



THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO
SHAPING A SUCCESSFUL

DIGITAL MARKETING CAREER

FROM CVs TO SKILLS TO SALARIES



digital
marketing
institute

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Introduction

Digital is no longer secondary, it's central. Across every job role, in every industry, digital tools and techniques are being employed to drive better results with greater efficacy.

The internet is the fastest growing medium for advertising globally, and is expected to surpass traditional television by 2020.

Social media spend is increasing at a rate of 25% a year, and paid search is expected to grow 12% a year to 2017.

This ongoing investment highlights how organizations are acknowledging the compelling power of digital to enhance brand awareness, generate quality leads, and convert and retain customers.

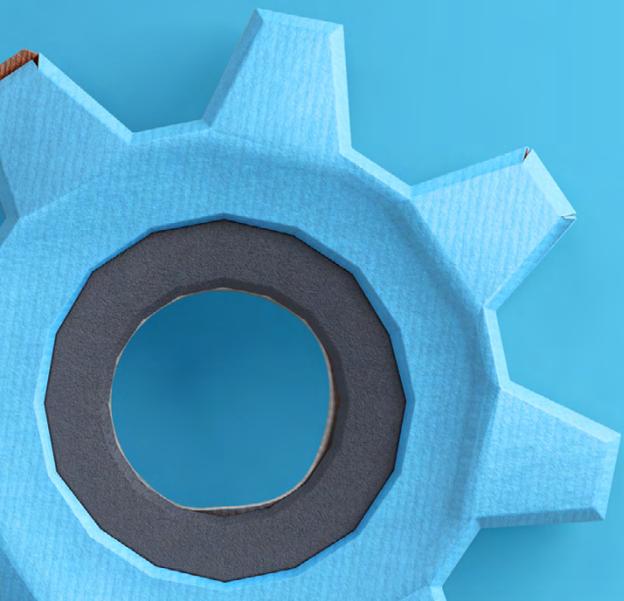
The digital economy is thriving. A rising demand for skilled professionals with both technical and analytical skills is stimulating job creation and lucrative employee benefits packages as recruiters compete to secure valuable digital talent.

The time to realize your professional goals is now. In our exclusive six chapter ebook, we'll help you navigate your digital career journey, providing you with actionable insights and quick tips for every stage, from identifying the right role, to creating a compelling CV, to refining your interview technique.

Your digital career success starts here.

CHAPTER 1

How to choose a digital marketing role you'll love



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How to choose a digital marketing role you'll love

When considering a new digital marketing role, a key question to ask yourself is if you'd prefer to work agency or client side. Every organization is different, but whether you're agency or client side will have a significant impact on your digital job experience. Each offers a range of distinct characteristics, challenges and benefits, so it's important to select a role that provides the best fit for your personality and sufficiently supports your career goals.

Where will I be able to be my most creative?

Before you decide to make your move into an organization or an agency, you first need to define what creativity means to you, as both routes will afford you the opportunity to harness your creativity in different ways:

Agency – An agency will allow you to get creative with a variety of brands in a fast-moving environment. You'll be pitching your ideas and creative vision to potential clients, tackling a succession of new, exciting projects and constantly brainstorming fresh creative concepts. If you feed off an unstoppable fast pace and endless variety, agency might be the best fit for you.

Brand – Working for a brand allows you to gain an in-depth understanding of your target audience in a way that is much more difficult to achieve in an agency. You are provided with the opportunity to think in a more long term, strategic manner. Working for one brand allows you to narrow and intensify your focus. If you're interested in helping to nurture a brand, shape its messaging and maintain full creative control over the campaigns you create, this could be your preferred option.

Where will I learn the most?

Again, what you learn and the skills you acquire at an agency and with a brand can differ significantly, and often depends on the specific nature of the organization you're working for. We've outlined some common capabilities you can expect to develop in both environments:

What you'll learn at an agency

Client Management: you'll gain interpersonal skills from working closely with clients to help them achieve their goals and meet their expectations.

Timekeeping Skills: most agencies get paid by the hour, so you'll learn how to be accountable for your time and document your hours accordingly.

Adaptability: at an agency you'll be forced to think and react quickly, and demonstrate a flexible, problem solving attitude to accommodate fluctuating briefs, changing campaign concepts and client preferences.

Multitasking: you'll learn how to simultaneously manage a number of client accounts while upholding a high quality standard of work.
Presentation Skills: you have to pitch your ideas to clients which means you will polish your verbal communication and presentation skills!

What you'll learn with a brand

Strategy: you'll learn how to conceive and execute on a long term vision and digital marketing strategy for your brand.

Brand Positioning: you will develop the skills needed to nurture your brand, carve out its identity and best position it to your target market.

Measurement and Iteration: working for a brand allows for more thorough measurement of key metrics which helps you learn how to interpret data which will inform strategic business decisions.

