

HOW I GOT MY DREAM JOB WITH NO APPLICATIONS OR INTERVIEWS

A Step by Step Guide



By David Ly Khim

PROLOGUE

Heyo! David Ly Khim here. Nice to see you. (:

If you're reading this, you're probably searching for a job or plan on searching soon. If so, you've downloaded the right resource.

My goal with this manual is to walk you step-by-step through the process I took that ended with me getting an awesome job. Hopefully I can ease your job search and lift some stress off your shoulders.

Let me tell you about my job. I'm at a digital marketing agency in Los Angeles and I work from my home office. That means I can play with my dog whenever I want. The only thing that matters is that I get my work done. I also get mentored by the CEO and get some awesome perks like Spotify Premium, Amazon Books and a Macbook Air. *Not bad.*

I love what I do. It aligns with both my career and personal goals. It was difficult to accept that work and life are aligned now. I was used to separating work and life, but now, work *is* life. And I'm okay with that.

I promise this isn't some wacky "believe in yourself" or law of attraction mumbo jumbo. All the online articles give you tips and tricks, but they don't actually tell you how to get a job.

My goal is for you to learn at least one new strategy to apply to your job search. If I don't succeed, you can have your money back. (:

David Ly Khim

P.S. I just wanted to say I've written a prologue. Mission accomplished.

Thank you to

*Celina, Van, Cody,
Tim, Emerline and Alvin*

*for your generous feedback on this manual
and putting up with my nagging.*

Cover graphic designed by [Jake Gavino](#).

INTRODUCTION

Jobs are difficult to come by.

That's probably what you're used to hearing. But that doesn't mean companies aren't hiring. As long as businesses exist, jobs will *always* exist.

To be more correct, jobs are just difficult to obtain, especially in this economy. You know, the bad economy we keep hearing about.

Because of this, many people will blame their unemployment on the *job economy*. That's like a student blaming the professor for his bad grades.

While it's partially true, in reality, you have more control over your job prospects than you think. It's just easier to blame the job economy than to consistently put yourself out there and get rejected.

From research and interviews I've conducted, I've found that the most popular method for applying to jobs is the **shotgun method**: blast out hundreds of resumes and applications in hopes that *someone... anyone* hires you.

Unfortunately, there are various flaws in that approach:

- You don't *really want* most of those jobs.
- You don't *care* about most of those companies.
- You're just *another* resume in the pile.
- You don't *stand out*.

Chances are, *no one's going to hire you.*

A few people get lucky with the shotgun approach, but *those few often end up at companies they don't care for, doing something they don't want to do*¹.

Does that situation sound familiar?

At the time of writing this manual, I have friends who have been stuck in the job search for a few months to years. After speaking with many of them individually, I realized that my approach to the job search was entirely different. I didn't send out hundreds of applications.

The thing is, I wasn't even been looking for a job in the first place. It just played out that way.

Imagine all the time you're spending sending out hundreds of resumes when, in reality, you just need to **laser target** 3-5 companies you *really* want to work for.

I'm going to walk you through the exact steps that allowed me to skip the entire application process and land a job at a great company. This method can be applied to nearly any field—yes even technical fields.

You shouldn't expect to do exactly what I did. You may need to get creative with your approach to fit the industry you're trying to get into. However, the general principles will still apply.

Let me clarify that just because there were no applications involved, doesn't mean that it was easy. In fact, since you will be laser-targeting companies, it will be more work on your end, but that work will pay off.

¹ I admit there are outliers who end up at a job they love and stick with for years. That rarely happens, though.

It's easier to upload your resume and click "submit" hundreds of times. But that often won't get you the results you want—a job.

You're welcome to continue submitting resumes and praying if you'd like. Just close this window, delete this file and carry on.

But if you're open to trying something new and willing to put in the work, I'd like to present a different approach to the job search.

With this approach, you're going to focus on quality, not quantity. Let's face it. You deserve quality in your life. So let's get it.

Don't spend your time further reading this manual if you're:

- not going to admit that your current approach isn't working
- not open to trying something new
- not willing to do real work
- not planning on getting a job you want anytime soon

This isn't for lazy people.

But you've read this far which means you're not lazy. You're hardworking and driven and you deserve an awesome job and a high quality of life.

You can do this.

Before we begin, I'd like to clarify that my initial intention in this process was **not** to get a job. It's important to genuinely want to connect, learn and get advice. In turn, opportunities may open up.

Don't expect good results if you go into this process expecting a job.

Employers can tell right off the bat if you're trying to game them. Instead, focus on the idea of meeting professionals and learning from them. Knowledge and relationships are extremely valuable.

Finally, let's begin.

