



Institute
and Faculty
of Actuaries

My Brilliant Career

How do successful people actually drive their careers?

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Generic advice – but is it true?

- “You have to have a 5-year career plan”
- “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know”
- “3 out of every 5 jobs are never advertised”
- “It’s all about networking”
- “Always keep your CV up to date”
- “I was just lucky – I was in the right place at the right time”
- “I need to change organisations every 2 -3 years”



The research

- Exploratory interviews with ‘high fliers’
- CEO and Director views on how they spot potential
- Structured interviews of over 1600 successful people, covering:
 - How they found key jobs
 - How long they stayed with organisations
 - Their career tactics
 - How did they plan?



Session Overview

- **1. Facts from the research**
- **2. How do I stand out from the crowd?**
Tips and observations from successful people
- **3. Practical exercises**
Experiments
- **4. Creative Career Strategies & Career Questions**

Experiment

- We'll spend a minute getting to know who is here
- **Find someone new or you don't know very well and ask them what they do**



Question

- How many people were sitting next to someone they already knew well?



- Career tip – make opportunities to get to know people

— Standing out from the crowd

Daily opportunities

- One simple career habit is to sit next to people you don't know.
- “I am the [Job Title] for [Area] – doesn't make you stand out.

Tip – answering “What do you do?”

- Start with “**I am responsible for...**”
- Show that you think about the value you add to the business - this makes you stand out as strategic.

Now ask again what they do and try out your new answer

How successful people **first** heard about jobs (3639 jobs)



Question

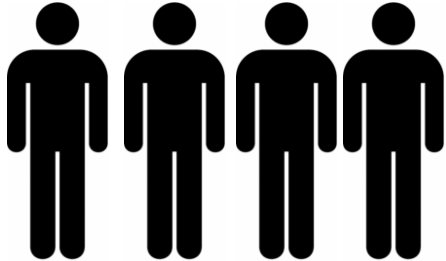
- Have you got a 5 year plan? (planning 2 career moves ahead)



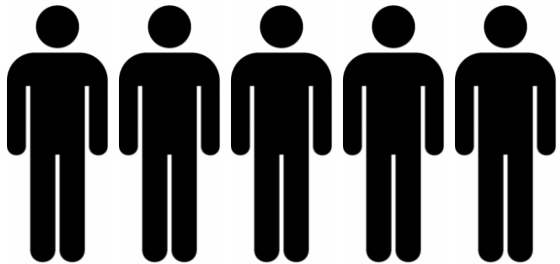
Do successful people have 5 year career plans?



5 year career plan
– at least 2 moves ahead



Targeted opportunism
– next job focus



Opportunistic
– daily habits create career opportunities

How long do successful people stay?

369 people with successful careers

Average time in longest organisation = 10.6 years

Sector	Longest organisation	2 nd longest organisation
Health	12.4 years	4.9 years
Government	11.4 years	5.1 years
Financial	8.2 years	3.9 years
Utilities	9.5 years	4.6 years
Engineering/Services	15.6 years	10.2 years

Invisible career assets you build

...and what you lose when you leave

Your network,
sponsors and allies



Your track record



You've 'earned the right'



4863 [RF] © www.visualphotos.com

The big question for your career...

**Are you capitalising
on your current
career assets?**



Standing out from the crowd

The 3 keys to career success from our research

1

Successful careers are based on leveraging **strengths**

2

Reducing **risk**

3

It's all about **daily actions**, not formal selection



1. Based on Strengths

- Successful people **use their strengths**
- They **educate others** to understand their strengths – and this results in more of the right opportunities
- They **negotiate** to showcase their strengths

How clearly do you put across your strengths?



Experiment – Your Strengths

- Pair up and decide on Person A and Person B
- Talk for 60 seconds on this topic:
- **“What I am good at, that I bring to a job or team”**



Questions

- When put on the spot, how well did you convey your key strengths?
- Was it comfortable?

Convey your strengths clearly

- **“I rambled”**
No more than 3 points
Get clear on your message!
- **“I felt I was bragging”**
Leads to qualifiers, talking about weaknesses, always saying ‘we’ not ‘I’
- **Experiment:**
Instead of saying “I am excellent at”, say
“What I really love doing is...”



