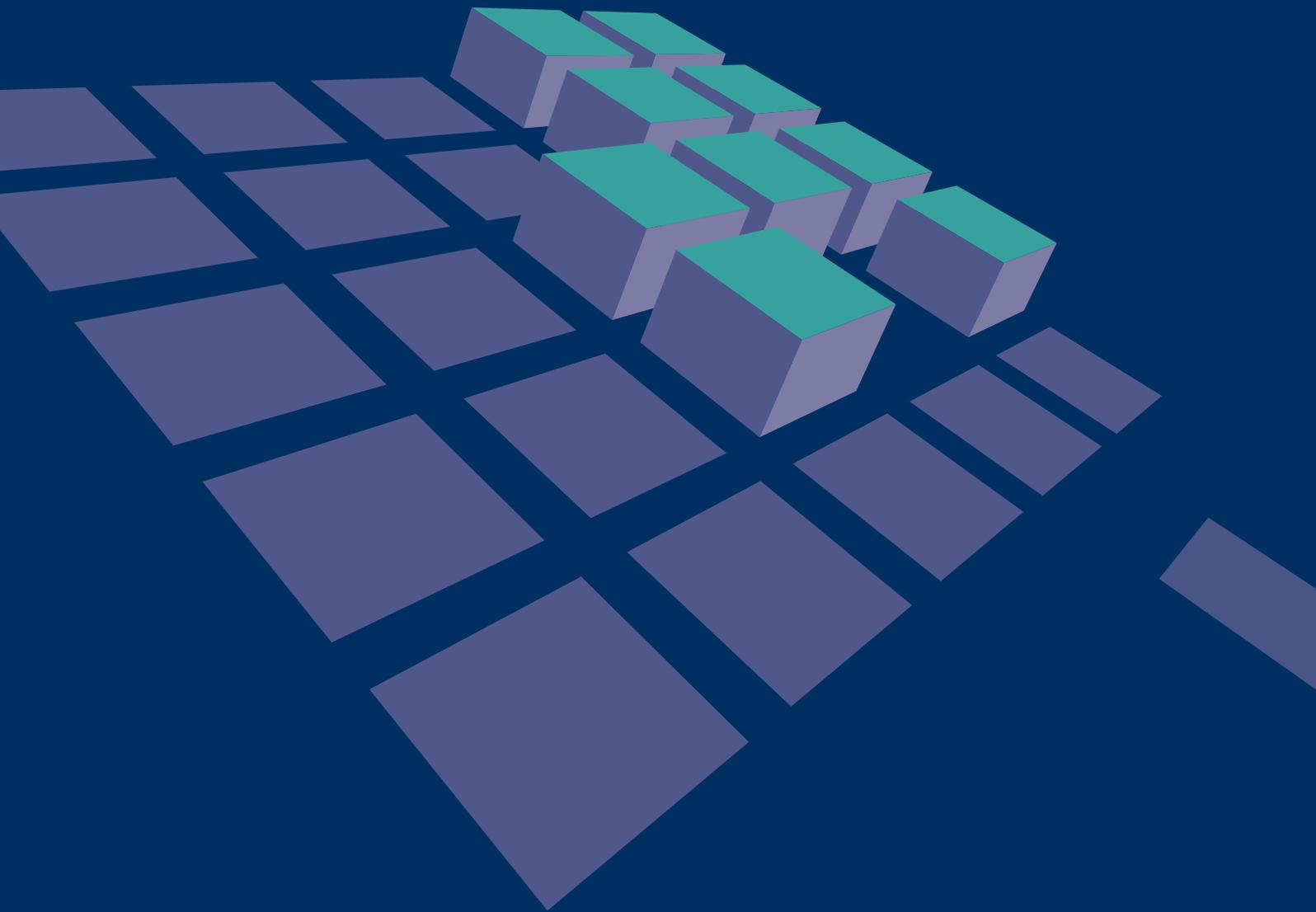


CAREER STRATEGIES SERIES

Strategies for an Intentional and Successful Career Move



ODGERS BERNDTSON

STRATEGIES FOR AN INTENTIONAL AND SUCCESSFUL CAREER MOVE

Executive Summary	1
1 Preparing for a Change	3
2 Your Personal Brand: Are you giving it the attention it deserves?	6
3 Work with an Executive Search Firm: Lay the foundations for your next move, now or later.	13
4 Make Sure Your CV Adds Value	17
5 Make Your Cover Letter Count	20
6 Client Interview: Be the one who stands out in person and online	23
7 Techniques to Ace a Competency-Based Interview	27
8 Psychometric Assessments	30
9 The Offer: How to negotiate your package and your resignation	33
10 New Job, New Start	36

Executive Summary

Make your career intentional.

You can greatly increase your chances of success in your career by being prepared.

In this Career Strategies Series, we take you through all the essential elements you need in planning your next move.

To realise your potential, you need to feel self-confident in a workplace that strives for everyone to be at their best. Is your organisation a good fit for your values? Does it support you in your ambitions? Recognise your unique collection of talents?

Even if you're happy where you are now, it's never too early to groom yourself for what's ahead.

You can sharpen your profile, strengthen your personal brand and brush up on interview and assessment skills. When have you last thought about your visibility in your market, curating your online reputation or networking?

Thinking about a move can be daunting. It may be some time since you actively pursued a senior role. Or you've progressed within one organisation and not pitched yourself in the open market. This Series is designed to take the challenge out of a new job search by showing you exactly how to prepare; in landing a top job, maximising your potential at offer stage and making an impact once you're in your new post.

We've broken the process down into clear, sound advice in ten areas that need your focus.

We hope to give you the enthusiasm and confidence you need to be proactive about your next move. There are ample, attractive opportunities out there. Grab one!

We wish you the very best in your new directions.

With kind regards

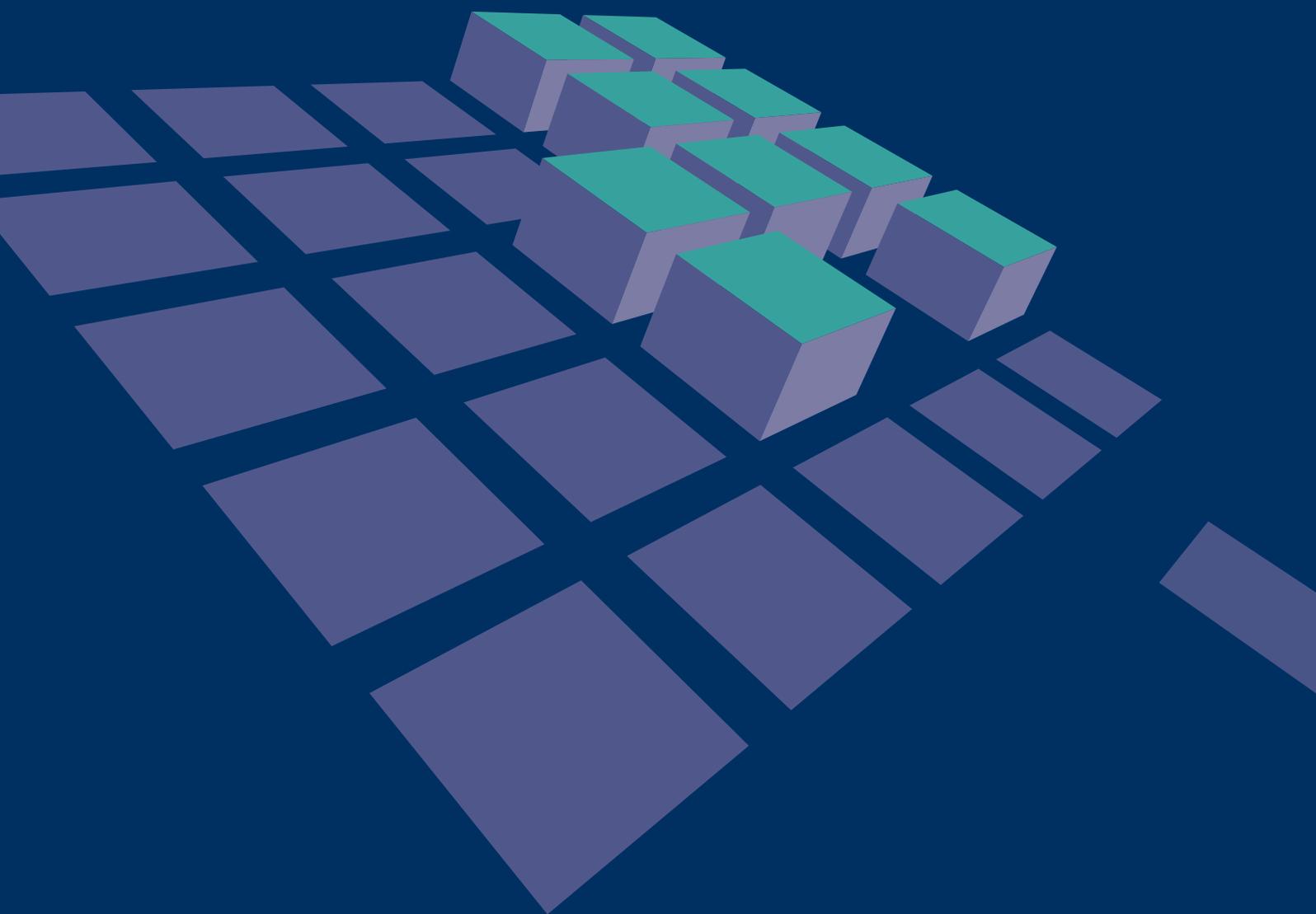
Helen



Helen Thomas
Principal and Head of
Candidate Care
Odgers Berndtson Ireland

CAREER STRATEGIES SERIES # 1

Preparing for a Change



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Life has changed considerably since the beginning of 2020; business priorities and cultures have evolved. Companies' responses to the pandemic have impacted positively and negatively on how employers are viewed by their employees.

With light now at the end of the Covid tunnel, does it feel like the right time to move on? If so, how do you begin looking for a new leadership role?

Post-pandemic career progression: time to set new goals?

Perhaps it's been a long time since you last actively looked for a new senior executive role, even without the interruption of a global pandemic! Or maybe you've risen through the ranks in your current organisation without ever having to find a leadership position in the open market. Either way, developing and progressing your career by moving to a new organisation can seem like a daunting prospect. Where do you begin?

We have designed our Career Strategies series to help take the pain and uncertainty out of a new job search.

We hope this series gives you the confidence and enthusiasm to apply focus to your future. You'll find sound advice on the strategies that can help land a top job and maximise your opportunities at the offer stage and, later, how to make an impact once in post. Let's begin with the initial steps to take when considering a move.

Identify your priorities

Life has tested all of us over the last number of months, both professionally and personally. One thing that remains constant, however, are our values. Take time to figure out what's most important to you and name yours.

- Which parts of your working life you want to hold on to?
- What areas do you want to build on?

Highlight which pieces need to change to align with your values and achieve your goals, professionally and personally.

Ego surf!

As well as using their established networks, recruiters (in-house and specialist search firms like us) increasingly use social media to identify and engage with high calibre individuals. Hiring firms can also search social media when they're considering potential candidates.

Do a forensic check on your online profile and take ownership of your reputation. Make sure it says everything about you that you want it to and nothing to the contrary. Make yourself visible. If you can't be found online and you don't actively network, you will only be considered for opportunities that you proactively select, not those you know nothing about. An opportunity (or two) lost, perhaps.

We go into more detail in our article about **curating your online reputation** on our website.

Commit to your objective

In the same way that you schedule time in your diary to deliver on your corporate goals, make sure to commit time in your diary for applying for roles, networking and following up on conversations.

The vast majority of career moves happen through an individual's network, where you'll hear about potential opportunities or be mentioned in the course of conversation. Reignite your network and start increasing your visibility within the market.

Get the right message out

Along with your online reputation, your reputation in the marketplace is critical. Think about the message you're conveying when you're engaging with your contacts. Clarity always counts in your favour.



Be specific. There's a big difference between wanting a job and wanting a job that will propel your career. Let your network know you're motivated, ambitious, clear on your personal goals and ready for your next career move.

