

*Learn the secrets to supercharge your career in 2016*

# How To **Stand Out** in the crowded job market in 2016



(C) 2016 Newaccra.com

This book is provided for free use with full credits to Newaccra.com. If you benefit from it, kindly support us by sharing with your friends and liking our [Facebook page](#).

Cover page photo- Tomatoes, credit- *Entrepreneur.com*

All sources in content are referenced in online version available at Newaccra.com

---

# How To Stand Out In A Crowded Job Market: Are You Well Prepared ?

by Priscilla Aseye Nanam | Newaccra.com

In today's workplace, managers and employees are opting for more sophisticated methods of communication. As organizations adopt newer tools like email, intranet systems and social media, it is becoming a requirement for graduates and prospective graduates to master how to use these tools productively.

Years ago in countries like Ghana, it was not common to use the internet for everyday activities. Today with globalisation and key developments in information technology, the digital divide is quickly closing up. We now have more smartphones and more computer literate people. Several universities are also swapping pens and paper with keyboards and Microsoft Word.

All these changes are leading to a modern world, where new graduates need certain skills in order to increase their chances of landing and excelling at a job.

Here are five strategies to stand out in a crowded job market;

## **1. Market yourself online.**

Organizations are increasingly adopting digital marketing via social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, mainly because they are cheaper in comparison with older marketing channels.

Nowadays, before your interview, some employers are already checking out your Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter pages, to see what type of person you are and how well you would fit into their current organizational culture.

It is therefore important for graduates and prospective graduates to use social media platforms to develop a positive image. Such an image tells employers you are capable of using these platforms to influence their stakeholders.

## **2. Have an opinion.**

We currently live in the society of citizen journalists, where anyone with a computer and a smart phone could easily have an opinion about an issue, and that's perfectly fine.

Certain jobs, such as public relations and advertising, are suited for individuals who are assertive and can communicate effectively. What better way to demonstrate this than keeping a blog where you regularly post current issues of professional and personal interest?

While this shows employers your ability to create content online, it also gives them an idea of where your interests lie and how they can be used to the betterment of their organization.

## **3. Use your time wisely.**

Knowledge is key, but employers are frequently showing that work experience carries more value in the recruitment process. It doesn't matter your level in the University, it is very important that you start doing something that develops your skill set.

The good news is you don't necessarily have to land an elaborate internship with a highly prestigious organization. Your internship could be helping out with admin duties at your local church or taking up a leadership position within a campus club or your neighborhood group.

That work experience, no matter how small, enhances your communication skills. It also shows prospective employers that you are not all about money. Finally, it gives you more things to talk about in your first job interview.

## **4. Know your competitive advantage.**

Employers meet hundreds of job applicants every day, so what makes you different? Knowing your competitive advantage and tailoring it to the job you desire gives you an edge over all the other applicants interested in the same job. Learn a new skill outside your profession, learn a new language, develop an interest in an area and become good at it.

## **5. Network**

Face to face communication still remains the richest form of communication despite the emergence of new technology and communication systems. Attend events and meet new people, you never know who you might meet at the interview.

Networking helps you to build a list of contacts that can help you get the job you need. But remember to maintain a relationship with those whom you networked with, long after the networking has taken place, after all no one likes to feel like they are only called upon when help is needed.

So say hi on your new contact's birthdays, congratulate them when their company wins an award or launches a new product, etc. Remember it's nice to be nice.

Now you are in the best position to compete in this crowded job market. I wish you all the best, in conquering this job market.

### ***AUTHOR***

Priscilla Aseye Nanam is a graduate from the University of Central Lancashire, UK. She believes organizations need to recognise the value of their PR and communications functions as they fundamentally serve as a management tool if used appropriately. She holds an MSc International Applied Communications and BA International Journalism. Her interests are internal communications, issues and crisis management, and digital communications. [Contact her on LinkedIn](#)

---

# The Best Career Advice I Ever Got

by Kwamina Sagu Ekremet | Newaccra.com

In my first full-time job, I had the privilege to work with a strategic, smart, and shrewd thought leader we all called 'Boss'. He saw potential in me, gave me a lot of unmerited exposure, and helped me hone my abilities.

