

MARKETING YOURSELF

INTRODUCTION

I wrote “Marketing Yourself” about 15 years ago.

I started my career after college and ROTC with 2 years in the Army as a Data Processing Officer in 1961. After the Army I got into sales and sales management with some of the best computer, software and services companies of the time.

I worked my way up the line and made company changes while raising a family with my wife. In the 1970’s and 80’s I worked for McDonnell Douglas Corporation’s MCAUTO computer services division and worked my way up to a Senior Vice President and General Manager position. After 17 years the corporation was in trouble and the older, higher paid employees, including me, started to be eliminated.

McDonnell Douglas, as part of a separation package, paid \$25,000 to a leading outplacement company to assist me in finding a new job. A lot of what I learned is in “Marketing Yourself”.

I had 2 more jobs when I decided to start my own business. Initially it was a service to assist unemployed job candidates to find a job and then evolved into recruiting. These business operations until this most recent economic setback have been very successful.

The current economic and employment situation is unique during my lifetime.

I want to help. I am sending you “Marketing Yourself” because I hope it help’s you. There are no strings, no charge and I wish I could do more.

Best wishes,

Gary Alexander

“MARKETING YOURSELF”

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of **MARKETING YOURSELF** is to provide you with a step-by-step program to market yourself in order to find a new job.

The basis of this program is that there are business organizations in the marketplace that have a need for you. They are seeking someone with your talent and experience that will contribute to the success of their organization. They are looking for you.

Your challenge is to:

- Find them
- Represent and sell you well in the interview
- Get the job
- Perform well at your new job
- Maintain a program of preparedness for your future

THE PROCESS OF FINDING A NEW JOB OPPORTUNITY

Your process of finding a new job opportunity includes the following:

- NETWORKING
- SELF ASSESSMENT
- ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT
- BALANCING YOUR LIFE WHILE SEEKING YOUR NEW JOB
- DETERMINING YOUR MARKET
- PREPARATION OF YOUR RESUME
- DEVELOPING YOUR COVER LETTERS
- IMPLEMENTING YOUR MAILING CAMPAIGN
- YOUR RESPONSE TO INQUIRIES FROM POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS
- YOUR INTERVIEWS
- "I THINK I WANT THIS JOB!" - OFFER ACCEPTANCE GUIDELINES

NETWORKING

If you are out of work, or suspect you could be soon, immediately start contacting everyone you have known and worked closely with in business. Make them aware of your availability and ask for their assistance. Verify the correct spelling of their name, title, business name, address, telephone and FAX number. Start a **NETWORK CONTACT LIST**. Each time you contact someone, ask them for names and telephone numbers of people they know who might be able to assist you -- those people who have or who may know of a potential employment opportunities. Telephone these people and continue networking and building your **NETWORK CONTACT LIST**.

On each contact, mention to them that you will send a resume as soon as possible. When you send them your resume, be sure to include a warm, customized, thank you in your accompanying personalized cover letter. Don't make the mistake of sending a prepared note.

You will be surprised at how many people you know; how many are interested in being of assistance; and how quickly your **NETWORK CONTACT LIST** will grow. This list will become a permanent file that you should maintain and use even after you have found new employment.

SELF ASSESSMENT

This is a creative process that you should spend quiet time thinking about and developing. It is an exercise that will help you develop your resume, cover letter and prepare you for interviews.

What value are you going to add to the business of your next employer? Will it be how many years of experience you have? Will it be how many people you have managed? The answer to both questions is yes. But these answers don't tell your next employer why they should hire you.

Your value to your next employer is what you can offer/bring to the success of their organization.

To determine what value you will add to your next employer's operation, you need to reflect on the accomplishments you have achieved for your former employer(s).

For each job you have had, you were confronted with opportunities and problems that you addressed. On a separate piece of paper for each position write down each:

SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITY OR PROBLEM
THE SPECIFIC ACTION YOU TOOK
THE RESULTANT ACCOMPLISHMENT

Do this for every accomplishment you can think of, no matter how insignificant you may think it was. As your sheets of accomplishments for your former employer grow, sort them in a high-to-low importance and a recent-to-old time frame sequence.

ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT

If you are unemployed you should face up to and acknowledge that there will be times when negative thoughts will start to creep into your mind and you must develop a conscious defense mechanism to combat these thoughts and maintain a positive attitude. The following is a check list compiled from people who were unemployed and what they did to adjust to their situation:

- Read, reread and continue to build the listings of your accomplishments. Dwell on what you have done. It will build self-confidence.
- Keep actively engaged in **MARKETING YOURSELF**. If you get tired of telephoning then go to the library or search the net and research reference material and periodicals. Become aware of organizations which are on the move, expanding and hiring. Add them to your mailing list and refer to what you have read about their activities in your personalized cover letter to them.
- Think about all the people who were faced with being unemployed and who had less experience and qualifications than you --- people today who are engaged in an exciting, new and rewarding job.
- Avoid negative influences. This includes everything from the newspaper, television news and people who are downers. When asked, "Have you found anything yet?" answer with a smile and indicate that you are working on some exciting possibilities. Instead of reading the newspapers, read books that offer inspiration. Read about people who, with less than you ever had, have become very successful. Surround yourself with positives and ignore the negatives.
- Keep reaffirming in your mind that it is a matter of time and how long it takes is really up to you. The more time you devote to finding a new job -- the sooner it will happen. So keep active.
- Schedule and balance each day so that you have time to enjoy each day.

Now on to Richard's story.

BALANCING YOUR LIFE WHILE FINDING A NEW JOB

A few years ago a friend, Richard, found himself out of work at age 59. He had a career of accomplishments and most recently was a Vice President of Sales and Marketing for a leasing company. The company he worked for was acquired, the new management team moved their people in, and Richard was out of work.

The new company provided Richard with the services of an outplacement firm. This firm provided counseling and access each day to a private office, telephone and typing service.

After over 14 months of looking for a new job, he only spent an hour or so each day at the outplacement office sending out a few letters and resumes. When asked why he didn't spend more time there, he said that he had exhausted his networking and contacts to mail his resume into. He now was focusing on answering advertisements and writing specific letters to companies that he read about in periodicals.

Surprisingly, he maintained an extremely positive attitude. While answering advertisements, he assisted other people at the outplacement firm in trying to find jobs. He maintained a great sense of humor and was a pleasure to be with. When asked what his secret was to coping with being unemployed, he shared how he spent each day:

- Each morning he would begin by jogging a mile.
- He attended a church service and returned home to breakfast. He limited his coffee intake to two cups.
- He then would proceed to the outplacement firm where he reviewed advertisements, sent resumes and re-telephoned people on his **NETWORK CONTACT LIST**.
- He would try a different low-priced restaurant every day and would usually dine with someone from the outplacement firm. He had joined several local organizations and would attend their luncheon meetings. He kept active.
- He would then spend some time at the library. I believe he had spent time at every library in the area and discovered at each that they had something new and different to offer.
- Some of his time was spent studying a new skill that would add to his expertise. He explored personal computers and their use. He enrolled in a program provided by the unemployment office that gave training on the use of personal computers. By the way, in his early months of unemployment, he had no difficulty standing in line to insure he would receive an unemployment compensation check. He felt he had earned and was deserving of it. Many of his unemployed colleagues felt this was beneath them. Standing in line, he met people and in a few cases, he was able to add their names to his **NETWORK CONTACT LIST**.
- The remainder of his afternoon was devoted to hobbies and yard work.
- He and his wife would spend a quiet evening at home or with friends.
- He limited his intake of alcoholic beverages.

Only once did he confide that he was really worried. With money running out, what should he do? He was considering starting his own business, but he had many doubts. What should he do?

These are personal and lonely questions, but he never gave in or gave up. One day he returned a telephone call from an entrepreneur looking for someone to run a start-up company. The call came as a result of advertisement he had responded to. Following a few interviews, he was chosen for the job and was employed.

Today he is happily employed because of a response to a newspaper advertisement and not giving up or giving in to negative thinking.

During his interviews, he was a qualified and positive thinking applicant. He was 59 years old but behaved with the enthusiasm and eagerness of a college graduate. He balanced his daily routine during his job search. He kept himself fresh and alert.