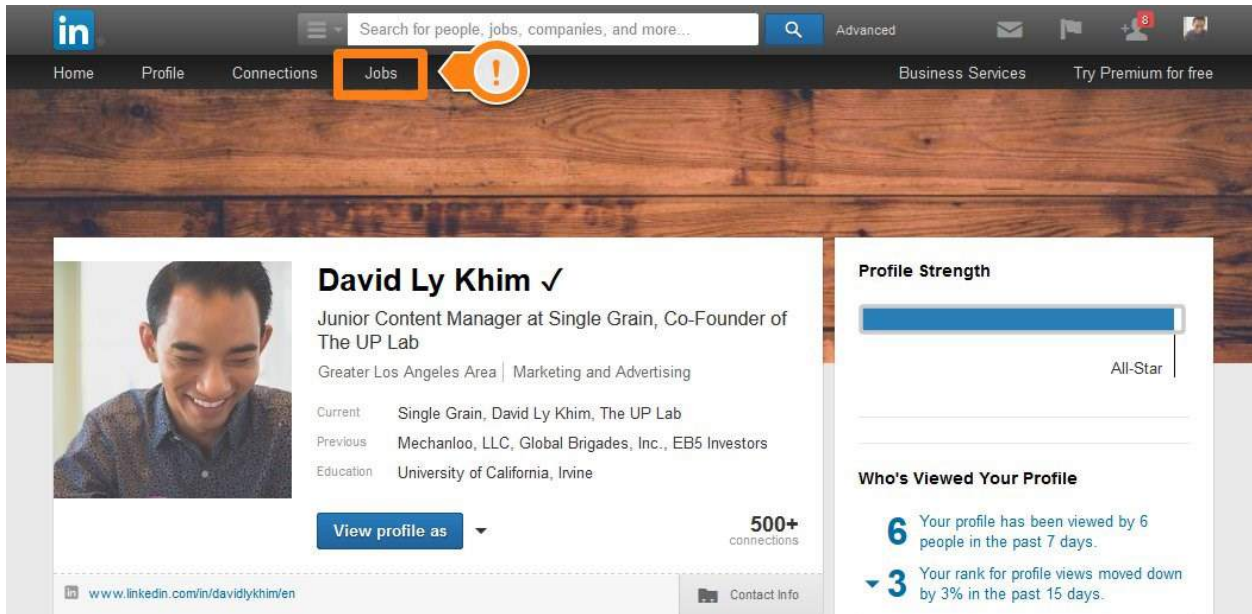
Shop Around Until Someone Catches Your Eye

With a laser targeted approach, you're going to craft a tailored email and probably a cover letter and you will very likely do real work for the company. It's important to put in the effort to find companies you're genuinely interested in and get in touch with someone. Don't get excited just because a company hiring.

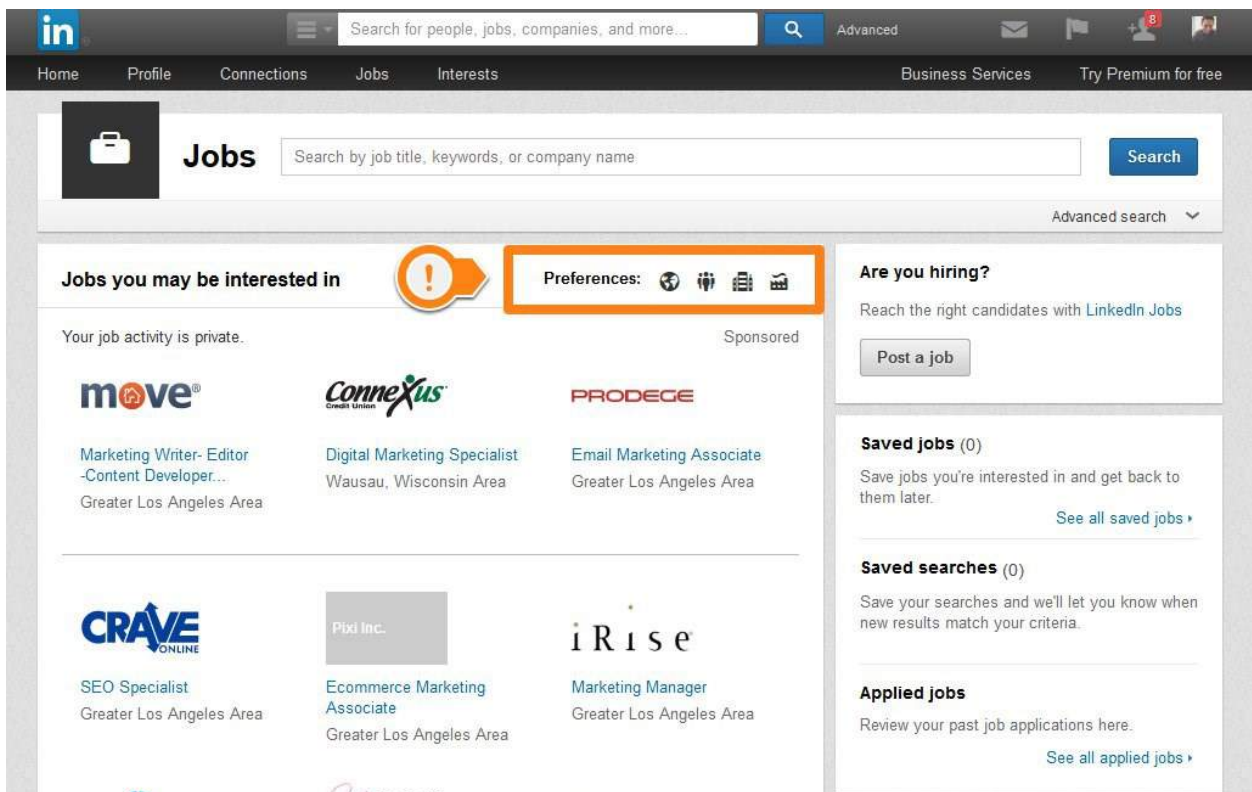
You can find companies by doing a simple Google search, but I prefer to use websites like LinkedIn. When you find a company you're interested in on LinkedIn, you can easily search the people who work there and get an understanding of their work experience and background. Glassdoor is also a good resource to learn what it's like to work for a company.