Engage with executive search firms

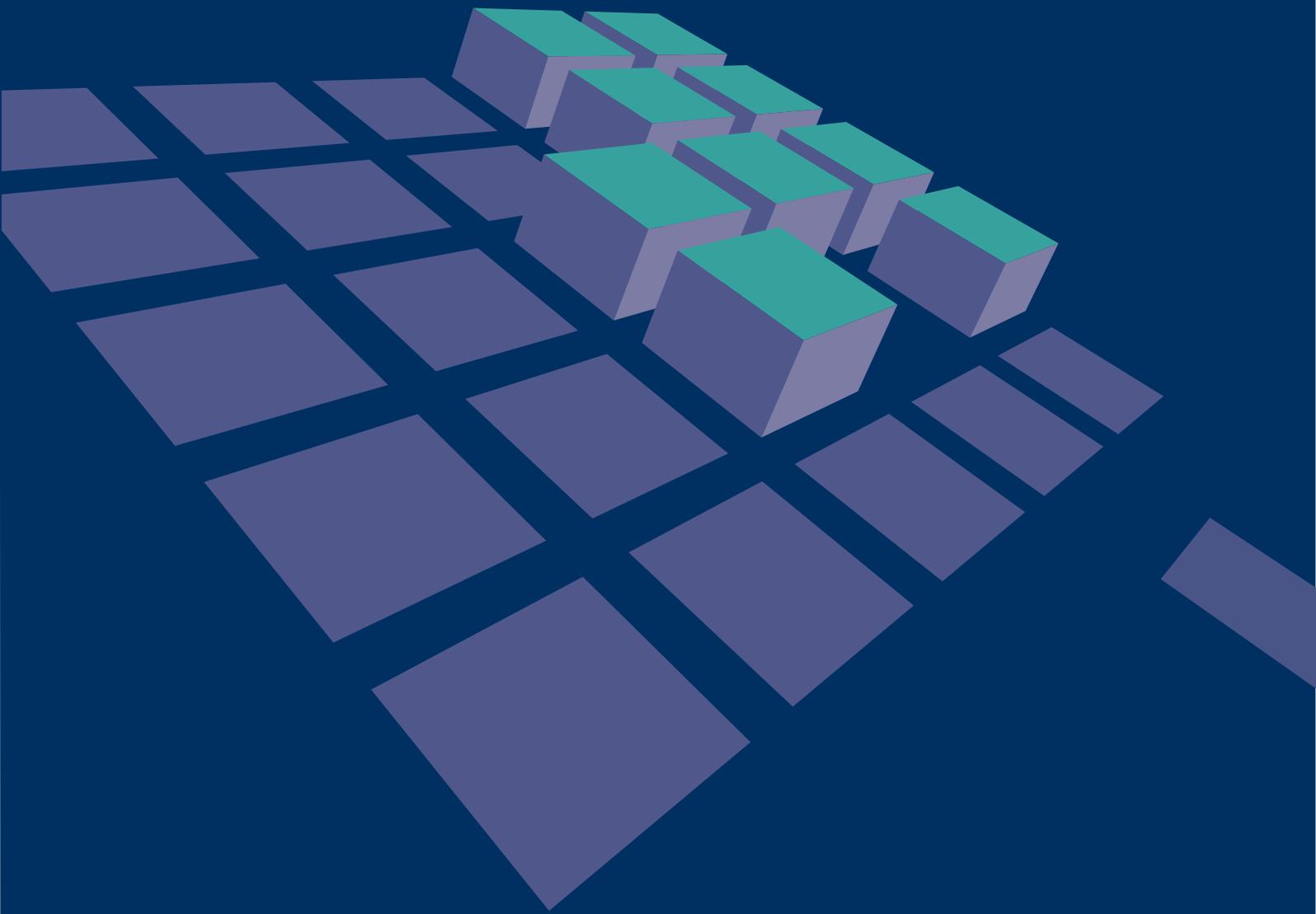
Take the time to engage with executive search firms as part of your networking. Reach out and let them know that you are open to considering opportunities and, if they reach out to you - even if you're not interested in the primary role they have on offer - make the time to have a conversation. It could lead to something more desirable in the future.

You can be assured that conversations with executive search firms are kept confidential.

At Odgers Berndtson, we've spent over half a century helping many of the world's best organisations find the right senior talent to drive their agendas. If you have what it takes to fill a senior leadership position, we'd be delighted to hear from you so make sure you get in touch! Once you're on our radar, we'll let you know when relevant roles come through.

CAREER STRATEGIES SERIES # 2

Your Personal Brand: Are you giving it the attention it deserves?



ODGERS BERNDTSON

Ireland has had one of the highest rates of home-working in Europe during the pandemic, according to labour market thinktank Eurofound. At the height of the crisis, approximately 40% of paid hours were carried out at home.

This blurred the boundaries between working from home and 'living' in the office, forcing many to embrace their digital image onscreen during a multitude of videocalls.

BUT ... how many of us have taken the time to think about how effectively we have managed our personal brand's transition into the virtual office environment?

In the era of digital media, individual identity has become vital and a given. From selfies to Facebook, LinkedIn to Twitter, everyone has the opportunity to create a highly-visible, easily shareable brand. Now that a significant proportion of meetings have moved online, we must manage our online brand in real time. But what's the best way to manage your personal brand to aid your professional development?

Rather than something that's manufactured outside of yourself, your personal brand comes from your very core, your true essence. The more authentic it is, the more powerful. It is an evolving, mouldable entity and you are fully in charge of directing it. It's about being seen, heard and understood in the right ways and in the right places. Unless you're purposeful about how it unfolds, it could lead to an impression of you that's misrepresentative and that doesn't serve your goals.

Beyond the digital world

It's easy to understand how much of your brand is crafted through your online presence. Every virtual meeting you attend, post you share, each tweet, every event you are pictured at, and all pieces of copy you publish add insight into your collection of capabilities, interests and focus. (We explore this topic further in [our curating your online reputation](#) article.)

But your brand extends far further than your digital output, more so than ever before.

It's about your actions, your behaviour, the quality of your relationships and your values. It's an accurate reflection of your core beliefs, passions and commitment. Like an outfit you've chosen, you wear it all day, everywhere you go and in every interaction you have.

In the virtual meeting room, it's harder to nurture one-on-one relationships, to pick up on signals and to distinguish between genuine hesitation and slow connection speed. It now takes a deeper level of attunement to read subtle reactions and atmospheres, and gathering these non-verbal communication cues takes significantly longer. We have to work harder at personal connection and understanding.

Strong feelings

What hasn't changed is that genuine values remain your most powerful assets. Like a great product brand, a personal brand is emotional. People remember how you make them feel, more strongly than what you do. Deciding from the outset to be genuine and authentic must be your baseline.

It means you will always be a natural fit for your brand. It won't be an effort to portray it in everything you say and do, every day. As successful global companies know, a brand's greatest power lies in the strength of its story. Good stories evoke emotion, build strong connections and win firm loyalty. They inspire people to follow.

Hang in there

When Shelly Lazarus, Chairman and CEO of global ad agency Ogilvy & Mather, shared her clear opinions on personal branding to an audience of senior professional women, she said: "What actually works is authenticity. One of the fabulous things I've enjoyed about my career is collaborating with so many leaders across different industries and countries, and without exception, the successful ones have been comfortable in their own skin."

She continued:

“Resilience - the ability to hang in there when things are difficult - is critical in a career, and if you’re spending every hour of the day pretending to be someone you’re not, you’ll be exhausted and won’t have the energy needed to face your real work. On the flip side, if you’re genuinely excited about what you’re doing, and have that light in your eyes, it will attract other people to you, and motivate them.”

Defining moments

The first step towards a strong brand with an authentic story is to look inside. Define who you are, identify your unique strengths and know what you stand for.

Start from where you are now:

- What are you passionate about?
- What areas of expertise do you own?
- For what do you want to be known?
- Are you able to tell your story compellingly?

Next, look to others you trust to give you their honest opinions and impressions:

- Since the pandemic has impacted how you work, has their perception of you changed?
- What skills and qualities are ‘yours’ in your workplace?
- What is your reputation in your marketplace?
- What track record have you built?
- What do people say about you when you leave the room?
- How is this serving you best now?
- Could you benefit more from adjustments in how you are perceived?

Have confidence in your strengths and let your belief in yourself come across in a commanding, personal voice. This doesn’t need to be loud. Quiet voices can be more compelling than attention-seeking ones. Let your passion come through when it’s appropriate. Combined with your choice of actions, this will distinguish you from others.

Who needs to know you?

Once you’re clear on what your brand is, and you’ve taken steps to shape and plan how you will live it, being visible is crucial. The Ellevete Network for professional women recommends you define who needs to know you.

“As is the case with winning brands, they know their target audience inside out. They know who they are talking to and where to find them. They understand their needs and wants; on a deeper, behavioural level. Make a list of your most important customers, stakeholders, networks, societies, communities and understand what would it take to influence them.”

Aim high

One group of influencers is not mentioned here and that is those ahead of you in your organisation and your field. This is particularly pertinent if you’re ambitious to join leadership.

The move from manager to leader is a pivotal one. It usually demands tactical adjustments to your personal brand, so you are perceived as a potential leader. Instead of keeping the show on the road, you can inspire others to do so and put your focus on leading them to new frontiers.

Strategic thinking and brave decision making are integral to leadership. Your potential to be that leader needs to come across in your personal brand. Doing so might mean stepping out of your comfort zone. As Kathy Caprino of Women@Forbes wrote recently: “If you’re not uncomfortable connecting with someone then you’re not aiming high enough.”

Upward networking will need to be part of your brand strategy, so those who can influence your road ahead recognise your powerful contribution and clearly see you as a leader.

At this level, being good at what you do is taken for granted:

- What can you portray that separates you out from others?
- Who do you align with?
- What do you associate with?
- How do you give back?
- Where do you lend support?
- How can you harness these talents in the virtual world?

Create the magic

Leadership ambition must be synonymous with an evolving personal brand. See where you’re going before others do and craft your brand accordingly. Create leadership presence and leverage it to your advantage.



Learning from past experiences, successes and mistakes always contributes to your continual reinvention and helps to renew focus at different stages of your path. In the words of George Bernard Shaw, the only person to have won both a Nobel Prize and an Academy Award,

"Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself."

The art of influencing upwards

Beyond using influence to motivate and inspire peers and those under your management, it's as vital for your self-development to influence those up to a few levels ahead of you in your organisation or wider market.

Marketing studies have shown that, when cold-emailing to look for a referral to a decision maker, success rates rise significantly when the request goes to those three or four levels ahead in a company's hierarchy, looking for a referral down.

With that in mind, it's important to know what's important to your top leaders. Take their high-level strategies and deconstruct them into their elements. Is innovation most important? Brand coherence? Cost savings? What challenges are of most concern to them? Once you identify what really matters to your boss's bosses, you can begin to make yourself relevant and present yourself as a provider of solutions to their problems.

Be clear about their expectations of you. Prepare in advance of any interaction, put emphasis on their perspective of things and, when you have the chance to shine, over-deliver.

Tailored information

Choose a style of communication that fits with theirs. At meetings, watch whether they want detailed hard copies or brief overviews. How often or for how long do they structure meetings? What reporting lines have they set up? Are they better listeners or readers? Once you're familiar with how your leaders welcome and absorb information you can tailor yours to fit.

Robert Cialdini, Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Marketing at Arizona State University, is one of the world's leading social scientists in the field of influence. With Steve Martin, Director of Influence at Work (UK), he has done extensive research into how we influence others. "In traditional hierarchical organizations, power is typically based on position. The higher you are on the organization chart, the more power you wield. The person with the power has the influence."

"Today, organisations are moving toward flatter, matrixed and team-based models. The theory is that with change and complexity comes the need to be more nimble, more inclusive of diverse thought, and more collaborative. In this model, power is more about one's ability to influence and get things done outside of traditional reporting lines. In other words, the person with the influence has the power."

In the virtual meeting room, it's harder to influence others than in an in-person environment but not impossible. Influence comes from effective communication which creates a sense of connection and shared goals.

Prepare for virtual meetings as you would for those in-person. Plan what you want to get out of the meeting. Research the people you're meeting with and prepare a couple of opening questions if you're nervous. Arrive early for the meeting and use those few minutes to build the rapport that you would otherwise have done in person.

The six principles of persuasion

Whether you work in a traditional hierarchy or a more team-based one, influence should be ethical, sustainable and effective. Cialdini and Martin have identified six principles of persuasion that apply universally:

1. Reciprocity

When they have received something first, people are significantly more likely to respond favourably to a subsequent request. Marketers know you're more likely to buy from them when they've given you something previously or shared freely.

This may seem manipulative, but it doesn't need to be. Use opportunities to give generously of your time or expertise in ways that are not expected and that come naturally, and, in time, this generosity is bound to be remembered and reciprocated. Give and take is a universal principle that people behave by.

2. Scarcity

The idea of scarcity has always been known to increase desirability. But when potential loss is pointed out instead of potential gain, people are 150% more likely to act. When Concorde announced the winding up of their New York to London route, mostly empty planes suddenly filled to capacity. In an employment situation, emphasise your uniqueness. As well as the gain in having you on the team, subtly infer the loss of your potential absence.

3. Authority

Credible experts have always wielded influence. It turns out, though, the messenger is what is persuasive, more than their messages. When evidence of expertise is offered before a required action, like a patient seeing a doctor's qualification before receiving a prescription, compliance increases.

