



GETTING THE CONTENT MARKETING JOB YOU WANT

TIPS TO ENGAGE THE BEST (PROGRESSIVE) EMPLOYERS



by Michael Kirsten and Mark Sherbin

Be Part of a Progressive Business

To get the job you love, you'll need to sell your skill set.

For content marketers, the job market can be complicated. You're looking for a gig focused on a relatively new title in marketing. Some companies have a well-established approach to content marketing. Others might just be dipping their toes in the water. Still others may have no idea what content marketing is.

Based on the overall job market, it's actually less and less likely that the job you really want is "out there." Instead, content marketers may need to sell their skill set to their employer/s of choice and create their dream job for themselves.

Here's what you need to know to catch the eyes of the best progressive employers and pursue your passion for content marketing.

Questions to ask a progressive employer:

- ▶ What sort of tech and process changes have you made recently to keep up with new trends?
- ▶ What kind of practical things do you do to drive innovation in your company?
- ▶ How do you keep your business sustainable?
- ▶ Would you say your organization puts more value into finding a solution or the process behind finding one?
- ▶ What kind of measures do you have in place to ensure a diverse, inclusive workplace?

The Skills Employers Want

Higher education can make you more employable, but it's important to focus on skills, too.

Higher education can improve employability, especially if your degree has a strong foundation in writing or marketing. Understanding which skills employers are seeking is critical to improving your overall employability, but particularly for engaging your employer of choice.

What skills are crucial for content marketers?

According to a **2011 McKinsey Report, An Economy That Works: Job Creation and America's Future**, two-thirds of participating companies (**64 percent**) reported that they could not find qualified applicants for some existing positions. Communication skills are important for any job—but they're especially important for content marketing. On the next page, check out a few highly desired skills for content marketers.



7 Critical Content Marketing Skills

- 1. Strong writing skills:** Every piece of content (even videos) begins with strong writing. Grammar and syntax are important, but demonstrating you can communicate an idea in a comprehensive and coherent way is a major differentiator.
- 2. A tactful personal brand:** Your digital presence on social media goes a long way in defining your personal brand. Job candidates who understand how to manage a public persona make strong applicants for a position heavily rooted in brand management.
- 3. Interviewing experience:** Marketers can't always get as close to a product or industry as they would like. As a result, knowing how to ask the right questions (and translate the answers to the page) is highly valued in content marketing.
- 4. Business background:** Understanding how businesses work is critical if you want to snag a content marketing position. Focus on learning the roles of different departments and how they work together to create successful organizations.
- 5. A confident voice:** Content marketing is all about showcasing confident answers to difficult questions. A confident voice, both on the page and in person, will win you good grace.

6. Storytelling ability: It's tough to tell a good story—but that's what good marketers do. Storytelling starts as a science and progresses into an art; if you don't understand the working parts of a story, creativity will only get you so far.

7. Organizational skills: Organization gets you a long way in all aspects of the business world. It's especially important for content marketing teams, where organization comes into play for ideation, content creation, distribution and more.

If you don't have these skills, look for internships or organizations with strong training programs.

Have these skills but no experience? Demonstrate them by building your personal brand online with your own blog, an active social media presence and contributions to LinkedIn groups and other community-focused websites.

DID YOU KNOW?*

- ▶ The majority of marketers plan to increase their content marketing spend over 2013.
- ▶ Nine out of 10 marketers use content marketing, but only about one-third of them believe their efforts are effective.
- ▶ Most marketers produce content in-house or use a combination of in-house and freelancers, consultants or agencies. Very few only outsource content creation.

*All stats come from original CMI research.

Research and Chatter

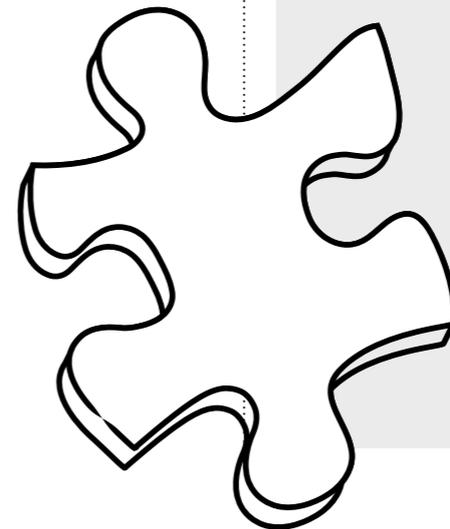
Both employees and employers want (and need) mutual understanding.

Making a list of the world's most progressive employers will depend entirely on what you're looking for. While family-friendly policies and flexible working practices can top the list for many employees, others seek a different kind of "progressive" attitude.