He found a new job and so will you!

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR AND WANT IN YOUR NEXT JOB?

Think about what you have done and really enjoyed in previous jobs. Write down those activities you enjoyed and why. Also, write down those activities you didn't enjoy and why you didn't enjoy them.

Your third list should be **WHAT YOU WANT FROM YOUR NEXT JOB**. Review this with your family and close friends. Get their input - what do they remember you enjoying about previous jobs? Brainstorm with them and include their thoughts in your written response.

You may get some surprising comments from your family and friends. What they say may sound like you are ready for something very different from what you have done.

Be open minded and think about the possibilities of a potential change in what you want from your next job.

After reviewing and thinking about this, start a fourth list, **WHAT YOU ARE REALLY LOOKING FOR IN YOUR NEXT JOB**. Again, you may be surprised at what you list.

TIME OUT

Please take a moment and review where you are relative to what you have read and done. You should now:

- Realize that there are organizations looking for you and that your job search process must include:
 - Finding them
 - Living a well-balanced life
 - Representing yourself well in an interview
 - Getting the job

Understand that your job search will result in finding a job that you must do well at.

- Have thought out and written down:
 - YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS
 - A NETWORK CONTACT LIST
 - WHAT YOU WANT IN YOUR NEXT JOB
 - WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR IN YOUR NEXT JOB

SOURCES OF POTENTIAL NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES

- **NETWORK CONTACT LIST**
Keep building your list and telephoning and corresponding with those people who know you. In most cases, this is your best source for finding your new job.
- **PROFESSIONAL RECRUITERS**
Depending on how they do business, they may have search assignments, or will try to find opportunities for you.

- **VENTURE CAPITAL ORGANIZATIONS**
They may have a company in their portfolio that has a need for someone with your experience and abilities.
- **BUSINESS/GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS**
These are organizations that may be in need of someone with your abilities and qualifications.
- **ADVERTISEMENTS**
It worked for Richard. It can work for you.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Spend time at libraries or on the Internet researching periodicals and reference material.

Build your **POTENTIAL PROSPECT FILE** of recruiters, venture capital firms, and business/government organizations.

Keep building your **POTENTIAL PROSPECT FILE** and updating it as you receive responses to your letters or read about activities of firms in periodicals.

CREATING YOUR RESUME

These are some key points regarding a successful resume:

- Your resume and cover letter need to tell the reader quickly what you can possibly do for their organization, and why you are qualified.
- Some guidelines to follow:
 - Your resume should not be longer than two pages.
 - It should be on good quality bond paper.
 - Neatness and simplicity will make your resume stand out.
 - Leave adequate space at the top, bottom and margins.
 - Be brief, accurate, honest; and avoid exaggeration.
 - No photograph.
 - Stress accomplishments.

RESUME FORMAT

There are many opinions on the format of a resume, but the following is recommended:

- Name and address centered at top of the first page.
- Residence telephone number on upper left, work number (if you feel you can be contacted at work) on upper right. If unemployed, put your telephone number under your name and address.
- Your job objective, in bold print, telling the reader quickly what you're looking for.
- A summary providing an overview of why you deserve the job described in your job objective.

- Employment history
 - Company name and dates employed
 - Each position
 - Your accomplishments associated with each position
 - Education
 - Military
 - Relocation status
 - Do not offer personal information, i.e., marital status, age, etc.

On the next page is a sample resume you can use as a guideline. This is a modified version (for privacy purposes) of an actual resume for a mailing service client. It resulted in many responses and offers.

He accepted a Senior Vice President of Sales position with a well funded, start-up software company. His new position resulted in increased earnings and an equity position in the company.

A year after he accepted this position he was promoted to the position of President, a position he continues to hold today.