Achieving KPIs: you'll learn how to set, measure, hit and (hopefully!) exceed long term KPIs that will help your business grow and achieve its objectives

Audience Analysis: working for a brand will facilitate deeper and ongoing audience analysis through surveys, interviews and social media research.

Where will I make the most money?

Whether or not it's your primary motivation, your potential income will be an important factor in your decision. Salaries can differ dramatically within different organizations in the industry. If you choose to work in a startup, for example, you will most likely be paid less than if you worked in a large corporation. Here are the salary expectations you should have when considering which route to take in your digital marketing career:

Agency- Agencies usually have lower starting salaries than brands. In an agency, you will often have to start at the bottom and work your way up, acquiring client management experience before you can claim a pay rise. However, because of the undeniable digital skills gap and consequent demand for accomplished digital professionals, agencies have started to compete with brands for talent by offering higher starting salaries.

Brand: Brands often pay significantly more than agencies. Of course, larger corporations will often pay more than financially restricted start-ups and smaller businesses. However, even these businesses are now competing to secure skilled digital professionals for their teams, and salaries and benefits have increased as a result. The digital skills gap has really empowered qualified digital marketers, so if you choose to work for a brand, make sure that you negotiate the best possible deal for yourself.

Where can I progress my career?

Within such a fast-paced industry, it's unsurprising that many digital professionals are highly motivated and ambitious. Whether your immediate priority is to upskill and acquire work experience, or fast track your career with a promotion, establishing yourself in an agency or a brand will provide you with different opportunities for career progression.

Agency: Agency life is incredibly fast-moving and there is often a high turnover of staff. Because of this constant flux, there can be more chances to progress more quickly. However, you may face internal competition from highly skilled colleagues fighting for the same position, as top spots are highly coveted.

Brand: Working for a brand can vary in terms of career progression. You might have to wait for someone to leave before an opportunity becomes available, as people are often more reluctant to leave more steady, corporate jobs. Within a brand, moving up can mean moving on and finding a new job in a new company. If you want to progress quickly, you might want to ask your potential employer about their professional development plan, or work for a startup, where the potential for progression and ownership of your role is epic.

CHAPTER 2

The 5-Step Formula to an Outstanding Digital Marketing CV



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The 5-Step Formula to an Outstanding Digital Marketing CV

You've found the perfect digital marketing job opportunity. It's an ideal match for your skills and interests, with an excellent salary and lots of room to advance. It's even at a unique, interesting company with a culture and values you admire.

The only problem? Your CV is years out of date and doesn't accurately reflect your knowledge, skills and experience as a digital marketer. So what can you do to make it stand out from the others and help you get the job?

The key is simple: sell yourself. When you stop thinking of your CV as a list of your past jobs or an inventory of every skills you have to offer, and instead view it as your own personal sales pitch, you'll go from "just another application" to the clear choice for almost any position.

Below, we've listed a simple and highly effective five-step formula that you can use to stand out from the crowd and market yourself to agencies, brands and other digital marketing employers.

Step 1: Create more than one CV

The key to getting the attention of recruiters and employers is to view each job opportunity from their perspective.

You view a job listing as an opportunity to find work, earn a salary and put your skills to use for a new employer. They view a job listing as an opportunity to fill a gap in their current team, solve a problem and achieve their goals as a business.

Put yourself in the shoes of your prospective employer. You've created a job listing for a digital marketing associate with the following key skills:

- **WordPress design/customization skills**
- **Content marketing experience**
- **Extensive understanding of SEO**

You've received 200 applications, complete with CVs and cover letters. Most are generic CVs aimed at every digital marketing job available, with no mentions of the specific skills you need for your open position.

Of these 200 applications, five specifically discuss their WordPress, content marketing and SEO experience. One person even provides specific examples of how they've helped previous clients and employers with their SEO efforts as a freelancer, and later as part of an agency.

Which application are you most likely to respond to? Of the 200, most will be skimmed (typically for just over six seconds) and discarded, while the five that mention their key skills and the one that provides real, concrete examples will get special attention.

Your goal, as someone applying for a job, is to be the one applicant that's such a perfect fit that you get all the attention. As Seth Godin says, your job is to be the Purple Cow -- the unique and interesting option that immediately stands out from the crowd.

Sending out a single generic CV to every employer is a great way to fit into the crowd, especially in an industry like digital marketing where specialization is everything.

Instead of creating one CV that's a good enough fit for every job, create two, three or even five digital marketing CVs, each of which emphasizes a different aspect of your skillset:

- One that focuses on your SEO knowledge
- One that focuses on your content marketing experience
- One that highlights your analytics skills
- One that lists your CRO achievements

Understand the key skills that digital marketing employers seek and you'll find it easier to create a specific, highly targeted CV for each opportunity you discover.

