as all they do is list a number of job titles... “*I’m... an engineer?*”

“*Well... bully for you!*” *your interlocutor will think to himself, meaning, “I couldn’t care less – now get lost and leave me alone”.*

Like all good things in life, and as any self-respecting Boy Scout will tell you, the **best remedy to avoid missed opportunities is to be well prepared** for all eventualities.

After deciding what you want to do and why it is you have this burning desire to do it, you should prepare your ‘elevator pitch’. This is basically a short talk with all the information you need to grab someone’s attention, strike up empathy and make a good first impression.

But **what is an ‘elevator pitch’** exactly?

The elevator pitch is your 30-second answer to the question “*What do you do?*” In other words, imagine you meet the person in a lift – you have the time of the journey in that lift to impress your listener: 30 seconds! Your answer should be so well put together that it will work perfectly without using any form of leaflet or multimedia. Here is an example to help you organise your ‘elevator pitch’:

1 – Introduce yourself: I’m an environmental consultant,

involved in licensing big building projects (e.g. industry, wind farms);

2 – Ask a question and wait a second before giving the answer: Did you know that birds and bats die when they fly into the blades of wind turbines?

3 – Answer your own question with a description of what you do, starting “**I...**” and ending “**This way...**”

Here’s an example of what I mean: “I carry out studies to make sure my clients’ projects respect the conservation of nature. **This way** I make sure the projects abide by environmental law and are approved by local authorities.”

So for the example above my elevator pitch would be:

“I’m an environmental consultant, involved in licensing big building projects (e.g. industry, wind farms).

Did you know that birds and bats die when they fly into the blades of wind turbines?

I carry out studies to make sure my clients’ projects respect the conservation of nature. This way I make sure the projects abide by environmental law and are approved by local authorities”.

You have to grab and keep the attention of the person you are talking to. They must become completely passionate about you and the way you describe yourself. Will simply looking at your CV really do this for them? I guess it depends on the photo you send!

Basically, forget you are trying to talk your way into a job and a salary and introduce yourself passionately. Everyone will then fall in love with you!

Practise your ‘elevator pitch’ in front of the mirror or with a

Day 17 - Prepare and practise your “elevator pitch”

friend. You should have it so off pat that you will never again be lost for words when you are asked what you do.

See more examples of ‘elevator pitches’ here:

www.job30days.com/day17

Follow companies on social media

Now you have got all your profiles on social media sorted out start using these platforms to keep up with the latest information being shared by the companies you'd like to work for.

There are various pages on Facebook that regularly share information about job vacancies in big firms, but don't focus only on these pages, because over 700,000 people are doing exactly the same thing. As you will have noticed, the focus in this book is on **not taking the obvious route** like everybody else, because if you do, you'll just end up getting the same bad results everyone else is complaining about.

Find companies you'd like to work for and follow them on social media. Every time a company shares a new project or advertises job vacancies, you'll know about it!

Even when companies aren't recruiting, they are open to people sending in their CVs spontaneously. There are often new vacancies made when a company starts a new project. In these situations,

companies usually look for potential candidates in their database of CVs sent in over time. If you notice the company is starting a new project and you have the necessary skills for the position being created, make life easier for the recruiter and “get ready”...Know what I mean? If not, someone else will get the job!

Keep a look out for all the vacancies and opportunities - you’ll see that the majority are not even advertised as “job vacancy” or “recruiting...” If you only look for job ads in newspapers, or employment sites, you’ll be wasting your time as you’ll seldom get results.

As you **follow companies on social media**, you’ll find out about workshops and free conferences they are offering and use these as an opportunity to meet people personally. We all know this may not be the quickest route, but do not reject the chance to make connections with people you’d like to work with.

On Facebook you’ll have to click on “*Get Notifications*” or something similar after ‘Liking’ the company’s page if you want to be sure to get all the latest information the company posts on its home page. Now do you realise why you are following various Facebook pages, but never get any notifications about new posts from them?

This link will take you to the page which shows you where to click to receive notifications from the pages you are interested in:

www.job30days.com/day18

Following companies on LinkedIn and Google+ is much simpler - just click on “Follow”. The reason for this difference is that Facebook

wants companies to pay to make their posts more visible, while other networks assume that you have clicked “Follow” on a company’s page because you are interested in following that company’s news. This may seem blatantly obvious, but the business models of each network are very different!

After following companies on social media, make a habit of interacting with the posts you consider to be most relevant. **Comment, show you’re interested** in what they are doing and you will begin to be noticed by potential recruiters.

But do be careful not to **bombard companies** with “Like” attacks on every post. Following and commenting in moderation is quite different to liking or commenting on every single post. You don’t want to be the admirer-turned-stalker!

Once again the secret is moderation.

It is so rare to find someone who makes positive comments on company posts, that if you do, it may attract positive comments from the company’s employees. This could be the first step to introducing yourself to somebody at a conference organised by the company. The hardest part has been done even before you get to the event. When you meet the people you have been interacting with on social media in person, it will be much easier for them to accept you as somebody special and say, *“This is our number one fan on social media!”* Read more about this topic here:

www.job30days.com/day18

Make a list of the companies you want to contact

I often hear people say, “I’ve sent my CV to hundreds of firms but haven’t heard back from any of them.” Then you get the usual complaints about the market being bad and all sorts of dumb comments like, *“These companies have no respect for people! They could at least answer, even if it’s to say ‘no!’”*

Many people still think incorrectly and make the mistake of sending their CV indiscriminately to all sorts of companies.

Are you going to do the same? Are you going to ‘shoot’ your CV off all over the place as if there was no tomorrow, just to fool yourself into thinking that the problem isn’t you? Haven’t I already told you not to think negatively or to behave like a jerk? Well then... let’s see if you really intend to find a job or whether you’re just trying to kid yourself and those around you so you can say at least you’ve tried.

If I was to ask you to show me the list of companies you have

sent your CV to, would you be able to? Can you show me your notes made during phone calls with these companies?

Huummm... I doubt you've made any notes at all about who you write to. I suspect you have sent your CV to the same company more than once without ever talking to anyone to find out if your CV was even looked at, if it was kept on file, **if it was tossed out or why...**

Why should companies have to bother replying to people who don't know what they're doing? On top of that, just think of the sheer number of CVs that are sent to a company every week. If you are not organised enough to keep a list of all the contacts you have made, and you're the one who is looking for work, why do you think that anyone else should waste their precious time on you? Companies can't be expected to give much attention to every one of the thousands of applicants who send in CVs when they only have one position that needs filling.

