Rapid changes in global demographics, economics, and technology are influencing how domestic and international corporations restructure and allocate all forms of capital, especially human capital. Rapid-response opportunities in emerging and mature economies demand professionals with demonstrated, quantifiable accomplishments. Meet these requirements through professional branding and continuous promotion of your skills, knowledge, and experience, and establish yourself as a preferred candidate, whether as an employee, contractor or consultant.

DONN LEVIE, JR.
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Austin, TX

Donn LeVie Jr. is a former hiring manager for Phillips Petroleum (now Conoco-Phillips), Fisher Controls, Motorola, and Intel Corporation. He was also an adjunct faculty lecturer with the University of Houston System in the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. Donn has reviewed thousands of cover letters and résumés and hired hundreds of professionals for scientific, engineering, marketing, and communications positions. He has authored more than 80 industry-specific papers, 800 general-interest articles, and seven non-fiction books, including Confessions of a Hiring Manager, Confessions of a Hiring Manager Rev. 2.0, and 50 Things You Can Do Now to Help Keep Your Job, all of which were written under the pseudonym “J.T. Kirk.” He was a “Career Connection” presenter at the 2010 and 2011 ACFE Annual Conferences where he also provided personal career consultations to conference attendees, and is a contributor to the “Ask the Expert” page of the ACFE website.

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## Abstract

Rapid changes in global demographics, economics, and technology are influencing how domestic and international corporations restructure and allocate all forms of capital. Not the least of these strategic and tactical shifts involves the workforce arena where the effects reverberate through the entire employment chain. Hiring managers now more than before seek candidates who can quantify their achievements as problem solvers, “game changers,” and solutions providers to a myriad of challenges. Assumptions about the workforce generally have been derived from studies and observations in the West and in mature economies; however, rapid-response opportunities are presenting themselves at an increasing rate in emerging economies as well as other mature economies within the block of G-20 nations. This paper surveys the key global demographic, technological, and economic changes that are shaping trends in the organization, which in turn dictate hiring trends in the organization. Armed with this information, readers will learn how to brand their professional skills, knowledge, and experience into both a portfolio of supportive documentation and a strategy that positions them as the hiring manager’s candidate of choice. The paper demonstrates how such a strategy works in parallel for permanent positions as well as contracting and consulting opportunities.

## Introduction

In 1982, best-selling author John Naisbitt wrote in *Megatrends* about American society being in a “time of parenthesis”—the time between eras, a reconceptualizing not just of society, but also of culture. Certainly the recession of 2007–2010 (or thereabouts)—the worst since the Great Depression of 1929—created another period of change and questioning for America and the world. But it also created opportunity for many.
The recent recession has only served to magnify the rapid changes already underway in global demographics, economics, and technology. These paradigm shifts have an influence on how domestic and international corporations restructure and allocate all forms of capital. Not the least of these strategic and tactical shifts involves the workforce arena where the effects reverberate through the entire employment chain. Hiring managers now more than before seek candidates who can quantify their achievements as problem solvers, “game changers,” and solutions providers to a myriad of challenges not only in mature economies but in emerging ones as well.

Analyzing the global picture that will affect the downstream nature of work, the types of jobs created, and the sort of candidate hiring managers will be seeking will reveal areas of potential opportunity between the lines in the “Global Trends” section and subsections.

**Global Trends Influencing Employment 2010–2020**

Besides considering major changes in economics and technology, we must also reflect on how those changes influence the ways people will work together across different time zones, geographies, and international borders. Demographics increasingly are influenced by social and organizational trends in how people work to improve efficiencies for getting products and services to the marketplace. How that innate “intellectual property” is maintained, protected (critical for anti-fraud professionals), exchanged, and repurposed inside and outside of the organization reshapes the duties and responsibilities of emerging employment, contracting, and consulting opportunities.
Demographic Trends and Human Capital

- Of the nearly 7 billion people inhabiting the planet today, approximately 3.4 billion are in the workforce. That number drops to about 2 billion if agricultural workers are excluded.¹

- A 2009 study conducted by the United Nations predicts the world population will reach 9 billion by 2050, mostly from countries with developing economies. If not for immigration, the net population in mature economies would actually decrease.

