

MANAGE YOUR JOB SEARCH

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Johanna Rothman

Manage Your Job Search

Johanna Rothman

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Practical **ink**

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*To all the job searchers: I believe in you.
For Mark, Shaina and Naomi, as always.*

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Well, that started my wheels turning. By the time I’d finished preparing for the talk, I’d outlined this book in my head, and tested it with the 20 or so people at the meeting. They had several “aha” moments.

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Any mistakes are mine.

Johanna Rothman, Arlington, Massachusetts

Introduction

You’re looking for a job. Maybe you’ve just graduated from college. Maybe you’ve been laid off. Or, maybe you’ve decided that it’s time for a career change. Maybe you want a better job. You might even have a better or different reason than the ones I’ve listed here.

Congratulations!

It’s exciting and scary and unpredictable and overwhelming. If you are anything like me, you can be optimistic one moment, pessimistic the next. You can think you have it “all set” and then your stack of company brochures slides off the table onto the floor and you think, “Oh boy, I do *not* have anything together.”

And, because it’s *all* of those things, and your emotions fly up and down, you just might need some help to find that emotional balance and intellectual focus to stay on track with your job search.

I’ve hired or consulted on hiring hundreds of people. I’ve trained thousands of people all over the world about how to hire. I’ve written two books about hiring. The most recent is *Hiring Geeks That Fit*. Many people think that finding a job is the inverse of hiring. It’s not.

Finding a job is dependent on other people. It is an emergent project, where you cannot predict the end date. You create opportunities and take advantage of serendipity.

If you are looking for a job, this book will help you create your system for finding a job. Then, with your system in place, you can iterate on deciding what job to look for, what your résumé should look like, what companies to target, how to interview, and how to get feedback on everything.

This book will help you.

Your job: Find fulfilling work.

My job: Show you a system that works.

Part 1: Learn to Manage Your Job Search Project

Do you like looking for a job? Almost no one does. It's overwhelming. You already know you're going to get rejected from jobs that you are qualified for. If *only* you could get in the door...

But, managing the rejection in a job hunt is *part* of your job search project. And, sadly, that's the part of the project that most job seekers miss. If you create a project, or a system, you can *manage* your job search, and keep yourself moving, right onto the next potential opportunity. That's what this book is about.

Years ago, when everyone advertised in the Sunday paper, you had just *one* place to look for jobs. Now, there are industry-specific and general online job boards to find and peruse. You need to become a networker extraordinaire, online and in-person. You'll be making decision after decision, each of which will seem to affect your career.

When no one responds to your résumé, it feels like a direct punch to your self-esteem. Don't be surprised: we identify closely with our work. When no one responds to your résumé, you feel personally rejected. When someone asks you for a phone screen or an interview, you feel great! You add these emotional highs and lows to an already intricate, non-linear project with many interruptions and what do you get? A complex project where you can become easily overwhelmed and lose your focus.

How many times have you wished for “magic” in your job hunt? Or, maybe you’ve “hoped for the best”? Nope, you know that “magic” is not going to happen. And “hope” is not a strategy. How do you maintain your progress and your sanity?

You *can* succeed with an open-ended big project like this. The key is to break your job search into small chunks of work that you can accomplish. You also need to track those chunks of work.

We’ll use two project management tools to accomplish this: the “timebox” and the personal kanban board.

A [Timebox](#) is when you say, “I’m only going to allow this task to take this much time. Then I’m going to stop, no matter what.” You’ve boxed or limited the time for that work. Timeboxes are useful when the work can take forever and you want to stop for now, and assess where you are.

One-week timeboxes provide a cadence, a rhythm, for your work. That cadence helps you maintain your focus and overcome procrastination. The timebox also forces you to break your work into smaller pieces. That helps you complete specific tasks and feel a sense of accomplishment and progress. That feeling is invaluable in helping you focus, work on your next step, and feel good about your project and yourself—especially when your self-esteem is such a big part of the project.