Thus far, I have taught you to structure your presence online, to be different in everything you do and to keep up with companies' latest news on social media so that you know when they are recruiting, but... that will all be meaningless if you insist on sending your CV out like a headless chicken, without keeping proper records of what you have done and the replies you have had and when you should get back in touch with a company to find out if they have looked at your application.

I have made a simple Excel file to help you keep a note of all your applications from now on and which can be **downloaded for free** here:

www.job30days.com/day19

Amazing as it may seem, I've had participants in the workshops who **have actually confessed to being called for an interview for jobs they didn't even remember applying for** and since they had no record of the contacts they had made, went off to meet a stranger. It is no great surprise to learn that they didn't get those jobs.

What sort of a world do we live in where people contact companies in zombie mode, to then be called for interview in a context they know nothing about?

I think you must at least be beginning to understand the enormous error you are making, so don't go down that path. Get organised and be selective about where you want to send your CV. Don't apply to do any old thing, anyhow. I also hear people saying, "*I'll do anything so long as I get a salary*". I have no problem with that, but if you could be a little less vague and more selective, then, just possibly, you won't have to send your CV to so many places before you start getting results.

What would you prefer? To send **500 copies** of your CV and **get no reply**, or to send your CV to just 20 companies and follow up on each opportunity with a phone call to create empathy with the potential recruiter and maybe get an interview?

Although the answer is obvious, most people who are looking for work still seem to think that shooting off CVs left, right and centre gives them the greatest chance of success. Forget the hard work ethos your parents rammed into you! Learn to enjoy working intelligently by being selective and organised.

Start by searching for companies you'd like to work for. Write down all the information in the file I made, but steady on – don't

Day 19 - Make a list of the companies you want to contact

start sending out CVs to those companies yet. For now, just keep a note of all the job offers you are interested in or companies you intend to write to.

Have you been to a workshop or a conference and seen any companies you'd like to work in? Make a note in the file right now.

Have you seen any vacancies on Facebook in companies you have since been following? Note them down.

There are more tips on all you need to do to get organised on the book's website:

www.job30days.com/day19

Write your CV and a covering letter

Today you are going to compile all your work experience into one document called a CV (short for the Latin curriculum vitae). There is much debate as to what makes a good CV and which model to use for the perfect CV. So let me start by telling you this:

There is no such thing as the perfect CV!

No CV will work perfectly for every single job vacancy.

That said, there are many *imperfect* CVs out there! In fact, there are so many of them clogging up company email inboxes that they have come to be more of a plague. And, as they are practically all identical, none stand out from the crowd of mass-produced CVs piling up in HR departments.

So what are we going to do about this? There is a never-ending list of things to take into consideration, but let's have a look at a few of

the most common questions and some suggested answers:

• I have no previous work experience, so what should I put on my CV?

Everyone has to have a first job. All you need is for someone to give you a first chance to shine.

Have a look at this article about how to overcome this temporary obstacle:

www.job30days.com/cv-without-work-experience

• Should I use the European CV model?

In my humble opinion, no! Because you don't want to use the same format everyone else does.

Only use the Euro model when sending your CV to recruiting agencies. These companies prefer standard CV formats because it helps them to sort the candidates. Since they deal with literally thousands of CVs every month, recruiting agencies get really annoyed with anything that looks a bit different from the norm.

Whenever you are applying directly in response to a job offer or when you send in a CV to a company, use what's known as a 'creative CV model', although I prefer to call them "the-one-CV-that-stands-out-from-the-rest-of-the-pile-of-rubbish-that-goes-straight-in-the-bin" model! Remember, companies will probably have seen hundreds of CVs before they get to yours and they may well be getting frustrated with so many applicants who don't stand out at all!

You'll find some good CV models here:

www.job30days.com/the-best-resume-models-CV

- **How many pages long should my CV be?**

Ideally, only one page, but that is usually not enough to put all you need to. Go for a two-page CV, so you can include everything that is important without any long-winded descriptions.

- **Should I put more or less personal information?**

What type of personal information do you mean? Stuff about your cats and your favourite chocolate? Absolutely not!

Keep it only to any information that shows how your hobbies and passions may be useful to the recruiter, giving a better idea of who you really are and that you are the right person to fill the vacancy.

For example, if you like children and organise birthday parties every year that your daughter adores, mention that if you are applying for a job in a kinder garden.

- **Should I mention I have children?**

I have been asked this on numerous occasions and I don't have a one-size-fits-all answer.

For example, as I mentioned earlier, if you are applying to work in a kinder garden, it would be a plus to say you have kids. But for most job applications it is not relevant information to put on a CV.

• **Should I mention my marital status?**

This is not a dating site form!

Do your skills change when you get married or divorced?

I don't see the point of putting this on a professional CV. It's something personal you only need to share with people close to you.

• **Should I say I have a driving licence and a car?**

Of course. This could be extremely important.

• **Should I mention my primary and secondary school results?**

I wouldn't put this on your CV. Generally speaking, anything before A-levels (or equivalent exams for getting into university) is of no interest.

• **Should I include a photo of myself?**

Yes, but not one of you at the beach or wearing dark glasses!

Use a photo where you can be seen from the waist up, in which the light is good and there is a plain, light-coloured or neutral background, so the focus is on your lovely smile! Yes, I really mean smile, like you have just won the lottery!

- **Should I include links to my profiles on social media?**

If you have followed and carried out what I have written so far, then it should be enough to just include icons for the sites you are on. Should the recruiter type in your email address on social media, he will find your profile. If you really want to put one of the links in full, use LinkedIn.

- **Should the most recent information be at the top or the end of my CV?**

Most people agree that the most recent work experience should come first. And, I agree, unless you have done something that absolutely fits this vacancy perfectly, despite not being your most recent job. Put that first.

Remember that it will probably take a recruiter 4 to 7 seconds to decide if your CV goes in the bin or not!

- **Should I mention my piano-playing skills if I am applying for a job as a web designer?**

There is a lot of talk about “Cross-sector skills and competences”. Speakers like to use this kind of jargon in training sessions and then make applicants look like idiots as they highlight at the top of their CVs that they were treasurer of the local village beer festival, when in fact what they are applying for is to be a web designer in a software firm. Just think before you make a mistake like that.

If you want to say that you compose music, have been playing the piano since you were 13 and have played in all sorts of bars to show how creative you are, then fine – web design certainly requires creativity and the recruiters may well be impressed. But it depends on the job you are applying for.

There is no one simple answer to this question. Consider whether or not the skills will be of interest to the potential employer for the particular job you are applying for.

• Should I send a cover letter / letter of introduction with my CV?

I've got good and bad news when it comes to cover letters...

The good news is practically no one reads them.

The bad news is this: the recruiters who do read your letter will be extremely demanding and will not tolerate bland, meaningless, impersonal texts.