- Emerging economies will account for 1.1 billion people over the age of 60, with 1.2 billion people of working age.

- The overall population is aging at a significant rate, with those 60 years of age and older tripling, and those 80 years of age and older quadrupling. Not only are we living longer, but there will be more of us living longer.

- Workers older than age 60 are a growing demographic and will increasingly show preference for full-time rather than part-time employment.²

- Women in the workforce are increasing at a rate three times that of men in mature economies through 2020, while in developing economies, those ratios will remain relatively constant and equal.

- The United Nations Organization reports that the ratio of the working-age labor force in developing economies vs. mature economies goes from 2:1 to 5:1 between 1980 and 2020, spanning four generations of workers.

Key takeaway: aging of the population places an ever-increasing strain on government and private programs for elderly; accommodating older workers in the workforce (an important source of intellectual property) may restrict hiring of new talent with new skills (and vice versa); increase of women in the

workforce in mature economies will be reflected in the tenor of the work environment (less competitive, more nurturing) as well as benefits options.

As this immense reorientation of the workforce from mature Western economies to emerging global ones suggests, companies must revisit the assumptions they have made about the workforce as it assumes a more heterogeneous face. A more valid, statistically reliable approach to envisioning the workforce of the future would involve looking at the world's most populous countries that have the highest gross national product (GNP). The G-20 organization of countries collectively represents 64 percent of the world's population, 80 percent of world trade, and nearly 90 percent of the global GNP. The countries composing the G-20 organization include most of the world's workers in the “digital information economy” whereby mobile technology is the preferred mode of communication and interaction, negating the necessity of frequent face-to-face dialogue.

Balancing the statistics from the G-20 organization of countries is the International Labor Office’s (ILO) recently released report on global employment trends for 2012. The important takeaways from this report include the following:

- The world faces a challenge of creating 600 million jobs over the next decade.
- Global labor markets show little improvement.
- Youth (15–24 years of age) are particularly hard hit by the crisis.
- Falling labor force participation masks an even worse global unemployment situation.

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3 G-20 website, www.g20.org/statistics
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The global economy has substantially reduced its capacity to add new jobs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outside of Asia, developing regions have lagged behind developed economies in labor productivity growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable employment (workers in geographies subject to climatological, political, and/or economic extremes) has increased by 23 million since 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The global economy is entering the third stage of a three-stage crisis (first stage: coordinated fiscal and monetary stimulus failed to bring about sustainable jobs recovery; second stage: higher public deficits and sovereign debt led to increased austerity measures, weakening GDP growth and employment; third stage: tightening of policies with persistent, high unemployment increases risk of a double-dip in growth and employment).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key takeaway: Challenges to global employment rates, workforce demographics, sovereign debt integrity, political instability, international monetary policies create an environment ripe for various types of fraud to occur. In any system where tension and strain impede the flow of normal business processes, the potential for financial deception and deceit is present.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The workforce of the future shows signs of becoming more homogeneous in some areas, such as language and culture, due in part to the rise of the middle class in developing countries. In other areas, such as the ratio of women to men in the workforce, distributions will be non-uniform, particularly in mature economies. While English has fast become the universal language of choice, it often creates contextual, cultural, and linguistic difficulties when being translated into other languages. However, because of emerging markets in the Far East—especially in high technology—there is more sensitivity to incorporating...
multicultural information requirements into documentation before English is translated into native languages.

In the high-technology field, most manufacturers and customers in the Far East prefer to receive documentation with more graphics, flowcharts, and tables, and far fewer words due to the language translation and context difficulties. They much prefer to view a PowerPoint presentation rather than read a mammoth-size PDF file for the simple reason that such highly technical language in English often has no correlative native language equivalent. The demand is also for smaller and less comprehensive documentation.

