



# BOOK SUMMARY

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## THE JOB SEEKER'S SCRIPT

By Judith Humphrey

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### BOOK SUMMARY

As a successful communication coach, author Judith Humphrey began teaching the same scripting techniques that she'd been teaching her executive clients to young people and senior-level job candidates in preparation for their interviews. Their success rate was 100%, and she was thrilled that this coaching led to impressive careers for job seekers. Her career had, in fact, been built on the strength of scriptwriting, and her desire to write this book emerged from a long-time belief in the power of a persuasive script.

Scripting yourself can be your superpower! These turbulent, challenging times in the job market demand a book like this. More individuals are competing for positions, and companies have become more demanding. Telling your story in a compelling way is the key to landing that coveted job. In ***The Job Seeker's Script: Tell Your Story and Land Your Dream Position***, Humphrey will show you how to create a winning narrative for each stage in your job search. This book will give you a new set of skills that will set you apart. The ability to present your narrative clearly and forcefully will serve you well in your job search and throughout your career.

### YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to become a scriptwriter to tell your story.
- The method for writing conversational scripts.
- How to execute killer written scripts to get interviews.
- The best way to handle interviews and land your dream job.



## **Part I: You Are the Scriptwriter: Telling Your Story**

Whether you're on the job market for the first time and looking to launch your career or you are a seasoned professional, telling your story is essential for landing the job you want. Part I will break down exactly how to write, develop, and tell that story.

### **Deciding on Your Story Line**

If you want to land that next job, you must know where you're going. Here are six essential questions to ask yourself to help decide the direction you wish to pursue.

#### **The Six Questions to Ask Yourself**

1. Am I prepared to invest in myself? A successful job search requires significant time and effort, which not everyone is willing to devote.
2. What are my skills and interests? Be realistic about your skill strengths. If you have your eye on a job category, but you're missing a necessary skill, take some training.
3. Do I want a new direction? Cherish your strengths but know when to pivot your finely tuned skills into another role that builds upon these strengths.
4. What kind of culture do I want to work in? Explore what corporate leadership is like, the atmosphere, whether the company values fit with yours, and where and when work gets done.
5. What size company do I want to work in? Like Goldilocks, you want a company that is not too large, not too small, but just right—for you.
6. Will I be able to succeed there? Find out about opportunities for advancement, salaries for different positions, tenure of employees, and the career trajectory of the leadership team to see if they've been promoted from within.

Once you've addressed these six questions, you'll have a well-defined set of goals that you'll use to craft a mission statement for your career. This is a statement you make *to yourself* to describe your goals and be the first cut message you'll deliver to others in your job search. It will serve as a filter to decide which positions to pursue and which to pass on.

### **Developing Your Character**

You are the main character in this story, and you'll need to portray yourself so others can connect with you and see you as a deserving candidate. To land the job, you'll need to bring forward those qualities that allow you to shine in every conversation, every interview, every resume and cover letter, and every job you want to win. There are nine qualities that will allow you to script yourself for success.



1. **Authenticity:** Show what makes you unique, what is special about you, and what drives you.
2. **Positivity:** Write and speak enthusiastically about your career aspirations and the company you are interviewing with, using language that shows your upbeat attitude.
3. **Passion:** Talk about your passion for building your career, for contributing to the world, excel in the job you are applying for—and use words that convey passion and deep interest.
4. **Confidence:** Express confidence in your language and speaking style, using active verbs that show what you created, built, accomplished, or implemented.
5. **Impact:** Communicate your impact and problem-solving abilities, using quantifiable results whenever possible.
6. **Resilience:** Show you can rebound from challenging circumstances and help others do so, too.
7. **Humility:** Emphasize your accomplishments, but don't boast. Humility means being so sure of yourself that you don't have to call undue attention to yourself.
8. **Respect:** Use simple courtesies, keep your commitments, and do research in advance of meeting anyone.
9. **Gratitude:** Humans crave appreciation, and showing gratitude will make you more appealing to hiring managers and make you feel happier.

As you craft your scripts for each stage in your job search, think about these nine characteristics that will enable you to make a strong impression.

### **What's Your Message?**

Every good story has a consistent point of view, and so should yours. You need a message that will deliver a clear idea of who you are, what you want, and why someone should hire you. You need to be telling your story, and at the heart of a good story is a message that will get across your value.