This is an example of the sort of letters recruiters are fed up of getting, yet applicants insist on writing time and time again:

“Dear Sirs/Madam,

I am writing to apply for the position of beautician in your company...”

This is so prefabricated and vague that no recruiter will be interested in reading on!

So how should you grab your reader's attention?

Here is a suggestion - I'm assuming the candidate wants a job in a beauty parlour:

“Hi,

I remember when my mum would get really annoyed with me for using up her best nail varnish, but I had no choice... my dolls had to have beautiful nails!

With time I left the dolls and began painting my friends' nails at school. They said I was really good and so I got more and more into it – before I knew it I was doing my neighbours' nails too. After each manicure, I would give them a relaxing massage using lovely creams and they would be in heaven, which made me happy too!

I enjoyed giving massages and doing people's nails and the service soon became more than just a hobby and I began to see there was a future in it. And so I became a beautician. This meant I could learn and develop techniques for massages, facials, body and skin care, etc...

I have been following the news and updates your studio publishes on social media and could hardly believe my luck when I saw you were looking to recruit a new beautician.

I am available to come and talk to you and to show you what I can bring to your studio to help you become the number one beauty salon in town.”

In this second example, the applicant shows her passion for health and beauty as well as her admiration for the company she's applying to work for. Do the same!

One last suggestion: if you send your CV by email, **don't send** the cover letter in a separate file. Write the letter in the main body of the email and attach only your CV as a PDF file.

• Should I send my application (CV and cover letter) to my own email address before sending it to the recruiting company?

Yes, I strongly recommend you do this to see exactly how your application will look to the recruiter. See this as one last chance to correct any spelling mistakes, incoherencies or to improve something that isn't quite right. Do this as often as you like until you have got it absolutely spot on.

When you have written your CV, save it as a PDF file with a file name that makes sense. Don't save it as "CVfinalversion.pdf" or "Doc1.pdf".

Here is an example:

CV_Pedro_Silva-Santos.pdf

If you have adapted your CV for a specific job vacancy, you could even include the company name in the file name:

CV_BootsChemist_Pedro_Silva-Santos.pdf

I put regular updates on this topic on the webpage:

www.job30days.com/day20

Write to companies by e-mail

The big day has arrived that will change your life forever! Now you have set yourself up in the digital world, made new contacts and get notifications from companies you follow on social media, the hour has come to send in your application by email.

Several studies show that **Tuesday is the best day to write to companies**. The reason is simple. Monday is spent sorting out urgent matters left over from the previous week, organising the current week, getting over the Monday blues and deleting bucket loads of junk mail from the inbox! And that is an important detail, because you don't want your application being chucked out with the junk mail.

Write your cover letter in the main body of the email and attach your CV as a PDF file.

What should you write in the subject line?

It depends.

If you are replying to a job offer, see if there is any mention of

what to put in the subject line. You'll often see things like this in job ads:

“Send your CV and cover letter to applications@xxxxxxxx.com with Application for Office job” in the subject line”

In this case, do as they say.

If you are sending in your CV spontaneously, be more creative so your email is not completely ignored or deleted. Don't put “spontaneous application”; try to use words that will catch people's attention. For example, I recently found out that a company we were hoping to work with had bought a wind farm (I'll call it XYZ) from another company. To show them I was available to work with them, I sent an email with the following subject line:

“Wind farm XYZ – can we talk?”

I like the simplicity of this approach. The recipient will know exactly what the email is about and will feel almost obliged to reply, even if only to say, “No.”

If you put “Presentation of services for wind farm” in the subject line, I bet it would be deleted in a flash!

Having taken painstaking care with of all these tiny details, at the end of the letter, before you sign, say something like:

“I will call next week to talk about this.”

This little line is magic and will mean you can speak to the person you actually want to! I'll explain why in just a minute.

Don't forget to make a note of all the CVs you send off using the

'follow-up' file I showed you earlier on day 19. If you still have any doubts, read the advice here:

www.job30days.com/day19

For more information and updates on emailing companies, look here:

www.job30days.com/day21

Replicate good habits

In the next six days allow the recruiting companies to have a look at your application before you start calling them.

However, don't stop making new contacts, so for days 22 to 27 of our 30-day challenge, **replicate the good habits you have created so far:**

- Keep reading every day;
- Keep sharing interesting stuff daily on social media;
- Keep making new contacts (in person and on LinkedIn);
- Keep looking for companies to get in touch with and updating your database with their details;
- Keep personalising your CV and cover letter for each company you write to.

And, once again, keep the register up-to-date for every contact

you make and CV you send, with notes (e.g. company/person is organising a conference in May, starting a new project later this month).

Additionally:

- Be critical of the results you get;
- Practise your telephone voice to sound professional and confident;
- Check your facial expressions in a mirror as you practise your ‘elevator pitch’;
- Make a note of key words you want to use in a conversation before making the call to avoid mental blocks.

A week after sending in your CV – on a Tuesday, don’t forget! – call the company you are applying to work for, to try to find out if they have received your application alright, whether they have looked at it and to find out if you are the sort of person the recruiter is looking for.

You should also use the time to sort out what clothes you want to wear at interviews. You will probably wear things you don’t usually wear every day, so check your clothes are free from stains, there are no buttons missing, the zip on your trousers works properly, etc. You don’t want a last minute panic as you are leaving the house on the day of the interview!

On day 28 of our journey I’ll show you how to get around one of the great obstacles applicants have to face: the recruiter’s secretary, or the company telephonist, so you can speak directly to the person who decides if you get hired.

Call companies

After you have sent in your application, you will need to speak to the recruiter on the phone.

Unless you get hold of their mobile phone number, your efforts may come to a grinding halt when the person on the other end of the phone politely asks:

- *“Who is calling, please?”* or *“Certainly, sir, and what is the nature of your call?”*

Those of you with little experience in these matters will answer both questions with innocent sincerity, not realising that 99% of the time they are merely a tool to block calls from salesmen trying to sell subscriptions or asking for a meeting to present their latest products. Job applicants are seen in the same light, so you will be setting yourself up to be shot down before you manage to speak to anyone.

In the first few years of my career in environmental consultancy, I seldom did well at making phone calls. Even after buttering up the

secretary on the phone, I was put on hold for a while until the sweet lady came back on the phone with something along these lines:

- *“Hello, Pedro, I’m afraid Mr. Green is taking another call at the moment (or he’s in a meeting!). Can you call back later, please?”*

- *“Fine,”* I would say, *“I’ll do that. Thank you.”*

The brutal truth is that **all secretaries are under strict instructions to get rid of everybody like this**, because they know, or they are taught, that most people won’t call back once they have been turned away.