Specialization isn't just something you should discuss in your cover letter. Take a laser focused approach to every CV you send and you'll stand out as the perfect fit for every job you apply for instead of blending into the crowd of unsuccessful applicants.

Step 2: Study your target audience

Winning a job isn't just about demonstrating your skills and experience - it's also about showing that you're a great fit for the company you want to work for.

Before you send in your CV, take a few moments to study the company that you could work with if your application is successful.

Google them and look around their website. Study their core values and goals, if they're publicly listed online. Use [Glassdoor](#) to view feedback from past and current employees and learn what it's like to work for them. Learn as much as you can before you start to customize your CV.

While you're studying the employer, make note of key points and values that differentiate them from other companies. Note their values and unique characteristics, especially if you think they could help you earn their attention as a prospective employee.

Study their competitors and gain an understanding of the market they operate in. Learn as much as you can as early as you can.

Most people leave the research phase of applying to a job for right before their first interview. If you study the employer before you even send in your CV, you'll be able to stand out right when it counts: the moment they open your application and start reading about you.

Step 3: Create your value proposition

For a business, the goal of any hire is to create value. If you can clearly state the value you offer in your CV, you'll stand out as the best solution to solve specific problems, reach specific targets and achieve specific goals.

Two marketing concepts are key to communicating this value:

1. A value proposition, which is a statement that summarizes the value you can offer to the employer
2. A unique selling proposition, which differentiates you from other candidates and makes your CV stand out

Most CVs have no value proposition and little or no differentiation. They list skills and past jobs as items in an inventory without ever explaining how these factors make the applicant unique or expressing any specific value.

Before you list your job experience or key skills, think of your value proposition. What unique or special value can you offer? What can you provide for the prospective employer that few or no other candidates can match?

Pretend that you're an analytics expert applying for a new job at a conversion rate optimization agency. Of the two statements below, which is most likely to attract the employer's attention and communicate your value?

- "I'm an experienced analytics expert."
- "My analytics and optimization skills have helped my previous clients and employers increase sales by 30% or more and generate a 43% improvement in return on ad spend."

Be specific, and never be afraid to make concrete statements that communicate how you've helped previous employers or clients. Your value proposition is a personal mission statement - use it to set yourself apart from the crowd and emphasize how you can help the employer.

Step 4: Demonstrate your enthusiasm

As a job seeker, the numbers are very much against you, and enthusiasm is the key to turning the odds in your favour.

On average, more than 250 CVs are received for every corporate job opening. Fewer than two percent of applicants are interviewed.

Studies show that most applicants spend about 80 seconds reading a job posting before they send in their CV. The results are predictable:

- Employers receive a huge amount of CV spam, especially from applicants that aren't a good fit for the position.
- Since most applicants only skim the details of each job and don't customize their CV or cover letter, only a select few are worth considering.
- Many of the applicants that are a good match on paper don't seem enthusiastic about the job, and seem to view it as just another opportunity.

You can avoid problem one by studying the employer, as we explained in step two. Problem two is avoided by customizing your CV, as we recommended in step one, and by having a clear and specific value proposition, as we recommended in step three.

Avoid problem three by being genuinely enthusiastic about the job opening and expressing this enthusiasm in your cover letter.

Talk about their goals and how you can help them achieve them. Mention their past successes and noteworthy events. Make it as clear as possible that you're not just familiar with them, but that you're a natural fit with real enthusiasm about doing the best job possible.

When an employer compares three seemingly equal candidates, enthusiasm is what gets you noticed. Demonstrate your interest and energy and you'll stand out as the candidate that has a clear motivation to help the employer achieve their goals.

Step 5: Before you send anything, proofread!

It only takes a single typo to ruin your CV and destroy your chances of earning the job. Before you send anything to anyone, proofread it thoroughly and double check that you haven't made any spelling or grammatical errors.

[Data from executive surveys shows that 76% of recruiters and HR staff will remove an applicant from consideration if their CV has one or two typos.](#)

40% of the executives surveyed said that a single typo or error is all it takes for a job application to end up in the waste disposal bin.

In the digital marketing world, communication is key. Imagine if you delivered a page of copy to an important client with numerous typos. Or if you launched an advertising campaign with major grammatical errors in the creative!

Making a small spelling or grammatical error every now and then in emails or internal messages is forgivable. However, your CV is an important document that markets your personal brand. If it has typos and grammatical errors, it sends a very bad message to your prospective employer.

Before you send anything to anyone, proofread. Take a short break after writing your CV to clear your mind and get out of “work” mode, then return to it and double check for spelling or grammatical errors. Only when you’re totally confident should you submit it to the recruiter or employer.

Does your CV help you stand out from the pack?

The digital marketing industry is fiercely competitive, and standing out with an engaging CV is one of the best ways to get noticed as a job seeker. Does your CV help you stand out from the pack and appeal to employers, or does it make you just another applicant?