**Economic Trends and Human Capital**

The global economy has become more integrated in recent years, as was evidenced by the recent recession that affected banks and investment institutions around the world. Perhaps nowhere else is this integration more apparent than how Wall Street now reacts daily to “worries” over the sovereign debt of European nations.

The G-20 organization counties make up a significantly large virtual workforce, with companies, divisions, teams, and individuals collaborating across borders, time zones, oceans, cultures, and different governmental/political/corporate infrastructures. Such global labor force evolution will demand more flexible and creative approaches to productivity and efficiency, such as work-at-home options that allow the “work day” to be configured according to the demands of collaboration with other entities in different time zones or countries.

The ILO has recommended a move away from the traditional three-tier approach to education (primary, secondary, and tertiary) and embraces one that emphasizes
life-long learning, which is designed to avoid shortages of workers with critical skills as technology accelerates market demands for new products and services. A life-long learning approach suggests more focused training (hands-on and/or classroom) and one that provides a quicker path to the accomplishment (such as six- or nine-month certification programs or two-year associates degrees versus four-year bachelor’s degrees).

The recession of 2008 has reshaped higher education trends. Enrollment of new students at community colleges from 2006–2009 increased as compared to enrollment in four-year schools, which remained relatively stable. Enrollment trends in community colleges, online colleges/universities, and trade schools hold the key for populations of the workforce seeking new career directions and opportunities. Many community colleges are partnering with local employers to develop training programs that place graduates in jobs immediately after successful completion of training.

**Technological Trends and Human Capital**

In 2010, 30 percent of workers in G-20 organization countries were born after 1980, meaning they grew up in the same era as the technology that gave us the Internet, iPhones, iPods, iPads, and many other portable digital devices. By 2020, this group will grow to more than 50 percent, with workers in the 30-to-40 age group. The social constructs built around such digital devices means that these workers know how to develop and maintain digital identities, and consume and create all types of digital content (running the gamut from superficial, low-value content to detailed communication that transfers knowledge). Digital technology will continue to raise the bar regarding expectations of the “new” fundamental skills.
required of workers in the coming decade. Here are a few that, unsurprisingly, revolve around mobile technology:

- Mobile voice traffic growth is expected to remain limited compared to the explosive growth in data traffic from 2010 to 2020.
- Social networking has become very important for mobile users and now represents new consumption patterns and generates significant traffic, with video becoming the No. 1 source of data traffic.
- Cloud computing, in which operations are performed on a network of shared, remote servers, is redefining Internet technology business models. A study conducted by IDC predicts cloud computing will create 14 million new jobs by 2015.
- Mobile devices will benefit from major breakthroughs expected to occur in the next decade: technology developments will enable the emergence of smaller, increasingly complex and intelligent devices.
- Many technologies will be available that provide different wireless solutions, and networking protocols will connect users to the best available network (network sharing)

- **Key takeaway:** Businesses will use emerging networking, data storage, and wireless technologies to change the competitive stakes in their respective industries. Organizations will increase their use of predictive analytics (various types of statistical analysis) to manage risk, reduce fraud, and identify trends that could later be converted into competitive advantages.

### Key Trends in the Organization

These key trends of the coming decade have already started to influence how organizations plan for, use, repurpose, and deploy human capital. Companies will have to pursue a more strategic vision for connecting and directing internal
and external intellectual assets. Jim Clifton, CEO of Gallup and author of The Coming Job Wars said in a recent interview that a major reason that almost half of the venture capital in 2009 was invested in Seattle, New York, Palo Alto, and Sunnyvale was because those cities have created a culture that responds to innovation. Companies in those cities create unique business models that serve as a “beacon for the most talented people in the world.”