However, if you really want that job, you are going to have to find a way to get round the barrier!

Having felt frustrated on numerous occasions, as I realised the PA’s of the clients I wanted to speak to were so well trained that the message never got through that I had called, I did the following Google search:

“How to get past secretaries + commercial presentations?”

Or something like that.

But nothing gave me solution to my problem.

That was when I realised that what I had to do was try to give the secretary the impression that the person I wanted to talk to was actually expecting my call. You must be wondering how on earth you do that if the person you are trying speak has never even heard of you!

I’m going to give you the strategy that I developed for **avoiding secretaries on the phone**. I’ll write out the conversation I had the

first time I tried the technique. Hopefully, it will inspire you to do something similar when you are making follow up calls after sending in your application.

About a week before making the call, I sent an email to introduce my company, NOCTULA to a new customer. I finished my email with the words I mentioned earlier:

“I will call next week to talk about this.”

The following week, I called the potential client (let’s call him Dr. Robert White), and, as expected the secretary politely answered the phone.

“Good morning, I’d like to speak to Robert White, please.” I said, using my most confident sounding voice.

Note I used his first name and no titles. This immediately makes the secretary lower her guard, as she will probably think I’m someone who knows Mr. White fairly well.

“Who is calling?” she asked politely, getting ready to put up the salesman barrier.

“It’s Pedro Silva-Santos from NOCTULA,” I replied confidently.

Alarm bells must have started going off at this point as the secretary threw in a trick question, *“May I ask what the purpose of your call is?”*

Without hesitation, and sounding as cool as a cucumber, I said, *“Robert is expecting my call.”*

Seconds later, Dr. Robert White was on the phone, sounding quite put out, *“Yes?”*

“Dr. White, good morning. It’s Pedro Silva-Santos from NOCTULA. As I said in my email, I’m calling about your new project.”

“Oh, right, yes,I see...” answered the good Dr. White, the confusion in his voice clearly showing he had no idea who I was and that he hadn’t even read my email, or at least he had merely skimmed over it!

“As I said in my email...” and I went on with my presentation.

As a result a few days later we actually received our first request for a proposal from this client. Our business relationship grew over the years and is now an excellent working relationship!

I have adapted and perfected this technique over the years and the success rate for getting past the secretary barrier is incredibly high. *But, I hear you asking... do I not run the risk of being called a liar?*

No.

I didn’t lie to the secretary when I said Robert was expecting my call. Remember, I had already told him I would call in my email: *“I will call next week to talk about this.”*

It’s not my fault if he didn’t read it!

Whenever I find new ideas for being successful on the phone, I’ll update the website. So from time to time have a look at the page for today’s topic:

www.job30days.com/day28

You've been called for interview... now what?

Because they send their CV willy-nilly to all kinds of companies, most applicants are used to not getting called for interview.

However, *YOU* are different. If you have been doing everything we have talked about over the last 28 days, you should start seeing positive results and can expect to be called for an interview.

Job interviews tend to follow Murphy's Law:

"If anything can go wrong, it will."

In fact, before even getting to the interview, many candidates manage to set the chances of success against themselves. How often have companies called candidates to tell them they have been chosen to come for an interview, and they get this sort of response:

"... sorry, what company is this? I've sent my CV to loads of companies!"

Come on!

Do you really think it wise to show the company that you are

useless at keeping records?

Fortunately, on day 19 of the challenge I showed you how to keep a clear record of all the applications you are sending off and I even gave you the pre-prepared Excel file to help you save time! Read that article again if you need to:

www.job30days.com/day19

Recently, my company put a job ad on social media, saying we were looking for a new worker. We got over 200 applications and, after looking carefully at all the CVs and cover letters (yes, we did read the letters!), we decided we wanted to meet 26 of the applicants in the flesh.

We made a list of the names of the candidates on Excel and began ringing round to to invite them for an interview. While we were on the phone with each candidate, we made notes of our first impressions:

- *“Indecisive”*
- *“Mentioned he didn't remember applying to us and asked what kind of work he would be doing”*
- *“Nice”*
- *“Speaks very fast and rolls his RRRs”*
- *“Dead loss!”*

Some of the candidates never answered the phone or even bothered to call us back. Others had no time to meet us in person and these applicants were all immediately excluded.

Amazing!

So many people complain that there is a shortage of opportunities, and yet when they get a chance they blow it because they are frightened of the interview and they don't know how to manage their fear. If you have no intention of going for an interview, don't bother applying and don't waste companies' precious time! Do something useful like giving this book to someone who really does want a job.

If you do let a company know you are interested in filling a vacancy, then you really must start trying to score brownie points from the moment you send in your CV.

So, going back to our recent experience, we excluded 4 of the 26 candidates we had selected and interviewed the remaining 22 all on one day, starting at 9 a.m. and going right through to dinner time. It was tiring, but we got to know each of the applicants.

Remember, if you are called for an interview you have already passed the first test – your application has made a good impression! Now you need to plan how you are going to be successful in the interview too.

When a company contacts you, try to find out what the interview format will be. It will often be a combination of interviews and standard tests, such as questionnaires. If you have at least some idea of what to expect, even if it is a very general idea, that will help you to prepare and feel more confident.

Now is the time to start your **spying campaign into the 'private life' of the company** and any people in the company who might possibly be interviewing you. We are curious creatures by nature, so why not put this natural tendency to good use? If you know someone who works in the company, talk to them and try to

find out who will be interviewing you and how you should behave. If you don't know anybody in the company, that is not a problem! Most applicants going for interview will be in the same boat.

Find out all you can about the company that contacted you. Look on the company website for:

- What type of business they are in;
- How long they have been in the market;
- Recent projects;
- Company history;
- The company values and mission statement;
- Who the HR manager is;
- Who started the company, etc...

Find out about the **person who answered your email** when you first applied. It will usually be the same person who phones you to invite you to the interview and they may well be present at the interview. Look up their name on Google and on the social networks. Look at their likes and hobbies so you have something to say to break the ice and gain some kind of advantage over the other candidates, who may be less well prepared than you are.

But make sure you use the information you find carefully – you don't want to sound like a stalker! Even if you have seen it on FB, don't go straight in there asking *“How was your son's school Christmas party!”* I suggest you use the information as naturally as possible.

If you discover the recruiter plays a musical instrument, for example, think of a subtle way to let them know about your love

of music, or that you also play an instrument. The interviewer will almost certainly appreciate knowing you have something in common.