Media and professional development organizations in most countries compile lists of the top employers for women, focusing on issues of salary equity, family-friendly policies and leadership gender balance. Generational awareness and other diversity issues are also common measures by which the world's top companies are compared.

Look for signs that you're a good match

▶ Many corporations are changing to better fit with the work styles of all generations and cultural preferences. Seek signs when you research companies, or visit their offices, to ensure that they're embracing diversity and inclusion, as well as specific work-related issues that are important to you.



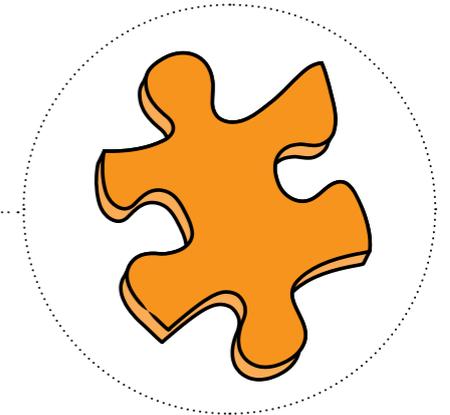
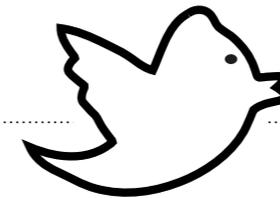
Beyond researching these, there are **three key ways** to gain an insight into a company's culture and understand whether it has the right progressive policies and practices for you:

- 1. Ask people in your networks who have worked there (or can connect you with someone who has).**
- 2. View comments on websites that review companies such as [glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com) (or local equivalents).**
- 3. Ask your recruiter or HR consultant to review the company handbook on your behalf to get insight into the culture of the organization.**

Once you've identified which companies meet your needs and are a good fit for your work style, proactively engage with them through social media to develop a deeper understanding of their strategy, priorities and leadership style. Most senior leaders and companies have LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter accounts, which you can follow and even use to engage in discussion. You may even discover shared connections, which can make introducing yourself to HR and recruitment professionals within the company much easier.

Other social engagement with company leaders may include:

- ▶ Follow them on Twitter, retweet and “favorite” especially insightful tweets, and ask questions or make comments.
- ▶ Connect on LinkedIn and interact with content they post.
- ▶ Join LinkedIn Groups they’re members of and post your own thought leadership content.
- ▶ Follow company pages on Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook and interact with the content they post on each network.



The other benefit of subscribing to company feeds and reading their blog posts is that you’ll learn about the projects and priorities they’re working on, which gives you a big advantage in interviews. Social sites will tell you a lot about how a company operates, what other people are saying about them, and what their primary goals and objectives are. Being fluent in these things not only makes you a more attractive employee, it helps you really decide if it’s the right place for you to work.

The Digital Interview

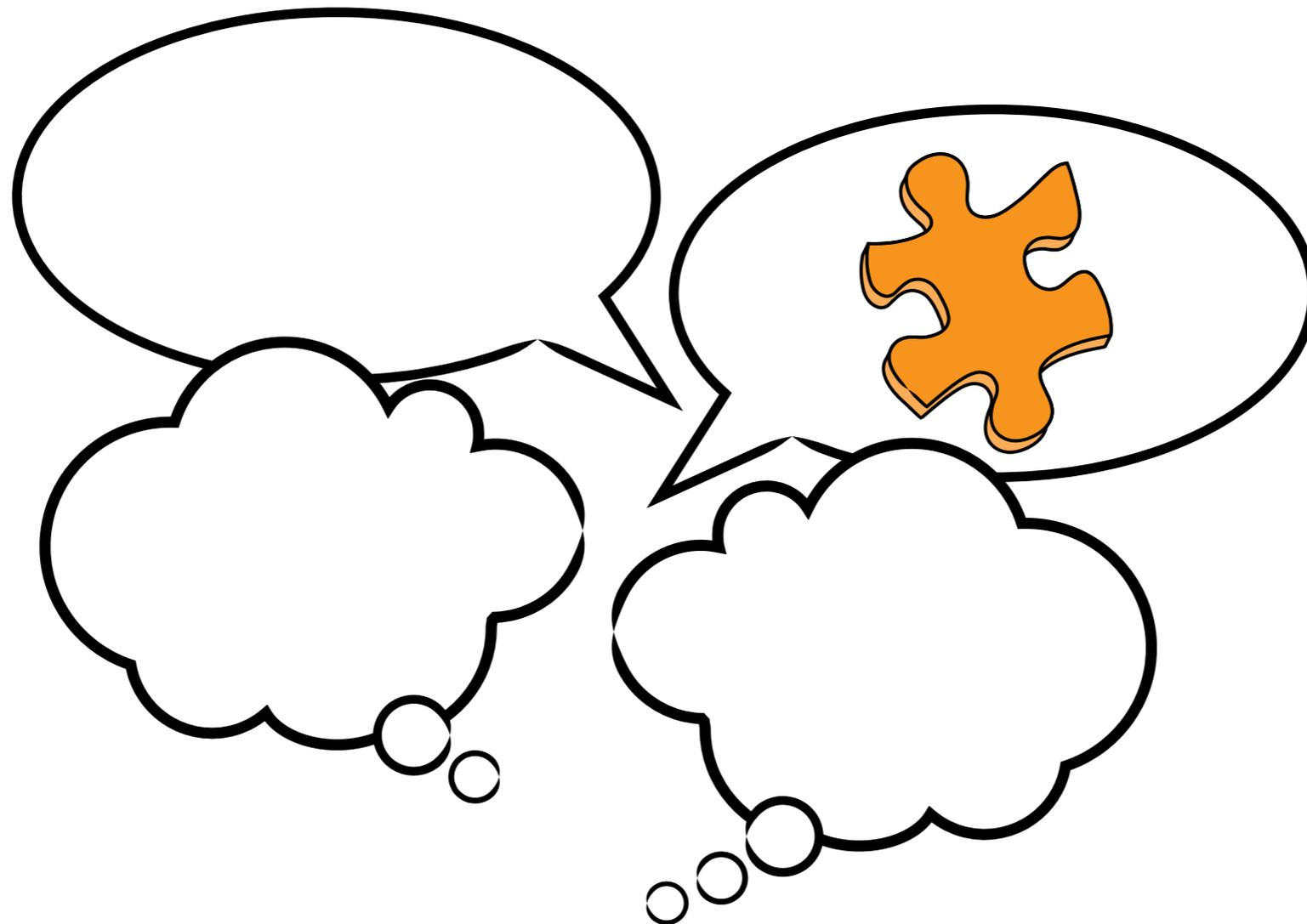
The interview doesn't stop when you walk out the door, so try to demonstrate that you think and act in ways that align with your prospective employer.