Here's how you can use LinkedIn to browse for specific job listings and uncover companies you haven't heard of.

After logging into your LinkedIn account. Go to your profile page and click on “Jobs” at the top.



You'll be taken to a page of job listings. There is an area where you can provide your preferences as to what type of company you're looking for.



What location(s) would you like to work in?

What experience level describes you best?

Unpaid to Manager

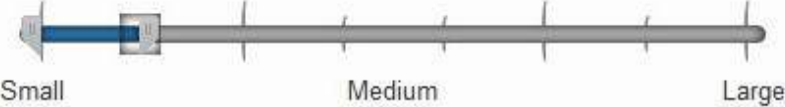


Entry Experienced Executive

A horizontal slider with a blue segment from 'Entry' to 'Experienced' and a grey segment from 'Experienced' to 'Executive'. A vertical marker is positioned at the 'Experienced' level.

What company size works for you?

1 to 50 employees



Small Medium Large


A horizontal slider with a blue segment from 'Small' to '1 to 50 employees' and a grey segment from '1 to 50 employees' to 'Large'. A vertical marker is positioned at the '1 to 50 employees' level.

What industries are you interested in?

<input type="checkbox"/> Construction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High Tech	<input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consumer Goods	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation, Travel, and Entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing	<input type="checkbox"/> Service Industry
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation

Bam. You'll have a list of jobs that match that criteria.

Now, choose a company, any company of your liking to read the job description.













Digital Marketing Manager

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
Other Details

159
Applicants

See how you compare to the competition
Get more insights on who's applied with a Premium account.

[Upgrade free](#)

About this job

 **Job description**

The Position

We're seeking an experienced Digital Marketing Manager to join our headquarters in Santa Monica, CA. As an integral part of the business development team, you will help build awareness and drive interest in our platform for universities...

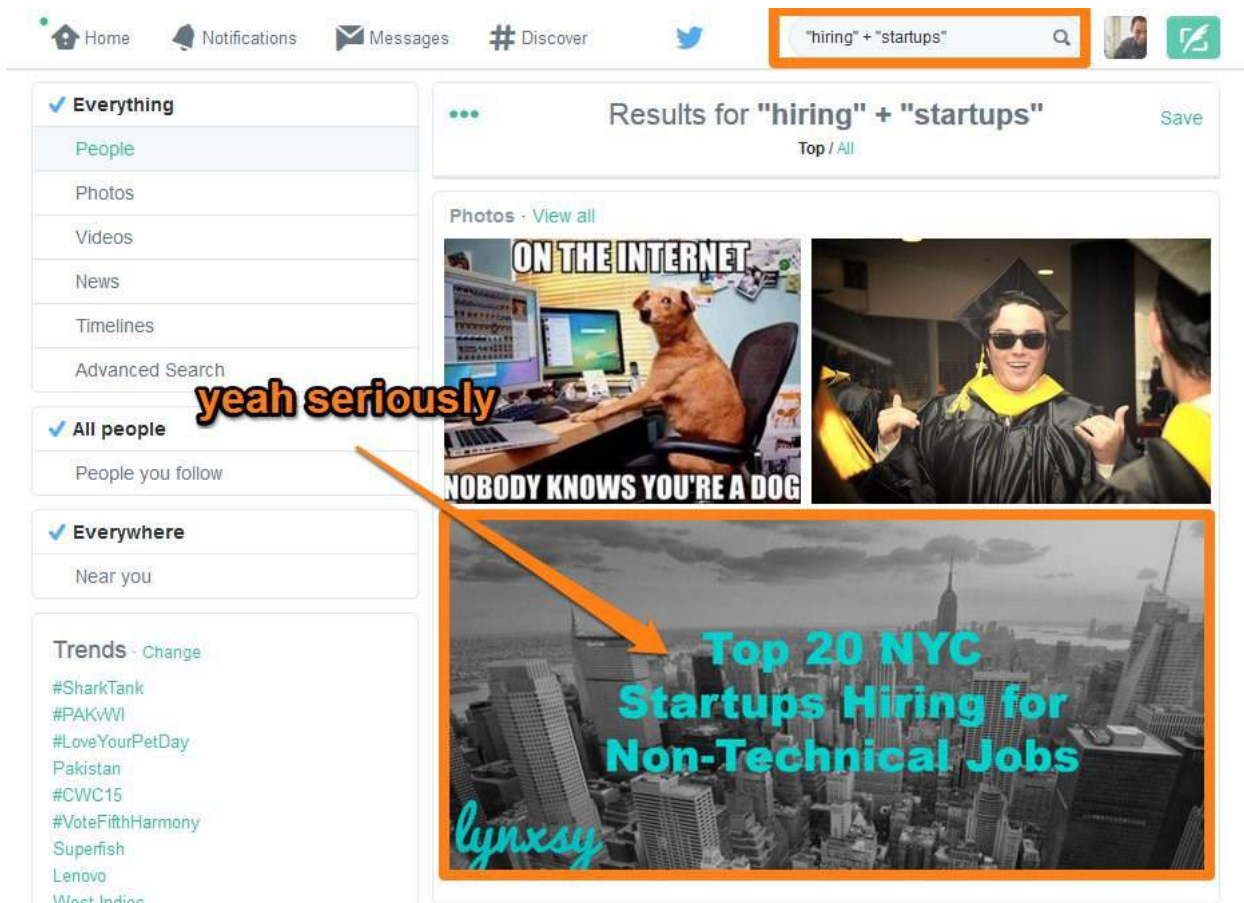
In this role, you will work with our Director of Business Development to analyze marketing metrics and customer data and build strategies for growth. You will also develop engaging, persuasive content and collateral for our marketing campaigns, blog, website and social media. The ideal candidate must have strong creative and professional writing skills for drafting copy and content and also an analytic mind for optimizing our outreach strategy based on marketing metrics and customer data.