If you find photos posted by the interviewer of her sailing in a yacht race, but you know nothing about sailing despite your love for the sea, think of a way to say something like:

- *“I love the sea – in fact, I’ve been thinking about taking up a sport which would let me spend time on the water, maybe sailing or surfing...”*

You might be able to mention this if they ask you about your interests or pastimes. Be ready to provide information, but be natural. Don’t give yourself away by making it too obvious to the interviewer that you have carried out an in-depth study of her private life in an effort to play her tune just to get a job. Be careful with the level of detail you provide and don’t promise anything you cannot deliver if you get the job!

If you say you are going to take up sailing, then do so and keep your promise as soon as you sign the contract. Exaggerate a little, by all means to please your interviewer, but remember to keep your promises to the level of what is possible to fulfill in the medium/long-term – that way your little lie is only a temporary lie, made at the moment of speaking, but one which will become truth... soon.

To avoid getting lost and therefore late for your interview, **plan your trip to the company** or the place where the interview is being held, **in advance**:

- Where is it?
- Is there free parking or should you take public transport? Check timetables to get you there in plenty of time.

If possible, do a practice run to get to the company a day or

two before your interview, so you can see any potential obstacles and avoid stress on the day caused by unforeseen circumstances.

Remember, on the day of the interview, you must stay calm and you can't afford to let your potential employers see that you got lost looking for the company or that you are running late and eating into the next candidate's interview time.

Use today to think about what you have to offer the company. What are the strengths and skills you have that make you the best person for the job?

Be careful about what you choose to wear to the interview too, as first impressions make a huge and lasting impact. Smart casual is right for most occasions. In others words, neither too formal, nor too informal. If you are going for an interview in bank, wear a suit, as this sector requires greater formality when dealing with customers.

I recommend you take your **business cards** and a copy of your ID card or driving licence and the CV that you sent to the company interviewing you. You might like to take **examples of your work** and **certificates** which might be needed. That way, if they want to hire you there and then, you'll have everything ready to hand in at the interview.

See more tips on this topic on the book's website:

www.job30days.com/day29

Get ready for the interview

A few years ago a candidate arrived 20 minutes late for his interview - with his flies open! My colleague hurriedly asked him to sit down whilst trying hard not to laugh out loud.

As if things hadn't started badly enough, when the young man shook my hand, things took a turn for the worse. His hands were dry and his skin was rough and he practically ripped the skin off my right hand! It might seem unkind to describe the candidate in these terms, but believe me John could not have created a worse first impression if he had tried (John, by the way, is not his real name – I'm not that unkind!).

I get dry hands too. Whatever soap I use dries my skin out completely. But, because I am aware of this, I always carry hand cream around with me!

From time to time you will still hear a caveman screaming in their

defence that, “*Real men don’t use hand cream!*” I do hope that isn’t the case with you.

But might I remind you that these little details are not only a problem for the men. How many women go for an interview with badly polished nails, or nails that look like eagles claws? You’re better off not doing your nails at all than using nail varnish and not looking after them. It’s better not to grow your nails long than to look like a witch.

And as for your hair?

Well, since hairdressers began tying hair back in a bun, held together with a battery of hair clips and pins, I’ve seen many women sporting the look for a week. What are these people thinking? Do they really believe that employers will be wowed by the look, rather than cringe at the thought of having an unwashed rats nest in the office?

I don’t know if you agree or not, but the smell of hair that needs washing is horrible – almost as bad as BO. If you don’t want to or can’t wash your hair every day, fine, but remember that there are dry shampoos that will help solve the problem.

It’s hard not to be nervous in an interview, so you should make contingency plans for excessive sweating, especially in summer. If you start sweating before the interview, with the nerves it’ll only get worse in the interview. Take an unscented antiperspirant with you to help solve the problem.

If you smoke, you’ll probably want to smoke more when you’re nervous. But you should know that even interviewers who smoke hate interviewees who stink of smoke. Take my advice: **Don’t smoke**

before a job interview. Your hands, your breath, your clothes will all smell awful, and you might be throwing it all away after all the effort you have made to get to where you are and catch the attention of the recruiter.

I remember only too well a lady I interviewed recently, who absolutely stank of smoke. Not only that, but her jacket smelt of moth balls, too. It was horrible... as I write these lines I can smell the stench again!

One of the questions I ask myself of a potential employee is:

“Will they fit in with the rest of the team?”

As you can imagine, the excellent working atmosphere and team spirit built up in a company over years must not be jeopardised by new hirings, so a candidate who smiles and looks after his or her hands will fit more easily into our organisation than someone who is tense and looks a mess.

So, have you got the idea of how to make a good first impression?

Make sure you are on time! Try to get there at least 15 minutes early for your interview. If for some reason you are running late, you must let the company know as soon as possible.

When you do get to the place where the interviews are being held, **introduce yourself with a smile on your face.**

Quickly look at the space around you and work out where to sit and what distractions there may be in the area. When they call you to go through for your interview, greet the interviewer with a smile and a firm handshake and sit down as comfortably and confidently

as possible. Adjust the position of the chair if necessary. I will never forget the day I interviewed a chap while printing out some papers on the printer which was on the table just behind him. The poor man couldn't concentrate for one second.

According to *Feng Shui*, you shouldn't sit in a place which is "unprotected". An open door or window in front of you or people moving or making noise behind you may distract you. Ask if it's OK to close the door. No one will mind!

Interviews don't always follow the standard pattern!

There are companies and recruiters who like to be original in their search for a new employee. Often, they are out to test your ability to be creative and to see if you are really serious about trying to get the job.

For example, a large tech company whose name I'll let you guess, decided that the interview for a new lawyer should go beyond the reasonable. The recruiter, one of the founding partners of the company, asked the candidate to draw up a contract by the end of the day to sell his soul to the Devil. Unbelievable!

What, you may ask, has this got to do with being a lawyer? Well, everything of course!! You see, the candidate was forced to be creative by including clauses in the contract that defined:

- the Devil's rights and obligations;
- how the client's (the future employer!) soul should be handed over to the Devil and the warrantee period;
- rules for terminating the contract should one or both parties be unhappy, etc...

This is how you get to find out which candidates have the best

ability in logical reasoning. In my consultancy company, we also set challenges for all the candidates. I'll explain a bit more about what we do later, but for now, let me clarify what interviewers are looking for. So, do not forget to be on time and look good as these two items will be evaluated before a single question is asked!

When the interview starts, it'll feel like the questions are unconnected or a bit random, but all they are intended to do is to put you at ease and to see if you are willing to answer questions openly about different topics. Be careful! Do not criticise ex-bosses or colleagues. We have all had to deal with idiots, but this is not a session with a shrink – it's an interview, so mind how you behave and talk accordingly.

After each of the following questions, I'll explain what the interviewers are looking for.