Who you are—not just what you do—is a major selling point for getting the job you want. Your attitude, ability to learn, flexibility and genuine passion for the work and the organization are all things that influence an employer's hiring decision. After all, the “right” person can learn the skills they may be missing.

Remember that social media activity is a **resume you're writing**. That's how employers research you. Next time you sit down to write a blog post, edit a wiki, update your status or tweet your thoughts, think about it as part of one, great, ever-expanding resume. Employers want to get to know you—and this means the online “you” as much as the person whose resume they read, and who sits in front of them in interviews.



Our attitudes about sharing information and interacting with strangers are evolving—and employer attitudes are part of this. The [Kelly Global Workforce Index](#), with insights into the thoughts and behavior of some **168,000** people worldwide, proves this. It shows that almost **one-third** of people now believe it is essential to be active on social media in order to advance their careers. Generation Y is the most likely to be active online for career development, but we also found that those in Asia-Pacific are particularly focused on online activity as a career tool—more than half of respondents in this region regard it as essential for career advancement.



Critically, however, candidates' online activity is not a sales pitch per se. It's not about being "on" all the time and living in a paranoid bubble where you try to consistently say and do all the right things to get "the" job. Instead, it's about being yourself (or probably the very best of yourself) in more public realms.

Recruitment is changing quickly. It's evolving to take in vast amounts of information from many more sources, particularly online ones. So, think about how you can build, add to, influence and even change the conversation about your suitability for a content marketing role.

The interview goes both ways. Ask questions of your interviewer that will help you understand just how well you will fit with the culture and direction of the organization:

- ▶ Will the company "fit" your personality?
- ▶ Will it support the way you work best?
- ▶ Does it reflect your values and priorities?

A content-oriented culture is another important factor to consider:

- ▶ Does the company have a content marketing mission statement?
- ▶ Are company leaders on board with content marketing?
- ▶ Who creates content?
- ▶ How long has content been core to the organization's marketing strategy?

Gaining Quick Experience

If you don't need or want a full-time job right away, think about the long-term career benefits of project work.

The barriers to virtual and flexible work practices are diminishing every day, meaning both employee and employer can cast their net for skills much, much wider. Content marketing in particular is well suited for remote positions, especially when it comes to marketing yourself as a freelance writer.