An audience listens differently when firstly made aware of a speaker's credentials. It's difficult to self-promote expertise. Allowing others to fill this role by introducing your credentials in advance of your presence is easier. This could be a simple one-liner on accomplishment or experience expressed by a colleague before a meeting with those you'd like to influence.

Another element of the authority principle is that when credible authority figures point out their own (minor) drawbacks or admit a small mistake this increases trust and creates a more favourable context

for their authority to be accepted. You can use this to show your confident sense of responsibility and ability to deal with challenges, as well as honesty.

4. Consistency

This principle is more useful in influencing team members or those you manage. It's been proven that when commitments are written, especially by the people accepting such commitments, their delivery on actions is greater.

This could happen naturally at a team meeting where notes are taken. If you subsequently ask a question which mentally brings a team member into the situation where the task would be carried out, it impacts behaviour even more positively, raising the chances of successful delivery.

5. Likeability

In a survey, negotiating parties were told that time is money and that they should get straight down to business and agree on outcomes. 30% of the teams ended in deadlock. When encouraged to socially interact beforehand to exchange information and look for similarities, deadlocked outcomes dropped to 6%. Among the other 94%, both negotiating parties ended up with better financial outcomes.

In another example, M&A negotiation times reduced from around 9 months to around 6 months, saving millions, when CEOs arrived early for meetings and looked for a personal connection. Humanising all your interactions pays off substantially.

6. Social proof

Humans are a collective group in an ecosystem. Behaviour that is studied tends to increase that behaviour. Highlighting favourable action will help to pull others in that direction. So, providing evidence of what large numbers of people are doing that's clearly productive, especially among a relevant group, is persuasive. This can be a useful concept to bring into presentations or proposals when you want to influence higher ranks positively.

How your personal brand can enrich your stakeholder relationships

Your personal brand has a big influence on all your professional relationships. Those with stakeholders matter more than most. Exactly which stakeholders do you need to consider?

It's usually a broad net, including colleagues, the wider community in your organisation, your sector or industry, related sectors, previous colleagues, personal contacts and, especially, leaders both within and outside of your organisation that you could benefit by impressing.

To figure it out, draw your stakeholder map. Consider the impact you need to have versus the influence that they have. Those where you need to have the most impact will be those who have the most influence so will be a priority. If in doubt, there are stakeholder mapping templates available online.

Internal stakeholders first

Internally, influencing the outcome of a project positively always involves building good relationships with your stakeholders. In a 2011 Harvard Business Review article, Jack Springman says research shows that 'CEOs who put stakeholders' interests ahead of profits generate greater workforce engagement, and thus deliver the superior financial results that they have made a secondary goal.'

Genuine consideration of your stakeholders' agendas leads to the best outcome for you.

A great personal brand paves your way to set up good relations and the successful outcome that these connections lead to, will, in turn, strengthen your brand. When you are credible and inspiring, the people you collaborate with will buy into your ideas, are more open to your communication and to co-operate enthusiastically with your proposed actions, delivering the best outcomes and, ultimately, boosting your reputation.

External stakeholders too

For her thesis in the Master's Programme in Corporate Communication, Aalto University School of Business, Helsinki, Johanna Strömsholm studied **Stakeholder perspective to the personal brand in social media**. The study showed that "stakeholder involvement has paramount importance for personal branding."

"Individuals assess the value of other people's brands in terms of the brand authenticity, uniqueness and identification, communication, as well as on the basis of the perceived personal benefits."

Both the quantity and perceived quality of communication around personal brands seemed to have a crucial effect on their perceived value. As manager of your personal brand, this means that the calibre of your profile is determined by:

- The communication you output.
- The interplays this communication leads to.
- The perceived benefits to the reader or receiver.



Outside in

Just as a fire doesn't burn without oxygen, keeping your personal brand alive means feeding it quality material consistently. The above study interestingly identifies an outside-in perspective. The personal brand is not just about your output, but also the input of stakeholders.

It proposes that "the success of personal branding is based on the individuals' ability to deliver value primarily to others and to evoke positive reactions among them. Individuals need to acknowledge that personal branding is an on-going process of interaction, the effectiveness of which requires time and effort - not only in continuous self-development but also in compelling and credible communication."

Creating a leadership identity

Your public persona is especially important in reaching out to those ahead of you in your profession. Use it to show yourself as leadership potential, so they have you in mind when promotions and succession planning are on the table.

Stakeholders will view your personal brand in three ways:

1. Their perceptions of the person behind your brand.
2. Their perceptions of your communication.
3. The personal benefits to them of your personal brand.

Craft your communication so that it is about adding value and not self-promotion. You will promote yourself by default in an appealing way.

Leadership is about being significant, not just successful

Think about your organisation, your industry and the wider market for your individual qualifications and experience. Identify who stands out. Who is important? Which leader is worth impressing? Think about the qualities you see in leaders you admire. What problems do they solve? What about them inspires those they lead? What is it about their style that put them in their position instead of other contenders?

- What examples can you use in your communication to show these or similar qualities?
- What is unique about how you think and problem-solve?
- What kind of solutions have you consistently delivered?
- When have you led a team to a better than expected outcome?
- Do you show your understanding of the issues your whole organisation faces, including outside of your jurisdiction? How all functions in your company work together? Let your conversations with those ahead of you reflect this interest and understanding.

Be visible

Let the evidence of your capabilities be seen and talked about. What opportunities can you take that will allow your personal brand to reach to those you'd like to influence?

- Be visible at meetings and events and add value where you can.
- Volunteer for projects where you know you can show significant qualities
- Put forward innovative ideas.
- Post and share communication that shows and connects you with leadership traits, but only when it is authentic to you.

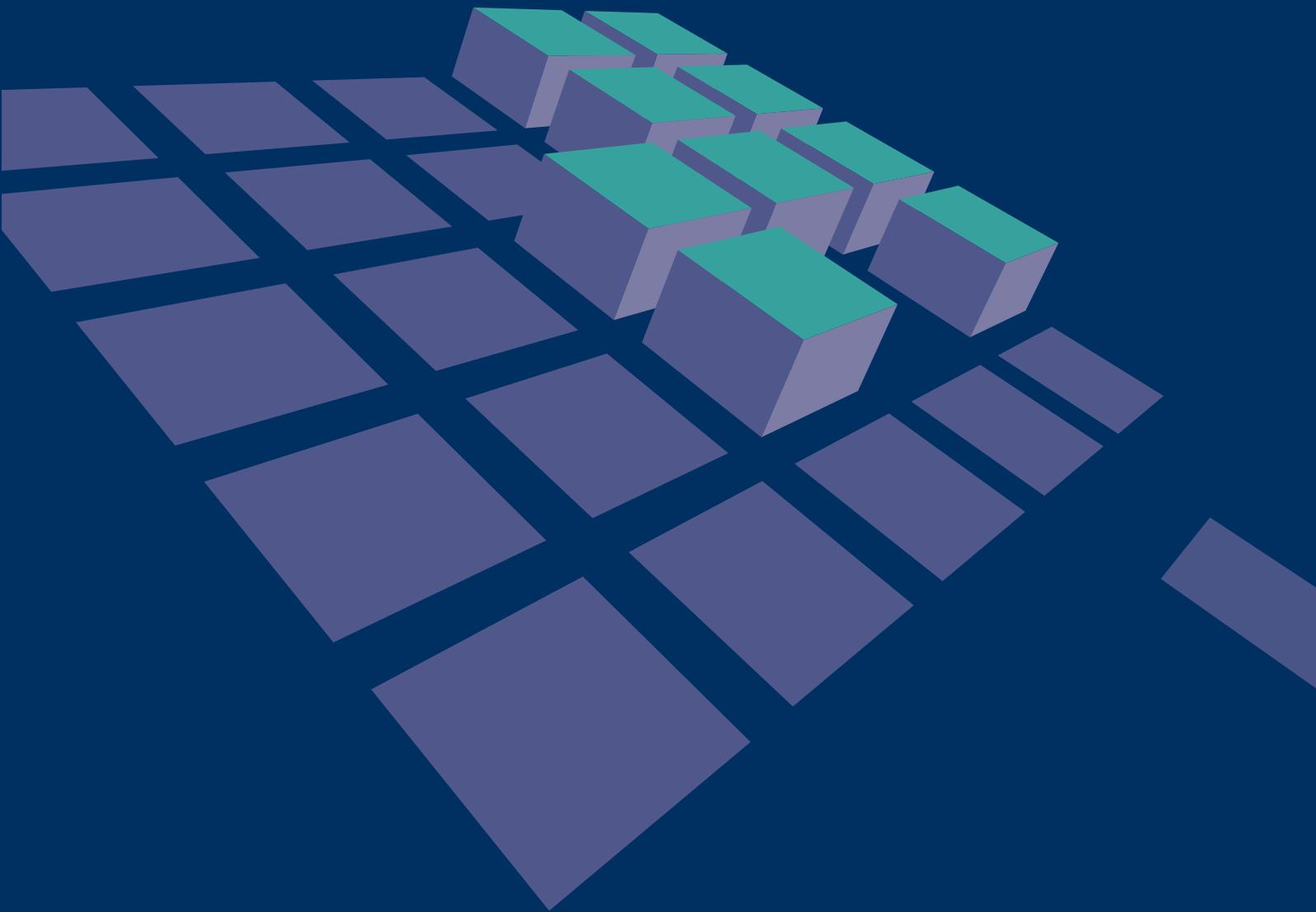
Build your tribe

Finally, build your tribe, so you have as large a support structure as possible in place before you reach a top position.

- Foster authentic relationships with peers, both formal and informal.
- If working remotely, make extra effort to pick up the phone to connect with others informally, just as you might drop by their office to say hi in person
- Use the six principles of persuasion to build influence among those you work and interact with.
- Find mentors and coaches who offer informed, objective perspectives and can give relevant guidance when you need it.
- Cultivate followers to show that you can gather and hold the interest and loyalty of a group.

CAREER STRATEGIES SERIES # 3

Work with an Executive Search Firm: Lay the foundations for your next move, now or later.



ODGERS BERNDTSON

Career Strategies Series # 3 - Work with an Executive Search Firm:
Lay the foundations for your next move, now or later.

Build a long-term relationship with your executive search firm. It will boost your prospects for an upward career move soon or in your future.

A Bureau of Labor Statistics survey found that in the US, people tend to change job an average of every 4.3 years. In the UK, it's roughly every 5 years according to life insurance firm LV=. Even if you're not planning a move right now, it's likely you'll be interested in looking around in the foreseeable future. Don't wait until you're ready to get prepared. You can lay the foundations for your next move now by building a mutually beneficial relationship with an executive search team.

Don't wait for your future to happen. Design it.

If your path is to move outside your current organisation to progress your C-suite career, now or over the next few years, taking time out to plan the right move is critical. The practical and logistical challenges of searching for a new role when you're busy can lead to limited opportunities and reactive choices. Rushed decisions are stressful. A considered, carefully planned approach gives you the time and insight to direct yourself towards the most suitable opportunities.

That's where working with a top executive search firm pays dividends. As with other areas of business, effective use of appropriate resources gives you an eagle's broad, but targeted, perspective.

Stay top of mind for opportunities you don't want to miss

Leading firms like Odgers Berndtson are an invaluable resource. Though many executives see our role as specific to an upcoming change, as our business is client led, not candidate led, we will seldom conjure up an immediate move when contacted by candidates.

Instead, turn to us as you would a coach or mentor, on an ongoing basis. Invest in nurturing a relationship

with our team as your career develops, so we know your potential, your ambitions and your dreams. It puts you in the arena where market knowledge runs in real time and you're top of mind when opportunities drop in.

Share in our market intelligence

Executive search firms differ from recruitment firms or contingent firms. As you advance your career, it pays to know the difference. Executive Search firms operate primarily at senior management, C-Suite and Board level and are retained exclusively by their clients to work on specific mandates. Recruitment firms operate across all levels of an organisation and can be commission led.