**General Human Capital Considerations**

To remain competitive, companies will have to function in a more pliable fashion to accommodate how social, demographic, economic, and technological shifts reshape the workplace paradigm. The items in the following list do not fall neatly into discrete categories but instead overlap in areas influenced to varying degrees by these global trends.

- As older workers return to the workforce or remain in it longer than expected, employers must seek ways to maximize their engagement. Succession planning strategies will become crucial, balanced against fewer individuals retiring.

- Workforce projections will be influenced both by the education system’s ability to produce qualified workers and by changes in the demographics of the older workforce. The higher education system is challenged to prepare the future workforce in a manner that is successful, affordable, and measurable. Trade and business schools, community colleges, online degree programs, and continuing education units will play an increasingly important role in keeping the new workforce current with skills, tools, and knowledge.

- Human resource departments will be challenged to improve efficiency and effectiveness in managing third-party products and services such as HR outsourcing,

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temp services, job postings, background checks, and so on. Employers are exercising more caution about finding the right candidates and augment traditional screening practices (panel interviews, reference checks) with additional criteria, such as personality assessment, skills assessment, criminal background check, social media background check, credit scores, as well as requiring work samples and writing samples. Hiring managers will require quantitative evidence of accomplishments stated on résumés as well.

- Studies show that job offers presented immediately after interviews are accepted at a higher rate than those presented later. Employers will benefit from reducing the time of the post-interview job offer process, improve job acceptance rates, and reduce the time that job openings remain unfilled, thereby decreasing operations delays because of vacant critical positions.6

- With the increase in globally dispersed work teams, there is a greater need for improved and cooperative communication, more flexible work schedules that overlap across time zones and geographies, and cultural competence-building to ensure higher efficiencies and employee productivity.

- The real-estate market and other economic pressures in different geographies make it not only difficult for employees to relocate, but technology has rendered such a practice passé for many professions. “Going to work” has been redefined more as an activity than an actual destination in many fields. In that light, workplace flexibility policies are becoming more critical (and important) in addressing recruitment and talent management issues, such as flexible schedules,

work/life balance, job rotation for skills development, and so on.

- The concept of employee-employer loyalty—once a mutual, emotionally tinged commitment—will continue to evolve as more of a policy of engagement and retention for many organizations. For some in the workforce, actions such as withholding salary increases or other compensation, employee downsizing, or offering few opportunities for career growth can induce a rapid exodus of talented professionals seeking opportunities elsewhere.

- Companies must maintain the employment brand, which is critical for recruiting and retaining talented professionals, regardless of the employment market and economic business conditions. Compensation is becoming less prominent as a retention and recruiting "carrot" as the new workforce seeks more opportunities for work-life balance awareness, such as telecommuting options, flexible spending accounts, education reimbursement, on-site child care, ride-share programs, contributing to projects peripheral to or even outside one's specific expertise.

**Crowdsourcing**

As an alternative to outsourcing of work, many corporations are turning to *crowdsourcing*. Unlike outsourcing, which typically assigns project work to a specified external entity (a contracting agency, for example), crowdsourcing uses a network of professionals, known as a *crowd*. The work performed by crowdsourcing can be done online or offline. A crowd can be invited to develop a new technology, process, or carry out a design task.

Some companies use internal crowdsourcing whereby the makeup of the crowd changes based on the project need or
The workforce, therefore, can be considered a resource to be borrowed, loaned, invested in inside and outside the immediate organization (division, geographic site, etc.), enhancing the entire value chain. Such an approach to human capital places an increased emphasis on the individual as a solutions provider, problem solver, and game changer at higher functional levels.

The workplace of 2020 is virtual and in most cases will be before 2020. Whereas “the workplace” today is largely defined by commercial buildings and where employees congregate to work, many workers will redefine “the workplace” as any location where they are at the moment performing work. Individuals can be working on many crowdsourcing projects at once because their expertise is needed for either a short time or a particular segment of a project. As crowdsourcing increases in popularity (it is already common in the music recording industry), people working as consultants or independent contractors will find it an additional niche to establish clientele and expertise.