There are two reasons for having a message that inspires. First, it will ground you and give you confidence. A one-sentence message will center you on the one thing that makes you exceptional and exemplary for the jobs you are seeking and knowing it will give you inner strength. Secondly, it will be the key idea you can deliver to everyone you meet. You want everyone to know that one big thing about you that will captivate them. A clear, strong message is your superpower.

### **Script Yourself with HIRE**

One of the biggest mistakes job seekers make is not preparing what they'll say. But without a script, you risk sounding unfocused. The unscripted job candidate may ramble on, jumping from one idea to another, without the coherence or focus that drives home a point. The secret to creating scripts that deliver strong, clear, persuasive messages is the HIRE template.



Here is the four-part HIRE template for structuring all your scripts:

**Hook—with a grabber**

**Inspire—with your message**

**Reinforce—with proof points**

**Engage—with a call to action**

**Hook:** A hook reaches out to your audience. It can be thought of as a grabber or a verbal handshake. It captures the attention of your listener and builds a bridge to that person. This could be a simple, “Thank you for taking the time to meet with me,” or “I’m so glad to have this opportunity. Let me tell you about my career success.”

**Inspire:** This is your compelling message, the one point you want to make. It’s your why. It could be, “This position is the ideal next step in my career with this company,” or “I’m excited about the seasoned leadership I’d bring to this role.”

**Reinforce:** Reinforce your message with numbered proof points. Here are three patterns to choose from.

The first is chronological. If your message is that you deliver strong results, you will share three points that clearly show the results you achieved over time in your career.

A second way is to share reasons that reinforce your message. For example, if your message is about your passion for marketing, your proof points would be reasons you say that, such as, “I really “get” marketing,” or “I’m a big believer in market research.”

A third approach is to have two proof points: one that describes a *situation* and the other describing a response to that situation.

**Engage:** Use a call to action that suggests the next steps. In an interview, you might say, “I am excited about this opportunity and feel I’m worthy to take on the assignment.” In a networking conversation, your close may be asking for a meeting or requesting that person send your resume to the hiring manager.

The HIRE template is your secret weapon for telling your story and landing that job. Nobody will know you’re using it, but you’ll sound and be inspiring when you do.

**Rehearse, Rehearse, Rehearse**

To succeed in your job journey, you’ll need to deliver your scripts with clarity and confidence. You’ll want to bring energy and enthusiasm to your performance. Don’t wait until the interview to learn



your lines. Write out what you want to say, and then practice those lines with the following guidelines in mind.

**Be “In” the Script:** What you say must reflect the story of who you are and what you believe you can offer. Make sure everything reflects your strong beliefs about yourself and what you are capable of.

**The Silent Rehearsal:** Next, you need to internalize the script. Find a quiet place and mentally review the script. Run through the entire script in silence and deliver it to yourself until you can do so without looking at the paper. Learn the flow and key points rather than memorizing.

**For the Big Events, Rehearse Out Loud:** When you have an important meeting with an influencer, recruiter, or hiring executive, it’s best to rehearse out loud. Practice delivering it in front of a coach, friend, or family member. Record yourself so you can review your delivery.

Interviewing for a new job can be stressful. But remember that in each encounter, you’re learning about the company just as they are finding out about you. Do your best to prepare—but also make sure you find the organization that’s the best fit for you.

## **Part II: Conversational Scripts**

As a job seeker, your journey often begins with the informal conversations you have with colleagues, networking contacts, mentors, sponsors, and bosses. Part II will help you develop an elevator pitch that captures your listener’s attention, how to script yourself for successful networking encounters, and how to promote yourself to the right people when you want to rise within your present company. These are all informal but critical conversations.

### **Crafting Your Elevator Pitch**

An elevator pitch allows you to get your point across in brief encounters, which can be make-or-break situations for job seekers. You will use it with planned and unplanned situations, such as chance run-ins or when talking to recruiters.

This kind of script will focus your thinking, demonstrate your value, and save you from delivering messages about yourself that are too general or scattered. It should be about 30 seconds in length but has all the same HIRE elements as a longer talk. Once you’ve created this brief talk, you’re ready to practice and deliver it.

### **Nailing the Networking Conversations**

Networking is all about asking others for help, and doing so is a smart move when you’re looking for a job. Don’t be shy about asking for help. But seeking support—especially from someone in a position of power—can be scary.