The personal kanban board helps you determine how much work you can do right now. (Kanban is Japanese for “signboard.”) A kanban board is a place where you can see and classify cards in a special way. The personal kanban board helps you see pending and upcoming tasks—especially those that are dependent on something outside your personal control, such as waiting for a response from an email or phone call. It will also provide you with feedback about whether you have over-committed yourself or can take on a bit more. It will help you to not commit to more work than you can actually complete in a single week.

I have noticed that I need both the structure of the big one-week timebox to help me organize my time, and the visualization of the small tasks on the personal kanban board when I work on

large open-ended projects, such as a job search. Why? Because as my work moves, visually and physically, across the kanban board, I can see and celebrate what I have finished. That increases my motivation and maintains my focus.

With both the timebox and personal kanban, I have positive feedback. “Oh, I did this. Good for me! I can do this much next week. Ah, I can celebrate my completed work, feel energized and ready for next week. Yay, me!” That is exactly how you should feel at the end of any given week.

By using these techniques, you’ll be able to take on small chunks of work and adjust your approach quickly if that approach isn’t working.

You may even discover that you like this way of working *so much* that you adopt and adapt it for all of your personal work. I have.

Okay, let’s start.

1 Become Your Own Project Manager

You want to optimize your job search, so you want to spend your time wisely. You know you'll have to repeat the send-a-résumé, wait-for-an-answer loop. You'll have to customize each cover letter for each new opportunity.

What if I told you that you could iterate on *everything* for your job search project—that you could iterate on how you decide where to look for a job, who to ask for a recommendation, how to network, where to network, absolutely everything for your job search project? And, what if I told you that your data collected from week to week could drive your decision-making?

Once you start networking, sending out resumes, and working your system, you could easily lose track of where you are: Who did you send *what* to? Who needs a callback? Who needs a customized résumé?

This is why you're using a one-week timebox and personal kanban. You don't plan too much ahead. You plan just enough work that enables you to see *all* of it. You maintain a rhythm that allows you to reflect.

1.1 Take Advantage of Feedback Opportunities

This is why *you* are your project manager. You don't drown yourself in paper. You keep one week's worth of data at a time, and maybe track some trends about *how* you work. That's it.

When you iterate, you can improve, bit by bit.

1.2 Work on One Action at a Time

One of the problems with iterating is that the realm of possible actions grows exponentially. You can't do everything all in one week. You need to decide how *much* you can accomplish in one week.

You create a rhythm for your work. You see what you can and cannot do in one week. You see your work in progress as you proceed, obtain feedback, and make changes as needed. You will do one small chunk of work at a time and finish it. Then you start something else.

Do *not* try to multitask. That is practically a guarantee your job search will be unsuccessful. Not only will you be less productive, you will make mistakes: call people by the wrong names, send your résumé with the wrong cover letter, sound like an idiot on a phone screen, all kinds of crazy mistakes.

Are you surprised by my insistence against multitasking? Multitasking decreases productivity. Don't believe me? Multitasking takes more time than focusing on one task at a time. It increases the number of errors we make, and it increases our agitation or stress. You can find some of the science here: [Multitasking and Task Switching](#), and [Multitasking: Switching costs](#).



Finish one thing. Then another. Take small steps and you will make progress. You'll feel energized as you tackle your job search.

By limiting the *amount* of work in progress, you can actually improve your completion rate, or *throughput*. You will not work on multiple tasks at once—no multitasking. One task at a time!

1.3 Why Finish Small Tasks in Timeboxes?

How will these small tasks inside of timeboxes help you? There is considerable research that confirms we humans like to make progress ([AMA11](#)). Our motivation and our self-esteem are high when we progress on work that is valuable to us. What could be more valuable than finding a new job?

Along with your accomplishments, you will gain a sense of order, a knowledge that you have your job search under control. You will know that you are working on the most important work at all times. You improve a little bit every week: one, two, or three things. You energize yourself in different arenas, week by week. This will all be helpful when you encounter rejection.

Because you improve your résumé, your networking, your LinkedIn connections, everything about your job search every single week—just a little bit—you improve your ability to show what you have to offer, and potential employers will see your worth.