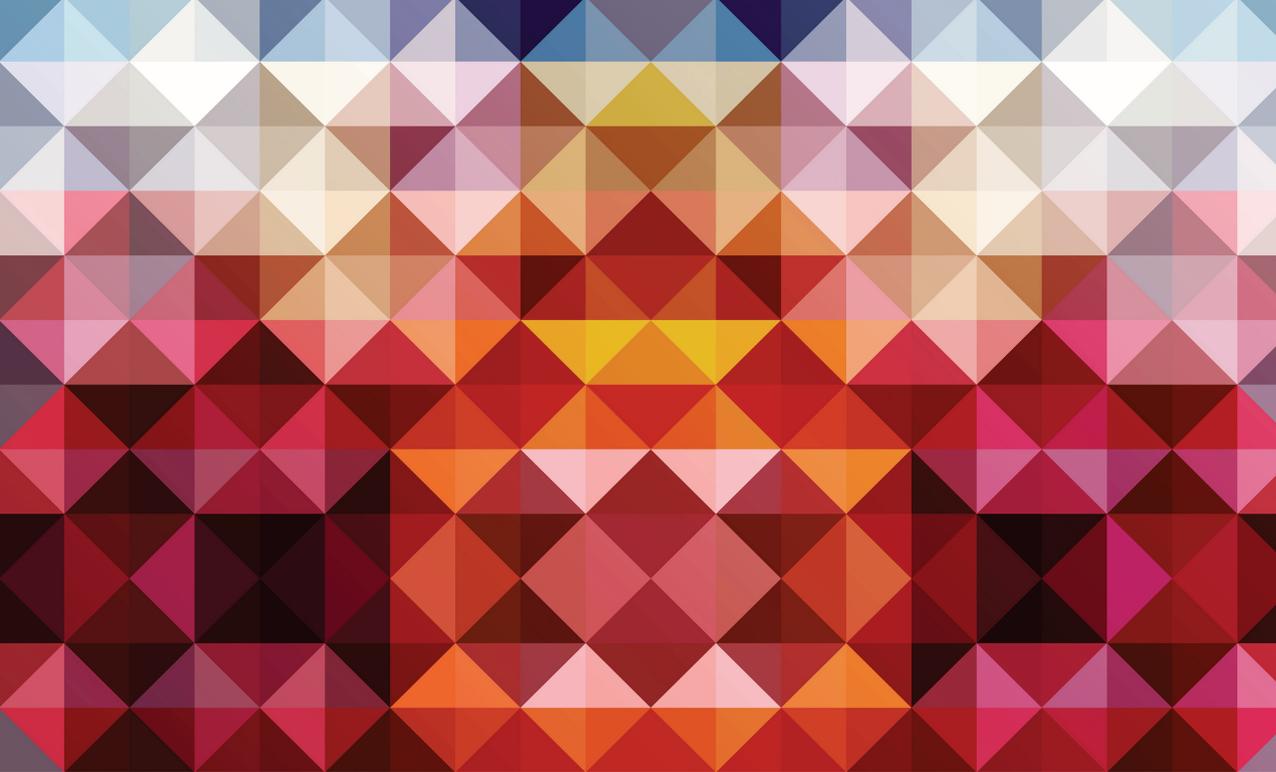
As an Executive Search firm, Odgers Berndtson are client-led; we proactively engage with relevant candidates only when we are retained to fulfil specific mandates.

We offer our clients an objective insight into the market for talent from which they are looking to recruit.

That said, gathering market intelligence is at the heart of our business. We form invaluable views on current talent trends by engaging with candidates who contact us, interested in a move.

We offer those looking for a move an objective insight into the market for talent in which they are competing.

Though we do not offer broad-spectrum career advice, we can help you clarify your thoughts and manage your expectations in the market. To get the most out of your relationship with us, take time to think about how you would like to benefit from our conversations. Prepare questions.



A strong CV is essential

At the heart of our success is our ability to identify high calibre talent at the most senior levels in a variety of sectors. In addition to formally assessing candidates as part of each search, we carefully evaluate your CV.

The more clearly you set out your skills and experience, the better we can assess them.

Take the time to sharpen your CV. Write a short statement summarising your areas of interest—this is hugely helpful. Offer an overview of the scale and complexity of the organisations in which you have worked. Give an indication of your remuneration/salary expectations. Addressing these points ensures we won't waste your time contacting you about roles that are completely out of sync with your interests or expectations. To help, we have some **good CV advice**.

We assure you of absolute confidence with everything you share with us. Stay in touch

We work in partnership with our clients as trusted advisors, often on complex, high-profile or politically-sensitive appointments. You can be assured of our discretion.

We work in partnership with our clients as trusted advisors, often on complex, high-profile or politically-sensitive appointments. Discretion is absolutely vital and we apply to this to every interaction with everyone. You can be assured of our strict confidentiality when we engage with you.

We will always acknowledge safe receipt of your CV. From that point on, if we do not contact you, it's because we are not working on anything that is relevant to either your interests or skillset.

Keep in touch as things change

As your interests and experience change, proactively keep in touch and let us know. Inform us if your interests or experience change. If you don't update us, you may be passing up a golden opportunity.

Our Partners and Consultants are supported by a highly-skilled team of senior, highly experienced Researchers. The primary role of the research team is to identify and track high-calibre talent across all industry sectors and functions. As with Partners, Researchers have key areas of sector and functional expertise.

Making direct contact with a Researcher within your core area of interest is as effective as contacting a Partner or Consultant. Researchers know their sectors inside-out and provide their Partners with invaluable market insights. They also work with multiple Partners on a range of assignments and share their insights with the rest of the team. Consequently, you might well be kept in mind for a broad range of opportunities.

The keys points of contact in our Research Team are:

Ondria Hart, Research Consultant

Helen Thomas, Principal and Head of Candidate Care

Siobhan Walsh, Research Partner

Is international relocation an option?

Our Research team is highly collaborative and works in partnership with relevant offices from our 62 locations across 29 countries to identify potential candidates for senior international roles.

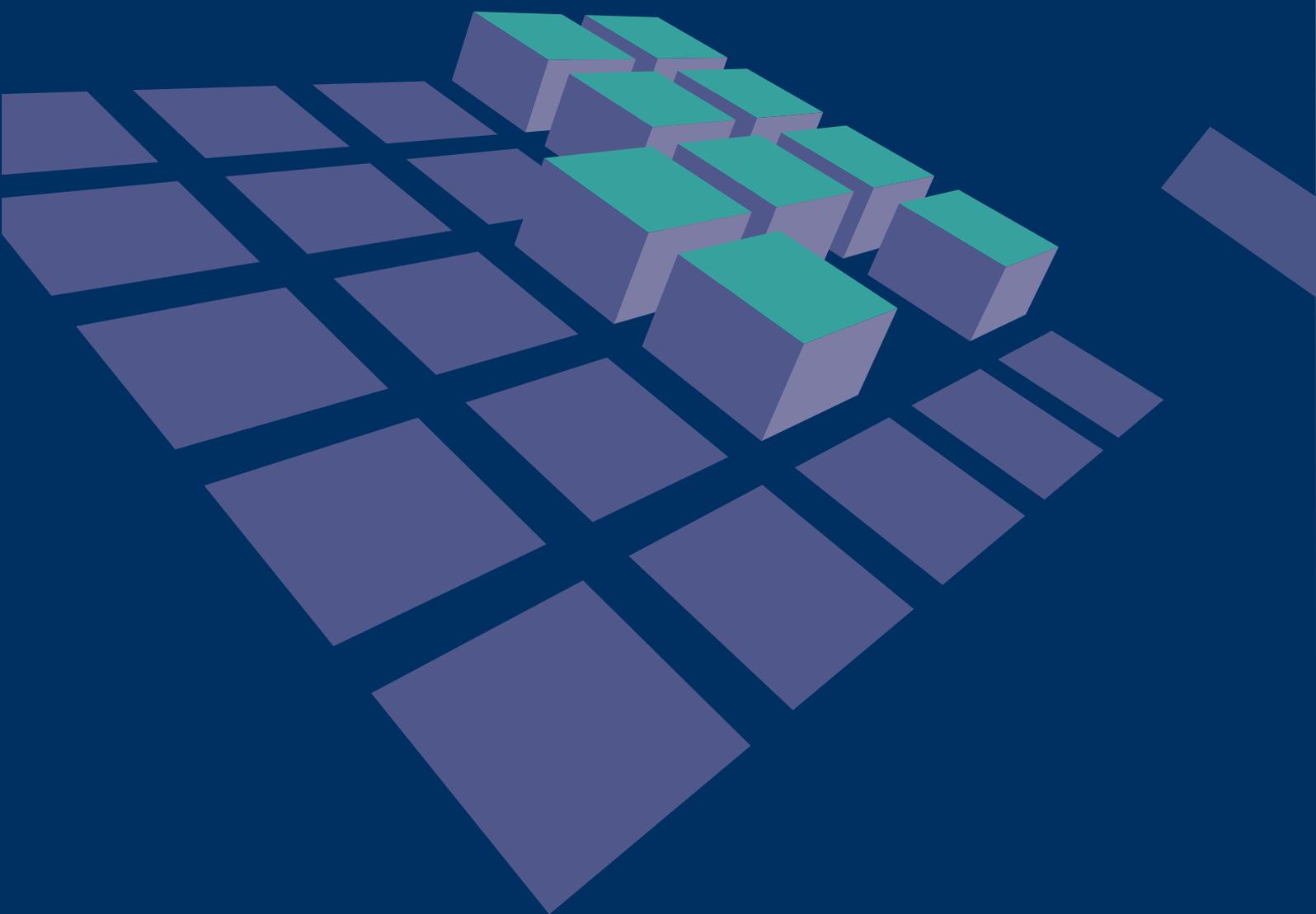
Let us know if you are willing to relocate. If appropriate, we will introduce you to the relevant office, allowing you to pursue opportunities abroad at your leisure.

Taking the steps outlined above will heighten your chances of securing the leadership role you seek. Building a relationship with an expert in executive search puts you in the driving seat. You design your future rather than react to what it brings.

In the next article in this series, we'll be helping you with advice on how to best negotiate your remuneration package. How do you create what you have in mind?

CAREER STRATEGIES SERIES # 4

Make Sure Your CV Adds Value



ODGERS BERNDTSON

A well-written CV makes a strong first impression and demonstrates you're clear about your progression.

A quick Google search for tips on how to write a CV generates over 100 million results. Yet despite all the help and advice out there, every year we see hundreds of CVs that are not up to scratch.

Shortcomings such as glaring omissions, vagueness where detail is called for and misjudgements in tone or language will undermine your chances of landing a C-suite level position. Check your CV is truly fit for purpose before submitting it. In the third of our Career Strategies series of articles, here are the key areas of your CV to address.

Be up-to-date and easily contactable

We store your information and CV on a database to ensure we can find your contact details quickly when we want to talk to you about an interesting role. Therefore, make sure your contact details are clearly displayed on the front page (you'd be surprised how many people don't include their contact details!).

It's surprising how many people provide email and LinkedIn accounts they don't access on a regular basis.

Be sure to check for messages frequently and don't forget to update us as soon as your contact details change.

Position yourself with a summary

Condense your career objectives and/or experience into three bullet points. Use these as a positioning statement at the top of your CV. Your aim is to entice a target employer to read on.

Clarify scope and scale

The scope and scale of your experience to date is of critical importance when assessing your suitability for C-suite roles, as clients often demand that potential candidates have provided leadership in a business of relevant size and scale.

Give a brief description of each company you have worked for, indicating its turnover, employee count, international reach and industry sector.

There are further questions to consider. Have you shown your position in the reporting hierarchy for each position? Do you provide an insight into the size of your team and budget responsibility in each role? Don't forget to highlight what you've achieved, not only what you were responsible for.

Key words

Make sure your CV includes a full range of key words and abbreviations that are associated with your experience and your sector, to ensure that your details come through on any database or AI searches. For example, if you are a Quality Assurance Director, also make reference to QA Director, if a Chief Financial Officer, include CFO etc.

Contribution across the leadership team

Clients don't just want someone who can do the designated job, they are looking for individuals who can contribute across the leadership team. With that in mind, use language in your CV that reflects the breadth of your capabilities.

Don't restrict yourself to words like "led" and "managed". Verbs such as "initiated", "created", "designed", "implemented", "achieved" and "delivered" they offer greater insights into your overall ability to contribute.

Give some serious thought to the requirements of the role you want to fulfil. Have you tailored the experience you highlight to show you have the capabilities necessary to do your next role, not just your current role?



Demonstrate your achievements

Clients are interested in individuals with a demonstrable track record of success, both professionally and personally. Be specific when addressing your achievements.

Quantify your contribution with illuminating figures.

For example, by giving the precise percentage increase or savings achieved, or the actual total figure realised in pounds, dollars or euros. Again, think carefully about the vocabulary you use to frame your successes. Include words like “acquired”, “calculated”, “negotiated” or “represented” if they are relevant and help illustrate the level of your success.

Reflect your personal brand

When we present you as a potential candidate to our clients, we provide them with our own written assessment of your suitability for the position as well as with a copy of your CV.

Are you confident your CV reflects your personal brand?

Consider its layout and presentation. For example, is it clear and concise? Or cluttered and ambiguous? Ideally, you should tailor your CV to the role. Use the job description as a guide for prioritising your experience. You want the client to conclude you’re a strong match.