Creating your network is a crucial first step. Don't wait until you are desperate for a new position. Expand your circle now. Every career conversation you have with someone you know or meet, particularly with someone who can help you, will reap returns when you are ready to make your move. Make connections with colleagues, friends, executives, HR professionals, industry influencers, and family members.

Once you've expanded your network, prepare an inspiring pitch for those you wish to approach. Prepare a customized script for each encounter or each ask. Write it out, learn it, rehearse it, and make it flawless. Don't go to a meeting or leave a voicemail until you have crafted a script using the HIRE template.

### **Pitching Yourself Inside Your Company**

Your dream job just might be waiting for you in your present company. There are many opportunities for advancement or lateral moves because it's a win-win. While the grass may look greener on the other side of the job fence, those who like their present company should consider advancing their career while staying with their current employer. It's worth your while to have that conversation. You can seize opportunities by approaching the right people and creating a strong script.

The first and crucial first step in getting promoted within your firm is building a network of people who can help you. Many companies have tools that help with this networking. If your company has such a platform, use it to find the positions and people that will lead to your next opportunity. Also, seek out individuals who can help you advance, beginning with your boss.

Once you've developed a network of senior-level influencers, get ready to meet with and ask those individuals for assistance with a HIRE script. You will need to prepare different scripts when talking to your boss, pitching a sponsor or mentor, or speaking to a hiring manager.

### **Part III: Written Scripts**

In addition to conversational scripts, you also have to tell your story in written documents, specifically in your resume, cover letter, and thank-you notes. Part III will show you how to create standout documents that communicate your strengths, your readiness for the role, and your enthusiasm for the position.

#### **A Winning Resume**

Your resume plays a significant role in your success. Contrary to popular belief, those who read resumes do give them more than a passing glance. These readers are looking for your story—your narrative. For that reason, there must be a thread running through your resume that moves the reader to believe in you and to choose you as a candidate worthy of an interview and, indeed, a job.



Although design elements and the role of the Applicant Tracking System (ATS) are essential, the more critical dimension is the deeper structure of your resume. This is the set of interlocking arguments that tell your story and persuade the reader that you are an ideal candidate.

To truly make your case, you need to use the HIRE template to write a “resume script” using the following steps.

### **Step 1: Craft Contact Information to Grab Your Reader**

This is the first thing a recruiter will look at, and it is your verbal handshake, so make it appealing. Make it strong and clear, including first and last name, phone number, email, and LinkedIn address, and a link to your website or portfolio.

### **Step 2: Create an Inspiring Summary Statement**

Make sure this message is clear and forceful. Ask yourself, “What’s the one compelling idea I want to get across about myself?” Ideally, it is *one sentence and only one sentence*. Choose active verbs over nouns like *built, earned, exceeded, delivered, increased, and transformed*.

### **Step 3: Reinforce Your Message with a Set of Supporting Points**

These are the points you will include in your “Professional Experience” section, and they should line up with and support your summary statement. List the companies you’ve worked for in reverse chronological order, including location, titles, and the years you held them. Provide a one-sentence message for each job just below the job title.

### **Step 4: Create a Set of Bullet Points Under Each Job Statement**

Reinforce each job statement with a set of bulleted points. Anywhere from two to four bullets is a good rule of thumb. Provide hard facts about what you’ve accomplished, using dollar amounts, percentage increases, number of people reached, and bottom-line results.

### **Step 5: Add Other Sections**

To finish, add short sections for education, certificates, or skills.

### **Step 6: Make Sure You Have the Important Key Words**

For many jobs, the first cut is made by a computer. ATS software scans your resume for keywords to make sure the fit is a good one. If you can pick some of the language of the job posting—without overdoing such repetition—you’ll help yourself.

### **Step 7: Do a Final Edit**

Before you submit your resume, give it a final edit.





## **A Killer Cover Letter**

Recruiters and hiring managers are busy people! Your cover letter needs to be a single page—typically three short paragraphs—that is gracious, clear, compelling, and well-structured. And whether they ask for one or not, you should always include a cover letter because it allows you to say a lot about yourself—who you are, what kind of personality you have, and why you are excited about this job opportunity.

