

Self-Marketing for Career Success

How to Win the Job Competition in China

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Self-Marketing for Career Success
How to Win the Job Competition in China



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Preface

This book is the result of my experience teaching career management and business courses to thousands of Chinese university students over the past several years. As a teacher and advisor of many students, I have personally witnessed the challenges and difficulties that most Chinese students face when they make the transition from



school to work. I have felt their confusion over choosing the right career, their anxiety in trying to find a job, and their disappointment in not realizing their dreams of a rich and rewarding future. I have also shared the excitement of students who have successfully used the ideas and skills of the marketing approach to get good jobs and begin rewarding careers. As a teacher, I have learned much by listening to the stories of both failure and success that students have shared with me.

My classroom approach is more like training than traditional teaching: training means helping students acquire the practical skills and motivation they need to choose their direction, develop themselves and successfully compete in the job market so they can begin satisfying careers; traditional teaching mainly provides abstract knowledge and theories that are often useless when they face social reality after graduation. Chinese students need more training, not more traditional teaching. I have been gratified by numerous students who have applied the practical skills to managing their careers and succeeded in getting good jobs and have started their careers with bright futures.

This book is more like training manuals than a traditional textbook. You will not find many theories, complex ideas or big words to learn. There is nothing to memorize and repeat for an examination. Rather, this book guides you through a series of practical exercises (contained in the *Career Portfolio Workbook*, at the end of this book) designed to develop your practical knowledge and skills, to give you a clear sense of your career direction, and help you to understand your unique value, so that you can compete and shine above the millions of others desperately trying to find jobs and start their careers.

I sincerely hope that you will not just read this book, but more importantly you will “do” it. If you take action, you will find your true value and your destiny, not only

fulfilling your personal potential but also contributing your talents to China's future development.

Personal Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to the development of this book and its ideas and approach. First I am grateful to my Chinese students who have taught me a lot by sharing their personal stories with me and have given me their first hand accounts of their experiences in trying to launch their careers. My students have inspired me to write this book, by sharing their stories of both hardship and success. And it is to my students (both past and future) that I dedicate this book.

I am grateful to Keuka College China Program for giving me the opportunity to teach career management and business in China and for encouraging me to develop my ideas and teaching style in line with its philosophy of "learn by doing". Keuka College, based in New York State, is the leader in experiential education and has been successfully implementing its career management and experiential education programs in China under the leadership of President James Burke (Keuka College), Vice-Chancellor and Provost Virginia Coombs (Keuka College), and Dr. Michael Hwang (Vice-President, Keuka China Programs).

There are several other former colleagues and students who read earlier drafts of the book and provided valuable suggestions: Duncan Rinehart, Anne Marie Guthrie, Li Xiang, Shen Xiaoling, Chang Sheng, and others. Any remaining errors, omissions or weaknesses regarding the book remain mine alone.

Finally, I encourage all readers to send me their comments and suggestions concerning how I might improve future editions of this book to the following email address: css.johnson@yahoo.com

About the Author

Dr. Ken Johnson is an American who has grown up in Miami, Brazil and Argentina. He received his Bachelor degree from Emory University (Atlanta), and his masters and doctorate degrees from Tulane University (New Orleans). He has traveled to 22 countries and has taught economics, politics, international relations, business and career management. He has also done consulting for Price Waterhouse Coopers and directed job placement program for students in Kentucky and Ohio. He currently lives in Xiamen, China, where he teaches business and career management for the Keuka College China Program at its four partner schools: Jimei University, Tianjin University of Science and Technology, Yunnan University of



Economics and Finance, and Wenzhou University. He has given numerous speeches at several Chinese universities about career planning and has also participated in career planning workshops and seminars.