Why does it matter?



Is your brand visible?



— Your career brand

1. What are your best strengths and contribution?
2. What kind of work energises you – what do you love to do?
3. Which piece of work is a good example of that?

3 things you want
your CEO to know
about YOU



Tell a good story

- Your strengths
- Achievement story – paints a memorable picture
- Hard results
- **Use opportunities in the workplace**
 - “How’s it going?”
 - “Fine, we’re really busy...”



2. Reducing risk

- Appointing an unknown person to the team is a high risk decision
- Many managers try to reduce the risk:
 - “Who do I know who would do a good job?”
 - “Who comes recommended by someone whose judgement I trust?”
- **How can you reduce the risk?**

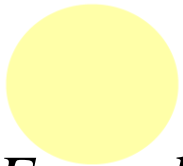


3. It's about daily actions

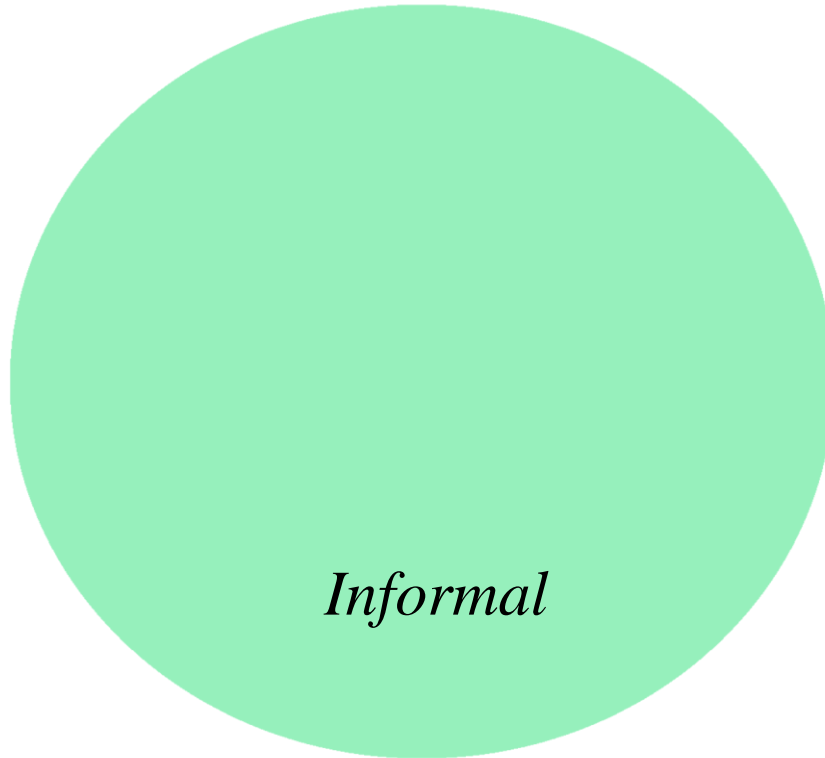
- Most career advice centres on application & interview
- Our research suggests that it is small daily actions that accelerate careers and help to **get the next job**
 - Action to increase visibility
 - Action to establish reputation
 - Action to decrease risk
 - Action to build strategic alliances
- Drip-feeding & lobster-potting



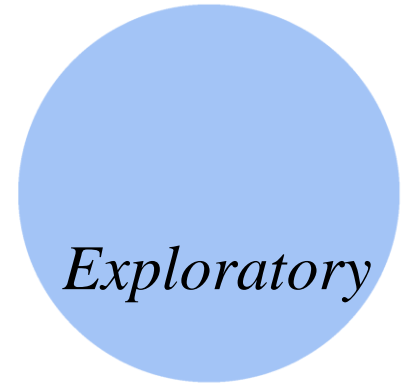
— Drip-feeding & lobster-potting



Formal




Informal



Exploratory


— Drip-feeding & lobster-potting



Formal



*Reactive -
Short
conversations
(1-minute)*



*Proactive -
Longer
(15 minutes)*

**Build your reputation in Informal &
Exploratory situations!**

Questions?



Weekly Career Tips

- Sign up at www.talentandpotential.com