### 2010–2020 Employment Projections of Interest to Anti-Fraud Professionals

The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a growing demand for financial professionals in the next decade, as shown in Table 1 and Table 2. Concomitant with such growth projections is the opportunity for various types of financial fraud to be committed.
Table 1. Occupations with the Most Job Growth, 2010 and projected 2020 (numbers in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13-2011 Accountants and Auditors</td>
<td>1216.9 / 1407.6</td>
<td>190.7 / 15.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics*

Table 2. Replacement Needs for Financial Occupations, Projected 2010–2020 (numbers in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial Managers</td>
<td>527.1</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>96.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/Financial Operations</td>
<td>6,789.2</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>1,381.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Specialists</td>
<td>2,637.3</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>571.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Replacement Needs:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,049,000 people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics*

Establishing a Professional Brand to Capitalize on Emerging Opportunities

With the economy on the upswing, the job picture is improving though still very competitive. The time is now to reassess career goals, determine if a job change or a new career is overdue, and rethink how peers and hiring managers perceive you as a professional in the marketplace.

One of the key strategies that contributed to the Intel Corporation’s success and ability to withstand the onslaught of economic downturns in the semiconductor industry during 2001 through 2004 was its strategy to accelerate product development when all its competitors were cutting back on R&D budgets. Intel understood that eventually the recession in its sector would end. Rather than ramp up product development when the bad times...
were fading, they were poised to take advantage of the improved market by launching new products at the first sign that the economic recovery was a trend and not just a single data point.

Creating and promoting a “professional brand” will help professionals take advantage of unforeseen opportunities. Building corporate or product brand value involves two important components: making others aware of the brand in question, and creating a brand image that generates positive associations. The same principles apply in the workforce regardless of specific employment arrangements. For individuals in permanent or contract employment positions, those wanting to move up the rungs of the corporate ladder, or people promoting their own business and seeking clients, the task is the same: Create positive associations between quantified accomplishments and expertise, and the people with a need for that expertise. That way, others will "create" that brand based on a perceived professional and personal reputation as a fraud examiner.

Here are several ways to become embedded in the “associative models” of others:

- Write articles for peer-reviewed journals (such as Fraud Magazine).
- Give presentations or workshops at ACFE meetings and conferences and with other associations.
- Network with other professionals in the fraud examination field.
- Use social media (blogs, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) to expand your circles of influence. (Be sure you have something valuable to say; the virtual world is already overflowing with mindless blather.)
- Write a book on fraud examination principles and issues.
Create your own attention-grabbing blog name and catch phrase.
Create a unique sign-off statement of each blog entry with your brand statement.
Write a bio that includes more details about your brand and its unique edge rather than the typical obituary format.

The more unique your niche, the stronger your brand can become. A positive brand image works in three significant ways:
- It helps solidify your position in any job or career opportunity.
- It can differentiate your expertise from your competition and move it toward “preferred candidate” status.
- It can command a higher salary and encourage hiring managers to seek you out.

**Elements of a Professional Brand**
Three important elements of building a brand image will determine how hiring managers will respond to you (the “product”): favorability, strength, and uniqueness of your offering.

**Favorability** relates to how strongly you have honed your interpersonal skills; it’s the “likeability factor.” They want to know if you’ll be a good personality fit with the team and if you can integrate into the corporate culture. A recent study on structured interviews revealed that candidates making better first impressions received more offers and higher ratings than those who did not. The study suggests that the first impressions of candidates influence employment outcomes, and that they may be based on useful judgments of candidate
competence that occur in the first few minutes of the structured interview.  

- **Strength** addresses the degree of your development of the requisite and optional skills and how well you might utilize those skills on current and future projects.

- **Uniqueness of your offering** is determined by these questions: What differentiates you (as a “product”) from other candidates? What separates you from the competition? The more unique those differentiations (and the more value employers perceive you have), the stronger your brand image.

