

PROACTIVE REASONING TO LAND THE PERFECT ROLE

Bernard Kufuor, Senior Associate at Cameron Cole International Recruitment, UK

I have been a Recruitment Consultant for over four years. Within this time, I have reviewed thousands of candidates' CVs.

I am confident most employers would agree that the first thing to look out for on a candidate's CV is their current experience, the title and general responsibility. Within that brief minute, if that part of the candidate's CV does not match the role, there is no motivation for that employer to further review that CV.

Candidate's often mistake "excess verbiage" for "detail" and "laziness" for "brevity". Some of us are guilty of one of these at least at one stage of our career, often fuelled by desperation or lack of enthusiasm.

Here are a few pointers I have put together to help you land your perfect role:

Identify what you want to do and who you want to do it with: The best Recruiters always have a spread sheet/excel document outlining roles they have, and candidates they have sent them to. It is a lot of hard work to put together such detailed document. But once you have it intact, sending a candidate to a particular role becomes a piece of cake. For a candidate, research your market of expertise; identify whether you want to join the big players or the mid-size organisations. When you have set your sights on one of these categories, identify which company or organisation within this category you want to join. It is really simple logic – you need to know what you want and then go get it.

Use your network: Growing up, I loved being a part of an extended family. Both my mother and father had huge families and this made Christmas get-togethers absolutely awesome. There was food everywhere but what I loved the most about some of our gatherings was how exposed you were to information – information from and about every member of the family. In the professional circle, there are so many avenues to build up such a network that will give you access to relevant information. And as a candidate looking for a new role, information about the company you have identified as the one you want to join can be easily available to you if you tap into the right network. LinkedIn has been my preferred over the years so adding the right calibre of people who could be of benefit to me professionally now or in the future has become most crucial. It is important that you know very well the company or organisation you want to join. Don't leave it for later and then decide it is not the place for you when the company has even made you an offer. You lose credibility when you do this. You have wasted your own time and the time of the one that wanted you on board. And if the network of that company is strong enough, they will tell potential employers in the market that you are not a serious candidate. So ask questions about the company – the culture, the style of work, behaviour and attitude of the people working within it especially heads of departments. After, ask yourself – "is this where I want to be for at least 3 years?"

Tailor Your CV To Match The Role: I think some candidates take Jimmy Cliff's "You Can Get It If You Really Want" too literally. Do you really think the way to landing your ideal role is playing the numbers game? You really think applying to the same role with the same CV over and over again will get your CV finally noticed? – Noticed, definitely but for the wrong reasons. Take some time and read about the role, the company, who you will be working under and tailor your CV to match what and who the company is looking for. Please be aware, the trick is not lying about who you are or what you can do but it's all about applying to a role that matches your background with more enthusiasm. You are now enthusiastic because you know the culture is right for you. You know the culture is right for you because your network has given the company stamp of approval.

How to get your CV seen by the 'POA': The POA is simply the Person of Authority. That person is the one that actually decides who should be given the role and who should not. You are ready to apply for the role of a lifetime, within the company you are confident has the right culture and environment for growth and progression. You suddenly say to yourself: "But there are already hundreds of other candidates applying for the same role." What do you do? Over the years, I have found two ways most effective; using an intermediary/recruitment consultant or asking for a referral. The former I find most effective. Asking for a referral from someone you know who knows the POA seems pretty easy and most certainly straight forward. The only risk is - you are not entirely sure how credible the person you know is to your potential employer. The question you will need to ask yourself is - will the POA click delete when your CV is forwarded by the one referring you or will he actually take it seriously. However when you use an intermediary that risk does not exist. Here's the logic - intermediary is paid to find the right candidate for a role, the intermediary's credibility is dependent on how successful he is, the intermediary's success is judged by what calibre of candidate he represents. Because of the effort and research you have put into this process, your intermediary will agree that you are suitable for the role and his client – your potential employer – the POA – therefore, there is a higher chance of the existence of significant interest.

The Interview: I believe first interviews are most important. Clients I represent feel out candidates during the first interview. Questions they ask are more behavioural and attitude based. I have represented certain candidates in the past whose technical knowledge and experience was spot but they were unfortunately not offered the roles because my clients felt there were no match in attitude and behaviour. It is harsh but every company wants to have an identity. It is almost mandatory for companies to have diversity in ethnicity not in mentality and attitude. Having identifiable traits across board builds a stronger cultural and family-like atmosphere. This bond creates a more purposeful attitude making company goals easily and quickly achievable. Let me remind you that following this process have helped you identify that the culture and style of work is similar to how you work so actually showing this during the interview should not be an issue – just be yourself.

Follow it up with an email: It is very normal for candidates to feel that all they have to do is nothing after the interview, but this is wrong. Before leaving, ask for the complimentary card of your interviewer and when you get home, drop a brief email as thanks and a reassurance of your interest in the role and their company. Be confident about this email and let this confidence ooze out of every line in the email. Let the receiver know you are confident that it will be a successful collaboration. Drop a point from the interview on why you think this is so, close on your keenness to hear back from them and the best number and email for them to reach you on in case they need any further clarification. Make it as concise as possible and await your positive news.

Bernard Kufuor is a Senior Associate at Cameron Cole International Recruitment in the UK. The recruitment firm is a global enterprise with core competencies in Legal, Human Capital and Executive. Please contact Bernard for consultation or any recruitment advice.

E: b.kufuor@camcoleinternational.com

T: 0044 161 7133 463