If you’re searching for a digital marketing job and haven’t had any success, use the five steps above to rewrite, improve and optimize your CV. With the right value proposition, experience, skills and marketing savvy, you could earn the attention of an incredible employer.

CHAPTER 3

Create a Convincing Digital Marketing Cover Letter



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Create a Convincing Digital Marketing Cover Letter

Two-thirds of hiring managers reject applicants based on what's written in their cover letter, according to a study by Zip Recruiter. It's an overwhelming validation of the fact that first impressions make all the difference.

Put yourself in the position of a recruiter. Inundated with applications on a daily basis, you're saturated with impersonal cover letters. Another one arrives – unresearched and uninspired. It's a resounding no, and so is the candidate.

If you want to avoid having your application efforts immediately discarded, all you need to do is follow our 6 simple tips to create a digital marketing cover letter that begs to be read, remembered and recommended.

You've got one page to achieve the following:

- Intrigue your potential employer.
- Demonstrate your interest in the role and organization
- Showcase who you are and how you're a perfect "fit."
- Incentivize them to ask you to interview

We'll show you how to achieve all four objectives below:

Talk the talk

There isn't a single employer that isn't looking for an enthusiastic, inspired candidate that is invested in the prospect of working for the organization. You need to be able to tailor your cover letter to reflect this energy.

Visit the company website and try to match their tone and terminology. Company culture is becoming increasingly important, so use your cover letter to showcase your distinct, complementary personality.

Try to avoid cultivating a boring, stilted, corporate voice, especially when you're looking to work in a fun, creative, digital environment. Highlight keywords used in the role description and aim to subtly weave them into your content. Don't forget to balance this mirroring with your own unique voice though! If you're a good fit for the company, your language should harmonize with theirs.

Showcase your perfect fit

Each cover letter you write should be a demonstration of how well you fit the role for which you're applying. Tailoring your cover letter doesn't just mean addressing your letter to the relevant person within the organization (although we recommend you do this too!) – you need to craft every line to ensure they anticipate and address the requirements of your potential employer.

It's all about persuasion, and conveying both why you want to work for them and why they should pick you.

You need to demonstrate your value proposition. This means referencing the role description, the organization and the culture and how your skills and personality complement each of these elements.

Create parallels between what you do, what the organization does and what the role description requires. For example, if they're looking for a creative and results-driven content marketer, you can offer tangible examples of the campaigns you've created that have raised brand awareness, generated leads and driven sales.

Open with clarity

Get to the point already! The first line of your cover letter should introduce you and your intent. The first paragraph needs to immediately address why you're the perfect candidate for the job. Before you begin writing, read through the job specification again and highlight the most important points. Look for repeated phrases, synonyms and 'required skills' to find the core abilities your potential employer is searching for.

If they're looking for an analytical mind for example, you should portray your passion for numbers and strategy within the first line or two. Your first paragraph is also a great place to convey your level of industry experience, particularly if it's impressive.

Offer more than your CV

If you've created the digital marketing CV of every recruiter's dreams, it should be formatted beautifully, include metrics that illustrate positive results, timelines, and substantial achievements. Your cover letter provides an opportunity to elaborate on these perfectly formed bullet points and add more depth and detail to your professional success story.

For example: your CV says you increased your company's leads by 30% in a single quarter. You can use your cover letter to explain how you managed to a team to achieve this metric, the tactics you employed and the obstacles you overcame. This will give your potential employer insight into your softer skills, such as the motivation, tenacity and collaboration as part of a team.

Close with a Call to Action

How you finish your cover letter is equally important as the rest of its content. Your closing paragraph has three purposes:

- To restate your enthusiasm for the role and the organization
- To re-communicate the value you can bring to the role and the organization
- To provide a clear and confident call to action about how your potential employer should contact you.

CHAPTER 4

7 Effective Interview Tips for Any Digital Marketing Job



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7 Effective Interview Tips for Any Digital Marketing Job

You've perfected your digital marketing CV, written excellent cover letters and applied to a large variety of jobs. Now what?

Once you receive a response from a potential employer, the dynamic of searching for a digital marketing job changes dramatically. You're closer to achieving your goal, and the only barrier that still stands in your way is the biggest of all - the interview.

Interviewing for a digital marketing job can be a daunting experience, particularly if you're new to the industry. There's terminology to familiarize yourself with, questions to answer, skills that you need to demonstrate, as well as a variety of other challenges.

It's no surprise that even the most experienced digital marketing professionals can feel nervous when interviewing for a new job. The key to beating this nervousness and doing well in your job interview is preparation. Below, we've listed seven tips that you can use to beat nervousness, impress your potential employer and make yourself a serious candidate for any digital marketing job!

Start with an outstanding CV

Your CV is more than just a ticket to an interview. It also frames the topics of discussion for your job interview by highlighting your skills, listing your credentials and sharing your achievements with your prospective employer.

