

Chapter 1 – Keep the End in Mind

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, better known by his pen name Lewis Carroll, was an English author, illustrator, poet, mathematician, photographer, teacher, and inventor. He is remembered for his work “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland” written in 1865. An exchange between Alice and the Cheshire Cat goes like this: :

Alice: “*Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?*”

The Cat: “*That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.*”

Alice: “*I don’t much care where.*”

The Cat: “*Then it doesn’t matter which way you go*”

Alice: “*.....so long as I get SOMEWHERE.*”

The Cat: “*Oh, you’re sure to do that, if you only walk long enough.*”

Little did the author know that he was describing the approach many professionals take in their search for new employment. They just begin trying a bunch of things, like rewriting their resume or scheduling interviews, without a clear understanding of what they are looking for and where they are going. Without a direction, without a goal, without knowing where you’re going, is all the same. You end up going nowhere, you never get there, and you can never arrive anywhere because you don’t have a destination. With a little luck you will get somewhere, but what will you find and how long will it take?

Dr. Stephen Covey wrote “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People”. Habit #2 says “begin with the end in mind”. He [described it](#) as “*being based on imagination. the ability to envision in your mind what you cannot at present see with your eyes. It is based on the principle that all things are created twice. There is a mental (first) creation, and a physical (second) creation. The physical creation follows the mental, just as a building follows a blueprint.*”

"If you don't make a conscious effort to visualize who you are and what you want in life, then you empower other people and circumstances to shape you and your life by default. It's about connecting again with your uniqueness and then defining the personal, moral, and ethical guidelines within which you can most happily express and fulfill yourself."

"One of the best ways to incorporate Habit 2 into your life is to develop a personal mission statement. It focuses on what you want to be and do. It is your plan for success. It reaffirms who you are, puts your goals in focus, and moves your ideas into the real world. Your mission statement makes you the leader of your own life. You create your destiny and secure the future you envision."

In this book you'll be asked to develop a value proposition that describes the qualities and value you can offer a potential employer. But before we get there, visualize three things that describe what you desire for your next career:

1. Job Fit
2. Culture
3. Work Environment

By visualizing at the start of your employment search you will do as Stephen Covey says, "it puts your goals in focus, and moves your ideas into the real world. Your mission statement makes you the leader of your own life. You create your destiny and secure the future you visualize.

Job Fit

Organizational psychologists typically define "fit" in [two different ways](#),

- Person-job fit is generally the most common. It identifies a candidate's suitability for tasks required to succeed in a specific job. This can include their skills, knowledge levels, strengths, and abilities.
- Person-organization fit refers to a match between an organization's core values and culture and an individual's beliefs and values.

Person-Job Fit

"Person-job fit is [important](#) for your work because it has strong implications for your well-being.

- It impacts job satisfaction, as well as satisfaction with your coworkers and supervisor.*
- You can also expect increases in your organizational commitment and identification when you fit well with your job.*
- Finally, your strain decreases when you fit better with your job. So, overall, you'll be happier, more dedicated to your organization, and less stressed when you fit better with your job."*
- "In addition to increasing well-being, person-job fit has other positive implications for organizations. Because person-job fit increases your attitude, it can also enhance your performance. It makes sense that your performance might increase when you are better suited toward your job. Also, fitting better to your job can also decrease the likelihood that you want to leave. So, you're less likely to turn over in the long run when you feel you fit well with your job."*

Culture

Glassdoor's November 2019 [survey](#) results that relate to a person-organization fit:

- When searching for a new job, 77% of respondents said they would consider a company's culture before applying.*
- American millennials are more likely to care about work culture over salary (65%) than those age 45 and older (52%). Similar numbers were found in the U.K. (66% vs. 52%).*
- 89% of adults polled told researchers that it was important for employers to "have a clear mission and purpose."*

"A common [misperception](#) among many employers today is that pay and work-life balance are among the top factors driving employee satisfaction," said Dr. Andrew Chamberlain, Glassdoor's chief economist.

"We find little support for this notion in Glassdoor data. Instead, employers looking to boost hiring and employee retention efforts should prioritize building strong company culture and value systems, amplifying the quality and visibility of their senior leadership teams and offering clear, exciting career opportunities to employees."

Five [factors](#) to consider in evaluating a company culture:

- 1. Evaluate the onboarding process – Do they provide the training, resources, and tools new employees need?*
- 2. Gauge openness with leadership*
- 3. Look at incentive programs (or lack thereof)*
- 4. Observe team interactions*
- 5. Determine attitudes from answers*

Work Environment

"A work [environment](#) refers to the elements that comprise the setting in which employees work and impact workers. While some items that comprise it are obvious, such as the wall treatment or the number of indoor plants, others are more obtuse, such as company politics or a coworker whose personality traits do not suit the company culture. Professionals working in both full-time and part-time positions are significantly impacted by their office environment because they have to perform their duties inside it. Usually, workers are required to adapt to this workplace feature."

The following [list](#) will help you to look for symptoms of the work environment at a potential employer. The work environment is important because:

- It can involve better conditions for workers, which can improve loyalty and build the corporate brand.*
- It can increase employee satisfaction, motivation, and engagement.*
- It can increase the productivity of workers who are eager to contribute to the company.*

- *It can avoid creating conditions in which the workers are dissatisfied or demotivated.*
- *It can make it easier to identify issues in the environment, such as an adversarial worker who reduces morale.*
- *It can include managers who use positive reinforcement to build employee satisfaction and engagement.*
- *It can include workers who treat others with respect and empathy.*
- *It can avoid distractions that prevent workers from performing their job responsibilities.*
- *It can support communication between workers from different occupations and levels of the company.*
- *It can generate many opportunities for professional growth through items such as internal promotions or training programs.*
- *It can encourage positive thinking among workers through employer programs, visual details in the physical setting, and worker-friendly policies.*
- *It can promote a work-life balance for both supervisors and subordinates.*

Summary

In your desire to step up to that new career, or new professional role you wanted, or new job role for women over fifty, have you stopped to consider where you want to go with your career? Have you thought through what you want it to look like when you get there? Hopefully you will consider these factors early in the employment search process. Having these factors in mind at the start of the search, will influence your thinking throughout the search.

One of the major challenges that professionals face is in establishing specific career goals. This is often the case with professionals that have been in the workplace for 10 or more years. They've often held a variety of positions in different roles. Upon leaving an organization they may find it difficult to decide which career path to follow. It's important to make that decision as soon as possible. Without clarity on that one point, a lack of focus will often be evident to others in networking meetings and interviews. That can hurt your chances of being selected for that ideal job you are pursuing.

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