1.4 What is Personal Kanban?

Kanban is a Japanese word that means “[signboard](#).” Kanban is a system of work that originated with Toyota in the 1980s. Taiichi Ohno wrote a book called *The Toyota Production System: Beyond Large-Scale Production* ([OHN88](#)) that described how Toyota was able to decrease its inventory and make cars with much less waste.

Kanban is a way of *pulling* work through the system, rather than *pushing* it through the system. Instead of *pushing* all the inventory, or all of the tasks, into production at once, in one big pile, the workers were able to work on a limited set of tasks, *pulling* new work forward as there was space and time.

Personal kanban is a way to schedule work as it flows through the system. When you can see it, you can manage it. This visibility will help you eliminate inefficiencies, offer feedback, and improve

your throughput.

Jim Benson and Tonianne Barry wrote the book about personal kanban, *Personal Kanban: Mapping Work / Navigating Life* (BEN11). I suggest you read it if you want to apply it to the rest of your life. It's terrific.

1.5 Why One Week?

Some of you may be familiar with timeboxes, maybe because you've heard of them as a project management approach or via agile approaches. Maybe you're wondering why I insist on one-week timeboxes for your job search.

One week timeboxes help you:

- Maintain your focus
- Allow for faster feedback
- See your progress
- See when you are stuck
- See when you need help from the outside
- See when you are trying to do too much or too little work, and
- See what to measure.

You need to be able to respond quickly to changes in the job search environment. Do you need to update your résumé? Take advantage of a new job fair? Network in a new way, at a new location, or with a new group? When you work in a one-week timebox with a visual representation of your search, and then look for feedback, you can see what to keep and what to change.



When you are your own project manager, you can see what's working and what's not working. Experiment and toss what's not working. Keep what is working.

1.6 Manage Your Risk

As a job hunter, you want to manage the risk of not finding the perfect job in a reasonable timeframe. How do you manage risk? By making your deliverables small and staying focused.

The bigger the chunk, the harder your job hunt is, and the less motivated you are. That's why you're going to use a one-week timebox—to keep your motivation high and to help you visualize your next steps.

1.7 Make Sure You Can See Your Work

Your first task is to organize yourself to accomplish anything. This will help you take control of your job search. Creating, visualizing, organizing, and ranking your tasks, which I like to call ToDos, is key to accomplishing your goal: getting your next job.

Why Am I Calling Tasks ToDos?

You might call your tasks “Actions” or “Tasks.” I call them “ToDos.”

I call them that because they might not be well-formed when I put them on my list. I want to make sure that if I think of it, I write it on my list. If these ideas are not actionable, my first action might be to make the ToDo actionable. The next time, I'll use this feedback and create a better ToDo. But I want that ToDo on my list.

As you become better at your job search and at using personal kanban, maybe all of your ToDos will become actionable. *Terrific.* In the meantime, if you think about a ToDo, write it down. Don't worry about what it is. Write it down, and then decide how to deal with it.

First, you'll create a workspace that will allow you to visualize your work. You have to *physically* see your work to make this approach work for you. Even if you only have part-time use of a desk, you can make this approach work.

You will be creating your personal kanban board that looks like this picture.

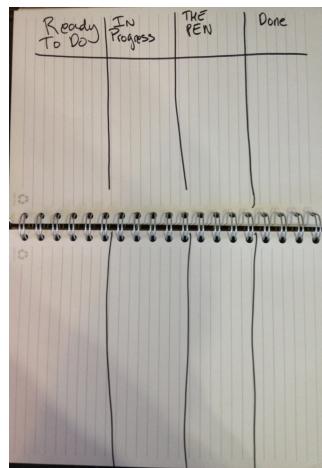
Ready To do	In Progress	The Pen	Done

Your Personal Kanban Board

To create your workspace, you'll first need to claim some blank wall, ideally near your phone, computer, and desk. You will need a space large enough to see your work. Think in terms of 3 feet high by 2 feet wide. Here are some possibilities for you, aside from wall space:

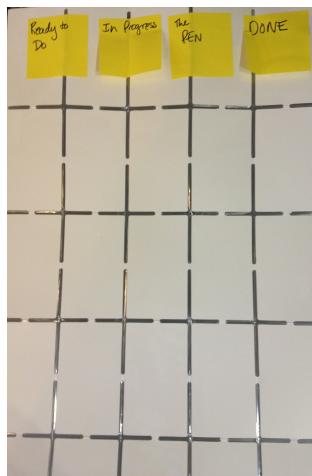
- A whiteboard
- A piece of flipchart paper
- The front of a refrigerator
- A notebook
- A corkboard
- A **noteboard**

If you use a notebook, use a large one that will lie flat when you open it up, so that you use two facing sheets, as in this picture.