Getting the interview

Ensuring your CV stands out for its relevance, sharpness and impact puts you in the running for new opportunities. Not only will it go a long way towards getting you noticed, but it should also be helpful during an interview. Time spent reflecting on and articulating your key skills and experience provides a solid foundation which you can build during an interview. It helps you prove the value you’ll bring to a new employer.

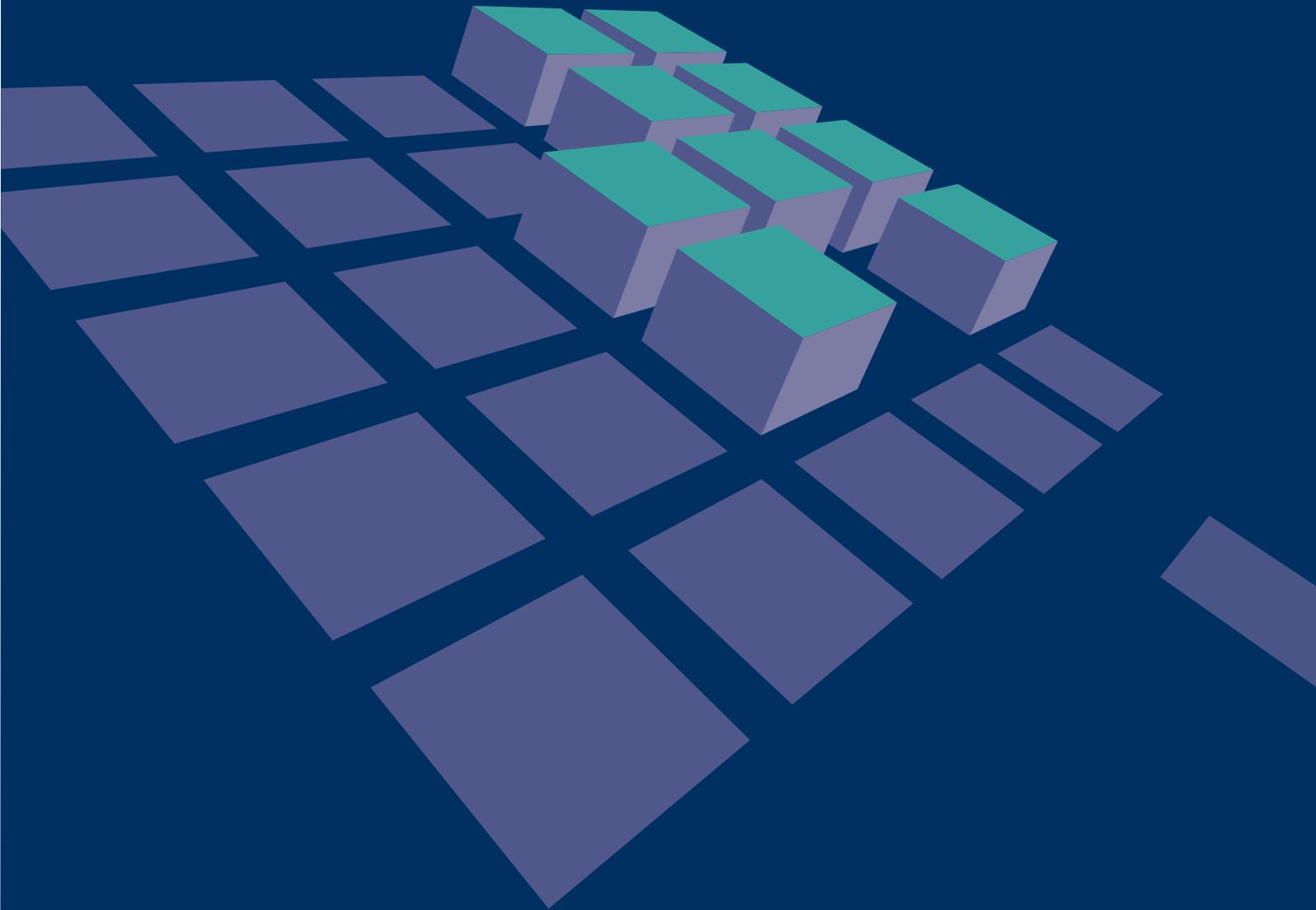
By demonstrating clear aims and a strong background, you’ll place yourself front of mind for the roles you’re targeting.

In the next article in this series, we’ll help you **write a persuasive cover letter** and show how to avoid common mistakes that could rule you out of consideration.

A well-written CV that highlights where **you can add significant value** makes a strong first impression and sets you apart.

CAREER STRATEGIES SERIES # 5

Make Your Cover Letter Count



ODGERS BERNDTSON

A good persuasive cover letter shows you understand the role and have the skills and experience necessary for success.

From an executive search firm's perspective, the decision on your suitability for a role will never be made solely on the content of your cover letter. Providing your CV meets the requirements, we will always talk to you about the role and assess your skills and experience verbally. If we feel you're right for the position, the next step is to present your details to the client.

With this in mind, does a cover letter really matter? The answer is yes. Absolutely.

Useful for all parties

Time spent drafting your cover letter is a useful tool to engage yourself in the application process. It clarifies and sums up your thoughts and quickly lets you know how much you want this particular role, versus any other role you might consider.

A well-constructed cover letter shows you understand the role and have the skills and experience necessary to be successful.

To a client, a good cover letter creates a strong first impression. It shows respect for their process and genuine interest in their organisation. When an executive search firm assesses your application, you inspire confidence by showing you've thought about the role and are committed to making a move.

Standing out from the crowd

Once you have an impactful cover letter, how will it help in your search for a new role? To begin with, it gives you an advantage over others who haven't included one, or whose letter is rushed and unfocused.

Important points to remember

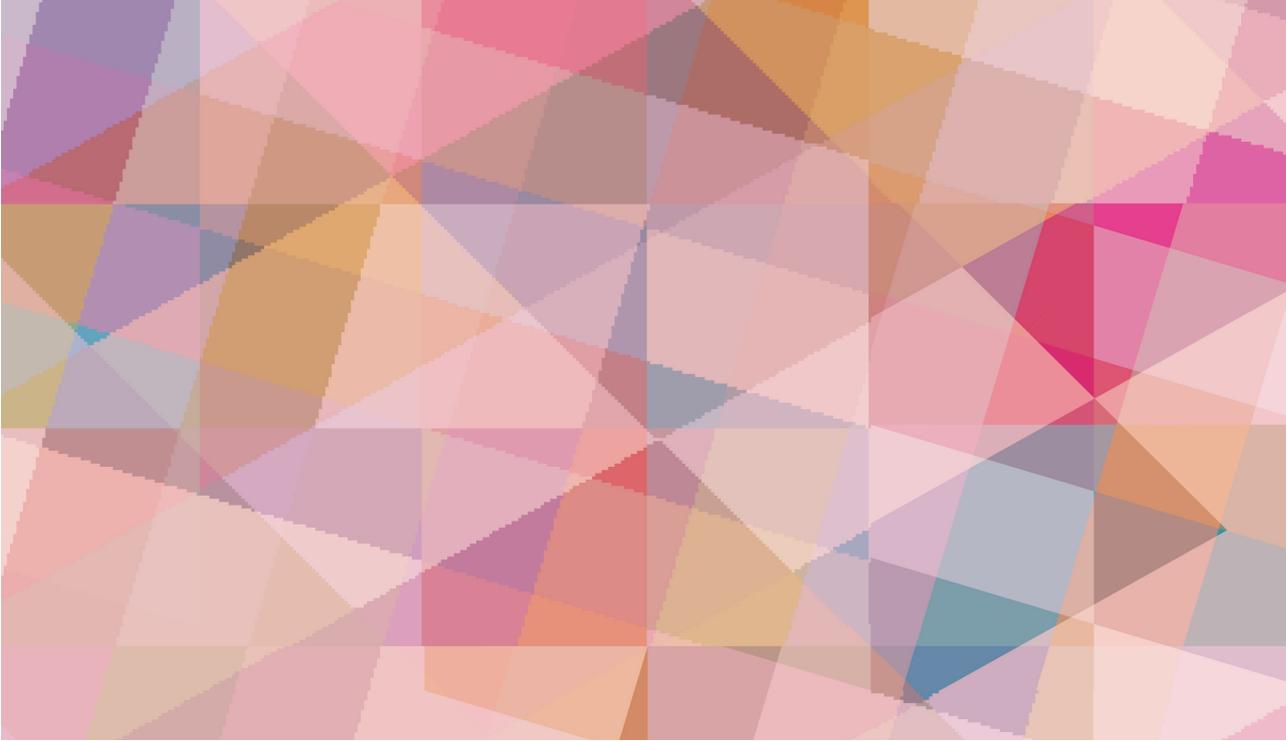
Brevity is the soul of wit. Keep it succinct. One page is enough.

Don't regurgitate your CV in your cover letter. Instead, highlight three key strengths in relation to the role.

Importantly, sending the same cover letter for every role smacks of a lack of rigour. You might think we won't notice, but we will! Adapt your letter to reflect the unique requirements of the role, every time. Address your letter to the person leading the search process. If you don't know who that is, take the trouble to find out. "Dear Sir/Madam" or "To whom it may concern" is outdated and comes across as disengaged. It won't cut much ice with the individual who decides whether or not to progress your application.

Avoid sloppy errors

Proofread before sending. This is a chance to showcase your writing ability and a reflection of your personal brand. It's naive to believe it doesn't matter if you make a small error. They are always noticed. Check and double check every line. Don't let your careful preparation down with misspellings.



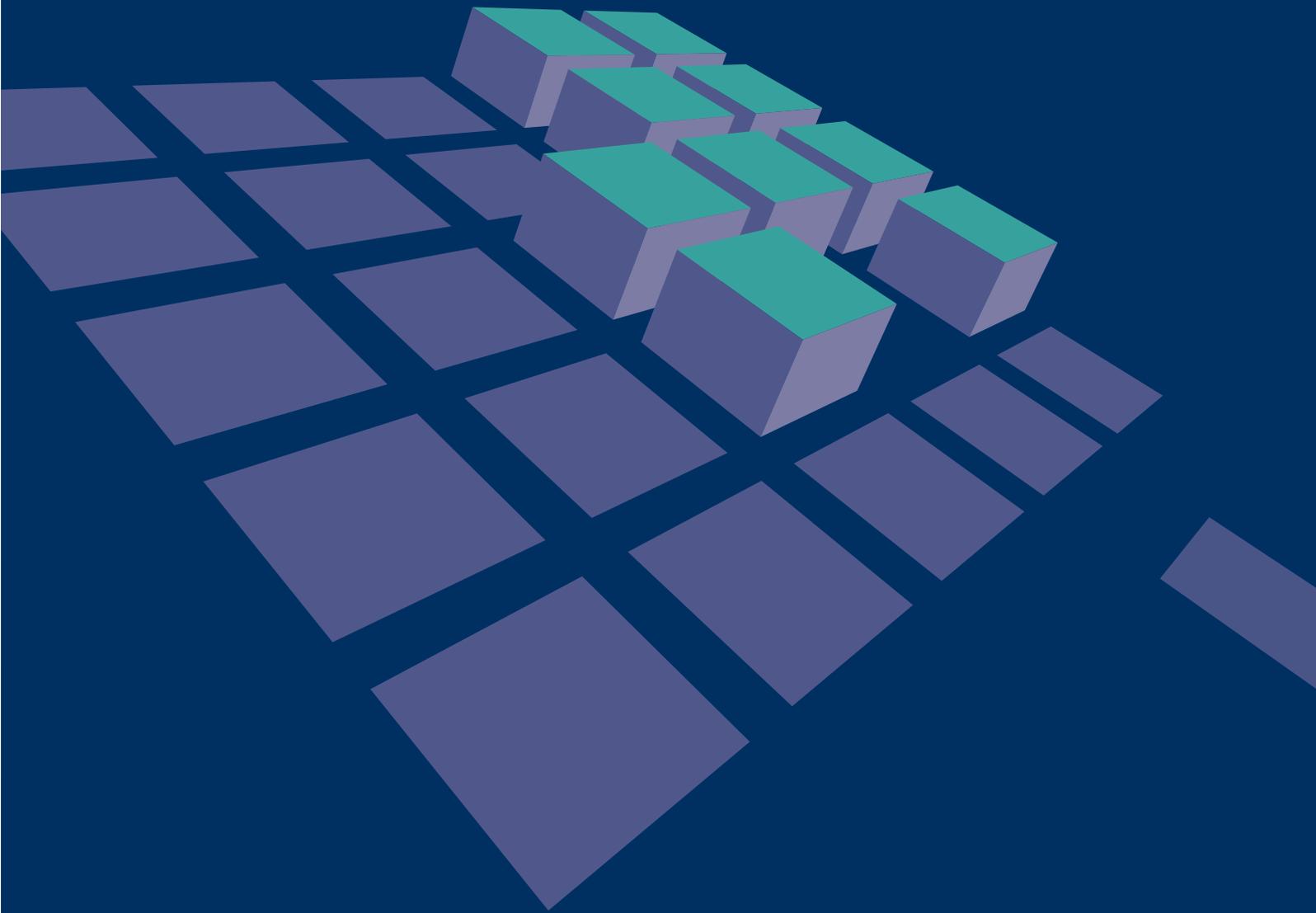
Giving Clarity

Being clear about what you want and what you have to offer allows us and our client to clearly understand your strengths and value proposition. It means when we call you to discuss an opportunity the conversation is more likely to be positive and mutually beneficial. We won't be wasting each other's time.