In Chapter 2, we looked at a five-step formula for creating a digital marketing CV that sets you apart from the competition. Our first step (and perhaps the most important) is to tailor each of your CVs to a specific position.

A targeted, tailored CV lets you highlight your qualifications, skills and achievements that are the most relevant for the job you're applying for. As such, you send a specific message to the interviewer about your biggest strengths and relevant skills.

This doesn't just get you the interview - it also helps the interviewer decide what to talk to you about during the interview. In many cases, the skills and experiences that you mention in your CV play a major role in determining the questions you'll face.

Before you apply for any digital marketing job, check that your CV is perfectly tailored to the position. Not only will you stand out before the interview, you'll also set the stage for a more specific job interview that emphasizes why you're the best choice for the job.

Show that you're a great researcher

Few experiences are as frustrating for interviewers as speaking to a candidate that clearly isn't as aware of the job – or the employer – as they should be.

Before you even consider scheduling an interview with any employer, learn as much as you can about the company:

- Search for the company on YouTube and look for press conferences, announcements and presentations that could give you more information about their current direction.
- For small and mid-sized companies, Google the company's senior management and look for interviews and media pieces with information on any new developments and challenges.
- If you're interviewing for a digital marketing job with a technology company, search on [TechCrunch](#) for recent coverage of events that could affect the company's priorities.
- Find the company's Wikipedia page and make note of any new products, services and other offerings that you could talk about during your interview.
- Find the company's profile on GlassDoor and make a note of any interesting reviews from previous employees.
- Create a [Google Alert](#) so that you receive articles and discussions about the company via email as soon as they're published.

While you're researching the company, take detailed notes of any specific points that you think are relevant. Familiarize yourself with their products, unique technologies, company culture and other topics that you can mention during your interview.

Doing this demonstrates three things. First, it shows that you're familiar with the company and a good match for its needs. Second, it shows that you're a talented researcher. Third, it shows the interviewer that you're willing to go the extra mile to offer as much value as possible.

Digital marketing jobs rarely go to the unprepared. Dive into the company's background before your interview and you'll walk in with a deeper knowledge of its history, its culture and its goals for the future.

Practice answering the “essential few” questions

Even with a great understanding of the company, it’s possible to stumble on a question that you didn’t expect. It only takes one bad answer to potentially ruin a job interview, making it essential that you’re prepared for at least some of the questions you expect to receive.

In any industry, most job interviews consist of the same, or similar, questions. Apply the [Pareto Principle](#) to your interview prep and spend your interview prep time working on answers for the vital few questions that determine your suitability for the job.

[Unfunnel](#) has a great list of 30 common digital marketing interview questions. [HubSpot](#) has a similar list of 10 questions aimed at general marketing job interviews. Both lists contain a few “critical few” questions - the questions interviewers use to assess your skills and attitude.

Preparing ahead of time for critical questions has several benefits. The first is that you’ll have clear, reasoned answers for the questions that matter. You’ll be able to answer right away and provide real value, differentiating yourself from other candidates.

The second, and perhaps the biggest benefit, is that you’ll gain confidence. Instead of having to stop and pause, losing your tempo in doing so, you’ll go into each question with confidence that you know how to answer not just satisfactorily, but in a way that truly impresses the employer.

Perfect your online presence

Gone are the days when you could show up to a job interview relatively anonymously. Today, 93 percent of employers use social networks like Facebook and Twitter to screen candidates either before or after the job interview process.

Interestingly, employers look at social networks in all stages of the interview process. Data from an AdWeek survey shows that:

- **47% of employers look at a candidate's social media profiles after receiving their application**
- **27% check a candidate's social media profiles after their first interview**
- **15% check after their second interview with a candidate**
- **4% check just before making a job offer**

This means that even if your interview is successful, a poorly thought out Tweet from years ago or a Facebook party photo could be all it takes for you to miss out on receiving a job offer from the company. Avoid missing out on great opportunities by perfecting your social media presence before you begin the interview process. Adjust your Facebook account's privacy settings so that anything aside from your name and location is invisible to non-friends.

Scan your Twitter account and delete any tweets that could affect your reputation. Check that your LinkedIn profile is up-to-date and reflective of your current skills. Google your name and scan the first two pages to make sure there's nothing that could hurt your chances.

CBS News has a great guide to preparing your social media profiles for job seeking. It's 2016, and there's a good chance your prospective employer will Google you! Stay one step ahead to turn your social profiles into valuable assets instead of potentially dangerous liabilities.

Demonstrate hands-on experience

Employers choose interview candidates based on qualifications and skills, but they're far more likely to hire based on experience.

[Study data](#) shows that people with industry experience are 2.38 times as likely to get a job than their peers with similar qualifications and no experience.