Unique brand associations fall into two major categories: **attributes** and **benefits**.

- **Attributes** relate to your “technical” performance on the job.

- **Benefits** are the specific brand features you project and that hiring managers value.
  - Benefits can be *functional*, which represent your features.
  - Benefits can be *experiential*, which are linked to your technical expertise and your fit on the team or group.
  - Benefits can be *symbolic*, which relate to the hiring managers’ self-concept, their higher order social and self-esteem needs, and even how they see their own standing in the entity. Don’t underestimate the importance of symbolic benefits tied to your brand. If the hiring managers believe that bringing someone on board with a strong brand like yours enhances their self-worth or self-esteem, then you’re as good as hired.

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### Promoting Your Professional Brand in the Marketplace

Promoting your professional brand uses the same approach whether your interest is in pursuing a permanent position (internal or external), seeking contracting opportunities, or expanding a consulting business. The common denominator of this approach is assuming an attitude of being in business for yourself. Truly successful individuals always understand that no matter where the paycheck comes from, they really do work for themselves. Contractors and consultants know what being self-employed is all about. Sometimes people in hourly or salaried positions lose sight of the fact that they are in a sense “self-employed” as well. No one keeps anyone on the payroll out of the goodness of their hearts; it is the daily application of both hard and soft skills that keep the paychecks coming on a regular basis.

### The Method: The Continuous Promotion Approach

The "Continuous Promotion Approach" is how I describe how the hybrid sales technique known as *consultative selling* have proven effective for candidates getting job offers, contractors receiving contracts, and consultants signing new clients. Research into customer-sales relationships shows that customers are more likely to trust sellers when they demonstrate:

- Frequent interaction
- Consistency
- Ability to deliver results

The results are no different for most hiring managers: The hiring manager (customer) trusts the candidate (the seller) to understand and solve problems the organization faces, based on the candidate’s individual experience and demonstrated track record of accomplishments and problem-solving abilities. It just so happens that a
Continuous Promotion Approach to a job strategy embraces these three trust-enhancing behaviors.

The Continuous Promotion Approach is about marketing your professional brand throughout the entire hiring process until a decision is made. It is an active rather than passive approach to landing a job, contract, or client. The most important part of the Continuous Promotion Approach is after the job interviews are finished up until an offer is made. That is when the decision is being made as to who receives the job offer, the contract, or the project. You simply cannot leave it to chance or mercy that you will be selected; you must actively take the opportunity away from the other candidates being considered. You do that through the staged release of documentation in your Professional Skills, Knowledge, and Experience Portfolio (PSKE Portfolio™).

**The Toolkit: The Professional Skills, Knowledge, and Experience Portfolio**

The PSKE Portfolio consists of the documentation that attests to your expertise and the professional brand you have developed over your career. Such documentation would include that shown in Table 3:
Table 3. Elements of a PSKE Portfolio (example, listed in a typical order of release)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permanent Position</th>
<th>Contractor</th>
<th>Consultant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cover letter</td>
<td>Cover letter or Introductory letter</td>
<td>Introductory letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Résumé</td>
<td>Résumé</td>
<td>Capabilities brochure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>References</td>
<td>Client list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications list</td>
<td>Publications list</td>
<td>Publications list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case history (solving a problem)</td>
<td>Case history (solving a problem)</td>
<td>Case history (solving a problem)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article reprint (pertinent to job) &quot;25 Ways I Add Value to Your Organization&quot; brochure*</td>
<td>Article reprint (pertinent to job) &quot;25 Ways I Add Value to Your Organization&quot; brochure*</td>
<td>Article reprint (pertinent to project) &quot;25 Ways I Add Value to Your Organization&quot; brochure*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Depending on the profession within a particular industry, samples of work may be required.  

*This is the last document staged in the Continuous Promotion Approach.

Depending on the profession within a particular industry, samples of work may be required.