Take advantage of the opportunities a strong job application cover letter brings. It could be the element that puts you ahead of your competitors.

CAREER STRATEGIES SERIES # 6

Client Interview: Be the one who stands out in person and online



ODGERS BERNDTSON

You've been selected for Client Interview.

Structure your preparation so you're confident, articulate and leave a lasting impression.

The blurred boundaries between working from home and 'living' in the office are forcing many to embrace their digital image onscreen during a multitude of videocalls.

BUT ... how many of us have taken the time to think about how effectively we have managed our personal brand's transition into the virtual office environment?

Give yourself the advantage of encyclopaedic content preparation

You have the experience, the company is the one you want to work for and you really want the job on offer. Next it's time to ace the interview be it in person or online. How best to prepare?

Decide how much time you think you need to give to content preparation. Then double it. It's vital to cover every angle that could be relevant.

- Do your research. Investigate everything about the organisation; not just the facts, figures, history and direction of the company, but its ethos, ambitions, dreams and learning lessons. Who does it want to be?
- Who are you meeting? Know all you can about their motivations and business interests. What's their communication style? Can you learn anything by looking at their network?
- Fully understand the job specification & the driving need. How can you solve that challenge?
- Prepare a precise summary of your career as it specifically relates to this role – your 'elevator pitch'. Rehearse it to within five minutes.
- Think about the core competencies that the role requires and find out about the company's core values. Use the STAR-ER format to prepare examples of your experience and its relevance to the role. Use examples that give a sense of the situation you were in, the task you were assigned, the actions you took and the results you achieved.

Demonstrate that you have evaluated what you did and reflected on what you learned.

- What do you want to leave the panel thinking? How can you persuade the members to see you taking charge of the role you're interviewing for?
- Seek affirmation and feedback.
- Do give depth, but in a focussed, sharp way. Don't wander.

Stick to the brief

Review over and over again the brief for the role. Like watching a film for the third time, there will be little nuances you've missed previously. Fully understand the context, job description and person specification. Carefully think through how these translate into the competencies and behavioural characteristics needed. What will be expected of you?

(We qualify this by knowing that not every successful candidate ticks every box on paper. Your individual set of experiences and personal abilities could be just what this company wants to see. Promote yourself passionately in the best light possible and believe you're right for this role.)

Showcase how your experience can apply to this role

Prepare to recount specific, relevant situations you've managed or that show your strengths as fully as possible. Showcase how you successfully addressed problems or performed above expectations. Include failed initiatives or setbacks that show resilience, adapted thinking and an ability to respond to change or challenge with agility.

Your interviewer or panel will want to assess how you'll behave when faced with the various challenges you'll deal with in your new position. In a short time they want to test run the kind of critical responsibilities and decisions involved in the role you want to be trusted with. Their questions are designed to explore your abilities to do so.

They are likely to explore your past experience in developing strategies, building a high performance team, influencing stakeholders and achieving targets. Describe any of your achievements or developed skills that can you can translate into specific assets in reaching the goals your employers have. Keep your examples relevant to this role and company.



Use real-life, convincing examples

When you know or sense your panel's interest, give more detail on how you approached certain tasks or experiences, outlining the context, challenges and outcomes. **Real business experiences are worth a hundred hypothetical examples.**

Along with interest in your successes, you may be asked also about failures and mistakes. Having reached an insightful understanding of the behaviours or circumstances that led to these and the subsequent learning will show openness, strength and a commitment to ongoing development. Expect questions exploring these situations.

Some typical questions:

'Talk us through how you have contributed to shaping future corporate strategy.'

'Tell us how you have built talent and raised engagement within your area of responsibility.'

'Can you give us an example that would illustrate how you got buy-in to your proposals where there were opposing views.'

'Tell us about the business plan you sponsored that failed to deliver what was required.'

Make it easy for the interviewer(s) to gather evidence on your strengths and abilities. Structure your examples in logical, step by step points. E.g., task or objective, challenges, actions, pivoting if relevant and outcome/results.

Online Interviews – the new normal?

Put yourself at ease with good technical preparation

Online meetings are now part of corporate culture. Technical proficiency with applications and equipment for remote communication has become the norm. Don't let this be where you let yourself down. Master the technology, be prepared for all eventualities and think through what to expect during your interview ahead of time. Prepare your environment to be interruption free. Do some practice runs with us or a friend.

- Ensure you have enough battery power so your laptop lasts the duration of the interview.
- Have your correct name on your Zoom/ Teams screen.
- Use a Zoom/Teams view that allows you to see the whole panel. Read the room, i.e., pick up on visual clues that may indicate you're talking too much or haven't engaged a particular panel member. This takes more astute tuning in than when in the same room.
- Camera level is paramount – having it centre screen at eye level is key to ensuring an engaged conversation. Use a riser/stand/books to raise up your laptop. It helps to move the on-screen tile/ video image of the interviewer (Zoom only) so that it is close to your camera. It may be worth investing in a separate camera. There are relatively inexpensive choices and it adds to the professionalism of your presentation.

- Your home office space is your studio. Think about your environment, lighting and background. Position yourself so light is facing towards you. Alternatively, ring lights are great.
- Remove all distractions, including people/alerts/mobile phones, pets etc. Try to ensure no-one is due to call to your door.
- Ask other household members not to use the internet for the duration of your interview.
- Dress as if you were meeting in person.

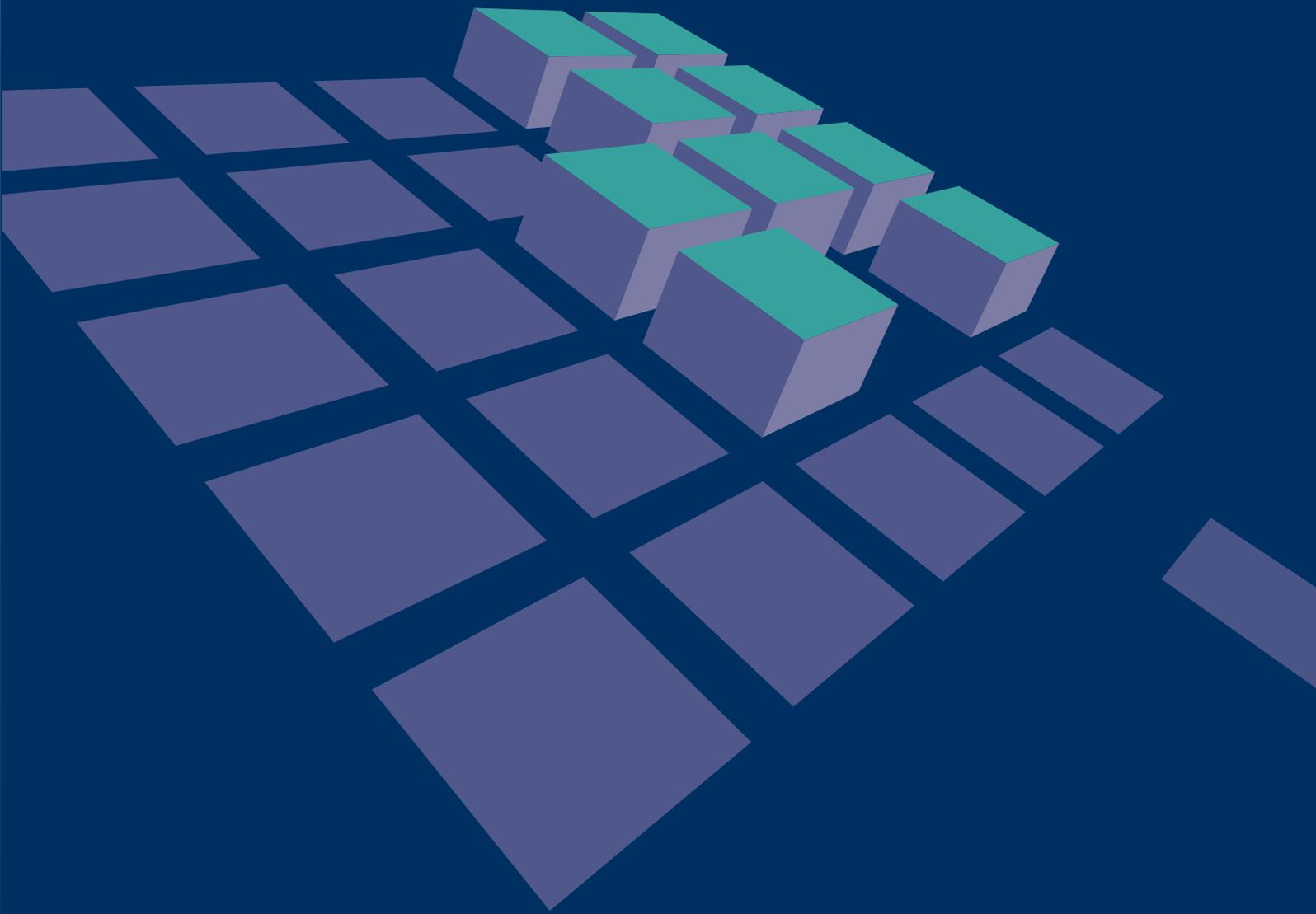
It's showtime – online!

It's interview day and your interview is online. In addition to all of the advice above, and while you may be well used to online meetings, online interviews can be completely different. After 18 months of managing online interview processes and advising clients and candidates on best practice, here are our top tips:

- 'Commute' to your interview. Leave your desk and go for a walk beforehand, even if it's around the block. This psychological trick really works to help you 'show up' as you might for an in-person interview.
- Take time to settle into your chosen location for the interview.
- Build rapport – focus on the introductions, refer to the interviewers by name. Names should be on the screen.
- Remember to practice good eye-contact and about the position of the camera.
- Project energy and enthusiasm – you want this job!
- Listen, speak slowly and take care to avoid excessive or distracting movement but at the same time, command the "Zoom" – don't be afraid of that. Does standing help?
- Maintain a good posture and nod and smile as appropriate to the conversation; it will give a sense of engagement.
- Use notes as you might if you were physically present at an interview. You will look distracted if you repeatedly look away, so prepare well and refer to them minimally.
- Can you give the panel a sense of what they would read from you if they were in the same room?
- Focus well. Give sharp, detailed answers. Keep on point. Don't wander. And stay human.

CAREER STRATEGIES SERIES # 7

Techniques to Ace a Competency-Based Interview



ODGERS BERNDTSON

Let's drill down to the nitty gritty of presenting yourself in the best possible light during competency-based interview.

What is the purpose of a competency-based interview?

- Behavioural or competency-based interviews allow interviewers to see how you would demonstrate specific behaviours/skills in their workplace. They allow interviewers to see how you have used your skills and experience previously and to get an idea of how you approach challenges or tasks in situ.

What value does a competency-based interview add for the employer?

- Competency based interviews offer insights into your preferred style of working and give a sense of how you would deal with situations in the future.
- By asking candidates the same questions, it levels the playing field for candidates so no unfair advantage is given to one candidate over another.

How can you use the competency-based interview approach to your advantage?

- This is your opportunity to provide evidence of your own skill and/or experience as it relates to the role.
- With a well thought out example, you can demonstrate:
 - the positive approach you took to resolving an issue
 - the steps you took to consider the wider needs of the situation and the other people/projects that might be impacted
 - how you understand your own limitations and recognise the point at which compromise is needed; and
 - that you will look for help when appropriate, ensure that problems do not escalate into stressful situations, and learn from each experience.

What are the core competencies associated with leadership?

- There are a multitude of competencies that can be associated with effective leadership.
- Reading the role profile and gaining an insight into the nature of the role will give you an insight into the competencies which are of most importance to this employer.
- Employers may also share their competency framework as part of their interview communication confirmation.
- From our experience, clients are always interested in the following competency areas:
 - Leadership and Influencing
 - Strategic Planning
 - Delivery of Results
 - Resource Management
 - Change Management
 - Stakeholder Engagement (internal and external)

Make sure you know the difference between giving an example of your leadership experience versus your ability to manage a team. This is a common error and one that can easily be avoided.

What does good preparation look like?