SAMPLE RESUME

RICHARD W. SMITH
123 Greenbriars Drive South □ Chesterfield, Missouri 12345
Telephone: (555) 555-1234

PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE

A sales management position with a progressive information systems industry organization that can utilize my extensive expertise in sales and sales management to attain/exceed company goals and objectives.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Twenty-four years of successful sales and sales management experience.
- Superior record of exceeding revenue goals and increasing profitability while reducing expenses.
- Achieved The Eagle Award, the highest honor given within IBM for superior sales accomplishments; plus numerous other achievement awards at IBM and with other employers.
- Strong sales team motivator - demonstrated ability to motivate others in the achievement of corporate and individual success.
- Excellent interpersonal team-building skills; experienced in interfacing with senior executives toward the realization of long-range goals/objectives, and the sale of major new business.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the computer, manufacturing, and telecommunications industries.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION - St. Louis, MO **1994 - Present**

Senior Account Manager

Responsible for overall sales account management in the St. Louis and Arkansas territory. Revenue responsibility for sales of all Advanced Technology products and services.

- Achieved 70% of full 1995 annual quota of \$6 million in first quarter of fiscal year 1995.

HITACHIDATA SYSTEMS - St. Louis, MO **1993 - 1994**

Senior Account Manager

Sold Hitachi Data Systems products and services with overall account management responsibility.

- Achieved full year sales quota in 9 months.
- Earned membership in first "Masters" recognition event.

DIGITAL EQUIPMENT CORPORATION - St. Louis, MO **1987 - 1992**

Account Group Manager

Managed and supervised 6 cross-functional managers and 50 sales, support and service personnel in selling products and services to a large world-wide account. Revenue responsibility was in excess of \$50 million.

- Exceeded revenue targets for 4 consecutive years, improving rank from 50th in revenue to 6th.
- Increased year-over-year direct margin while maintaining expense reduction.
- Sold a 4-year, \$25 million local area network procurement and service system integration contract.
- Awarded 4 consecutive DEC100 awards for exceeding sales goals, 4 Baton Awards for balanced performance, and 3 Circle of Excellence Awards for outstanding profit and loss performance.

WANG LABORATORIES, INC. - St. Louis, MO

1985 - 1987

National Account Manager/Corporate Account Executive

Successfully developed and implemented strategies for pilot marketing program in St. Louis, which was subsequently utilized in the national marketplace. Managed and supervised 2 marketing managers and 6 senior account representatives with revenue responsibility in excess of \$40 million.

- Achieved 162% of fiscal year 1985 assigned goals in 6 months.
- Exceeded fiscal year 1986 goals at 131%.

IBM CORPORATION - Armonk, NY

1967 - 1985

Account Executive - St. Louis, MO (1981 – 1985)

Coordinated all sales activities for Fortune 100 account headquartered in St. Louis. Managed and supervised two marketing managers, 6 senior account marketing representatives, and 3 systems engineers; with additional responsibility for 20 marketing representatives and systems personnel. Revenue responsibility for \$150 million lease/purchase base, and direct responsibility for \$80 million in annual equipment, software, and network sales.

- Attended IBM's GOLDEN CIRCLE in 1984 and 1985.

Senior Account Manager - Selected National Accounts - St. Louis, MO (1978 – 1981)

Revenue responsibility of \$82.8 million lease/purchase base, and marketing responsibility of \$4.2 million in annual equipment sales.

- Recipient of "The Eagle Award", the highest honor given for outstanding sales accomplishments.
- Attained sales revenue performance in excess of 200% in 1978.

Marketing Manager - Memphis, TN (1976 – 1977)

Supervised and directed line management of 18 employees including marketing representatives, special product representatives, and systems engineers.

- Selected as "Marketing Manager of the Year" in 1977.
- Developed sales strategy which increased market share from 17% to 26% in a 12-month period, resulting in \$10 million of revenue growth.

Manager - Communications Systems - Chicago, IL/St Louis, MO (1972 – 1975)

Developed unique marketing strategy for communications-based products which was subsequently adopted for world-wide utilization by the Data Processing Division.

- Improved region from 9th to 1st place in communications sales out of 14 national regions.
- Attained over 150% of goal for 3 consecutive years.

Marketing/Advisory Marketing Representative - Youngstown, OH (1967 – 1972)

- Consistently achieved 200-300% of quota performance.
- Presented the "IBM Divisional Achievement Award" within the Data Processing Division in 1972.
- Ranked as #1 Producer in the branch, region, and division repeatedly - 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972.