Your Personal Kanban Notebook

If you use a noteboard from [noteboard](#), here's what it might look like when you start:



A Blank Noteboard

Your columns don't need to align, regardless of the board you use. The noteboard is a little too wide for four columns. Maybe if

you used slightly wider stickies than I did, the columns would line up nicely. I like the length in the columns, because I have many little ToDos. I want the space for them. I don't care if they line up perfectly.

Whatever you do, make sure you have a big visible board. That way you can see your status at a moment's glance. You don't have to work to see the status; you see it immediately.



Your board works because you can see your status—your work and your progress—at one time. If you can't see it all, your board is not going to work for you. Experiment with another kind of board.

There are only four columns on your board. The “Ready To Do” column will have all of your ToDos for one week. The “In Progress” column will have all of your work that you have started during that week. And the “Done” column will have all of the work that you completed during the week. “The Pen” column is a special column for the work you can't complete because you depend on other people to finish that work, i.e., call-backs or email responses. Think of “The Pen” as a corral, where you track those up-in-the-air, not-quite-done pieces of work that you can't finish alone.

1.8 Create Your ToDos

Now, you have your board or your notebook. It's time to transfer your ToDo list to your board or notebook.

Your first step is to write everything on your ToDo list onto stickies, one to a sticky. If you use cards, assume cards when I say stickies, okay?

1.9 What Might You Do First?

Here's how I would start in Week One. You might not like these ToDos in this order. That's okay. Use this list as a guide, and change

it. Consider this list a template for your first week.

1. Create a barebones LinkedIn profile with your name, email, education, and most recent work experience. If you are a new grad, where you graduated and your graduation date.
2. Create a draft résumé.
3. Ask three people to review your résumé and email it to them.
4. Decide who your references will be, and ask them to be your references.
5. Make a list of where to network in-person this month.
6. Start sending connection requests to people you know on LinkedIn.
7. Update your profile on LinkedIn. Now is the time to start crafting your profile, adding **value** to each line on the profile. You might decide to do some of this before sending connection requests.
8. Endorse people on LinkedIn, so you give before you get. (Note: as of this writing, endorsements are becoming less useful, so you may decide this is not worth your while.)
9. Take your **LinkedIn photo** and post it, if you have not done so before now. People with photos on LinkedIn are seven times more likely to hear from a hiring manager.
10. Start looking at online job boards, now that you have a reasonable résumé and a reasonable LinkedIn profile. (If your résumé and your profile are ready earlier, you can move this up the list.)
11. Start networking in person, by participating, not just attending, some of those networking events you considered in #5.
12. Research specific company #1 that you would like to work for, assuming you know what it is.
13. Research specific company #2 that you would like to work for, assuming you know what it is.

In addition, if you are senior enough and there is enough demand in your field, you may want to contact a recruiter. For

example, in my field, software, once you have several years of experience, many of the jobs are not advertised. You need to know somebody or know a recruiter. This is why you want to [Network With People Who are Loose Connections](#), and why your network is so critical to your success.

Why Focus So Much on LinkedIn for the First Week?

As you've noticed by now, LinkedIn is a huge part of making connections and becoming known in your job search. I have focused a significant part of your first week's ToDos on LinkedIn. Why?

LinkedIn is, right now, the 600-pound gorilla. If you want people to know you professionally, you *must* be on LinkedIn. If you don't exist on LinkedIn, you don't exist. You might not like it, but it's the current truth.

You don't have to use LinkedIn to heavily network, although I do recommend you consider it. But, if you don't have a profile, with a picture, potential employers will not find you. It's that simple.

