



# Creating Your Personal Marketing Plan

## A 3 Step Approach to Developing a Roadmap to Your Next Great Opportunity

This white paper covers:

- Step 1: Constructing Your 12 Point Model
- Step 2: Developing a Target Employer Prospect List
- Step 3: Leveraging Your Advocates

## Introduction

Is your career where you'd like it to be? If not, do you have a plan to acquire what's missing? We work hard and manage hectic schedules and endless commitments, but when was the last time you set aside time to plan for your career? Assessing your career goals and aspirations and creating a plan to get there requires thought, internal reflection and preparation. The Agile Personal Marketing Plan (PMP) is a three step approach that helps you create a valuable roadmap to navigate your career to the next great opportunity. The 3 steps include how to:

1. Construct your 12 Point Model
2. Develop a target employer prospect list
3. Leverage your advocates

Writing a comprehensive personal marketing plan is an ambitious but worthwhile project, especially if you haven't developed one before. The plan and the thought that you put into it set you apart from the competition. Therefore, it's a wise move to begin the disciplined process soon after you enter your first position.

- Professors Ed Scribner, PhD; Eric Pratt, PhD; and Elise Sautter, PhD  
*New Mexico State University*



## Step 1: Construct Your 12 Point Model

The first step in creating your PMP is to define what's most important to you and build your model. You wouldn't build a house without a blueprint, so why architect your next career move without one either? The model for your next opportunity outlines the top criteria you need to evaluate in a potential job offer situation. Here are the 12 areas to focus on when constructing your 12 Point Model:

1. **Reason for Leaving:** What is making you consider a change? On a scale of 1-5, how ready are you to make a change? Why? What pain points are you experiencing that you'd like to change?
2. **Title:** What is your current title vs. desired title? Do you have a plan to get there? What do you like about your current role? Where do you see yourself in the next 3-5 years?
3. **Industry:** Do you enjoy your current industry? Are there others you would consider or want to avoid? What industry preference should you leverage in your marketing plan?
4. **Expertise:** What is your area(s) of expertise (current position and past positions)? In your next job, what are the areas where you want to grow your skills?
5. **Value Proposition:** What is your personal value proposition? What differentiates you? What are you frequently recognized for that you can bring to your next employer?
6. **Geographic Location/Travel Tolerance:** Where do you live? Is location important to you? What is the longest commute you will tolerate? Do you currently travel and how much are you willing to travel?
7. **Full time or Contract:** Which one does your model include? Would you consider both? Are benefits a consideration? Is a long term relationship important or do you like variety? Do you want to grow within an organization or leverage your skillset?
8. **Salary or Hourly Rate:** Break down your current total compensation (base, bonus, benefits, and vacation). You need an accurate picture of where you are and what you need. Is compensation your primary motivator? When was your last review/increase? Have you told your boss you love your job but need more money? What kind of offer would make you change jobs right now?
9. **W-2 or Self Incorporated:** Do you prefer W-2 or self-incorporation? Do you need benefits? Are you insured? What other considerations might you have in this area?
10. **Three Most Important Things:** What are the 3 most important things you are looking for in your next opportunity? Rank them by importance? What 3 things would motivate you to make a change? What might be a deal breaker for you?

11. **Availability:** What is your sense of urgency in making a change? Any considerations? A review or bonus coming up? A performance review with pay increase implications? A scheduled vacation? Can you give a two weeks' notice?
12. **Interviewing:** How do you feel about interviewing? When did you interview last? When could you interview and what days and times might be best? Could you use a vacation day to interview?

Using the 12 Point Model will ensure that your next career change will be a strategic choice aligned with your career goals and personal mission statement.

Developing a personal mission statement may require considerable time and reflection. This step may also require extensive research so that you can identify the positions and industries that are most attractive to you, but it is of great importance.

- Stephen Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People*

## Step 2: Developing a Target Employer Prospect List

Step 2 of creating your Personal Marketing Plan (PMP) is considering the target companies where you want to work. Once defined, this list becomes your “Targeted Marketing List” for your job search. Think about the following characteristics that will help you build your list:

**DEMOGRAPHICS** – demographics allow you to quickly segment your market by:

- Size:
  - What size company do I feel most comfortable working in? i.e. – Fortune 500, fastest growing emerging companies, IT organizations with at least 1,000 employees.
- Location:
  - Consider commute and travel tolerance. i.e. – Companies located within the perimeter, within 10 miles of my home, in the Southeast, Headquarters in Atlanta
- Industry:
  - Healthcare, Financial Services, Digital Media

## CULTURE

- Values:
  - What are your values?
  - Take time to review the company's values for similarities: are they a high performance culture?
  - Do they give back to the community?
- Leadership:
  - Preferred leadership and management styles – highly autonomous or collaborative?
- Recognition:
  - Best Places to Work, Fastest Growing Employer, Microsoft Partner of the Year

## TYPE OF WORK

- Products and Services:
  - Client facing, more internal IT focused, Software as a Service, Cloud Computing
- Skill sets:
  - Microsoft platform, ERP focused, Java
- Do I prefer larger teams or smaller teams?
- Do I want an organization that will afford me the opportunity to move around and do multiple things or would I like to become the subject matter expert?