Whenever possible, use your interview as an opportunity to highlight your relevant hands-on experience:

- When you mention how you would solve a problem or overcome a challenge, drive the point home with a specific example of how you've solved a similar problem in the past.
- When you get the chance to mention your past achievements, be as specific as you can with exact figures, statistics and improvements. Avoid round numbers and give specifics, since they're more likely to stand out as concrete improvements.

As a marketing professional, you're not just tasked with performing a job - you're also tasked with controlling a certain amount of the company's image. Show experience and you show that you're a reliable, proven pick for the job instead of just another candidate.

Create your personal “Story Statement”

When you’re asked a personal question in a job interview, do you opt for the interesting answer or the button-down, “boring” one?

Most job applicants avoid telling their personal story during a job interview, instead opting for a short, clichéd answer about their professional background and interest in the job. The result is a statement that says everything about your career and very little about you.

Forbes contributor Jon Youshaei recommends replacing the standard personal blurb with your own “Story Statement” -- a shortened, Cliff Notes version of your personal autobiography that shares just as much about you as a person as it does about you as a professional.

The goal is to describe yourself and your background, all while tying this history into the job that you’re applying for. Instead of being a brief snippet about you, it’s an engaging introduction that leads up to purpose behind your interview.

Just like your CV, your Story Statement should focus on a different aspect of your life for every job you apply for. Tailor your personal story to focus on your most relevant strengths, interests and passions and you’ll stand out as a highly motivated, engaging candidate.

Remember, the “classic” job interview rules still apply

Working at a digital marketing agency may not be quite like working at a Fortune 500 company, but it still has some aspects in common. Before your interview, remember that the classic “rules” of applying for a job still apply:

- Be polite and introduce yourself to everyone you meet with the goal of making a great first impression.
- Dress well (always dress at or above the standard for the employer) so that you stand out as someone that takes the opportunity seriously.
- Arrive for your interview on time (or preferably 10 to 15 minutes early) and bring extra copies of your CV and reference list with you.
- Avoid bad habits like slouching, fidgeting, chewing gum or mumbling. Meanwhile, focus on keeping great posture, maintaining eye contact and listening to your interviewer.

You are, after all, at a job interview. While the digital marketing industry is less formal than the norm in many ways, you lose nothing (and gain a great deal) by following the traditional “rules” of applying for a new job.

Are you ready for your digital marketing job interview?

Do you have a digital marketing job interview coming up? Whether you're applying to interview for an entry-level position or hoping to climb the career ladder into a senior job, apply our seven tips to make a great impression, stand out from the crowd and obtain your dream marketing job.

CHAPTER 5

How to Progress Your Career and Find Your Happy Path



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How to Progress Your Career and Find Your Happy Path

The demand for skilled digital professionals is growing exponentially; there's no better time to capitalize on the growth within the industry and advance your career. Are you aware of the number of opportunities that exist?

You can start your own business, progress through the ranks within an organization, go freelance, or start your own blog or vlog. The possibilities often seem infinite for a digital practitioner with the very skills you possess.

Rather than leave your career success to chance, you can strengthen your potential to progress by creating your very own digital marketing career plan in a few simple steps.

Step One: Define your digital marketing career needs

No matter how busy you are, it's important to regularly take some time to take stock of what your career priorities are and what keeps you motivated. Ask yourself the following questions regularly: what are your digital marketing career goals? Are you getting what you want from your career? Are you happy and motivated or drained and overly stressed?

You need to be able to define what's really important to you from a professional perspective. Set everyone else's needs and opinions and asides. Your voice is the only one you should hear as you plan your next digital marketing career step.

Get Your Career Priorities Straight:

Rank your career needs under the following criteria in order of what's most important to you (feel free to add your own if we've forgotten any needs that particularly resonate with you):

- **Training & Education** – I need to continuously learn new skills to stay excited.
- **Progression** – I want to work somewhere I can progress my career.
- **Culture** – I'd love to work in a positive environment where I can make friends.
- **Money** – I can't deny that money is an important motivator for me.
- **Location** – I'd love to walk to work or live in the city centre, for example.
- **Values** – I need to believe wholeheartedly in my company's vision and the product/service I'm marketing.

Assess Your Current Career Potential.

Now assess your current career situation under the same criteria. Ask yourself how your current role is meeting your needs in the following areas:

- **Training & Education** – Does your role allow for continuous learning?
- **Progression** – Is there potential for you to move up the career ladder in your current company?
- **Culture** – Is the culture a good fit for your personality?
- **Money** – Are you earning enough money or do you want/need more?
- **Location** – Do you have to endure a lengthy commute to work every day?
- **Values** – Do you wholeheartedly believe in the company's vision and are you happy to market this product/service?

Now that you've completed these two exercises, you should have developed a clearer picture where you are and where you want to be in your digital marketing career. Your next step is to define your digital marketing career mission.