You, as the candidate, want every tool at your disposal. LinkedIn is one of your primary tools. Use it.

What might you do in Week Two? Update your résumé, continue networking in person, continue networking on LinkedIn, consider other job boards. You want to reflect on what you did and did not accomplish in Week One, and how you felt about your progress before you decide where to go with Week Two. Maybe, you prefer to call everyone you know, instead of focusing your efforts on your online profile. Make conscious choices.

Week One is about getting ready to put your best self on the market. Week Two is what you do with that first feedback. Maybe

potential employers don't understand your résumé. Okay, you'll update it until they do. Or, you'll spend a little money on a résumé-writing service. Maybe you don't have references yet. You need them. Keep asking. Maybe you don't have any ideas about where to network. Keep looking.

If you don't like my possible Week One and Week Two ToDos, that's fine. As long as you are taking steps, you'll be fine. Just don't leave a [Zombie Profile on LinkedIn](#) when a potential employer looks for you. *That's bad.* No one wants to hire a zombie.

1.10 Keep ToDos Small and Independent

Keep two things in mind as you create your ToDos. You will make more progress with your job search if you keep your ToDos small and independent.

Some of your ToDos will have natural dependencies. There's a natural dependency between writing the résumé and the résumé review. That's fine.

But sometimes multiple dependent ToDos can masquerade as a single large ToDo. I recently met someone who had a whole series of ToDos centered around a job fair: research the companies, decide whether to participate in the job fair, compose introductions, maybe even more ToDos. You can decouple these preparatory ToDos from each other.

Here's how I would do it. First, do some research to see whether this job fair is for you. Now, this might mean a longer research ToDo, or even several research ToDos that target specific companies or opportunities for the job fair.

Are you flexible about the type of job you are looking for? Based on your job research, you might compose different introductions, emphasizing different aspects of your experience, for different potential employers.

Your job fair ToDos now look like this:

Decision: Attend this job fair: yes/no? (This decision is the

triggering decision for all the other ToDos)

Each of these ToDos is now independent:

- Research Company X (timebox to 15 minutes)
- Research Company Y (timebox to 15 minutes)
- Research Company Z (timebox to 15 minutes)
- Network with David C. about Company X. Didn't he work there?
- Work on Intro 1 for Position A
- Work on Intro 2 for Position B
- Print 25 résumés before Tuesday

1.11 Rank Your ToDos

Depending on your field and your experience, your ToDos will be specific to you. However, for many people, First Week ToDos will look similar.

As an example, let's say you need to: research a company, review a specific job board for open positions, and call your old boss for a reference—you would have three stickies. That looks like this:



First Three Yellow Stickies

Now, for simplicity's sake, let's rank these three stickies. They are all important. In fact, you could say they are all the #1 priority. But they can't be. You need to decide which one to do first.

Here is where the fact that you have your ToDos on something moveable is helpful. Take all the stickies. Line them up in some

order, even if you think that order is wrong, on the wall or on your desk. Now, step back so you can get a little perspective.

Maybe you made “Call John for reference” #1. Is that okay? If so, leave it there. Maybe you made “Research Company A” #2. Is that okay? If not, exchange the sticky underneath it with that one.

Keep sorting until you are happy with the sort order. Remember, you can only have one #1 ranked item. You can only have one #2. You are only one person, so you can only do one thing at a time—that’s why you can only have one #1.

What if you can’t decide between two stickies? You really have two critical stickies, and you want to accomplish both of them this week. What do you do then? You have some options:

- Do the smallest one first. Sometimes, accomplishing *something* is better than fretting about the priority.
- Toss a coin. If they are the same priority, who cares which one you do first?
- Break the ToDos apart, and see if they have ToDos underneath, one of which might be more critical than another.

1.12 Limit Your Week’s Work

At some point, you realize you have too many items for one week. Review all of your ToDos. Now, think about your week and how much time you can devote to your job search. Are you still working a day job and only looking for a job part time? Are you devoting all of your energy to finding a job? You will be able to accomplish different numbers of ToDos based upon your available time.

Make your ToDos small enough to complete within an hour or two. That’s how you make your job search successful—and more flexible.