EDUCATION

UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY - Annapolis, MD
Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering

This resume tells the reader quickly what position he is looking for and why he is qualified. Of course, your resume will not be identical or possibly even similar to this resume. However, it is provided to give you guidelines. You may want to embellish in some areas, and describe the function you performed in the job and describe the accomplishments. But remember, only two pages long and the accomplishments are bolded.

Putting yourself in the position of the reader, wouldn't you want to interview this person if you needed a senior sales person or sales management executive? You bet you would!

CREATING YOUR COVER LETTER

Your letter and resume will most likely be opened by someone, usually a secretary, who will be scanning many letters from applicants. I interviewed via phone about ten secretaries to CEO's and asked them what they do when they open a letter with an enclosed resume. Unanimously they said they give it a scan usually not lasting over a minute or a minute and a half.

Your letter and resume will quickly be reviewed and either marked for follow-up action or filed. Many times the file can be a wastebasket.

The objective of your letter is to avoid the wastebasket and get your resume into the hands of the person who will make a decision on whether to follow up with a telephone call or letter. You want your letter and resume is to get you a response that can lead to an interview.

If possible, your letter should be tailored to your recipient. In addition, you may find different contacts within the same firm. You may want to tailor your letter depending upon the functional area you are writing to.

Regarding professional recruiters, you will find some firms with multiple contacts/locations. You should send a letter to each contact/location, as many offices operate on an autonomous basis. You should describe your current, or most recent, earnings in your letter to recruiters and your willingness to relocate.

On the following page you will find a sample cover letter. Again, this is a modified version for the same mailing service client whose resume is on page 14. You should use it as a beginning point in developing your letter. Your letter is like a newspaper headline; it gets the attention of the person scanning incoming mail and avoids the wastebasket. Be sure the letter represents you and what you are looking for.

If you are currently employed, you should include a request that they handle your inquiry in "strict confidence".

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

RICHARD W. SMITH
123 Greenbriars Drive South
Chesterfield, Missouri 12345
(555) 555-1234

Date

Dear _____:

I am seeking a new position as a divisional manager or a sales/marketing executive. This position would most likely include some if not all of the following responsibilities:

- Product/group/division profitability
- Market share attainment/revenue delivery
- Alliance/strategic partner development
- Customer service/quality improvements

My career was established with an engineering degree, an MBA from the Wharton School of Business, and selling large systems for IBM. During the past twenty-three years, I have directed a broad spectrum of businesses in high technology organizations involving data/voice/video networking, hardware and software products, outsourcing, consulting and technical business services. These business units varied in size to more than 100 personnel and achieved, in part, the following:

- 25% to 80% compounded revenue growth rates.
- Annual sales of up to \$50,000,000.
- Establishment and growth of international business.

As mutually agreed upon with my current employer, I am pursuing new career possibilities due to corporate restructuring activities.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Smith

enclosure

YOUR MAILING

In addition to utilizing the MCA mailing of up to 4000 key executives in the computer industry, you will want to send your cover letter and resume to selected people on your NETWORK CONTACT LIST. Wherever possible, these letters should be customized to each individual. Use the basic cover letter that you have developed with your MCA consultant, and tailor the first and last paragraphs to the recipient. Make sure you use a good grade of personalized stationery and envelopes. MCA will be happy to provide you with additional copies of your resume for enclosure.

If you do not have a personal computer, find a local secretarial/typing service. Negotiate having them type your envelopes and letters. A reasonable charge is \$20.00 to \$30.00 per hour for a high-quality service. Be sure their quality is high - your letter and resume represent you.

Volume mailing is the name of the game and the basis for our MCA service. You want to supplement the MCA service by getting your paperwork in front of as many personal contacts and their contacts as possible.

The telephone will begin to ring, "We have received your letter and resume and would like to discuss a potential employment opportunity with you". Your marketing program has begun to work. Now you need to prepare for the interview.

By the way, even if the position described on the telephone isn't an exact fit, go for an interview anyway. Some years ago, an executive interviewed for a Vice President of Finance position with a then small company. He so impressed the President with his sales management accomplishments, that he was hired on the spot as the Vice President of Sales. He became CEO of the company which is now among the Fortune 500.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

To many people, the interview process is something you did years ago and haven't thought about for a long time. You will most likely feel uneasy --- try to relax. You are a qualified person with many accomplishments. The interview is a process where an organization determines if you can fulfill their requirements; while at the same time, you must determine if their organization has what you are looking for.