Please apply with your Resume.

The job description is cool. But I want you to look at the right side, “People Also Viewed” column. This is where you can get your browsing on. Click around to look at what other types of positions are available.

Don't pay attention to the number of applicants. Once you find a company you want to look for, it won't matter who else has applied. (:

Here's how you can also use Twitter to search for jobs that aren't often listed.



If you look at the search bar, I typed in:

“hiring” + “startups”

Exactly like that. This is a search engine trick. What I searched for are tweets that contain the exact words “hiring” and “startups” in no particular order. Here are another one you can play around with:

“hiring startups”

That one searches for tweets with that exact phrase. So “hiring startups” is not the same as “startups hiring.” You’ll have to play around with plurals, singulars and spaces. Each combination may generate different results. In addition to the two above, I also searched:

“startup” + “jobs”

“hiring” + “startup”

I had begun to use Twitter more and did a search for startup jobs in LA.

After browsing around, I ended up on the Single Grain² Twitter profile. I searched the company on LinkedIn and found the CEO, Eric. His profile stood out for three reasons:

- Professional profile photo
- He had a freaken check mark next to his name (looks legit) and
- Take a look at his skills below

The image shows a screenshot of a LinkedIn profile for Eric. On the left, the 'Background' section is visible, featuring a 'Summary' icon and a list of skills. The skills list includes: SEO, Paid Search (Pay per click advertising), Affiliate Marketing, Display Advertising, Mobile Advertising, Remarketing/Retargeting, Facebook Marketing, Video Advertising, Twitter Marketing, Google Analytics, Conversion Rate Optimization, and Sales. On the right, a circular diagram illustrates Eric's professional network and expertise. The central circle is labeled 'Skills & Expertise' and contains the number '11'. Surrounding this are four smaller circles: 'Company' (1), 'Group' (1), and 'Location' (1), each with a '1' above it. A profile picture of Eric is also visible in the diagram.

To a digital marketer like myself who's always looking to learn, I saw a gold mine of knowledge. I've learned that the people around you determine your success and I saw that I could learn a lot from Eric.

A quick look through Eric's LinkedIn profile took me to his two companies, Single Grain and Growth Everywhere.

To become acquainted with his work, I visited the websites of both companies and downloaded any free educational material they provided and read months worth of blog posts. I had to learn everything I could about his companies so that I knew what to talk to him about.

After doing the research, I had to reach out.

Formulate Your Ask and Get in Touch

Here is where you take the first leap. I contacted Eric using a form on his website:

Enter Your Question Here*

Hey Eric,

David Ly Khim here. I found you while doing a search on Twitter about startups and marketing and I ended up on singlegrain.com and growtheverywhere.com.

I've been following your work and I found the 8 Online Marketing Tactics extremely useful. I knew of the skyscraping, Facebook lookalike audiences and SEO tactics beforehand and it's awesome that I've learned 5 new tactics.

Your skill set is essentially what I hope to develop and I'd like to talk to you about any advice you may have about breaking into the tech startup scene as a digital marketer.

Are you up for a 30 minute coffee meeting sometime next week at the Starbucks on San Vicente in Brentwood? I'm available Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 11-2 each day. Hope to hear from you!

- David

There are three key points to include in the first message:

1. Explain how you found him so you don't come off as a spammer.
2. Demonstrate that you've read material from the company and learned from it.
3. Make an ask. Specify how much of his time you would like, suggest a place to meet and provide times you're available.

As stated by entrepreneur and digital marketer, Noah Kagan, you have to make it easy to say yes³. All Eric had to do was reply with the time that worked best for him.

However, there was one big problem. I didn't know how *I* could provide value to *his company*. What reason would he have to speak to me unless if I was able to demonstrate some sort of value?

I spoke to Eric about this. He explained that he was simply just open to meeting with me. He had no agenda for the meeting and he took a bet on me. That bet has paid off. (:

I sent the email and stepped away from my laptop. Eric sent back a response in less than an hour.



The meeting was in our calendars.

³ [Make it Easy to Say Yes](#) by Noah Kagan

Why would ask for a coffee meeting? Why not just look at the websites and see if they're hiring?

A coffee meet is an opportunity to connect with highly experienced professionals and to learn. It isn't a means to get a job. I was in a position where I needed a mentor, someone with more knowledge and experience that I could learn from.

You may have been told that getting a job is less about what you know and more about who you know.

However, it's undeniably difficult to make meaningful and valuable connections. A coffee meeting⁴ will help with that. As long as you don't screw it up by asking for a job.