- ***What do you know about our company?***

It may seem hard to believe, but even in this age of information, there are many candidates who get to the interview knowing almost nothing about the company they have applied to work for. Why would you apply to work in a company you know nothing about in the first place? Having made that initial mistake, why could they not then be bothered to go and find out about the company inviting them for an interview? I just don't get it!

If you are still unsure exactly what sort of information you should know about the company, I suggest you go back and read chapter 29 of this book.

• *When you last changed jobs, what was your reason for doing so?*

Your answer to this question will tell the interviewer what makes you move around the job market.

Did you change jobs because you felt you had stagnated and reached a point where there was no more potential for growth?

Did you change jobs because you wanted a new challenge in a new line of work?

Did you change jobs because you saw an opportunity for earning a higher salary?

Or did you change jobs because your boss was an idiot and all your colleagues were twice as bad as he was?

Steady on now!! Whatever the reasons that made you change jobs in the past, be very careful what you say about it in your interview.

I always get suspicious when I see a CV with 5 or 6 changes of job in 2-3 years. Think about it: this person works in a company for 4 months, changes company and stays there for 6 months. Then he/she moves again and only manages to stay put for 3 months before moving on again – but even then, only for 6 months! There is something not right with this person, wouldn't you say?

• *Why have you been unemployed for so long?*

I was once sent a CV by someone who had been unemployed for 5 years. How is it possible not to work at all for 5 years? Haven't you even been working on some kind of personal project, whether or it

was successful or not?

Try to understand how bad it looks to a recruiter if you have spent 5 years living off unemployment benefits and other social subsidies or spending your inheritance...!?

If you were out of work for 5 years, you should have found some way to earn money and not keep depending on others, right?

They'll be thinking, *"If you have been out of work for 5 years, why should I give you this job now?"*

Don't even think of saying you have been actively looking for work during those 5 years! Nobody takes 5 years to find work, not even during a recession! If you have been out of work for so long, there must be a good reason.

Think carefully about what you will say to show the recruiter you are up with new technologies, social media, digital platforms, etc... In 5 years, the way of doing things will have changed completely, so you'll have to show your potential employer you have not stagnated in time.

• Why are you leaving your current job? (a question for candidates currently in work)

Here are a few little gems I have heard over the years in reply to this question.

- *"I can't stand my boss anymore! I have to do everything and he's never satisfied with the way I do it."*

They say hell is full of people who are irreplaceable. You can easily be replaced by another worker, so if your boss is an idiot, go

ahead and hand in your letter of resignation. Your boss can make somebody else's life a misery!

However, **careful what you say in the interview**. It's better to say something like *"I have no chance to grow in my current job and so I'm looking for a new challenge"*.

- *"I'm frightened of enclosed spaces. I'm pregnant and... I have to think of my daughter above all else!"*

Frightened of enclosed spaces? And what exactly does that have to do with being pregnant? My mother worked throughout her pregnancy and she gave birth to a wonderful son!

If you have a phobia of small spaces, get help before you look for work. Otherwise, you'll only be able to work planting lettuces and cabbages in the open air... Because even in a greenhouse you'd be liable to have a panic attack!

- *"My boss is an old bore who can't even use RAR to compact files"*

This was said by someone who obviously doesn't realise that not everyone of the age of his parents or grand-parents had access to a decent education ... nor did they grow up with computers, mobile phones or tablets. Be a little more understanding when it comes to older people and modern gadgets – and remember it was that same old bore who started the company you have been working in. Even if he doesn't know how to use RAR, the old man has managed to run a company for years!

• ***Don't you think you are over-qualified for this job?***

When we were recruiting for admin staff in my company we initially thought that they wouldn't need to be a university graduate. But after looking at all the CVs we received, we decided it might be a bonus to have someone with better qualifications that might complement our current skills set. We ended up taking on a girl who had graduated in communications and international relations and she also took on the role of Press Officer, which was an area we were starting to do more work with at the time.

The question is not a trick!

Your answer will allow the interviewer to see which candidates are willing to do work which does not require them to use all their abilities and qualifications. Remember, you may be starting at the bottom but your 'excess of qualifications' could well help you to get to the top faster as the company grows.

• ***Do you remember a time when you knew you were right, but your superior asked you to do the exact opposite? How did you react?***

Careful how you answer this one.

Good recruiters can build up empathy with the interviewee during the course of the interview and can lull you into a false sense of security before throwing in this sort of question. Careful not to get things off your chest as if talking to a close buddy. This is when the interviewer will be able to see the best and worst of each candidate.

I remember asking a question like this to a candidate who went on to tell me how his boss asked him to do exactly the opposite to what he had intended to do:

“It won’t work and it’ll take longer,” said the employee to his boss.

As this chap had already told me his boss was an old bore who regularly went off on tantrums (the one who can’t use RAR files!), I threw him the bait:

“Don’t tell me your boss insisted he was right after that!?”

“Damn right he did. The stupid old man always was a tough nut to crack! He made me do it his way,” said the candidate sitting in front of me, visibly fuming inside as he relived the moment.

“So what happened next? Was he right?” I asked.

“Course not! ... I made a point of taking even longer than usual to get the job done, and jammed one of the machines. I warned him!”

Can you see why you can never talk to an interviewer as if you were speaking to a friend?

I listened to this wise-guy tell his story and as soon as he finished with the triumphant words, *“I warned him!”* I wanted him out of my sight. No company wants to employ a nutter like that, who is unable to see the difference between having a strong personality and being the “Mr-I’m-always-right-even-if-nobody-else-cares”.

• Have you ever looked at your watch and suddenly realised you had completely lost track of time? What were you doing when this happened?

Your answer will allow interviewers to see what hobbies make

you lose track of time.

Do you lose track of time when you read a good book?

Do you lose track of time when you go to the gym or go out on your bike?

Do you lose track of time when you play a musical instrument?

The way people use their free time is important to potential employers because it gives them an idea of who you are and what you are like outside work.

• Would you like to run your own business one day? What kind of business?

The first office worker I employed answered this question like this:

“Yes, I’d like to set up my own communications and press consultancy – that’s what I trained in”.

Bingo!

As it was one of the areas I wanted to invest in to help grow the company, I thought she would be the ideal candidate. I offered her a job doing simple admin things to begin with, but which at the same time also built up our company press office.

Think about what you would like to do professionally in the future and see if that might be relevant to the company you are applying to. If a candidate says he or she would like to start his or her own business in a particular field of work that the recruiting company is looking to develop, everyone wins, don’t they?

• ***How much do you expect to earn?***

Many job candidates have no idea how much they want to earn and are frightened to even touch on the subject in the interview. When the interviewer mentions the issue, don't give the idea that you'll take a job at any price. Even if you are going through a rough patch, show no signs of weakness because you risk earning far less than you deserve.