- Put aside time to prepare solid examples of your experience across the different competency areas. **At senior leadership level, it is expected that you will have a number of different examples to share with the panel.**
- Put the work in. Prepare in the same way you would if your company's future was on the line.
- Think about what it would mean to be in the role you're going for. What role will this job play in delivering against the company's strategic objectives? What skills and experience will you need to draw from to be successful when appointed?



How can you put structure into your responses?

- To help deliver a succinct and impactful response, build your examples around the STAR-ER framework:
- Firstly:
 - **Situation** – begin by giving a brief overview of the context of your example.
 - **Task** – describe the challenge/task you were faced with.
 - **Action** – explain what action you took, and how and why you took that approach.
 - **Results** – what was the measurable outcome? What did you accomplish?

Secondly, companies are increasingly interested in:

- **Evaluation** – having had time to evaluate your approach, what could you have done differently? How would the outcome have differed?
- **Reflect** – having reflected on the experience, what have you learned from it? What would you do differently in the future?

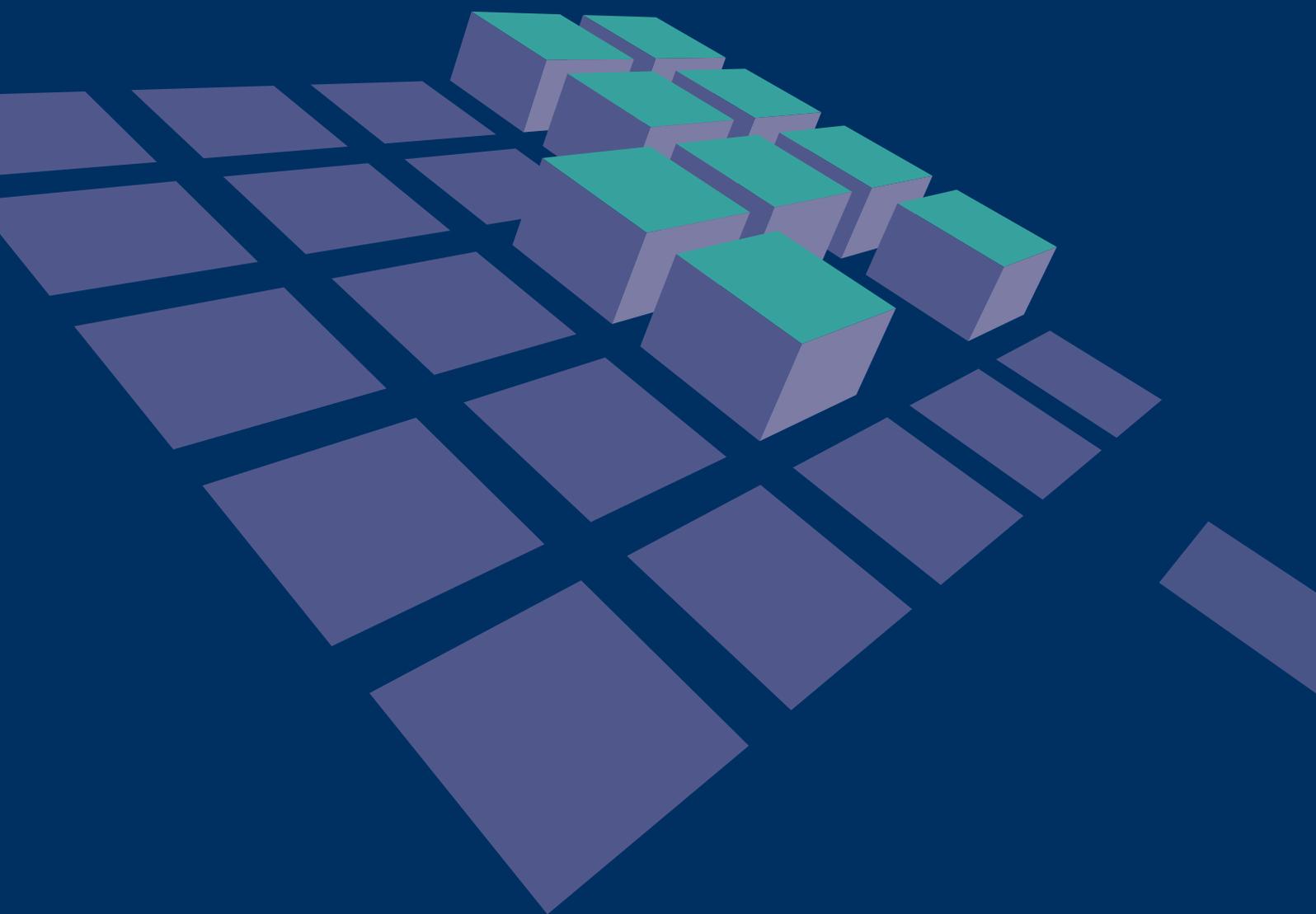
Top Tips Summary

- Prepare and plan your examples but **do not learn by rote**. You need to be able to communicate your experience authentically, demonstrating you have the interpersonal skills necessary to engage effectively at leadership level.
- Have a few different examples up your sleeve to demonstrate the breadth of your experience and its relevance to different situations

- Listen to the question. **Answer the question asked** NOT the question you'd like to have been asked.
- **If you did it, say you did it** – don't let your role/actions get lost in translation by describing it in terms of "what we did". Use "I" not "we" to describe your experience.
 - **If you didn't do it, don't take credit for it**. Find a different example.
- If you don't have an example of the experience the interviewer is looking for, say so and then walk them through how you would handle it if put into that situation.

CAREER STRATEGIES SERIES # 8

Psychometric Assessments



ODGERS BERNDTSON

You've been asked to complete a psychometric assessment as part of the final stages of an interview process. Online psychometric questionnaires help to generate a profile of you as an individual.

They offer an extra lens through which to view a person and play a part in forming a more complete picture.

Here are a few insights into the process and some tips on how to do your best when completing them:

Two categories

Questionnaires tend to fall into two categories - either personality/leadership profiling tests or aptitude/ability tests. In some instances, you will be completing a combination of these.

Some questionnaires are available on the general market, while others, like our proprietary LeaderFit™ suite, are bespoke and exclusive to an organisation. Although the tips below are designed to help you familiarise yourself with the process and principles, they are not exhaustive and do not guarantee the outputs or outcomes.

Profiling your personality

Personality or leadership profiles provide insight into your personality traits, preferences, motives or drivers, or blind spots. They often identify where individuals can add the most value and where there may be risks to be considered.

Bear in mind the following points when completing such questionnaires:

1. Question formats vary, but typically you will be asked to respond in two different ways. Either you'll be asked the extent to which you agree with a statement, or to rank statements in order of how much you agree, given how you operate.
2. These are not 'tests', and there are no right or wrong answers. Rather, the profiles generated provide insight into how an individual will approach a role. They do not make assumptions about whether they will succeed.
3. Always make sure you read each statement carefully and respond honestly.

4. Be aware that there are various checks built into questionnaires. These are to prevent cheating and manipulation and validate responses by measuring, for example, their consistency.
5. While most personality profile tests are not timed, it is important you find a quiet space to avoid distractions and interruptions so you can do your very best. If you have any special requirements to complete the questionnaire, tell the organisation or recruitment consultant upfront.

Measuring your aptitude

Cognitive aptitude or ability tests are considered strong predictors of performance in professional roles. The most common of these are the verbal, numerical, and abstract reasoning. These are timed tests where you will be responding to a series of multiple-choice questions.

Here's what to consider when preparing for aptitude or ability tests:

1. Practice. Practice. The most effective approach is to familiarise yourself with the types of questions. While this will not enable someone with limited reasoning skills to outperform others, it will help you to optimise your performance.
2. There are many online resources to practice aptitude tests. If you are undertaking a test with Odgers Berndtson, we will always provide you with practice tests in advance of an aptitude assessment.
3. Practice tests are designed to familiarise you with the format but are not necessarily an accurate indication of the difficulty level of the test you will eventually sit.

Here are some examples:

<https://www.savilleassessment.com/PracticeTests>

<https://www.practiceaptitudetests.com/>

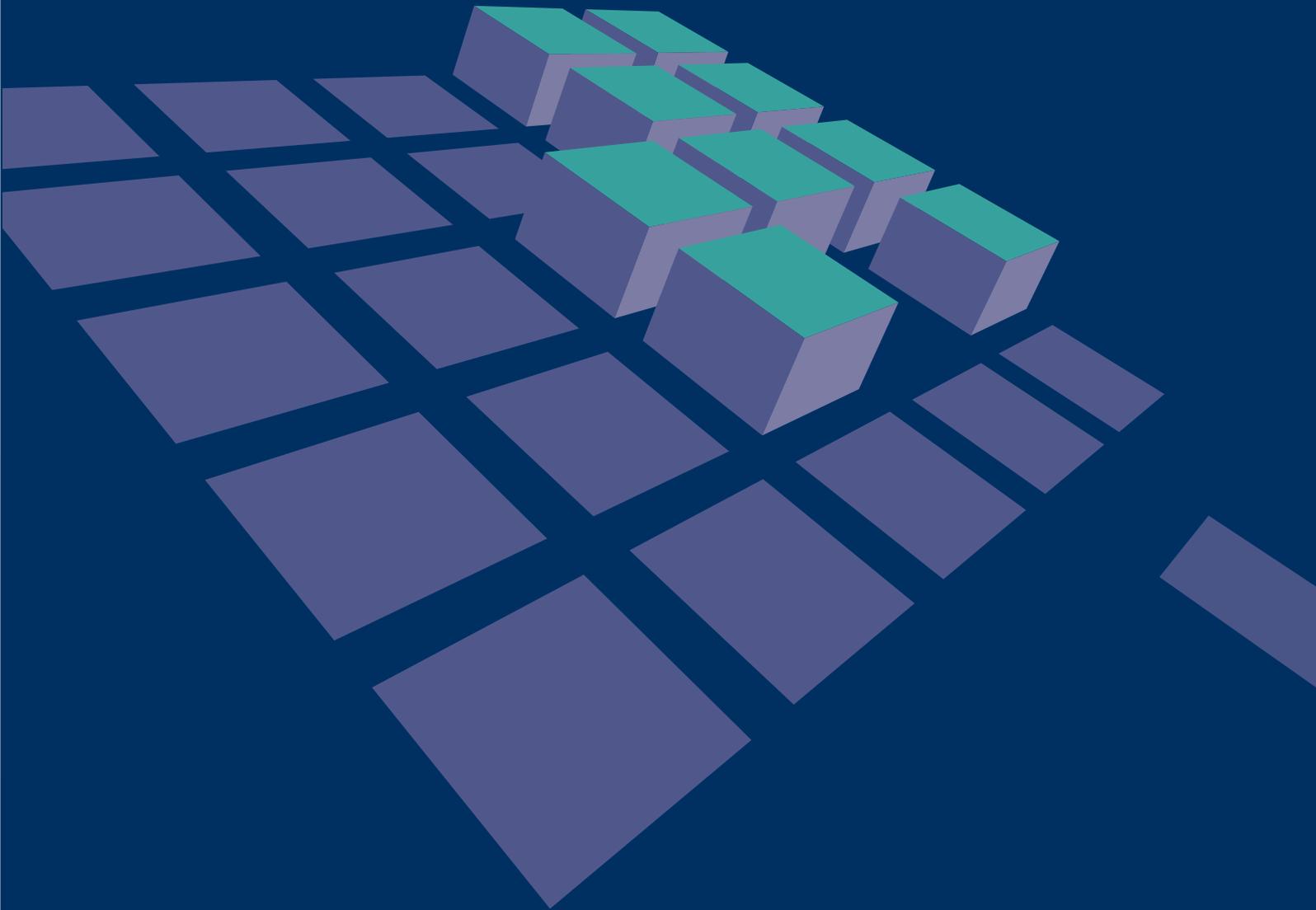


4. Finally, it might seem obvious, but always make sure you read the questions thoroughly for maximum understanding. It is best to move steadily and systematically through the questions. As time is limited, rather than getting stuck on a question, move on, so you complete the test.

At Odgers Berndtson, our commitment to Candidate Care means that we would be delighted to supply you with a copy of your psychometric profile if required. We also offer short feedback sessions with our in-house Assessment and Development Consultant to guide you through your profile and explain it in more detail.

CAREER STRATEGIES SERIES # 9

The Offer: How to negotiate your package and your resignation



ODGERS BERNDTSON

You've been offered the role you've been working towards for months. Congratulations! But what happens next?

We advise candidates to consider the initial offer for 24 to 48 hours before responding.

How to respond if the proposed package falls below your expectations.

Everything has gone wonderfully well so far. You've been through the interview process, you're keen to take on the role and your offer arrives. But there's one major sticking point. The remuneration package on offer isn't what you were expecting. What do you do?