Dr. Ken Johnson
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2009

Introduction

Are you ready to start the most important business venture of your life? Do you want to discover and develop a product that can immeasurably enrich your life and the life of others? Do you dream of a future lit bright with success? Do you want to be a player in China's global economy? Are you ready to take action and take control of your life and your destiny? If you answered "yes" to these questions, then read on. This book provides a special and unique contribution to career education by adapting Western ideas and experience about career management to the culture and challenges of Chinese job market. Here is what is inside:

The Job Crisis & Need for Career Management



The 2008—2009 global financial crisis has awakened many people to the crisis of the job market. But actually, the crisis of China's job market for fresh graduates has its origins in the early 1990s (as Chapter 1 will show). Despite the unprecedented growth of China's economy during the past 15 years, there is a growing crisis in the job market, a crisis that hits university students especially hard. On the one hand, many graduates are ill-equipped in terms of their skills and knowledge to enter China's fast-changing job market; and on the other hand, the huge growth in university enrollments has vastly increased the competition for jobs, leaving many graduates starting their careers well below their expectations or even failing to find any job at all. In recognition of this growing crisis, the Chinese government has decreed that all universities must offer career management education as part of their general curriculum beginning in 2008. Chapter 1 provides a more detailed picture of the competition students will face and the need to change their thinking and their approach to career management.



New Thinking: Self-Marketing with Chinese Characteristics



Thirty years ago, Deng Xiaoping's "new thinking" provided the basis for China to develop rapidly and become globally competitive. Deng Xiaoping's "new thinking" was based on the introduction of market reforms, with Chinese characteristics; borrowing ideas and methods from the successes of the Western world, but adapting them to fit the realities of Chinese culture and society.



Although market ideas have developed solid roots in Chinese society and economy, they have been not yet fully taken root in most of China's educational institutions. This book is aimed at introducing "new thinking" into schools, universities and training centers so that China's millions of graduates can accelerate their personal development and competitiveness in China's global job market. The author introduces western marketing concepts, but adapts them to the different educational, cultural and market conditions of China. So you will find here a book written specifically for Chinese people, based on Chinese experiences and realities; in other words, "self-marketing with Chinese characteristics". By introducing "market reforms" into your career management, you will be able to experience the same growth in opportunities and development that Deng Xiaoping's market reforms have provided for China during the past 30 years. Chapter 2 "Self Marketing", introduces the marketing approach and how it can be applied to your career.

Using Marketing to Manage Your Career▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶

In today's global economy, every business needs marketing in order to be competitive and make a profit. It is the same with your career. This book encourages you to think of your career as a business, and it uses the marketing approach to career management based on the "Five P's of Marketing":



- **Product** : understanding what is the value of your skills, education, experience, knowledge and interests in the job market.
- **Positioning**: finding your career direction and developing a plan how to reach your career goals.
- **Pricing**: calculating your value for your specific career and job and learning how to negotiate a fair salary and benefits.

- **Promotion**: effectively communicating your value and your goals to employers and others.
- **Placement**: locating and finding the best job using the major distribution channels of internet, job fairs, and networking.

Chapters 3~7 explain in detail how to use each of the 5 P's to manage your career and find success in your future. The last chapter provides practical advice about how you can continue to use the 5 P's to develop and improve your life and career.

Is This Book for You? ▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶

This book is designed especially for anyone who finds themselves in any one or more of the following situations:


- Are university students and want to get the most suitable job when they graduate
- Recent graduates who have been working less than five years
- Those who want to use English to enhance their opportunities and add value to their careers
- Anyone who wants to improve practical career skills such as interviewing, resume-writing, and job search strategies.
- Students and recent graduates who find themselves without direction in their future
- Anyone who wants to compete more effectively and promote their careers faster

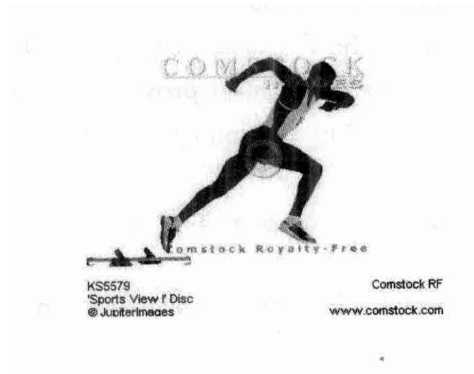


You need not be a business student or a business professional to use and benefit from a marketing approach. This book is designed for people with no prior business knowledge as well as those who do have some background in business. You will not find sophisticated theories, formulas or principles in this book. It is a book based on the real experiences of many people who have tried to compete in China's job market, not a book based on theory or abstract ideas.