There are some basic factors you should consider as you prepare and enter the interview:

- Be yourself. You want to sell the real you. Be honest with yourself and the opportunity.
- Do your homework. Try to be aware of the organization you are interviewing with and the issues facing them.
- What can you do to contribute to their success?
- We call it A & A: Attitude & Appearance

Attitude

- Be positive, cheerful and eager.

Appearance

- Dress and grooming are critical elements in the evaluation process. You should appear as you are, successful. Here are some basic elements:
 - Dark, well-tailored and pressed business suit.
 - White starched shirt (if appropriate).
 - Silk moderate necktie (if appropriate).
 - Well polished dress shoes (avoid loafers).
 - No gaudy rings, watches or jewelry.
- Practice answering questions that can come up during the interview. Prepare and rehearse your responses with family or business associates. Questions that you can anticipate include:
 - Tell me about yourself?
Write out your response. Practice it and make sure it concentrates on what you have accomplished, be specific, and keep your response to 1 or 2 minutes on all questions.
 - How would you describe your strengths and weaknesses?
Give 3 strengths and 1 weakness. Keep response brief. A great weakness is a tendency to get so involved in getting a job done you lose sight of your time and you have been told you work too hard.

This may sound corny but it usually satisfies a dumb question.

NOTE: Two of the most useless questions during an interview process is give me your references and what are your weaknesses? You have to accommodate the request so wing it. The interviewer usually has a checklist so make it easy and give them a harmless response.

- What has been your greatest achievement?
Give your most recent achievement, and be specific, but keep it brief.
- What do you like most about your current or most recent job?
Have response fit what they are looking for.
- Describe your management style?
You are a hardworking achiever who is a team player. Briefly describe.
- What appeals to you about our company?
Having done your homework, have your 1 or 2 minute response fit the key issues and responsibilities of the job you are being interviewed for.
- What is your reason for leaving or having left "X" company?
State your career objectives and never criticize your former employer. If you were fired or laid off, then say so.

Be alert, precise and never ramble. Listen carefully to questions and response thoughtfully. Keep your responses to 1 or 2 minutes each. After all, you want them to feel that you are a fine person who can get the job done for their organization.

FOLLOW UP

After the interview or even a call regarding a possible job, you should send a personalized letter or e-mail or both, thanking the person you met or who called for their interest. This will make you stand out from your competition.

If possible, get feedback about your interview. Recruiters will normally provide you with the perceptions of their client. If you are not selected for a position, don't hesitate to contact those people whom you met to determine their reasons for not selecting you.

OFFER ACCEPTANCE GUIDELINES

- Make sure all of your questions are answered and that you have a high level of comfort with the people you will be working with.
- If you feel comfortable with the people you have met, and the offer, then take it.
- An offer in hand is more valuable than what might come in the near future.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO KEEP YOUR NEW JOB

The answer is simple. Contribute to the success of the new organization that you now work for. Real contribution is one thing. The perception of your new employer is another.

Factors that influence perception include:

- Show dedication by attacking your new job with excitement, enthusiasm and lots of hours. Deliver creative, specific and tangible results.
- Stress teamwork and avoid the "I did this" syndrome. Give the team members credit.
- You are an enthusiastic member of the team dedicated to making the organization successful.

BE PREPARED

Most likely, your new job will not be your last.

Your personal and professional goals may change; an even more lucrative and challenging job offer may come your way; or things at your current employer may change, and you could be confronted with looking for a new job again.

Do your best at what you are doing at your new job. However, be aware that circumstances may occur that will cause you to again be looking for a new position.

Be prepared by:

- Keeping your NETWORK CONTACT LIST up to date.
- Helping anyone who contacts you looking for a new job. "Give and you shall receive."
- Keep very active reading about organizations in your business. Keep a clippings file of advertisements for employment and companies on the move in your industry niche.

Best wishes!

May you find the position you are looking for!