



# FOLLOW THESE FIVE STEPS TO EARN AN EXECUTIVE-LEVEL INTERVIEW

By Gina Riley



Are you facing or contemplating a career transition?

Oftentimes, the first thought you might have as a jobseeker is to dust off and update your resume or dive into job boards.

If you have not had to actively seek out a job opportunity for a long time, this is a completely normal, knee-jerk reaction. Why? Because most of us haven't been shown, taught, or exposed to modern job search strategies nor incorporated them into our long-term professional development plan.

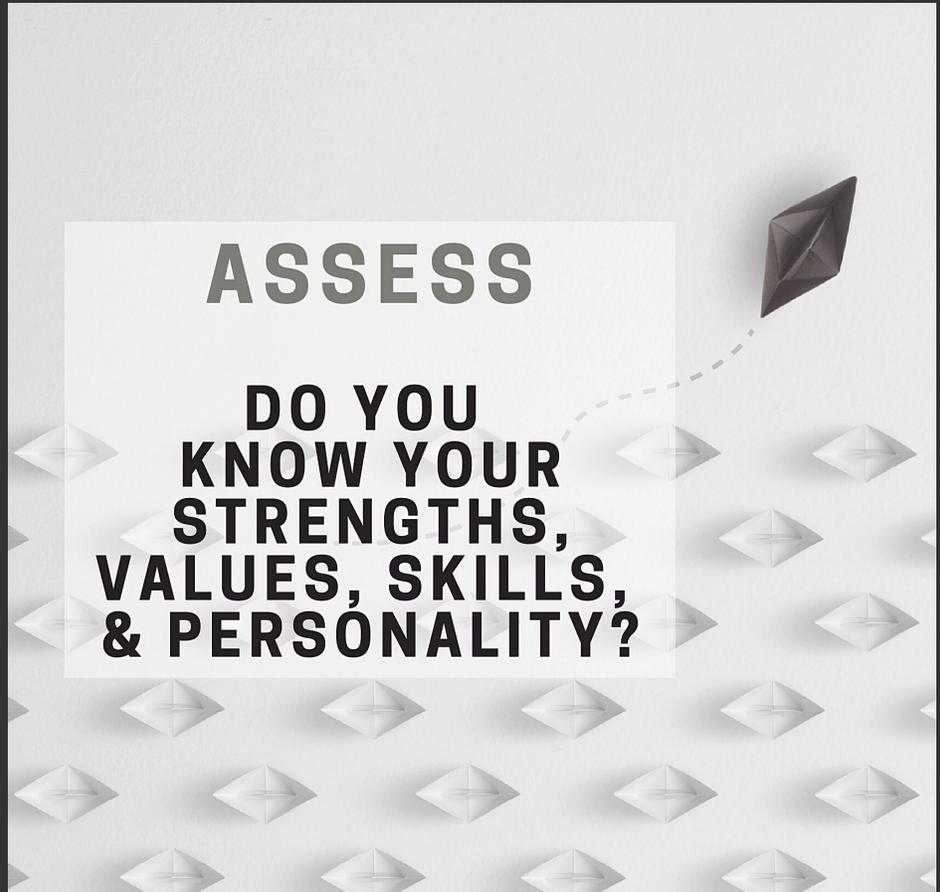
Sound like you? Do you need to dust off an old resume?

For your own sanity, start with a different approach by building a rock-solid account of your career story and shaping your unique value proposition.

Your ability to make it to the final rounds of interviews and earn the job offer depends on effectively communicating your career story in a way that lands with decision-makers.

The following is a list of five foundational steps you should take before you dust off your resume or update your LinkedIn profile. Use the questions as prompts to start building your career transition strategy.

**TO WIN THE JOB, THE ASPIRING EXECUTIVE NEEDS STORIES ABOUT HOW THEY RECRUIT, SELECT, MENTOR, AND RETAIN TALENT.**



## 1. ASSESSMENT INTEGRATION

Are you able to articulate how you uniquely show up in the world?

While you may have taken many assessments over the course of your career, oftentimes there is only a vague recollection of the results. Before you head into a career transition, dust off the cobwebs or better yet, consider updating these assessments because they are helpful in shaping how you show up as a teammate and a leader.

If your assessments are sitting in a file folder somewhere and you have not integrated the language into how you communicate about yourself, you may find yourself ill-prepared to speak about HOW you do what you do and WHY you do what you do.

Keep in mind, if you have only taken a personality assessment, like the Holland, DISC, or MBTI (Myers-Briggs), this is only one of four aspects to explaining how you show up in the world. You might consider using the YouMap® Career Profile Assessment instead because it will help you describe your natural strengths, your values, your motivated skills, and your personality.



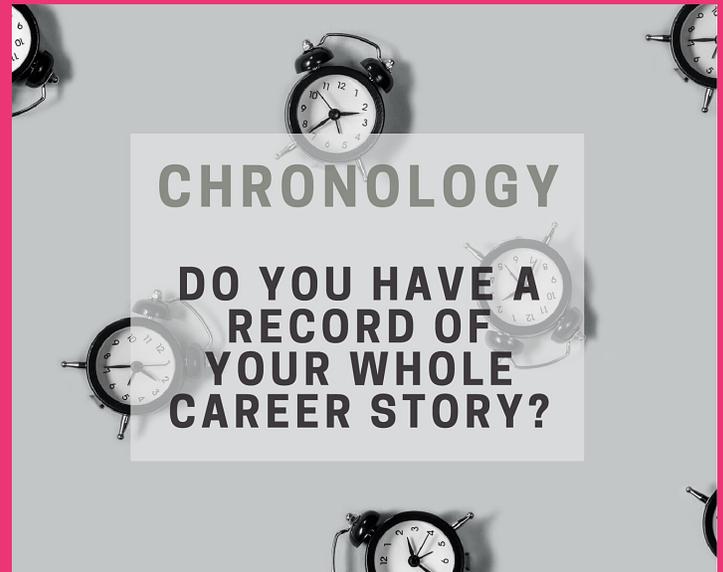
## 2.FRAMEWORK FOR LEADERSHIP

If you have been managing teams or organizations, what is your approach to leading people? Are you able to describe it to the decision-makers on an interview team? In a post-pandemic world, how do you lead people through change and manage transition?

