CHAMELEONS & PEACOCKS

How to Stand Out in a Job Search

Job Seeker Handbook

MOVE YOUR MOUNTAIN ADVISORY

This handbook is your reference guide for today's session. Use it to put what you learned to work in your search, refresh your memory before a networking conversation or an interview, and go deeper on topics we touched on but couldn't fully explore in the room.

Barb Monson | Founder & Principal, Move Your Mountain Advisory

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Section 1

The Framework: Chameleons & Peacocks

The Core Idea

Visibility is a tool. It gets you more influence, opportunity, and money. In a job search, being visible is not about becoming louder, more flashy, or someone you're not. It is about knowing when to blend in, when to stand out, and how to communicate your value in both moments.

When you lack visibility, effort becomes a proxy for credibility. You send more applications. You do more of the wrong things. None of it gets you into the room. From behind the job boards, there is no influence, no opportunity, and no money.

The room is not always the final round, either. Sometimes you have the right experience and still do not feel like you belong. This framework gives you a practical way to get into the room, and to feel like you belong once you are there.

The Three Pillars

1

Blend In vs. Stand Out

Balance blending in with standing out. Done correctly, both are good things. Done incorrectly, both are bad. Blending in the right way does not mean changing who you are. Standing out the right way is not about being the loudest person in the room.

2

Redefine Your Value

Your value is not your task list. It is the repeatable way you create outcomes, and your ability to create them again somewhere new.

3

Leverage Your Relationships

Getting hired is not transactional. People hire those they know, like, and trust.

> ***"Visibility isn't about being the loudest, the flashiest, and the first to hit 'reply all.' It's making sure you understand your value and that others know it, too."***
>
> **Barb Monson**

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Chameleon or Peacock? A Self-Check

For each row, mark the statement that sounds more like your search right now. Be honest. This is just for you.

Chameleon	Peacock
○ I find out about openings from job boards.	○ I find out about openings from conversations.
○ People know that I'm looking.	○ People know what problem I solve.
○ My introduction walks through my background.	○ My introduction makes people want to know more.
○ My LinkedIn profile is up to date.	○ I use LinkedIn as a positioning strategy.
○ What networking?	○ I follow up after networking and schedule more conversations.

Mostly Chameleon? Start with Section 2 and Section 4. **Mostly Peacock?** Make sure the value is behind it first. Peacocking without the value is just being showy.

Balance Blending In With Standing Out

When done correctly, both are good things. In a search, there are four versions.

1 Passive blending in	Apply online, tweak a resume, hope someone notices. Low effort where it matters and high effort where it doesn't.
2 Quiet, deliberate blending in	Doing the research, refining your story, reconnecting with people with real intent, and being useful to your network before you ask for anything. Nobody sees it yet, but it builds the material you will need later.
3 Standing out too soon, or too awkwardly	Peacocking before you have done the quiet work reads as posturing. Or you have the substance, but putting yourself forward still feels uncomfortable, so it lands wrong anyway.
4 Standing out with the goods	**The goal.** The discomfort wears off because you trust what you are standing on.

Skipping the quiet, deliberate work does not just slow you down. It means none of your effort turns into influence, opportunity, or money.

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What Worked for Me

The same three moves work in a job search. Strategies 1 and 2 already happened. You lived them. You just have to dig them up.

1

Make your boss's job easier.

My job description was always to make my boss's job easier. Look back at your own career. Every time you made someone above you look good, caught a problem before it landed on their desk, or ran interference so they didn't have to, that is not a soft skill. It is a specific accomplishment. **Go find three of them.**

2

Leave everything better than you found it.

Clean up the messes, document the procedures, reduce the cycle time. Where did you fix something broken, build a process that didn't exist, or make something faster or cheaper? Those are measurable outcomes. They are what you will use in your resume and your interviews.

3

Go for impact, not attention.

Attention is the peacock with nothing behind it. Impact is the outcomes. This is the one that is live right now, in your search. It is where you use what you found. That is the point of the quiet work: it makes standing out feel earned instead of forced.