One day during an off the hook appraisal chit chat, Boss started reflecting on his own career, and then he gave me the piece of advice that has stuck with me from that early period of my career till today. Late last year, I came across an article titled '*The 60-30-10 Rule. The Secret To Career Success*'. It was written by one of my favorite LinkedIn writers, Jordi Alemany. This article confirmed the advice Boss gave me from observations he has made over the course of his career.

This is what Boss told me in a brotherly tone. It is paraphrased and the emphasis is mine.

“Kwamina, you are a great team player and worker. What will set you apart in your career is your personality and you have a strong likable one. To go far, you need to master the interplay of hard work, the dynamics of office politics, and relationship building. A congenial mixture of these heterogeneous qualities will set you apart. You see, the average intelligent person can equally do your work, but it is your self-knowledge, self-awareness, and personality that will customize the work and let you leave a legacy”.

In this article, I explain the three ingredients to a soaring career, as learnt from my boss and confirmed by my daily experiences and Alemany's insights.

## 1. Workplace Politics.

I have heard lots of people say, 'I hate politics!' I am forced to assume that their understanding of politics is limited to partisan politics, because every decision or indecision in life is politics. It is better to learn how it works and play it to suit you if need be than to stay away from it.

You don't necessarily have to be in the gutters of office politics. You must be as wise as the Owl, who understands all that is going on around it, pulls the strings of politics if need be, and pretends nothing is happening when it isn't confronted.

## **2. Knowledge, hard work and power.**

Knowledge they say is power. In certain quarters, the more knowledge you have, the higher you sit on the organogram. This is why some workers compete with each other to acquire knowledge and try to hoard it. This is unfortunate because knowledge is like a lighted candle. If you help others light their candle, it doesn't diminish or quench your candle light, it rather helps others see and enlighten their corners. Invariably, the whole world becomes brighter.

So go to work with your skills, talents, abilities, knowledge and personality. This will customize the work to you. Once you do that, no one can complete or copy your style of working. That will be your mark of excellence. Work hard and work smart!

## **3. Relationships and gelling with others**

Your ability to network and build relationships will separate you from the pack. There are stories of people who lost good jobs, not because they were not competent, but because they were unable to build relationships. In many modern jobs, you will need to go with the flow and build temporal or permanent chemistry to achieve laid down objectives with teammates.

Netweaving, a higher version of networking is what can set you apart. With netweaving, you connect to other people who have robust networks, thereby creating a weave.

The advantages of netweaving are many. Most opportunities aren't published; they cascade from our relationships through networks. If you spend time to associate with the major players in your industry, you will become commercially aware and more relevant.

Beyond certain positions, it is always someone's recommendation that will take you to a higher role. Your knowledge alone can give you opportunity for a few years. But when you combine knowledge with relationships, you'll get opportunity for light years.

A perfect blend of job competence, relationship building and dealing with different people, and a mastery of workplace politics will be the perfect ingredient for a soaring career. Learn it early and maximize it. I wish you the best in your career!

### **AUTHOR**

*Kwamina Sagu Ekremet is a youth leader, volunteer and a Process Engineer who is in love with Africa. He believes individual Africans can change Africa by making Africa's problem their problem and find solutions to them. Follow on twitter @kwaminasekremet*

---

# Surviving In The Culture Of The “Old”

by Jonathan Adzokpe | Newaccra.com

There is the saying that, “Life begins at 40.” I am not too sure if this saying is an African saying, or a general saying all around the world. But I have had the opportunity to live a few years beyond the shores of Ghana. And while away, I never heard any of the citizens of my host country make reference to such a saying.

I have often heard this saying throughout my stay in Ghana. In my own understanding, when we say life begins at 40, it implies it’s when one is 40 that life actually takes off. Thus, age 0 to 39 is for “partying”, if I may put it that way. I don’t know what the genesis of this saying is. Neither do I know who authored it. But from my experience, it has become clear that many people would rather waste away than strive to achieve something significant in their youthful years.