Once you've answered these questions, consider companies that fit these criteria and build a list of your Top 10 Targets. Think about utilizing:

- **Saved searches.** Create saved searches on Indeed and Simply Hired that target jobs fitting your ideal location, keywords, salary range and industries. Set up Google alerts to notify you when there is a new press release on your target companies.
- **Book of Lists.** Acquire the *Book of Lists* for your metropolitan area. Get knowledgeable and answer the following questions: Who is in your city you might not be thinking of? Who are the top 10 employers? Who are the fastest growing employers?
- **LinkedIn and social networking sites.** Utilize these sites to connect with others. Think about the following: Where are your connections currently working? Who are their past employers? Do you have an advocate at your target clients?

- **The Business Chronicle.** *The Business Chronicle* for your metropolitan area is a great source of current news and coverage of the changing business landscape. Pay attention to articles on mergers, acquisitions, promotions, etc.
- **Industry Conferences and Publications.**

### Step 3: Leverage Your Advocates (This is the secret sauce)

What is an advocate? By definition an advocate is someone who acts or intercedes on behalf of another, speaking in favor to lend support. An example of an advocate is a knowledgeable and experienced real estate agent. When moving to a new area and searching for a home, a good agent can understand the key criteria for a new home (model) and help match those criteria to form a list of desirable neighborhoods (targeted market list). They have the inside knowledge of the area, can open doors and make valuable introductions on the buyers behalf. A career advocate works the same way.

A career advocate opens doors and makes valuable introductions. This can be a key factor in helping you land your next big opportunity at one of your target companies. Think about the people you interact with both professionally and personally, today and in years past. Can you think of someone who will champion you into a new organization? Who will provide you support? Who can recommend you or make a personal introduction?

The final step of the Agile Personal Marketing Plan (PMP) is identifying your advocates and enlisting them to help in the pursuit of your dream job. Consider your network and engage:

- Previous bosses
- Coworkers
- Peers in associations you participate in like user groups and programs
- LinkedIn group members and Social Media connections
- Neighbors, friends and family members
- Church affiliated contacts
- Relationships built through your children, like education professionals and those who run extracurricular activities

It's not as hard as you think to engage your advocates once you've identified them. Your potential advocates are all around you and most are willing to help. Think about engaging an advocate as you would ask for a professional courtesy. An example conversation starter might be, *"I really enjoyed working for you (or getting to know you) in the past. I am interested in growing my career to the next level and I've built my list of target companies. One of those target companies happens to be your employer. Would you be able to make a professional introduction for me? I would be happy to return the favor in the future."* Keep in mind, many

organizations reward employees with referral bonuses. Reexamine your relationships and realize that asking your advocate to represent you is good business sense.

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- Example of Conversation Starter to Engage an Advocate

## Summary: Using your PMP

The Agile Personal Marketing Plan (PMP) is a roadmap to navigate your career to the next great opportunity. The three steps challenge you to:

**Step 1:** Construct your 12 Point Model

**Step 2:** Create a list of Target Employers

**Step 3:** Leverage your Advocates to help you achieve your goals.

The process of crafting your PMP empowers you to take your career aspirations and job search to the next level in a strategic way using a proven approach.

“By recording your dreams and goals on paper, you set in motion the process of becoming the person you most want to be. Put your future in good hands — your own.”

--Mark Victor Hansen, *Chicken Soup for the Soul*

## About Agile

Agile is an innovative IT staffing and consulting firm that speeds time to talent by matching great people to great opportunities, enabling our clients to drive business results and create competitive advantage. Agile has consistently been recognized on the Inc. 5000 as one of the fastest growing companies in the U.S., and in 2012, Agile was named the #3 fastest growing staffing firm in the nation by Staffing Industry Analysts.

Founded by Tricia Dempsey in 2003, Agile is a values-driven organization committed to community involvement and charitable causes. Through *Agile on the Green*, the firm's annual golf tournament, Agile has raised more than \$200,000 for Komen for the Cure - Greater Atlanta Affiliate. Agile is a certified woman-owned business (WBENC).

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