If a recruiter called you today with the ideal executive-level opportunity, could you quickly explain not only your leadership philosophy but how you inspire, motivate and activate people? Will your values shine through when you tell your stories?

To win the job, the aspiring executive needs stories about how they recruit, select, mentor, and retain talent. They also need to describe their process for moving people out if their performance isn't effective.

**YOUR ABILITY TO MAKE IT TO THE FINAL ROUNDS OF INTERVIEWS AND EARN THE JOB OFFER DEPENDS ON EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATING YOUR CAREER STORY IN A WAY THAT LANDS WITH DECISION-MAKERS.**



## 3.BUILD YOUR CAREER CHRONOLOGY

Do you have a repository of your career history? Have you had a chance to talk through the arc of your career trajectory with someone who can give you honest feedback?

Do you ramble or go off track and talk about the wrong things? Are you clear on the themes and patterns that caused your job movement?

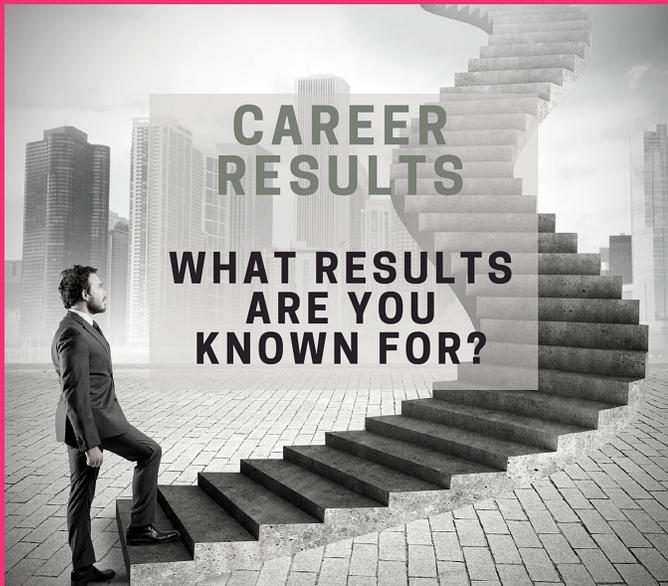
Creating and updating your job movement and career wins is an essential part of telling your story on your resume, on LinkedIn, and most importantly, when you interview.

Being able to "see" your career arc in your mind is essential. If you haven't spent the time examining your story-line, it puts you in a dangerous position when you are asked the standard question – asked by almost every decision-maker:

***"So, tell me about yourself."***

How you answer this can be a make-or-break moment that starts at the beginning of nearly every interview. One of the most damaging things a leadership level candidate does in an interview is spend 20 minutes out of a 60-minute interview answering this question.

Spend time building out a detailed document or spreadsheet which houses all of your career movement and career wins. Then, write or journal out your story. Start with your education to present and build a short, succinct, and powerful narrative so you can explain your career arc.



#### 4. CAREER RESULTS

The outcome of the chronology exercise is to be able to extract and use your career highlights and key career results.

Are you able to see the themes and patterns as you have moved through your career? Are you ready to speak about what you have delivered on in the past and how that links to your future in this role?

Once you identify your top career results you are ready to pivot and upgrade your marketing materials - resume, LinkedIn profile, cover letters, etc.



#### 5. LEADERSHIP SOLUTION - or your "Business Solution"

Are you ready to showcase and package yourself as a unique solutions provider? If you make it to the final rounds of an interview process, do you have a final candidate presentation ready?

As a finalist, you need to showcase how your unique offering matches up with what the decision-makers are looking for. What picture can you paint to remove any doubt the hiring team may have about you?

*“So, tell me about yourself.”*

**HOW YOU ANSWER THIS CAN BE A MAKE-OR-BREAK MOMENT THAT STARTS AT THE BEGINNING OF NEARLY EVERY INTERVIEW.**

## BUILD YOUR STRATEGY

**Benjamin Franklin said, “If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.”**

Your plan should start with the five foundational steps listed above. They are the building blocks to a successful career transition strategy.

Jobseekers with long and complex career stories shouldn't jump out of the gate by tweaking a resume, applying to job boards, and hoping they will get a call out of hundreds of applicants.

Instead, start by integrating assessments into how you write and speak about yourself, know your leadership attributes, be ready to explain your career arc and career results, and prepare your unique value proposition with your “business solution”.

Remember, you are a “business in a business”. You have a unique offering. Now is the time to prepare what is necessary so you can showcase your value proposition so you have an edge on the competition.



## CONTRIBUTING WRITER'S PROFILE



*Gina Riley Consulting & creator of the CareerVelocity System™. She is a career transition coach who helps leaders customize their career stories to land jobs where they can leave a legacy. She is an Executive Search Consultant for Talence Group.*



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