As such, before one would achieve a significant feat in Africa, and going by the saying that, “Life begins at 40”; it means the person would have advanced well in age. No wonder the greatest “achievers” we celebrate in Ghana and Africa, if not today, but some years ago, are mostly older folks. It’s a recent thing to see young people blaze the trail and work hard to achieve something of significance in their youthful years.

What this means is that, you’re almost never given the chance to prove yourself, or, you’re not “regarded” as an achiever when you achieve something of worth in your youth. Why do I say these? It’s due to my experiences since I became a lecturer in one of Ghana’s public universities.

At 27, I am part of the lecturers in one of the most promising departments in the university. I have had a few encounters with certain people who have spoken to me as though I was a student, often harshly, just because I looked young and didn’t look “old” enough to be a lecturer. Am I bothered? Not much, but sometimes!

Just yesterday, I went to invigilate an exam with a fellow lecturer. And as the custom of the university, all invigilators are to report to the exam officer with the papers, sign, and leave. In the exam officer’s office was another lecturer, well advanced in age. When he saw me approach the office door, he took the paper from me and thought I should leave. So he realised I was still standing. After a while, the exam officer asked if I was so so, from so, so, and so department. I answered in the affirmative.

Then the other lecturer who took the papers from me retorted, “Oh sorry, I thought you were a student.” Of course, even the older lecturers in the university community have no badge or element of identity to differentiate them from students. But their grey hair, or dressing in an “oldies” fashion, easily gives the signal that they are lecturers. So why not me? Well, because I look young, have no grey hair and dress contemporarily like majority of students.

But here’s what I want you to understand, and perhaps, note in mind – as we reach out for the gold in our youthful years, we will be faced with some of these “embarrassing” moments where our appearances will give no clue whatsoever about what we have achieved. After all, I have met many people in many other circles who are told that I am the author of *The Realities of Life After School*, a book that has done so well beyond any form of grading. Many times, they go like, “I was expecting to see some older looking and big and stout person.” Sometimes it hurts. Other times, it is a compliment that at such a young age, we reach out for something bigger than ourselves.

Whether you like it or not, you will face some of these experiences as a young achiever. What you should note in mind is, we are in a society that attributes success to the old. You will need to “prove” yourself, many times, just to make the case that you’re worth your salt. But who do we blame? No one! Shall we give up reaching out for success? Never! We shall continue to strive and achieve success, until such a time when our culture begins to identify that, success is not limited by age; but by one’s willingness to work hard, sacrifice, and pay the price.

Until then, keep striving. Keep working. Keep sacrificing. And keep achieving!

## **AUTHOR**

*Jonathan Adzokpe is the author of The Realities of Life After School. This book gives every student and graduate a feel of what the real world looks like after school, what to do to manage life's uncertainties, the tools needed to take advantage of opportunities out there, and how best to position oneself for take-off. Available in hardcopy in Ghana's bookshops and on Amazon. <http://amzn.to/1vXxSAE>*

## ABOUT NEWACCRA.COM

Newaccra.com is Ghana's leading website for success and personal development.

We are loved by young professionals, entrepreneurs, and current students. Our sites have been online since October 2013, and our sites have been viewed more than fifty thousand (50,000) times by visitors from more than one hundred and twenty(120) countries. Some of the biggest websites in Africa frequently carry our stories. We produce special reports and run unique events for current students, recent, graduates, and young entrepreneurs.



Newaccra is the publisher of the trusted Newaccra Achievers Report, which comes out in March every year to celebrate unsung young Ghanaians making impact and showing future promise in diverse fields.

Newaccra also runs the exciting Winning Graduate<sup>(TM)</sup> workshop, which gives current students and recent graduates an advantage in their first career and entrepreneurship moves.

Newaccra runs high impact training programmes for corporate professionals in the areas of customer service, marketing, internet technologies and more. To see all of our upcoming training events, or get more goodies from us, kindly [click here to like our page on Facebook](#)

### CONTACT

Email: [info@newaccra.com](mailto:info@newaccra.com)

Web: Newaccra.com

Facebook: Newaccra

Twitter: @Newaccra

How to cite this book (Harvard)

Newaccra (2016) How to stand out in a crowded job market, Newaccra [online], available at <http://www.newaccra.com> [accessed 15 January 2016]