I suggest you think about what you want to earn before you go for the interview.

Show you are going to do your best to help the company grow and, as you do so, you expect to be promoted and so earn more money. Contrary to popular belief, recruiters hate vague answers to this question. Show that you know what you want and commit to doing what you promise to do if you get the job.

• ***Is there anything you would like to ask?***

Never leave a job interview without asking some intelligent questions about the company or the job to show your interest. Recruiters like that!

Here are a few suggestions:

- *What sort of challenges have your clients thrown up recently?*
- *What will your company be like in a year's time – or 5 years from now?*
- *I have noticed that you have been particularly active on social media lately.*

Is that related to a new strategy you will be adopting in the future?

- *What will the lucky candidate you choose for this job have to achieve in the*

first 12 months for you to say, “Gosh, we made an excellent decision by taking on (Peter)”?

You will leave recruiters reeling in amazement with those questions! If you have already been doing well up to that point in the interview, questions like those will simply be the icing on the cake.

But there is still one more detail which you must not overlook. Send an email at the end of the day to thank the interviewer. Make a point of saying how happy you were with the way the interview was conducted and state yet again how you will make it your job to help the company to grow, should you be selected.

As well the questions I gave you earlier, some recruiters like to see how fast you can think on your feet and might throw in an odd question or two to test you out.

Have a look at these examples, which I often use to close an interview:

• ***How many months have 28 days?***

Why do so many candidates get confused and say, *“Only one – February – but it has 29 in leap years!”*

Really? Is that what you were actually asked? The answer is obvious: Every month has 28 days. Stay calm and think before you give your answer.

• ***After midday, at what time do the hands of a clock meet up again?***

Usually, they say, “At 6 o’clock!”

When I get a hurried answer like that I ask, “Are you sure? Not before then?”

... Then there are more hurried answers, “Oh yes, true. 3 o’clock!”

Why do they rush their answers and say an exact time? Slow down and, if necessary, draw a clock face with hands. Have you noticed that the hands of the clock will meet again only 1 hour and 5 minutes later?

• ***I’m thinking of a number between 0 and 100. What number am I thinking of?***

The answers to this question are often quite amusing too. Normally, candidates start firing off numbers at random:

“24?”

“52?”

What are the chances of getting the right number by randomly guessing?

Did I *say* you couldn’t ask me questions to get to the answer?

Added to that, if you go for the random approach without noting down the numbers you shot off, you run the serious risk of repeating the same number in no time at all! *No, it’s still not 24!*

What the question is intended to do is to see if the candidate is able to set increasingly narrower boundaries. Instead of asking for a

number, ask, “*Does your number have one, two or three digits?*”

If I say it has one digit, you have restricted the number to 0 to 9.

“Is it more or less than fifty?”

Keep asking questions like this to reduce the range down to that magic number.

Please don’t ask if it’s *odd or even*... How will that help you?! You might as well ask if it can be divided by 3 or if it’s a prime number!

A lot of people don’t understand the reason for asking these strange questions in a job interview. But if you get selected for the job, you will be faced with situations every day for which you have no immediate answer. And it is exactly that sort of practical intelligence that recruiters are looking for before deciding who they want to hire.

Take a routine situation like this:

“I have been asked to tell a client when his order has been dispatched. Shall I send him an e-mail? Shall I send him a text message? Would the client prefer to be told by fax? As his order is being sent out earlier than expected, do I really need to tell him or shall let him be pleasantly surprised when his order arrives early?”

Instead of bothering your work colleagues with these sorts of questions, pick up the phone and tell the client his order has been sent and ask him how he would like the formal written notice to be sent. Simple, isn’t it?

Just ask a few sensible questions and most problems can easily be solved. But there are so many people who sit there waiting for someone else to tell them what to do or waiting for answers...

Think about your answers to all the questions in the sections above. There are thousands of variations on the same theme, but the end goal is always to test people’s confidence, speed of thought and

whether not a candidate will create conflict if chosen for a position on the team.

In my company, all the candidates that are suitable earn the right to accept a new challenge before the final decision is made. For example, we were recently recruiting for admin staff as I mentioned earlier, we received over 200 applications, from which we chose 22 to come for interview and came to the conclusion that only 5 were really suitable. We decided to set a challenge for these 5 to test their ability to do research and make new contacts. This was the challenge:

Each of the final 5 candidates had to find out who was the head of one of the companies we wanted to work with (I shall mention no names here for obvious reasons!), and write a letter to convince this person to set up a meeting in which we would present our services.

The 5 accepted the challenge but only 3 found out who ran the company in question.

Bang! Bang! 2 more down, only 3 to go! Remember we began with over 200 applications.

Of the 3 candidates, who were all women, one really stood out. She had managed to get hold of the person we wanted, phoned him and spoke to him as if she already was working for us, without even asking our permission!

It's obvious who we chose, isn't it?

If you are looking for work, you must be fully committed to doing whatever it takes to be successful.

Check out all the latest updates for this topic on the site:

www.job30days.com/day30

Your first day at work!

Your first day at work, be it your first job or not, is one of those moments when first impressions count for a lot. So here are a few tips from earlier in the book that will serve you well today.

- **Arrive on time or a little ahead of time**

Just as you did for the interview, check the route or do a trial run to get to work, whether on foot, by car or public transport.

Don't try to navigate a new route on the first day of a new job. Avoid nasty surprises trying to get there – you don't want to be late and spend the first day apologising!

- **Be careful how you look, dress and smell**

As previously mentioned, dress according to what you will be doing and follow the company policy, which should have become clear on the day of your interview. It would be ridiculous if you turned up in a suit to find everyone else wearing jeans and trainers.

Be sure to sleep well leading up to the big day so your body and mind can adapt to the new rhythm of work. Make sure your hair is clean, your skin is well looked after, your fingers nails are clean or well-polished and you don't smell of cigarettes or too much perfume. We've been over all this before, so I hope that's all crystal clear now!

- **Greet everyone with a smile and introduce yourself properly**

There should be someone in charge of helping to get you settled in. However, you will have to do your bit too. On day 15 of this challenge I taught you how to break the ice with strangers. If you need to read the article I wrote for you again, here it is:

www.job30days.com/day15

Smile, make eye contact and shake people's hands normally. "... and what do you mean by 'normally'?" I hear you asking.

When I say a normal handshake I mean one which is somewhere in between these two extremes:

1 – The limp handshake

The person offers their hand as if it were about to drop of their arm. It is so annoying when people shake hands like this that it gives a bad impression right from the start. What company wants to have a wimp on its team?