From the beginning of the process, listen to your Executive Search Firm on salary range and package – it's unlikely to change significantly from what they advise.

Self-worth and realism

First of all, know your worth. Be clear about what value you will bring to the role. Temper this with clear-headed realism. What salary range was indicated during the interview process? Were you given any insights into the package? For instance, is the salary determined by a flexible or inflexible pay scale?

Answering these questions will give you an indication on how much room there may be to negotiate. If you learned at the outset the salary is fixed, negotiating for a significant uplift at offer stage will not be well received.

Write a list of components.

Weigh up what really matters to you in your current remuneration. Is the role more important than the package? Does the package hold particular importance for you? List its components, including: salary, bonus, car allowance, pension, holiday entitlement, tax-free vouchers, stock options, health insurance, gym membership, parking, subsidised canteen, death in service benefit. Which of these are your 'deal breakers'?

Pinpoint the minimum salary you need to achieve.

What additional costs will you incur in taking up the new role? Will it involve a longer commute or longer

hours? Can you move for the same salary, but a higher bonus and stock options, for example? Weighing up all relevant factors will help you to get clearer about what you really want.

Using the list of current salary components as your base, consider the uplift you're looking for across each area. Make use of the Income Tax Calculators available online. As a guideline, a 5% uplift in your current salary is tight, 10% is good, 15% is very good. Any more is extraordinary.

However, be sure to factor in a longer-term view. Think about why you want the role. Consider the career progression benefits. Is this a once-in-a-blue-moon, or possibly even once-in-a-lifetime, opportunity? Does your long term plan influence your expectations?

Consult with your Search Consultant

Have an open conversation with the Executive Search Consultant handling your appointment. If you feel the salary level on offer is too low, explain where you feel it should be pitched, set out your reasons why and outline your expectations. You'll be in a stronger position to make your case if you've done your own research into market salary levels.

Manage your expectations bearing in mind your Consultant's response. This all hinges on what you're happy to accept. Articulate which components of the offer are deal breakers if not increased. Finally, trust your Consultant to act on your behalf to negotiate a better offer. It is in everyone's best interests to conclude the deal quickly and efficiently.

Once a 'best and final' offer is on the table, either accept it or reject it. Do not prolong the process. Remember, your reputation is at stake.



Your resignation and exit

You've accepted your new role, the package has been confirmed and you've signed contracts.

Your next step is to resign from your current role.

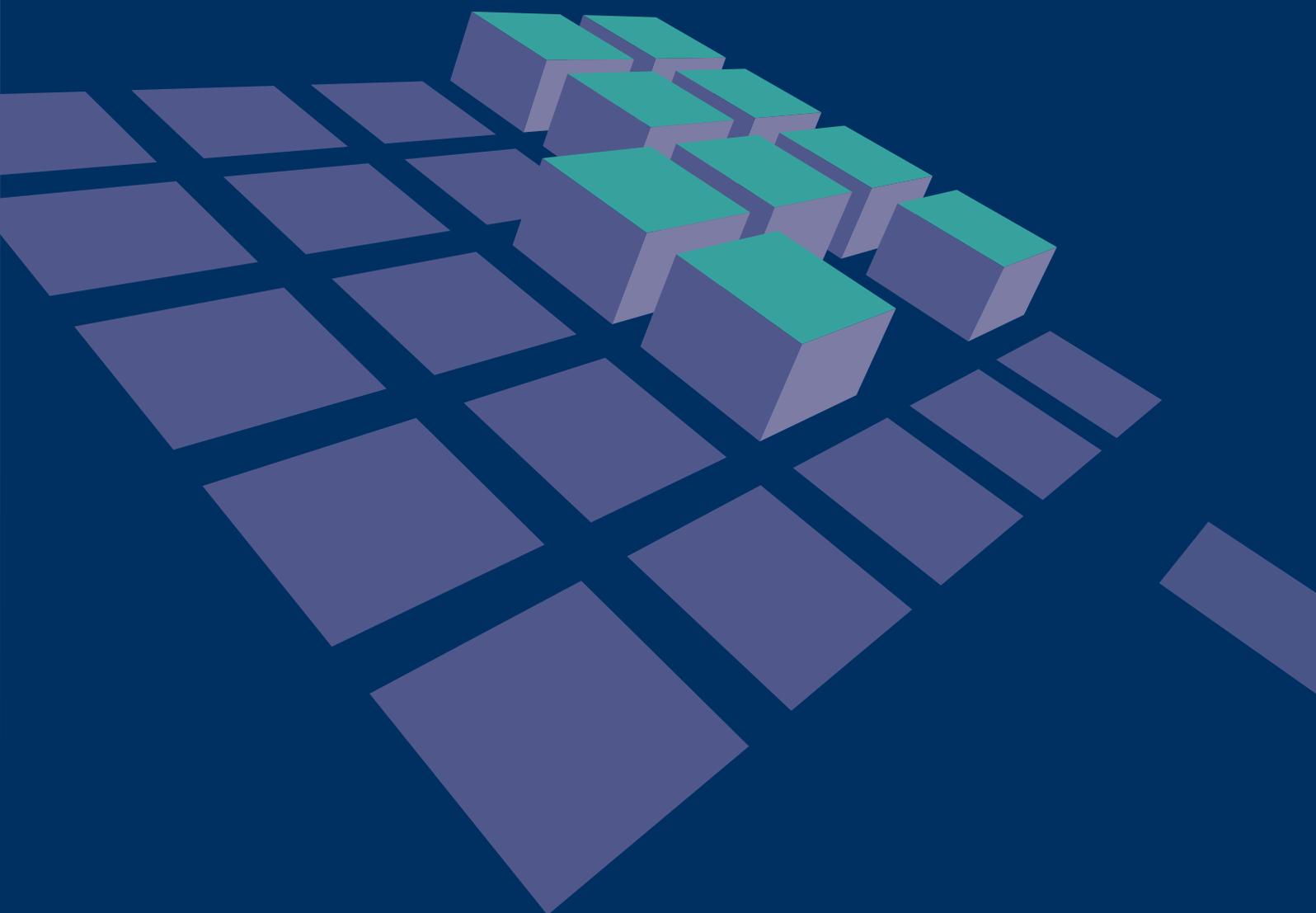
Though many people neglect to give adequate thought to announcing their departure, a well planned and executed resignation can bring benefits to both you and your current employer.

Here are some considerations:

1. Ensure all the details around your new role are confirmed and finalised. Your package, contract and start date should all be in place before you resign to ensure there are no unexpected gaps in employment.
2. Write a resignation letter that formally sets out the specific date of your last working day and consider expressing how much you've enjoyed working for your current organisation.
3. Ensure your direct line manager (who you report to) is the first person you tell in the business and is the person you give your formal resignation letter to. Remember the most important thing is to leave on good terms with your reputation intact. You may well work for your current line manager again in the future and they will most likely be a referee.
4. Begin to formulate a plan to transition your responsibilities. Do you have someone in mind to recommend to replace you, even temporarily?

CAREER STRATEGIES SERIES # 10

New Job, New Start



ODGERS BERNDTSON

You've accepted your new role. How can you make an immediate impact?

Congratulations, you've been chosen above all other applicants and can be fully justified in feeling proud. A demanding role awaits and you need to be well-prepared to thrive from the very start.

It's vital to get off on the right foot and make a positive impact from the outset – especially during remote working and managing. There's plenty you'll need to think about as you make your transition into a new organisation.

How to get off to a flying start and onboard remotely

You're likely to be starting your new role with some element of remote working. It's a new world we've been adjusting to. We interviewed three people who were recently appointed to senior roles. A common thread among them was the commitment to having one-to-one remote meetings with everyone on their wider teams. Here's their advice on remote onboarding:

Phil:

"I've found pushing on open doors a good strategy. I look for 'honorary' team members who are inquisitive and have a passion for my channel among either top or emerging talent and build this focus into their professional development plans. It becomes part of their role.

I work on building a plan that's easy to articulate and has buy-in from the top. When it's talked about credibly, word spreads and interest and momentum build. I came from a team of almost 50. I know it's the people on the ground who make things work, not leaders!

One of first things I did was identify anyone who has anything to do with my area. I connected through half day sessions so they could get to know me, shared initial plans, heard from other markets and introduced rhythm + routine. This spreads connection with key people in business. I overinvest in meetings, but it pays."

Suzanne:

"I was deliberate about taking the extra five minutes wherever I could to have a chat. I made a big effort to be open, to converse. There are no chats in the kitchen or canteen so you need to be proactive. I asked for help, checked with colleagues: What's the dynamic here? Is there history on this project I should know about? People know stuff, the legacy. You have to ask.

Coming into a senior role doesn't mean you have a monopoly on wisdom. You don't know anyone here which means you need to ask for guidance and help. And I've found people have been hugely helpful and supportive. I'm definitely looking forward to being back in the office though. Five minutes while getting a cup of tea can be worth 20 emails!"

Brian:

"In the first ten days I did 40 1-hour zoom calls with people all over the organisation. At all levels, all functions. One-to-one calls. I made a conscious decision that I wanted to connect with people immediately. It made a big statement to people that it was top of my agenda to get to know them and their views. This gave me invaluable insight into business and our people, a real plus. Even though they were at home, they could see I was on site and I showed my commitment to connect as genuinely as I possibly could."

Insights from your interview

En route to being offered your role, you probably went through a stringent interview process and may well have completed a range of psychometric tests. If you were appointed through an executive search firm, arrange to meet with the Partner involved in your appointment.

He or she will have a keen insight into how you performed during interview(s), notably, the areas in which you most strongly impressed the panel, and conversely, any areas where the panel felt they may have compromised.

The search firm Partner should also be able to provide you with in-depth feedback from your psychometric tests. Utilise this valuable information when formulating your own personal development plan.



Set your own objectives

Alongside the official targets set by your new employer, take some time to set out your own objectives within the role. When drawing these up, factor in your motivations for this move and what future opportunities your new role presents.

Consider also how you want to be perceived within the organisation and how to set about conveying that. What is the best way to get to know the team and wider organisation in detail? Are remote or in person one-to-one meetings enough? Should you schedule follow up meetings with key people? Do you need to arrange site visits?

Clarity regarding your Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is essential. Make sure you agree upfront what in particular is expected from your appointment. Your targets should be clearly defined and measurable. Moreover, there should be no ambiguity with respect to the timeframe or time commitment involved for delivery.

Key people to know

Identify the key stakeholders within the organisation. Take the trouble to understand their backgrounds, the manner in which their role interlinks with yours and how you might build constructive relationships with these influential people.

Also, spend time getting to know the team you're leading/joining. What are their strengths? In what areas do they need further support? What changes would you like to make? Are you confident about tackling this on your own? Or could you benefit from external leadership consulting advice or personal coaching? It's an area where we can certainly help and offer advice.

Tune in

Your arrival in the role is a fresh beginning – a clean slate both for you and your team. Use meetings as an opportunity for mindful listening. Hear what is being said and listen carefully for the nuances. Then think about what you've heard and how it impacts your ability to deliver. Delay any action until you've thought through the consequences.

As leadership author Tony Robbins puts it, "Stay committed to your decisions but stay flexible in your approach."

We wish you the best of luck in your new role, but in the words of a top golfer "The more I practice, the luckier I get." Furthering the accolades that got you to this point will bring you to your next pinnacle.

Odgers Berndtson Ireland Candidate Care Team



Helen Thomas
Principal and Head of
Candidate Care

Helen works to identify high calibre individuals for C Suite, Board Level executives and their direct reports across the Private and Public sectors. Helen has particular expertise in senior appointments within Technology, Retail, and Consumer spaces as well as the appointments of Commercial Directors.

As Head of Candidate Care, she is passionate about the experience each candidate receives from Odgers Berndtson; whether someone is approached about a specific opportunity, or they contact Odgers Berndtson to share their background and career ambitions, Helen works to ensure that each candidate has a positive and constructive experience.



Mark O'Donnell
Managing Partner

Mark is Managing Partner of Odgers Berndtson Ireland. He specialises in high-level executive searches and appointments of senior management appointments from Head of Function to Board level across a range of industries and functions. He is particularly focused on assisting clients in the Consumer, Financial Services, Technology, Arts and Sports sectors. He is considered a leading consultant in the recruitment of all C suite positions in particular CEO, CFO, HRD, Marketing and Commercial Directors. Additionally, Mark leads our assessment practice where he is passionate about assisting clients to assess and develop their talent.



Ruth Anne Kilduff
Marketing Executive

Ruth manages all marketing initiatives Odgers Berndtson Ireland, continually innovating with new digital marketing campaigns. Through social media management, analytics and online mediums she creates an interactive space for clients and candidates and looks for novel opportunities to strengthen these relationships.



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