Step Two: define your digital marketing career mission

What does your ideal career look like? That's what you need to figure out before you create your digital marketing career mission. Your career mission should encompass who and what you want to be. Make a list of aspirational digital marketing career heroes (influencers, bloggers and business owners you admire) and take note of how you'd like to replicate their success. Do you want to start your own blog, for example? Perhaps you'd like to be a digital marketing consultant, or start your own business?

Top Tip: *If you're the planning type and would like to take it one step further, you can make a list of the steps you plan to take to make sure you achieve your career goals.*

Your Career Mission Template

Now it's time to create a career mission template (this can be one line, a paragraph or a few lines – whatever you feel compelled to write) that helps you to determine what you want from your career. You can use the following template to help get you started:

- I want to make an impact in the industry by (insert your business or blog idea or particular skill you want to use).
- I'll get there by (insert the great thing you're going to do to help you get there – e.g. creating a business, starting a blog or mastering Google Analytics).
- I want to be (insert the kind of digital professional you want to be).
- Ultimately I'd love to achieve (insert your ultimate career mission – e.g. make money from my blog, become the Digital Marketing Director of a well-known company, etc.)

Step Three: find an industry mentor

Whether it's your current manager, a previous manager, or someone influential in your industry you admire, you need a digital marketing mentor. Look to someone you admire, respect, and aspire to be. A great tip is to choose someone who is already in the role you want for yourself.

Remember that you'll need to cultivate a reciprocal relationship with your mentor. Try to provide them with something valuable in return for their advice; can you help them with their website, or social media channels, for example? Remember to always keep your mentor informed of your digital marketing successes and don't forget to show gratitude.

How to reach out:

- Sign up to a site or newsletter to keep track of upcoming networking events in your area.
- While networking, look out for opportunities to genuinely help others.
- Connect with and reach out to influencers online - thank them for their great content, etc.
- If asking influencers for a favour or quote, keep your question short, simple and to the point.
- Guest blog - but be selective about who you approach (make sure they have a similar audience and are an authoritative site).
- Join relevant LinkedIn groups and regularly contribute your own opinions, thoughts and content.

Step Four: align yourself with ambitious peers

Never underestimate the power of people; ambitiousness can be infectious (in a good way).! You are the sum of the 5 people you hang around with most, according to motivational speaker, [Jim Rohn](#). So wouldn't it be helpful if those people were driven by success and ambition?

People who are ambitious about their digital marketing career are more likely to support you and provide practical tips to help you achieve your goals. They will also be better placed to empathize with your struggles, and understand how significant it is that you got a blog post published on Moz or that people are praising your new article in the Inbound.org community!

How to Find Ambitious & Successful Digital Marketing People:

Your Workplace – Are there any particularly ambitious people working with you? Someone who is starting their own digital marketing consultancy, for example? The excitement that your colleagues have for their own side projects and businesses can be incredibly motivating. Offer to help out with one of their projects, or try to collaborate in some way. You'll benefit from seeing your own enthusiasm for the industry grow.

Networking Events – Networking events are a hotbed for digital marketing talent. You'll find plenty of motivated, like-minded professionals at these events. Make sure you come armed with a smile, your business card and your personal digital marketing career mission. Again, a powerful way to connect with ambitious people is to offer to help them with their career, their blog or their business.

Through Social Media – Twitter has brought together plenty of digital marketing business partners, mentors and future colleagues; don't be afraid to reach out to people you respect and admire online. You can also do this LinkedIn and relevant online communities; you could foster connections by participating in group discussions on Inbound.org, for example.

Step Five: build your personal brand

Building a strong personal brand will help you to gain a competitive advantage during a job search, secure industry recognition, enhance your credibility and become an influencer in your niche. It all depends on what motivates you! Building a personal brand involves two phases: equipping yourself with the skills and experience needed to become an expert in your field, and then showcasing that expertise and refining your personal brand.

1. Identify your Unique Selling Point

What makes you good at what you do? It's important to identify what makes you unique from the outset. This will help you to stand out and set yourself apart from your competitors. First, determine your niche and your passions, and then articulate what value you can bring to your audience.

Top Influencer Tip:

Jeet Banerjee, Co-founder of Statfuse.com, TEDx Speaker & Bestselling Author Says:

“Be unique. Don't create a brand that's just like everyone else's.”

2. Choose your digital channels wisely

There is an abundance of digital channels to choose from, but it's important to be selective when developing your online presence. Choose the channels that your target audience are, the ones your competitors are utilizing. Don't spread yourself too thinly; focus on a few channels to maximize your time and enhance the effectiveness of your strategy.

When choosing channels, ask yourself:

- Is my audience there?
- What kind of content does this channel require (e.g. blog posts, video, imagery)? Do I enjoy creating it?
- Is this a channel that people in my industry are engaging and succeeding with?
- Do I have enough time to dedicate to managing this channel?