Many refer to this as an informational interview⁵, which can be easily, but wrongly considered part of "the game" of getting a job. It's important to genuinely want to learn from the person you reach out to.

Professionals can tell right away if you try to kiss ass to get a job. Even the slightest hint of it will disqualify you from receiving good advice. This is why I prefer to think of it as a coffee meeting instead.

It's a conversation, not an interview.

⁴ [10 Steps for an Awesome Coffee Meeting](#) by Sean Blanda

⁵ [How to Land and Ace an Informational Interview](#) by Jacquelyn Smith

Do Your Research to Avoid Stupid Questions

So the meeting is booked. Here's where the first stage of work comes in.

I went to the Single Grain and Growth Everywhere websites and subscribed to their newsletters. I had already read the blog posts but read even more. It's important to find out everything you can about the company including how they started, what they value and exactly what they do.

It's also important to learn about the person you're going to meeting up with. I visited Eric's LinkedIn page again and looked at previous companies he had worked at to get an idea of his career path.

Why all the research?

Contrary to what people say, **there are stupid questions and the point of doing research is to avoid asking those stupid questions.**

What's a stupid question?

- What do you do? (It's likely all over the internet.)
- What does your company do? (Seriously?)
- How can I get a job? (You just met this person and you haven't done anything for him. What makes you think he'll give you a job?)

Ask specific questions that you believe only that person would be best fit to answer.

I had about 20 questions prepared. I didn't plan on asking all the questions, but it's better to be over prepared in case his answers were short. Here are a few of my questions:

- You have a lot of experience in digital marketing. How did you end up in this field of work?
- Could you walk me through your typical work day?
- What are the biggest challenges you're facing with Single Grain and Growth Everywhere right now?
- My understanding of digital marketing is holistic. I have a broad understand of the different avenues of marketing, but I haven't figured out what channels to specialize in. What advice would you have for that?
- Would you have any advice for me for breaking into a digital marketing agency or a startup team?

You may notice that my questions⁶ are tailored for Eric and his experiences. Not only that but the questions I asked were specifically to solve my career problem at the time.

Eric and I met and we had a good chat. I had my notebook handy with questions and took plenty of notes as he spoke. The biggest thing he emphasized was to “**stay hungry and always be looking to learn.**”

Note: There's no doubt I was nervous to meet someone I considered successful and knowledgeable. I arrived to the meeting an hour early so I could settle down. My biggest tip is to stay curious about the person in front of you. Don't just ask about his or her job. Ask about specific knowledge and experiences.

Don't Forget to Follow Up!

This is the next big leap and—not surprisingly—where many people fall off the process.

Imagine you ask a girl (or guy) out to a date and she says yes. You both have a great time, but neither of you text each other afterward. You can't expect to see each other again or become something more without following up.

That's why you follow up.

I'd often ask friends if they followed up after submitting their resume. The question was almost always met with a confused look and a “Why?”

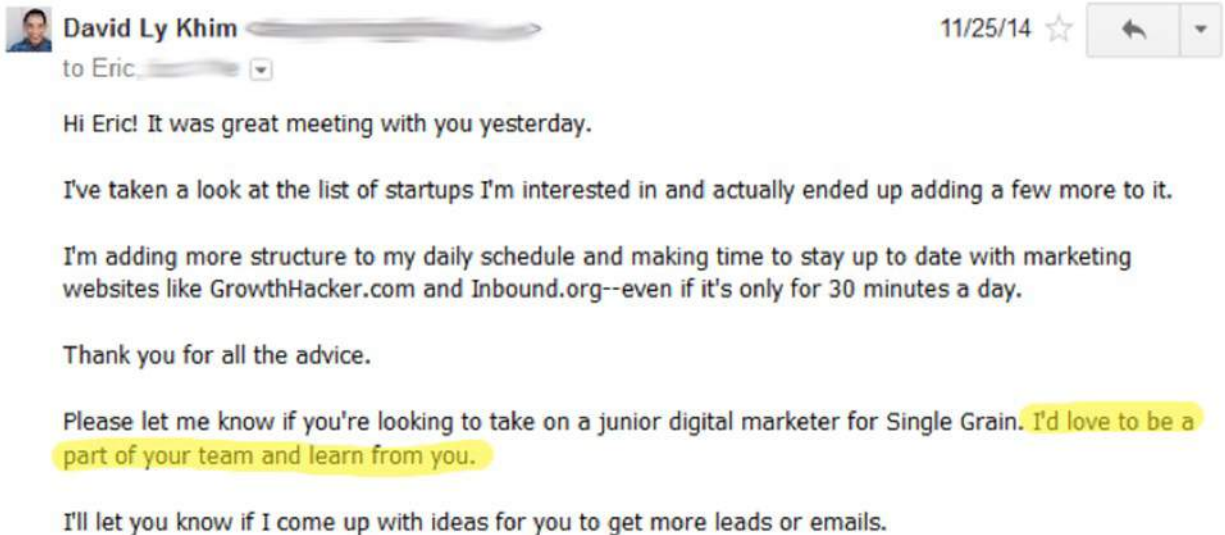
I couldn't believe it.

The follow up is crucial to solidify the connection and continue the relationship. Don't forget to follow up. EVER.

It's similar to how you meet a friend's friend at a party and decide to add your new friend on Facebook. That's a form of following up.