Rather than dump documentation all at once on an interview team as is so often the case, the most effective method for keeping your name at the top of the offer list is to stage the release of these documents throughout the entire hiring process. Typically, the hiring manager is in possession of the first two items before the interview. The remaining documents of the PSKE are staged for release through snail mail after the interview until an offer is extended or the hiring decision is made.

Whether the hiring manager reviews these post-interview testimonial elements of your professional brand is irrelevant; it’s the Post-It Note you put on each one with your name on it that matters most because it places your name in front of the hiring manager yet again after the interview processes has ended. The more often your name and evidence of your brand equity is placed in front of a hiring manager and/or the interview team, the better your chances of getting the job offer, the contract, or the project. Do not discount the
POSITIONING FOR THE FUTURE: CREATING AND PROMOTING YOUR PROFESSIONAL BRAND IN AN EVOLVING JOB MARKET

psychology behind the hiring process: often it is the candidate with whom the hiring manager and/or interview team is familiar. While other candidates are waiting for word whether they got the job/contract/project, you are establishing yourself as the only viable option.

The details of the Continuous Promotion Approach and the PSKE Portfolio have their own chapters in *Confessions of a Hiring Manager Rev. 2.0.*

Table 3 contains seven elements of a PSKE Portfolio. Consultative Marketing uses the “Rule of Seven,” which states that up to seven separate contacts may be required before anyone takes action on an offer. Some experts have refuted the idea of the Rule of Seven, but literature contains many references to the number seven: “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,” “Seven Deadly Sins,” “Seven Voyages of Sinbad,” “Sailing the Seven Seas,” “Seven Wonders of the World,” and so on.

Conclusion

We have drilled down from a macroscopic view of global trends that will have an influence on our lives in the coming decade.

1. Understanding how the trends in demographics, economics, and technology percolate through social and business networks helps you identify areas of potential opportunities for your financial fraud prevention specialty.
2. Creating and promoting your professional brand helps differentiate you from others who may be competing with you for the same job, contract, or project. Specializing in a niche entitles you to “king of the mountain” status, particularly with crowdsourcing types of opportunities.

| NOTES |
3. Following the Continuous Promotion Approach teaches you a proactive strategy for deploying evidence of your brand equity throughout the hiring/contract/project cycle.

4. Creating a Professional Skills, Knowledge, and Experience Portfolio (PSKE Portfolio) consisting of documentation that attests to your brand identity and brand equity for use with the Continuous Promotion Approach presents you as the complete package and only viable candidate for whatever opportunity you want to pursue.

Over my 25-year career in various hiring manager positions, I have taken note of certain individuals I had a hand in hiring who went on to enjoy highly successful careers for themselves. These people more often than not showed personal and professional initiative, a willingness to learn, displayed a flexible attitude toward projects, had great people skills, demonstrated excellent communication abilities, and possessed an ability to navigate successfully through organizational structures (and the politics that go with them).

I have categorized these abilities into six major qualities that each of these individuals possessed:

- A sense of *project ownership*: a quality mindset, get-it-done-right-the-first-time attitude
- A sense of *project urgency*: a purposeful, resolute focus to completing projects
- A sense of *personal integrity*: the reflection of the deeper nature of character and moral, ethical fiber
- A desire to *help others succeed*: helping others succeed without expectation of anything in return, much the same way a burning candle loses nothing to light another
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- An attitude of being "self-employed": an empowering attitude that will be recognized by the right people
- A sense of the graceful exit: your reputation will continue to linger in the hallways and cubicle neighborhood for some time after you leave a company, so how would the smell of burning bridges enhance your character in the minds of those you worked with—and may again in the future?

Any paradigm of change in business—whether local or global in scope—always involves tension and strain as entities learn to adjust to the new economics, demographics, and technology. A proactive approach to where your anti-fraud specialty intersects with those points in the process that are subject to insufficient legal, ethical, financial, or management oversight will reveal new opportunities.