While You Wait to Hear Back

What can you accomplish while you wait? Use the quiet stretches of a search wisely. This is where you:

- Sharpen your story
- Do the informational interviews
- Build your target list

One thing I will do this week:

My three accomplishments (from Strategies 1 and 2):

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Section 2

Find Your Value

Your value is not transaction-based. Your value is knowing what you bring to the table, outside of your tasks.

There are people who know how to do the work, and people who know how to talk about the work in an interview. In a search, we default to listing tasks as our value. Recruiters see hundreds of task lists.

What Value Actually Is

NOT Your Value	Your Actual Value
Tasks completed	The repeatable way you create outcomes
Deliverables produced	What you do that others can't replicate
Hours logged	The capability behind the result
Productivity metrics	Your ability to create those outcomes again, somewhere new

Visibility = knowing your unique value, and making sure others know it, too. Peacocking without the value is just being showy.

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Task vs. Value

A lot of us can talk about our outcomes. It is another step deeper to name the underlying ability that created them.

What you did	What you're known for
Ran the monthly close & budget process	I make the numbers something leaders can act on, not just read
Managed 3 plants and 400 people	I find the bottleneck nobody is talking about and fix it without stopping the line
Owned a large sales territory	I turn stalled accounts into long-term customers
Led recruiting and onboarding	I help leaders hire people who stay
Ran the ERP rollout	I translate between the technical team and the business so projects ship what people needed

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Where Your Value Hides

Start here. Write what comes to mind.

1. What do people keep coming to you for?

2. What problem do you fix that others avoid?

3. What did your last boss or team say about you, in reviews, emails, or recommendations?

Tip: Pull out the three accomplishments you wrote in Section 1, "What Worked for Me." Look for the pattern. That pattern is your value.

Let's Test It

Ask yourself:

- Would you struggle to articulate your value right now, in an interview, without having to think about it first?
- Do you have trouble receiving a compliment, or naming your own strengths out loud?
- Have you been frustrated by the silence, the rejection, or the lack of traction in this search?

Don't feel bad about this. It doesn't mean you don't have value. It just means you aren't ready to peacock yet.

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How to Find Yours: Costs Time

These are free. They take effort.

1. **Read your own records.**
   Performance reviews, recommendations, thank-you emails. Highlight the words other people used about you.

2. **Ask people.**
   Pick three to five people who worked with you. Ask: “What situations bring my name to mind?” This does double duty. It gives you your answer, and it gives you a reason to reach out to someone without asking for a job.

3. **Find the pattern.**
   Review your accomplishments. What is the common throughline?

4. **Use Right Management's tools.**
   Career Guidance Report, Strengths Assessment. Use them for personal branding.

Who I Will Ask

List three to five people. Add a date you will reach out by.

Name	Reach out by

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How to Find Yours: Costs Money

The four ways on the last page cost time. This one costs money and saves time. If you want a direct line to the language itself, the Visibility Signals Assessment is an option.

The Visibility Signals Assessment + Blueprint gives you the language.

What you get:

- The full guided assessment: all 40 visibility signals, sorted, narrowed, and prioritized.
- A visual map showing where your strengths show up, and where they don't.
- Five ready-to-use language templates for the moments that matter: asking for a raise or opportunity, client and sales conversations, interviews, networking, and your LinkedIn bio.
- Guided reflection questions that help you see where your signals already show up, and where you're leaving them on the table.
- Your personalized AI Blueprint prompt. Paste it into Claude or ChatGPT and get a full coaching report built around your top visibility signal and four supporting signals.

Your Blueprint Includes

1. Your core drivers
2. How you naturally create value
3. What energizes you
4. What drains your energy
5. Decision-making style
6. Communication & collaboration style
7. Leadership tendencies
8. How others experience you at your best
9. Potential blind spots
10. Growth opportunities
11. Reflection questions
12. Your anchor

+ 1 action to take in the next 7 days

Visibility Signals Assessment + Blueprint: $69

Click here to get the assessment
OR copy/paste this URL: https://barbmonson.gumroad.com/l/visibility

Your Visibility Signals

Whether you found your signals through the assessment, Right Management's tools, or your own effort, they name the patterns you already live out every day. You might not consciously notice them because they feel like just how you operate. Once you can name them, you can use them: in your bio, on LinkedIn, in a networking introduction, and in an interview.