Again, **remember to follow up**. I'm begging you.

I didn't send Eric a friend request, but I did send him an email the next day.



Take a look at the four key things in the email:

1. Explain what actions you've taken since we met based on the advice he gave me.
2. Thank him again.
3. **Make another ask**—this time a much bolder one than asking for coffee (it's highlighted so you don't miss it).
4. Let him know you'll keep him in mind. I told him I would come up with ideas for him.

Look at number three again.

I tossed in the idea of working with him—but I didn't focus on the work part. I wanted to be a **part of his team** and to **learn** from him.

Are you seeing the pattern?

The job is not the priority.

Eric responded and asked if I had created any marketing reports or audits. He wanted to see some internet marketing I've done.

Big problem.

I had never created any reports or audits before. My previous jobs didn't require me to. And I didn't know how to demonstrate the internet marketing I've done.

However, bestselling author and entrepreneur, Ramit Sethi, states that **top performers will go the extra mile to stick out and make things happen in their favor**⁷. Although it may seem like your lack of experience is handicap, there's something you can do about it.

You have to apply the briefcase technique. In my case, I didn't feel like there was anything in my briefcase yet. Better yet, I didn't even have a briefcase.

Let's fix that.

Time to Buff Up Your Briefcase

This is where more than half of all job searchers will give up on this approach because it's *too much work*. This is better for us because we're willing to go the extra mile.

This is the most important part of this process because while other people will give up, you have an opportunity to demonstrate your capabilities and your value.

I could've said, "I guess I'm not qualified," thrown my hands up and leave it at that.

No thanks.

You'll often find yourself looking at job listings that you feel tremendously under-qualified for and decide not to apply. Join the club.

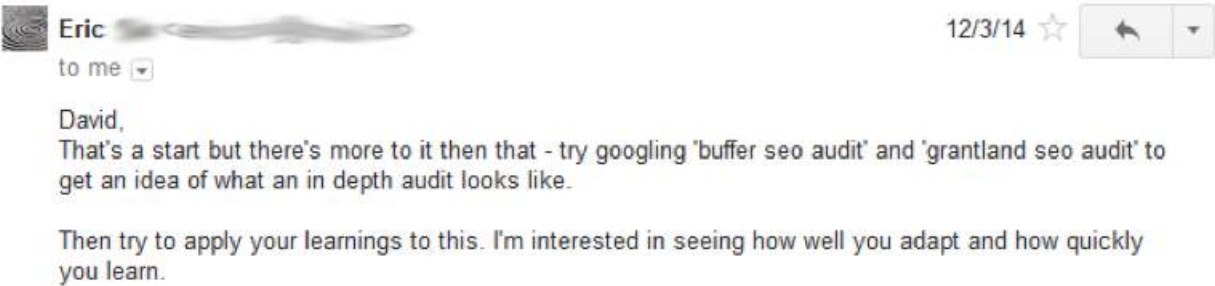
However, there's always a way to look better to hiring managers—do work for them as if you're already working for the company. Although the person you speak to make not ask for you to do work for them, do it anyway. It shows that you're serious. Marketer and entrepreneur, Charlie Hoehn, refers to this as doing free work⁸.

Although I hadn't done any marketing audits or reports at previous jobs, I recalled that the latest newsletter I received from Eric was a video demonstrating how to do a quick SEO audit (I wouldn't have known this if I didn't do my research beforehand).

I followed along with the video and presented Eric with an SEO audit for Single Grain. If you don't know what SEO is, don't sweat it. It's just marketing speak.

I'm going to provide examples of how you can apply this concept of free work in different situations later.

I sent the report to Eric and received feedback within an hour. After reviewing the feedback, I improved the report and sent it over again. Eric sent me even more feedback to improve the audit.



You might be faced with a situation where you did some free work and sent it over but got no response, or worse, you got a seemingly ungrateful response.

Realize that the person you email probably has a lot on his or her plate. The fact that she took the time to respond is huge. That means she'll be more open to responding to future emails. If you don't get a response, follow up. If you get a response then keep pushing forward.

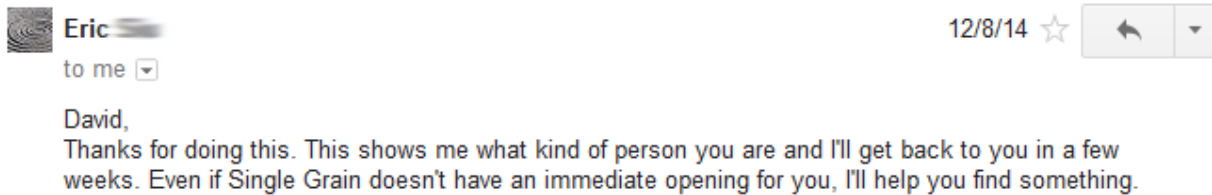
In my case, I could've thought "This is way too much work. For nothing!" I could've stopped right there. Instead I told myself,

This guy is really pushing me. He isn't settling for work that's just okay. This is helping me. I have to prove myself.

You don't have to be in marketing to understand that I essentially did about 20 hours of free work for Eric and produced a real product for him that would help his company.

This is what you will have to do to stand out. No one else is going to actually do work for a company for free. If you do it, boom, you stand out.

Within an hour, Eric responded to my email with the following:



Hell yeah.