A Book for Taking Action▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶

Each of the five steps will guide you through a total of 21 assignments that are in Part 2 of this book, entitled "Career Portfolio Workbook". These 21 assignments will give you practice in developing your career and finding a suitable job; they form the basis of your Career Portfolio. Your Career Portfolio is a collection of your most valuable resources that can help you get a job and begin a satisfying and rewarding career; it is your own personal self-marketing plan. Each of the assignments for the

career portfolio are marked with a . Once you have completed these assignments, you will be well-prepared to compete and find success in China's job market. Are you ready? Let's go!



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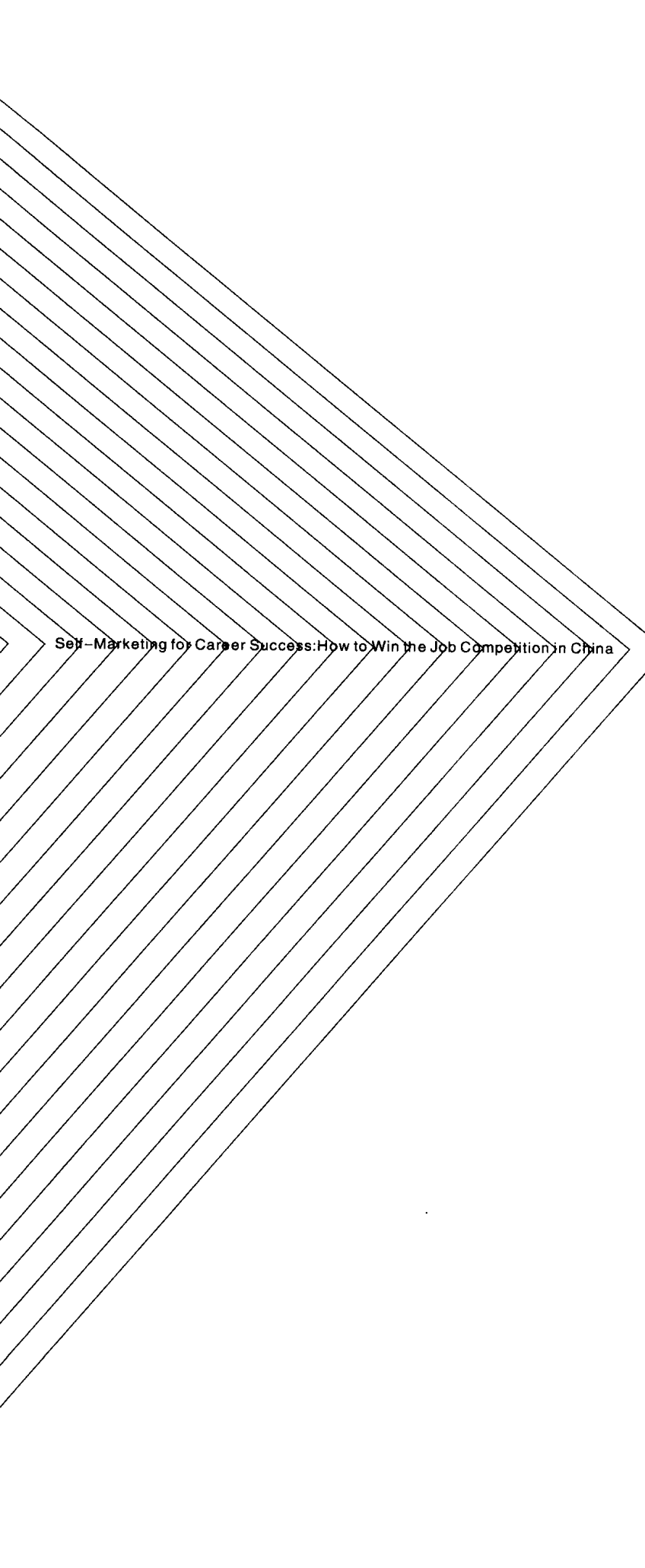
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Part 1:

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