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Section 3

Using Your Language Once You Have It

Your language comes from your visibility signals: the strengths people see in how you work.

However you found yours, that is your signal. The language is what you say because of it. Once you have it, you use it in two ways. You say it, and you write it.

Spoken	Written
Networking introduction	Resume language
Interview introduction	Cover letters
Interview language overall	LinkedIn (headline, About, posts)
In your job once you land	Thank you notes

Use Right Management's Resources

Right Management has many resources for the written pieces. This handbook does not teach resumes, cover letters, or LinkedIn profile writing. Use the RM resources, and bring your value language into each one.

Same language, two forms. If the two don't match, people notice.

What Comes Next

The spoken language comes first. Section 4 builds your networking introduction. Section 5 extends it into your answer to “Tell me about yourself.”

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Section 4

Build Your Introduction

The Purpose of an Introduction

So people know what you do for others. Not who you are, not where you work. What you do for them.

Everyone has been trapped in a networking conversation that went nowhere. A clear, short introduction is what people remember.

The Progression: From Forgettable to Memorable

#1 The Default Title + Company	*"Hi, I'm Barb Monson and I'm a Leadership & Career Advisor."*
#2 The Overcorrection Title + Company + Life Story + Everything I Do	*"I'm Barb Monson, founder of Move Your Mountain Advisory. I spent 26 years in corporate finance, everything from clerk to CFO, mostly in manufacturing, and along the way I realized that a lot of really talented people were being overlooked, not because they weren't good at their jobs, but because they didn't know how to make their work visible. So now I work with professionals on visibility and personal branding and LinkedIn optimization and influence and leadership and that kind of thing."*
#3 Getting Closer Title + Problem I Solve	*"I'm Barb Monson, founder of Move Your Mountain Advisory. I work with professionals on visibility and personal branding, helping people who are doing great work actually get recognized for it. Most people don't know how to talk about their own value, and that's the gap I close."*
#4 What Actually Works Who It's For + Outcome / Benefit (Bonus: a "without" statement)	*"I'm Barb Monson and I help people with their professional visibility so they can get more influence, opportunity, and money, without having to change who they are."*

What actually works:

- Explains what you do for them
- Promotes conversation
- Leaves them wanting to know more

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Two Secrets of a Great Introduction

1

Think sound bite, not data dump.

Your title, your company, your years of experience: none of that is your introduction. One clear idea is more memorable than six accurate ones.

2

Lead with what you deliver. Let your title provide context, not substance.

The person listening is always asking "why does this matter to me?" Answer that question first. Your title tells them where you sit. It doesn't tell them why they should care.

The Formula

Quick title *(who you are)* **+** **Who / how you help** *(what you do)* **+** **The outcome** *(what changes for them)*

Intentionally generic examples:

Operations	*"I'm an operations leader. I see how the plant, the suppliers, and the numbers affect each other, and I get those teams working from one plan, so problems get fixed before a customer feels them."*
Sales	*"I'm a sales leader. I see how the customer's needs, our team's capacity, and finance's limits fit together, and I get everyone behind one deal, so the deal we close is the deal we can deliver."*
IT	*"I'm an IT leader. I see how the systems, the budget, and the business priorities affect each other, and I get the technical team and the business at one table, so we catch the problem before it turns into an outage or a rewrite."*

These are intentionally generic. Yours should be tighter, specific enough to show how you are different.

Remember: keep it short, repeatable, and memorable.

Write your version here:

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What About Your Signals?

Your signals don't appear literally in your introduction. They are the reason your introduction sounds like you and nobody else.

THE NETWORKING INTRODUCTION	
"I'm a sales leader. I see how the customer's needs, our team's capacity, and finance's limits fit together, and I get everyone behind one deal, so the deal we close is the deal we can deliver."	**#1 Connecting the Dots** #2 Creating Alliances #3 Managing the Details #4 Prioritizing Under Pressure #5 Anticipating What's Next

Nothing in this introduction says "connecting the dots" or "creating alliances." But every word is informed by those signals. They are the engine behind your language, not the language itself.

Try It

Try the formula on yourself. Finish this sentence:

"I help / work with _____ do / achieve _____ so that they can _____."