Remember, you don't have to leave it at "I don't have experience," or "I'm not qualified."

You can choose to create your experience. You can choose to create qualifications for yourself.

The experience and the qualifications won't always come in the form of a certification or a publication, but it's something related. This is where you get creative with your approach.

The real qualification is that **you demonstrate you're capable of producing real results with minimal direction**. Don't think too much about the work aspect. Think of how you can help the company.

In some industries, it may make more sense to demonstrate your value by getting certifications or taking courses or getting an internship.

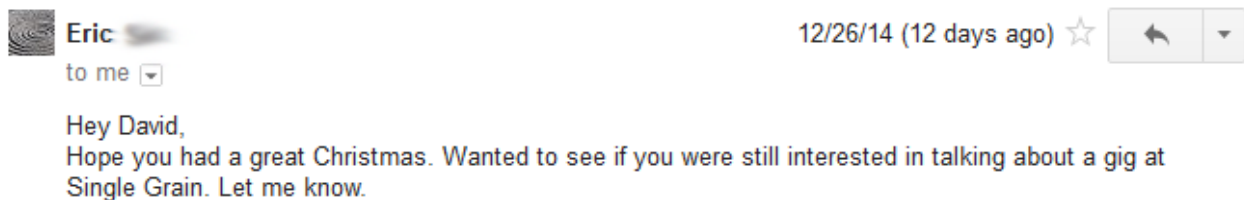
There are many ways to demonstrate your capabilities. Each of those things will vary in the time it takes to complete them, but all of each of them will fill your skill and experience gap and give future employers something to look at it—and be impressed by.

It'll be worth it.

In my case, I created a report and I wanted to show you the back-and-forth that might occur. Don't expect it to be a one time thing.

Finalize the Offer

A few weeks later (actually, the day after Christmas), I got an email.



Merry Christmas, David.

We chatted on the phone and he presented an offer. I was excited. But I had to meet with two more people on the team, Matt and Josh, to see if I would fit in. Hardly an interview.

Another meeting was scheduled via email.

Remember how I did my research on Eric before our meeting? I did my research on Matt and Josh as well. Although I was the one that was going to be interviewed, it was yet another opportunity for me to learn and get advice from people who are more experienced than me (yes

we're still learning).

Three days after the meeting with Matt and Josh, I got on a call with Eric and he offered me job at Single Grain.



WIN.

The situation may differ for you. The person you're speaking to may not get back to you so soon. You'll have to follow up again to understand how to proceed moving forward. You may not be offered a job. If they demonstrate that they appreciate the work you did, you may have to actually ask them if there is a position you can fill.

As shown by the dates in the emails, this process took about month and a half.

This process isn't a one time thing like submitting resumes. As stated many times, it's a process. It's about developing a relationship and find people to learn from.

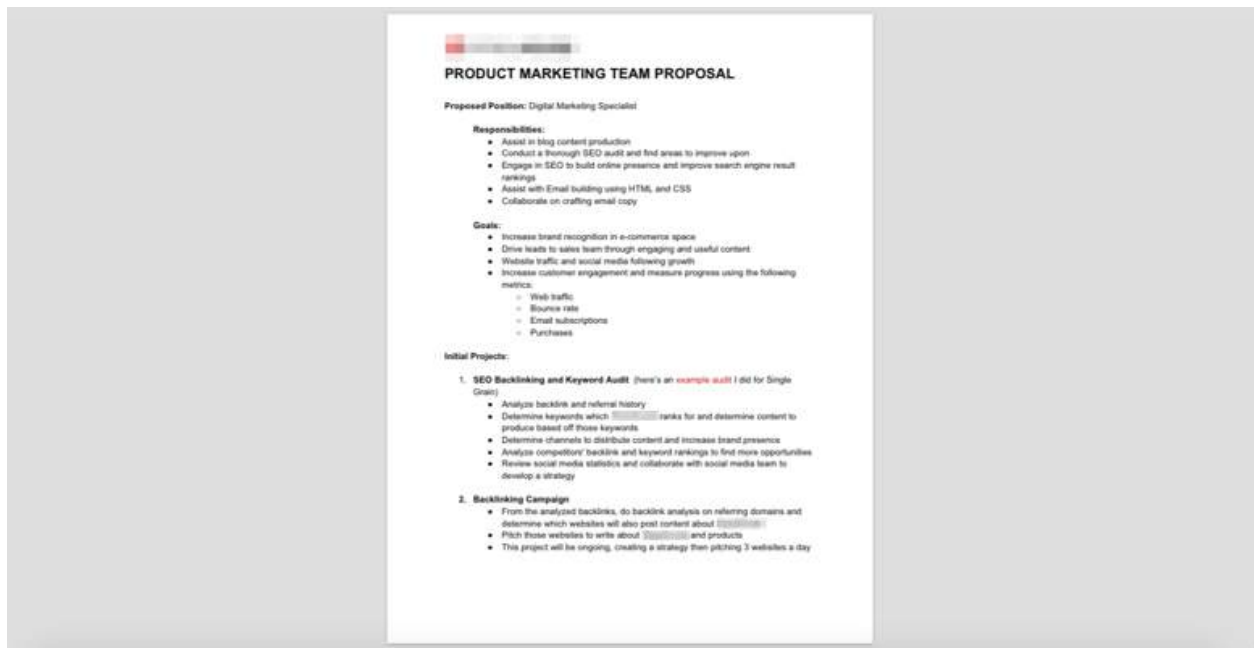
Other Factors to Consider

If you don't have a source of income and you need a job ASAP, do not rely only on this approach. I suggest a hybrid of the shotgun and laser approaches.