Frankly, when someone gives me a limp handshake, it makes me want to slap them - but with a limp hand so the guy realises just how ridiculous it is!

2 – The bone-crusher handshake

I hate this handshake even more, when overly virile men seem to be trying to break every bone in your hand!

I wear a ring on the middle finger of my right hand, so when someone shakes my hand like this, my index and ring fingers have ring marks on them for days afterwards, never mind the scintillating pain of crushed bones, which annoys me so much I lose the will to speak to the person. Most people who wear rings on their right hand wear them on their ring finger, so imagine the pain of having you little finger crushed while greeting a bone-crushing brute.

• Ask questions

People wrongly seem to think that they should get through the first day of work unnoticed and without bothering their new colleagues. How wrong they are.

Everybody wants to get to know the new guy, so don't be ashamed of asking people's names, what they do, what people usually do for lunch or tea, etc...

Does the company have somewhere you can heat up food you bring in from home?

Are there breaks in the morning and afternoon for free coffee, tea, juice and biscuits?

Are there breaks, but no free biscuits? Is there a café nearby? Or is there somewhere to keep things you bring in from home?

Imagine how long it would take you work all this out on your own! Don't be afraid to ask.

• **Keep yourself busy**

If you have time on your hands and don't know what to do to keep yourself busy, ask a colleague if they need help with anything. That way, you'll be using your time well and letting people know you are willing to help others.

Careful: spending the afternoon **updating your pages on social media does not count as work...** even if you work in marketing and communications.

• **Speaking of social media...**

On your first day at work, come with your homework thoroughly done!

You should be up to speed on everything the company has

published recently on social media, who uses social media and who is most active, etc...

Update the info about your work experience on your social media pages 15 or 20 minutes before you start your first day of work. That's another reason for you to be there on time!

Follow the company's updates and the things your colleagues share and gradually add your new colleagues to your contacts as you get to know them. If you do well on day one, it is possible that everyone will have invited you to join their contacts after your first day! Remember that everyone will be interested in finding out about the new guy who is so nice and friendly and smiling all the time and so the first thing they will do is look you up online!

• **Please, take notes**

There is nothing more irritating than having to repeat the same thing twice!

Write down everything you are taught: where to find work instructions, what rules you have to follow, who to talk to if you have doubts. Make a note of everything because you will need the information in the future:

- Problems with EXCEL? → Talk to Kate.
- Make a mailing list? → Meet with Irene.
- Revise procedures manual? → Christine works in Quality Management Systems.

- **Make all the mistakes you like ... but own up to them and correct them**

Keep this famous line in mind: *“Don’t ask permission, apologise if things go wrong”*

You will be doing new things, so it is to be expected that you will make mistakes. When you do though, take responsibility for your mistakes, try to come up with solutions, correct your mistakes quickly and... learn from your failures, which will help not to make the same ones and others in the future.

- **Do not whinge!**

Your new colleagues will be eager to get your attention and may start telling you about their little complaints and niggles so you will take pity on the poor over-worked things and join forces with them.

Do not fall into this trap!

The best thing to do is to end this poor little bug’s suffering and put him out of his misery quickly – step on him quickly! Careful how you do it because they might decide to step on you on your day one too. If you are whinger, I seriously doubt you will have got this far in the book and you won’t have tried to put into practice what you have read. Whingeing super heroes can never succeed because sooner or later they destroy everything around them. On your first day at work, they tell you too many details about their personal life. On the second day, they are already victims of injustice and creating problems within the team... they are wretched and so attract more

wretchedness to them.

You do not want to be one of them!

- **Think you have the best-looking kids on the planet?**

Everybody does!

Nobody is going to say, *“Your baby really is an ugly little thing!”* *Are they?*

Keep the photos of your babies to yourself; nobody wants to see them... certainly not on your first day at work.

- **Be confident, above all else!**

Just as on the day of your interview, it's quite normal to feel a little nervous on your first day at work. Don't let that stop you from feeling confident. You will soon be in charge of a new colleague on their first day at work!

As ever, I will regularly be updating the tips and articles on the book's website:

www.job30days.com/first-day-at-work

A final word

I would love to hear your comments about the tips and ideas I have shared in this book.

How have they helped you to find work or improve you career?
Share your opinion on the book's website:

(www.job30days.com)

or on social media:

facebook.com/job30days

instagram.com/job30days

<https://pinterest.com/job30days>

plus.google.com/+job30days-plus

linkedin.com/company/how-to-find-a-job-in-30-days

Don't forget to use the hashtag **#job30days** so I can follow what you're saying.

If you need any help, don't hesitate to get in touch by e-mail on **pedro@job30days.com**

Bye for now,

Pedro Silva-Santos

Thanks

Writing this book has been a team effort – I could never have done it on my own. I needed to surround myself with a team of people who believed from day one that this book had to see the light of day.

To my friend and designer, Ricardo Matias, with whom I have had some pretty juicy arguments, thank you so much for the way you make things I try to do become reality, even some of the dumb things. You have been on board since the beginning of this project and have helped me turn it into something worthwhile.

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To my parents, for producing such a beautiful son and for never trying to limit my dreams, even when some of my ideas seemed to be utter madness.

And finally, I am grateful to everyone who has helped organise or taken part in the workshops "*How to find a job in 30 days*". Without you, none of this would exist and the book would never have come to fruition.

Opinions

“It’s an interesting idea to have a website with updates and extra information on each topic. Despite all the tech at our disposal, this is not yet common publishing practice.”

- PAULO GUERRA, Project Manager

“I loved the way the book is written! As I read, I felt as if I was back in the workshop.”

- FABÍOLA FREITAS, Masters in Environment Engineering

“I liked the fact the book is organised on a day-by-day basis and gives example texts that can be used to contact people on LinkedIn. Vague tips on how to succeed abound out there... but this is the first time I have found a step-by-step approach in one document. For me, that is what makes this book essential reading for anyone starting out on their career.”

- NATASHA PÁDUA, Innovation Manager in the food industry and
Founder of the portal www.eatinnovation.com

“Full of practical tips that anyone can use in their day-to-day. One of the most positive things I found was the simplicity with which the author introduces each theme and grabs the reader’s attention.”

- ANA GERALDES, , Lecturer at the School of Agriculture of the Polytechnic Institute of Bragança

“I began working before I finished my degree and ended up not finishing it for the wrong reasons: I took any old job, so long as it meant I was earning some money! On my own it took me 20 years to understand most of what the author has just shared in this book.”

- NINI GONÇALVES, blogger

“This book is obviously written by someone who loves telling stories. I was struck by the clever way he distracts secretaries on the phone!”

- IRINA TAVARES, Secretary

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