3. Be authentic and open

How you conduct yourself online, and how you interact with other people in the industry can have a massive impact on your personal brand. It's important to be sincere, and stay true to who you are and what you believe in, in order to grow meaningful connections and build trust.

Top Influencer Tip:

John Lee Dumas, Founder & Host of [EntrepreneurOnFire.com](https://www.entrepreneuronfire.com) Says:

“Being honest helps build trust and credibility with your audience, which will lead to a loyal following who knows, likes and trusts you.”

How to Be Authentic:

- Be as honest as you can be. Always.
- Don't endorse any products/brands/tools you don't believe in and wouldn't use yourself.
- Stay humble - don't let any success you might have go to your head.
- Remember to thank every person who helps you along with the way.
- Respond to criticism politely (both online and offline).

Step Six: never stop learning

As the digital industry advances at lightning speed, staying ahead is essential. Knowledge is power. Although it is recommended to specialize in and refine a digital marketing discipline like content marketing or SEO, there are a variety of additional skills with which you can equip yourself to propel your career forward! You should be able to gain insights from both your manager and industry mentor, but sometimes the best learning comes from what we're able to teach ourselves.

To ensure your skills are always up to date, use an app like [Feedly](#) to organize and read industry blogs that relate to your digital marketing discipline, be it PPC Hero or Social Media Examiner. You can also follow your favourite industry influencers on Twitter, who will share their experiences, advice and best practice tips to help you progress your own career. Start your own blog and newsletter to incentivize yourself to create content so you can practice driving traffic, distributing content and growing your subscriber list.

Ben Yoskovitz, Serial Entrepreneur, Author & Blogger says:

"I remember spending a good amount of time watching and learning, and then emulating what others were doing. It was natural to copy what seemed to be working. But over time you branch out, do your own thing, experiment and your own personality, brand, value emerges into email subscribers & leads."

CHAPTER 6

What can you
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Over the past few years, digital skills and technologies have become increasingly essential to all industries and areas of commerce, and there has been a sustained surge in the demand for digital experts to fill these vital roles.

Organizations are finding themselves in competition with one another to recruit skilled digital professionals, which has resulted in higher salaries and benefits. Whether it's flexi-time, an increased annual leave allocation, or incentivizing bonuses, the digital job market has never been more enticing! Wherever you are in the world, regardless of your level of experience, the digital industry can provide you with the potential to earn more and progress further.

We've provided a comparison of what you could be earning below:

Incomes in the USA

In the American job market, there is a high demand for digital professionals with specific skill-sets, and the readiness to compensate them accordingly! Content marketers who can create and distribute mobile-optimized content for a range of devices are particularly in-demand. Similarly, digital marketers with a strong knowledge of mobile and responsive design are highly sought after, as wearables and mobile devices grow in popularity!

Digital marketing salaries in the US are equally attractive; the [Creative Group](#) confirms that the average salary of a web content writer can range from \$47,750 to \$71,750 for between 1 and 5 years of experience. A fledgling SEO specialist with 1 to 3 years' experience can earn between \$52,000 and \$71,000, while at management level, an e-commerce marketing manager, for example, can take home between \$87,500 and \$120,500.

UK Pay-scales

Last year, digital salaries in the UK rose by 10% across most specialisms, with a notable need for mobile experts and front end / Java Script and full stack developers. The demand for skilled digital specialists across all channels is set to continue in 2016, along with a rising need for marketing technologists, content strategists and growth marketers.

In a salary guide compiled by [Hudson](#), it's reported that an entry-level digital marketing executive can earn between 25,000 and 35,000 pounds sterling, while an SEO manager can receive an annual salary ranging from 40,000 and 55,000 pounds. At the more senior end of the spectrum, the Head of Digital Marketing in an agency can earn up to 90,000 pounds sterling across a variety of sectors, from professional services, to financial services, to commerce.

Earning in Ireland

In Ireland, salaries continue to grow as the requirement for technically skilled, analytical marketers is acknowledged. According to a salary survey conducted by [Sigmar Recruitment](#), employers are placing particular emphasis on results-driven professionals with strong experience in executing and managing digital marketing campaigns, as well as marketing automation software such as HubSpot and Marketo. In terms of the salaries on offer, an SEO specialist with between 0-3 years of experience can expect an entry level salary of between 30,000 and 50,000 euro, as can a PPC executive

A more seasoned social media manager with between 3 and 5 years' experience could command between 45,000 and 60,000 euro, and an experienced Head of Digital Marketing in an agency has the potential to earn anywhere between 70,000 and 100,000, depending on their level of experience.

Emphasis on Education

As demand for digital experts consistently outweighs supply, organizations are finally beginning to invest in the necessary skills training to support digital career development and the retention of valuable employees as a result. An increased emphasis is being placed on education as a means for both individuals and organizations to keep pace with a constantly evolving industry.