Just as I suggested about what to do with the job fair ToDo, you can learn to break your work up into small chunks. Here are some tips:

1. If you are not sure how long any of your work will take, consider using one-hour and two-hour timeboxes for all of your ToDos. Many of us humans stink at estimation. We tend to be either optimistic or pessimistic. Rarely are we accurate.
2. What is the first thing you have to accomplish for your next ToDo? Do that. Is there more to do for that ToDo? Now, write everything else down on separate stickies. You have something larger than you thought. *That's okay.* Remember that for next week's planning.
3. Some people think if they take their total time per day for their job search, and divide that by the total number of one hour timeboxes, they can use that amount of time for the number of ToDos. If you find that helpful, let me know.

As you practice your ToDo planning, you will become better at it.

The most useful information I know: Write everything down on a sticky. Rank the stickies. Start at the top, and keep working your way down.



Do not try to do *everything* you can think of for your job search in the first week. You will make yourself nuts. Think of the first week as laying the foundation for a successful job search.

What if you *know* you have too much to do for your first week? Create a [Parking Lot for Work You Don't Want to Lose](#). For now, place all the stickies you can't accomplish on the Parking Lot. You'll assess it next week, when you can see whether that work is still useful. For now, you don't have to consider it. You've written it down. You don't have to worry about it.

1.13 Use a Parking Lot for Work You Don't Want to Lose

You have work you don't want to forget about, and you don't want to do it right now. Use a parking lot to hold a sticky so you can postpone dealing with it *right now*. I keep the Parking Lot separate from my Personal Board, which is why you don't see it in the pictures. You can keep it on your board, but then you might feel stressed by all that potential work. I don't recommend it.

I keep it separate, because I don't want to think about it until it's time to plan for the next week.



“Perfection is the enemy of the good.” —Gustave Flaubert. If you wait for everything to be perfect, you could wait a long time. Do not wait for a perfect picture or a perfect résumé or a perfect profile. You have to progress on this task, mark it done, and move to the next one. If you are confused by good enough and perfection, see [Perfection Rules Trap Us Every Time](#).

Remember when you ranked the work? If you are stuck on work that does not add value to your overall job search, you will *not* make progress. That's another reason for one-week timeboxes. You have an opportunity every week to look back and reflect on your progress. You have the chance to see whether where you invested your energy was the right place. And, you only spent a week doing so!

1.14 But I Like to Use Electronic Tools

I bet some of you are thinking, “Johanna can't fool me. I know *just* the right tool for this: a spreadsheet, or a kanban tool.”

You are correct. This is personal kanban. If electronic tools tempt you for the first four weeks of this approach:

DO NOT BE TEMPTED BY THE DARK SIDE.

I am serious.

When you use tangible physical objects, such as stickies or cards, you will make better decisions about your tasks. There is something about the tactile nature of the cards or stickies that will provide you with better feedback about your ToDos. Not just the size of the ToDos, but better decisions about how you rank them.

I see this with my clients when they have to make project portfolio decisions. If they can do this for a month while they are learning to manage their project portfolios with millions of dollars at stake, I bet you can do this for a month while you learn to manage your job search.

Trust me for four weeks. After that, you can decide what to do. *Really.*

1.15 Now Do This

1. Create your board. Make sure you have enough space on your board.
2. Create your first set of ToDos. Write them all out. Don't worry if you have too many. Make sure they are independent. You don't know how many you can do in a week yet. If you have too many for a week, you will learn how many you can and cannot do.
3. Rank your ToDos.

Glossary

If you are not familiar with the terms I've used, here are the definitions:

Agile: You work in small chunks, finishing work that is valuable to the customer in the order the customer specifies. The value of working in an agile way is that you have the ability to change quickly, because you complete work.

Kanban: Literally the Japanese word for "signboard." A scheduling system for limiting the amount of work in progress at any one time.

Lean: A pull approach to managing work that looks for waste in the system.

LinkedIn: A social networking website for people in professional occupations. <http://www.linkedin.com>.

Parking Lot: This is a place to put issues you don't want to lose but don't necessarily want to address at this time.