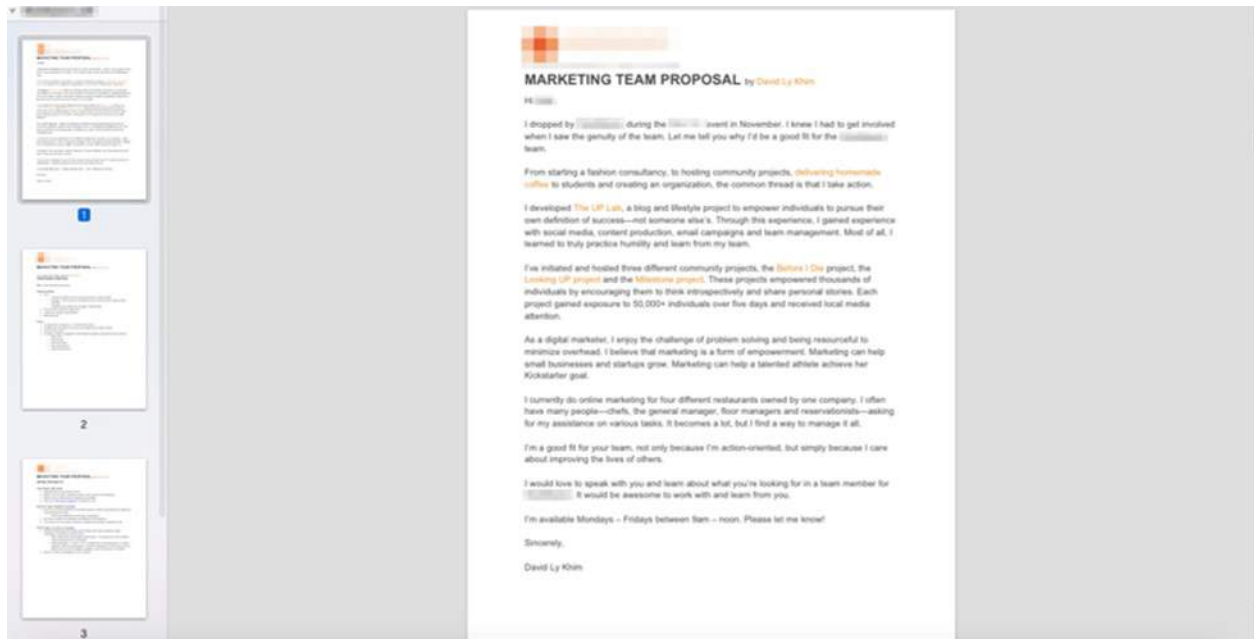
Use the shotgun method to get a job as soon as you can to have a source of income but also have a few companies you're laser targeting.

Although I didn't take the shotgun approach, Single Grain wasn't the only company I was talking to. I was in touch with the marketing directors at two other companies during this entire process. I had a very similar approach to the other companies.

That means that I was doing more work than what you just read about. And it was worth it because I developed relationships with other companies and got to learn what they were up to.



I proposed a position for myself within the company based off the goals I learned about.



I wrote a cover letter, proposed a position for myself that would fit with their team and created three projects that I would've worked on immediately if they hired me.

There are two large hurdles throughout this process to take note of:

Patience: If you have patience, this is going to be much easier. It helps to have a long-term perspective of this approach. People who are focused on the short-term or don't have patience will go back to submitting resumes because it *feels* productive.

Hard work: If you accept that you'll have to work hard, then you'll be ready for it. Don't expect to go in and have a job handed to you. People who don't see the necessity of going the extra mile will give up quickly.

It's all about persistence. If you don't get a response, you follow up. Still no response? Follow up again in a few days. As long as you're overly polite and humble with your phrasing, you won't be annoying.

Now It's Your Turn

I hope these tactics will help you in your job search. Again, those steps were:

1. Shop around
2. Formulate your ask and get in touch
3. Do your research to avoid stupid questions
4. Don't forget to follow up!
5. Buff up your briefcase
6. Put in (more) work
7. Finalize the offer

Remember, don't focus on getting a job. Focus on meeting professionals, getting advice and learning from those who are more experienced.

Through this approach, you'll develop relationships and create opportunities. Through these opportunities, you can show how much value you can add to a company. And they'll be more willing to take you in.

Do you still want to send out a few hundred more resumes to companies you don't care about?

Or would you rather get a job you truly want?

EPILOGUE

Thanks for reading this manual. I hope you've learned at least one new tactic that you can apply to your job search.

Then I have a few favors to ask of you.

On a scale of 1-10 please rate how useful this manual was (click one).



Email me and let me know how your job search goes

davidlykhim@gmail.com.

Feel free to add me on [Facebook](#) and follow me on [Twitter](#)!

David Ly Khim

P.S. If this was useful and you know someone who could use some of the strategies included in this manual, please share it with them!

P.P.S. Yes, now I can say that I've written an epilogue too.

Did you catch a typo or grammar error? Those things like to sneak in there. Let me know and I'll fix it.