There are four qualities to a winning cover letter, which should be incorporated into the HIRE template you will use to structure your cover letter script. Your cover letter should:

1. Show your passion for your work and for the advertised position
2. Be explicitly customized for the position
3. Use natural, conversational language and be free from jargon
4. Be flawless in terms of spelling, grammar, and presentation

To apply the HIRE template, structure your cover letter in the following way:

H-Hook with the opening sentence.

I-Inspire with the second sentence, which is the message we have previously discussed.

R-Reinforce with the second paragraph with proof points tied to your message.

E-Engage with your third paragraph, which will restate your interest and outline the next step you'd like them to take.

## **How to Say Thank You**

A career conversation shouldn't end when you leave the room. You want to be in the good graces of those who assist you. If someone has given you their time or advice, they deserve to hear back from you. Expressing your gratitude is an act of politeness and indicates good character. It reinforces ties with those who helped you and makes it likely they will assist you in the future. The gold standard to follow up with your thanks is with a handwritten note or card. Such notes speak volumes.

## **Part IV: Interview Scripts**

For most job seekers, the crucial make-or-break moments come with the interview or a string of interviews. Part IV will show you how to succeed in these high stakes encounters by intensely preparing, creating a winning interview script, mastering Q&A, and making your interview a standout performance.



## **Rock Your Research**

Knowledge is power. Prepare for that crucial meeting by deepening your knowledge in four areas: the company, the culture, the interviewer, and the job. Your research will make you come across as savvy and well-prepared. Your exploration of those topics will enable you to ask good probing questions that will help you gain the insights needed to make the right decision about whether you want to accept an offer.

## **Crafting an Interview Script**

An interview script will enable you to tell your story, know what you want to say about yourself, and have a set of arguments about your readiness for the role. It will also help you sound clear-headed and avoid the all-too-common situation of job seekers who adopt a reactive mode, responding to questions but not leading the discussion in any way. The key to acing the interview is to create a script using the HIRE template, which you can apply to different types of interview scripts.

**Word-for-Word:** Write out the main elements of your script in full sentences.

**Bullet-Point:** Organized around sound bites you can elaborate on in the interview.

**PowerPoint:** Present a PowerPoint deck at your interview and blow the interviewer away.

**Demo:** Demonstrate your skills in the area you are applying for, showing how you'd pitch a client in a sales job interview, for example.

**Video:** Send a video before the interview to make a strong case for yourself as a candidate.

Whichever script you use, the key is to plan it all out with the HIRE template. Preparing in advance will provide you with direction and purpose that will enable you to exude confidence.

## **Preparing for Q&A**

You may have the best credentials in the world, but if you can't talk about them intelligently and confidently, your interviewer will give you the thumbs down. Answering questions tests a candidate's agility, clarity, and readiness for the role. Before you enter the room, know how to answer the questions you're likely to get.

There are questions that your hiring firm may typically ask. Try to find out what these are and know how to handle answering all types of questions, including quirky curveballs. Find out your answers to 15-20 questions, write them down, and learn them as best you can by studying them in silence and then rehearsing them out loud. Make time to create a list of probing questions to ask the interviewer as well.



### **Delivering a Standout Performance**

You've done all the prep work. You know the qualities you want to project. You've researched the company, its culture, the interviewers, and the job. You've prepared answers to the questions you might be asked and created a set of probing questions yourself. You've written out and rehearsed your interview script. And with it all, you have an amazing story to tell about yourself. Now it's time to deliver a star performance.

Make sure you have the right tech, setting, and dress to present professionally. Use your script, but be real, genuine, and open and project a strong presence. Ask great questions and try to stay strong, even when a curveball comes your way. Doing this will win over hiring managers, and you will have a new set of soft skills that will serve you well throughout your career.

### **Stay Connected, Stay in Touch**

The position you applied for seemed like a perfect fit. You had a great interview process, followed up with a thank you note, and then...nothing, for days or even weeks! That hurts because you feel like you've been ghosted. But a successful job seeker doesn't give up or let the ghost get the better of them. After all, there may be sound reasons for the delay. Stay focused, stay connected, and stay in touch.

The lessons in this book will help you land your dream position and will serve you well in your new role and your career. You are still the main character in this story you've been crafting—and it's far from over. Don't stop thinking about what your career goals are, how you want to come across, what your message is, who your audience is, and what will make people want to work with you. All of this is part of your story.

***This summary is not intended to replace the original book; all quotes are credited to the above-mentioned author and publisher.***