Pen: In personal kanban, the place to corral ToDos that can get lost.

Timebox: A specific limited amount of time in which the person will attempt to accomplish a specific task.

WIP or Work in Progress: Any work that is not complete. When you think in lean terms, it is waste in the system.

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- [AMA11] Amabile, Teresa and Steven Kramer. *The Progress Principle: Using Small Wins to Ignite Joy, Engagement, and Creativity at Work*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2011. Just in case you don't believe me, there's research that says we like to finish work in small chunks so we can make progress.
- [ANI13] Animal, Recruiting. *The Psychology of Job Hunting: Transform yourself from a lily-livered loser into a Sales Man*. Canada: Recruiting Animal, 2013. An ebook that helps you navigate the issues of selling yourself in the the job hunting world. Recruiting Animal is a Canadian recruiter with an internet talk show. I think he's a riot. You might not. But his book? On target.
- [BEN11] Benson, Jim and Tonianne DeMaria Barry. *Personal Kanban Mapping Work / Navigating Life*. CreateSpace, 2011. This is the book that really explains how to use personal kanban in an easy-to-understand way. I read the book, internalized it, and did not realize that I was quoting from it. That's how easy it is to understand, internalize, and adopt personal kanban. You can drop the personal from that sentence, too, and apply the principles as kanban in projects at work.
- [BUC99] Buckingham, Marcus, and Curt Coffman. *First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999. An eye-opening look to what great managers do.
- [DER06] Derby, Esther and Diana Larsen. *Agile Retrospectives: Making Good Teams Great*. Dallas and Raleigh: Pragmatic Bookshelf, 2006. If you need ideas for any retrospective

or reflection, this is the book to use. No, they don't pay me for this endorsement. But they should!

- [DWE07] Dweck, Carol. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2007. This book discusses the fixed mindset and the growth mindset. If you have the fixed mindset, you believe you can only do what you were born with. If you have the growth mindset, you believe you can acquire new skills and learn. I believe in the growth mindset. So should you. It's how you get better, bit by bit. Sound familiar?
- [HEA13] Heath, Chip and Dan Heath. *Decisive: How to Make Better Choices in Life and Work*. New York: Crown Business Books, 2013. If you need more discussion than just "The Rule of Three," use this book to help you understand how to make better choices. I have used this approach in my coaching and consulting with my clients.
- [LEI13] Leipzig, Adam. *How to Know Your Life Purpose in 5 Minutes*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vVsXO9brK7M>. 2013. I was surprised at how quickly these five questions get to the point. Because they are not about *you*, but about the *people* you serve, they work.
- [LES09] Lester, Andy. *Land the Tech Job You Love*. Dallas and Raleigh: Pragmatic Bookshelf, 2009. Andy delves into the necessary detail about how to write your résumé, how to write a cover letter, and how to interview. I've scratched the surface and described a framework. Andy has the depth behind the framework.
- [OHN88] Ohno, Taiichi. *Toyota Production System: Beyond Large-Scale Production*. New York: Productivity Press, 1988. Taiichi Ohno discusses the notions of teamwork, just-in-time, and especially the ideas of *pulling* work, rather than *pushing*

work through the system. I originally read this book when I was reading about how to apply these ideas to unwedging my clients in software and software/hardware organizations. Then, the lightbulb went on. I could use it for me.

- [PFE10] Pfeffer, Jeffrey. *Power: Why Some People Have It and Others Don't*. New York: HarperCollins, 2010. I don't agree with everything Pfeffer says, but he always makes me think. I do agree with what he says about networking. Like I said, he makes me think. He'll make you think, too.
- [PIE06] Pierson, Orville. *The Unwritten Rules of the Highly Effective Job Search*. New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 2006. A terrific marketing plan for the job seeker. Although the author calls this a project plan, it's a marketing plan of how to determine your target list, your core message, and how to react when you realize you are looking for a job that is scarce. I wish it had references.
- [PIN09] Pink, Dan. *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2009. This is a link to Dan Pink's TEDTalk about what motivates us: purpose, mastery, and autonomy. He explains why financial incentives alone don't work. Yes, you need to make enough money, but money isn't enough to keep you satisfied. This is why you can't just use money as a decision for your job search. Well, you can, but you may well not be satisfied.
- [RAT07] Rath, Tom. *StrengthsFinder 2.0*. Washington D.C. and Omaha: Gallup Press, 2007. The book is a list of strengths, what I would call attributes, or qualities, preferences, and skills. The value is in the code you get when you buy the book. You use the code to take a StrengthsFinder assessment, which allows you to develop and discover your natural talents.
- [ROT12] Rothman, Johanna. *Hiring Geeks That Fit*. Practical Ink, 2012. If you want to know how to hire people, this is it,