How did it go?

- ○ Easier than I thought
- ○ Harder than I thought
- ○ I can write it, but I can't say it

You do not need a perfect introduction. You need a working draft. If it felt harder than you thought, go back to Section 2 and spend more time finding your value. Awkward is fine at this stage. Saying it out loud to one person is what makes it better.

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Section 5

The Interview Version: Tell Me About Yourself

Use this section as your reference when preparing for interviews. The structure below works for the most common opening question in any interview.

The Four-Part Structure

This is not a script. It is a structure. Say it conversationally, not from memory.

1	**Who You Are** Start with your networking introduction. *"I'm a sales leader. I see how the customer's needs, our team's capacity, and finance's limits fit together, and I get everyone behind one deal, so the deal we close is the deal we can deliver."*
2	**What You've Done** One or two specific accomplishments that prove what you just claimed. Start with: "In my most recent role, I…" *"In my last role, I saw a large deal heading toward terms our operations team couldn't meet. Six weeks before signing, I brought operations and finance in. We reworked the terms, still closed it, and delivered on time."*
3	**What You're Known For** The repeatable strength colleagues count on you for. Start with: "I'm usually the person teams come to when…" *"I'm usually the person who gets sales, operations, and finance into the same conversation early, without slowing the deal down."*
4	**Where You're Headed** Connect your value to the opportunity. Start with: "I'm looking for an environment where…" Stay forward-focused. "I'm looking for" is always stronger than "I left because." *"I'm drawn to companies where sales, delivery, and finance have to work together, because that's where a promise to a customer has the most riding on it."*

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Write Your Interview Version

1 Who you are	
2 What you've done	
3 What you're known for	
4 Where you're headed	

Keep in Mind

Your signals go beyond your introduction. As you prepare to interview, notice how your value has shown up in your career. Be ready to give examples in answer to interview questions that illustrate what you most want to be known for.

An Important Note on "Reason for Leaving"

Do not volunteer why you left a position in your introduction. That is an answer to a direct question. It is not part of your opening statement.

When the interviewer asks why you are leaving, or have already left, your last role, they are testing you. Do not, under any circumstances, give a negative or critical response. You will fail their test. Speak in truthful but neutral terms.

- *"My entire department was downsized in the latest restructuring."*
- *"My role has been a great learning experience, but I'm at a point where I'm eager to expand my skillset further."*

The differentiator: be forward looking. You're grateful for what you learned, and now you're excited about the possibility of _____ in this opportunity. Keep this entire response to under 10 seconds.

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Section 6

Getting Hired Is Not Transactional

“It's not WHAT you know, but who you know.” People hire those they know, like, and trust.

Three Moves That Worked for Me

1

Download your LinkedIn data.

Use it to find the people you have lost touch with and reconnect with intent. The full steps are in the Bonus section at the end of this handbook. The monthly routine is later in this section.

2

Use a QR code at events.

Share your LinkedIn QR code, and save the connecting for after the event. The full strategy is on the next page.

3

Follow up.

Connecting is not the goal. Conversations are. Message each new connection, and keep the conversation going.

A Simple Goal for Any Event

Meet two people you could have coffee with. That is enough. One good follow-up conversation beats a pocket full of business cards.

Ask People

The fastest way back into a relationship is a question, not an ask. In Section 2, in "Who I Will Ask," you listed three to five people who worked with you. Ask each one: “What situations bring my name to mind?” It gives you your answer, and it gives you a reason to reach out without asking for a job.

Networking is a long game. Don’t expect an immediate payoff.

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LinkedIn Networking Strategies

Connecting at an event or meeting:

1

During the event

Share your QR code, but do not accept requests during the event itself. If someone shares their code first, connect with them. Don't just “follow.” If someone follows you, send them a connection request.

2

When you're home

Wait until you're home. Then accept each connection, one at a time.

3

As soon as you connect

Send a short message: “It was great meeting you at [event name].” Share a memorable moment, or use my go-to line: “What are you working on right now that you're excited about?”

> ***The goal is to keep the conversation going. Some will stay online. Some will move to in-person.***

Events I Will Attend in the Next Three Months

Event	Date

My Follow-Up Message

Write the message you will send after an event, in your own words.