from soup to nuts. All the templates are available for free on my website. The book explains how to use them.

- [BCD05] Rothman, Johanna and Esther Derby. *Behind Closed Doors: Secrets of Great Management*. Dallas and Raleigh: Pragmatic Bookshelf, 2005. We describe the Rule of Three and many other management approaches and techniques in here.
- [ROTH07] Rothman, Johanna. *Manage It! Your Guide to Modern, Pragmatic Project Management*. Dallas and Raleigh: Pragmatic Bookshelf, 2007. If you want to know more about how to estimate task size, establish a project rhythm, or see a project dashboard, this is the book for you. I have references about why multitasking is crazy in here.
- [ROT09] Rothman, Johanna. *Manage Your Project Portfolio: Increase Your Capacity and Finish More Projects*. Dallas and Raleigh: Pragmatic Bookshelf, 2009. In many ways, you are managing a project portfolio, except that you are managing a project portfolio of just job-finding work. This book helps you manage all the work in your project portfolio. I also have more references about why multitasking is crazy in here.
- [ROT13] Rothman, Johanna. *Don't Have a Zombie Profile on LinkedIn*, <http://www.jrothman.com/blog/htp/2013/07/dont-have-a-zombie-profile-on-linkedin.html>. Why you need to have a bare-bones LinkedIn profile.
- [SAL11] Salt peter, Miriam, *How to be Found on LinkedIn*, <http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/2011/12/15/how-to-be-found-in-linkedin>. Read it, and see if you area doing what the experts say you should be doing.
- [STA00] Stanfield, R. Brian, Editor. *The Art of Focused Conversation, 100 Ways to Access Group Wisdom in the Workplace*. Canada: New Society Publishers, 2000. This is the book that explains how to have a focused conversation.

- [WEI13] Weinberg, Gerald M. “Seeing Your Own Big Picture,” in Esther Derby *et al.*, in *Readings for Problem-Solving Leadership*. Leanpub, 2013. How to go meta.
- [WEI85] Weinberg, Gerald M. *The Secrets of Consulting*. New York: Dorset House Publishing, 1985. If you’re thinking of becoming a consultant, you should read this classic text. Full of rules and aphorisms, you will learn what to do as a consultant. You will also learn, just by reading, if you do *not* want to be a consultant. Cheap learning.
- [WEI86] Weinberg, Gerald M. *Becoming a Technical Leader: An Organic Problem-Solving Approach*. New York: Dorset House, 1986. If you only read one book a year about how to become the best leader you can be, this is the book to read. I teach Problem Solving Leadership every year with Jerry and Esther Derby, and we often refer to this book when we teach. I learn every time I teach. You will learn every time you read.
- [WHI10] Whitcomb, Susan Britton; Bryan, Chandlee; and Deb Dib. *The Twitter Job Search Guide: Find a Job and Advance Your Career in Just 15 Minutes a Day*. Indianapolis: Jist Works, 2010. I was tempted to write 140 characters about this book. I decided you deserved a little more. The book is already dated, not surprisingly. If you decide to use Twitter as a primary search mechanism for your job search, do get this book. On the other hand, I would build my target list first, because that’s a better use of my job search time.

More from Johanna

I consult, speak, and train about all aspects of managing product development. I have a distinctly *agile* bent. I'm more interested in helping you become more effective than I am in sticking with some specific approach. There's a reason my newsletter is called the "Pragmatic Manager"—that's because I am!

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[Behind Closed Doors: Secrets of Great Management](#)

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Johanna