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Reconnecting With Existing Connections

Do this monthly.

1

Download your LinkedIn data.

Click your profile photo, then Settings & Privacy, then Data Privacy, then “Get a copy of your data.” The step-by-step instructions are in the Bonus section at the end of this handbook.

2

Filter for three groups.

Who you connected with in the past 3, 6, or 12 months and never followed up with. Who you worked with 2, 5, or 10+ years ago and have lost touch with. Who works at the companies, or holds the titles, you are targeting.

3

Reach out with a private message.

Follow the same protocol as the event follow-up on the previous page. Keep it short. Ask a question. Don't ask for a job.

Sample Messages

Use these as a starting point. Make them sound like you.

LOST TOUCH

“Hi [Name]. It's been a while, and I was thinking about the work we did together on [project]. What are you working on right now that you're excited about? I'd love to catch up.”

CONNECTED, NEVER FOLLOWED UP

“Hi [Name]. We connected a few months ago after [event or post], and I never followed up. What are you working on right now that you're excited about? I'd enjoy hearing more.”

AT A TARGET COMPANY

“Hi [Name]. I noticed you're at [company]. [Your one-sentence introduction.] I'd value your view of how things look from the inside. Would you be open to a short conversation?”

The first message is not an ask. It is a question. The goal is a conversation.

The first three people I will message:

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Section 7

Your Next Step

Choose ONE. Write the specifics: a name, a date, or both. Vague is not a plan.

A	**I need to build my story** so I can peacock confidently. Start with Sections 2 and 4.	***I will finish my introduction by*** _____
B	**I'm ready to leverage my existing LinkedIn network.** See Section 6, Reconnecting With Existing Connections.	***I will download my data by*** _____ ***and message*** _____ ***by*** _____
C	**I'll register for events** to attend in the next three months. See Section 6, LinkedIn Networking Strategies.	***I will register for*** _____ ***by*** _____
D	**I'll create a messaging and follow-up strategy.** See Section 6.	***I will write my follow-up message by*** _____

Recap

1

Balance blending in and standing out

Do the quiet work first. Then stand out with the goods.

2

Redefine your value

Know what you bring beyond your tasks, and have the language to say it.

3

Leverage your relationships

People hire those they know, like, and trust. Build the relationships before you need them.

> ***It's making sure you understand your value and that others know it, too.***
>
> **Barb Monson**

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Thank you!

Right Management has many resources for your resume, your cover letters, and your LinkedIn profile. Use them, and bring your value language into each one.

Your value is already there. The work now is to name it and say it out loud.



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Bonus Section

LinkedIn Data Download

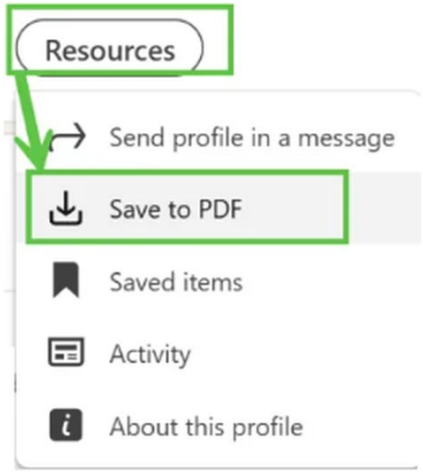
Use these steps for the monthly reconnect routine in Section 6. You will also download a PDF of your profile.

How to Get a Copy of Your Data

1	Click the **Me** icon (your profile photo in the upper right corner of the screen).
2	Go to **Settings & Privacy**.
3	Select **Data privacy**.
4	Select **"Get a copy of your data,"** listed under How LinkedIn uses your data.
5	Click the arrow.
6	Select **option 1: Download larger data archive**.
7	Click **Request Archive**. It will send you two links: partial results, and full results in 24 hours.

Also Download a PDF of Your Profile

The PDF includes your headline, About section, experience, top 3 skills, certifications, and publications. Go to the **Resources** area on your profile (previously called More). Then choose **Save to PDF**.



LinkedIn changes its menus from time to time. If a step doesn't match what you see, search LinkedIn Help for "download your data."

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