Temporary, freelance and project roles can offer:

- ▶ More challenging work
- ▶ More exposure to innovative and change-focused projects
- ▶ The chance to experience many different ways of working and company cultures
- ▶ The ability to amass more varied skills, more quickly

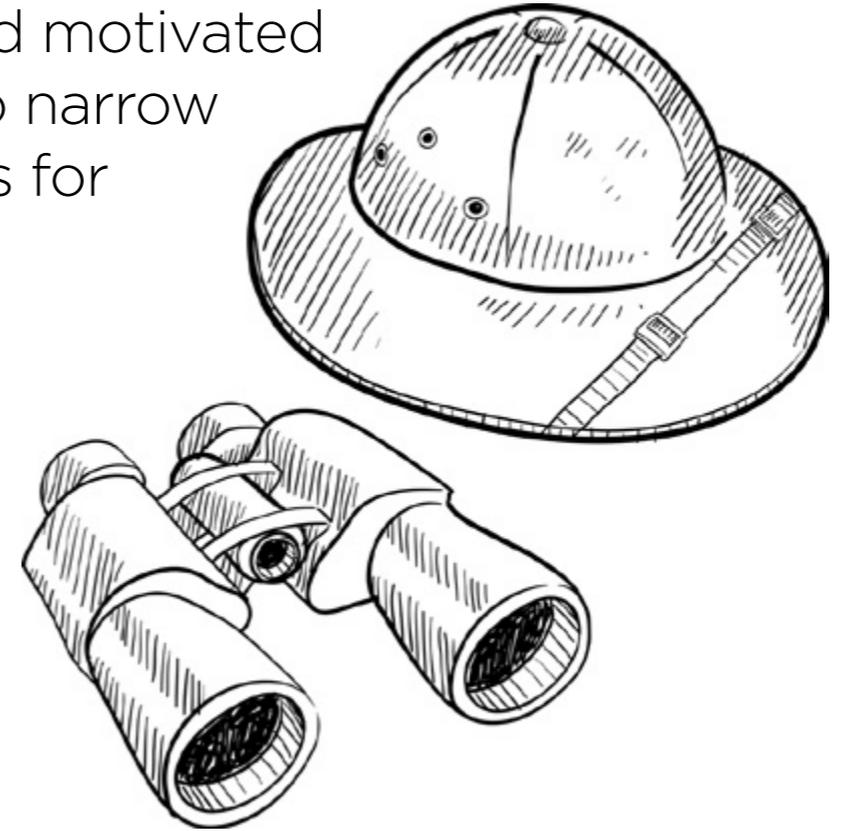
If you're looking to expand on certain skills or types of experience, look for shorter-term projects that offer what you're seeking. Also, if you have one specific employer on your list as your preferred employer, look for shorter-term opportunities that will allow you to "get a foot in the door." You can then work your way into your preferred role with that organization once you know exactly what's required for your desired role.

On the Hunt

When looking for a new opportunity, staying focused and motivated can be tough. If you can't figure out where to start, try to narrow your search as far as possible. The amount of possibilities for applying can get overwhelming.

LinkedIn is a great resource for your search. Pack your digital resume with as many goodies as you can. Find keywords that describe your expertise and use them in your profile. Sift through the professional network's job boards to find interesting positions. Look for connections of connections and try to get introductions from your friends, colleagues and family members.

Be discerning with your search. Interview as many times as possible. And keep your eyes peeled for cold sales positions disguised as "marketing" jobs. Soon enough, you'll get the content marketing job you want.



About Content Marketing Institute

Our goal at the Content Marketing Institute is simple: We want to advance the practice of content marketing. We believe the more you know about content marketing, and how to integrate it into your organization, the better you will market, attracting and retaining more and happier customers.

We teach marketers through educational events like Content Marketing World (the largest content marketing event in the world), media properties like Chief Content Officer magazine (the leading trade magazine), and strategic consulting and research for some of the best known brands in the world (such as AT&T, Tyco, PTC and others).

For more helpful tips on content marketing careers, visit contentmarketinginstitute.com.

About Kelly Services, Inc.

Kelly Services, Inc. (NASDAQ: KELYA, KELYB) is a leader in providing workforce solutions. Kelly® offers a comprehensive array of outsourcing and consulting services as well as world-class staffing on a temporary, temporary-to-hire, and direct-hire basis. Serving clients around the globe, Kelly provides employment to more than 560,000 employees annually. Revenue in 2012 was \$5.5 billion.

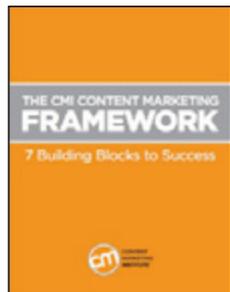
Visit kellyservices.com and connect with us on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Download The Talent Project, a free iPad app by Kelly Services.

ESSENTIAL CONTENT MARKETING RESOURCES



Chief Content Officer magazine

CCO is the first globally-distributed magazine devoted to the fast-growing, evolving field of content marketing. It is written by, for, and about the most innovative, influential global content marketers. [Sign up here.](#)



CMI Content Marketing Framework

Learn the common building blocks of any content marketing strategy.

[Read the Framework.](#)



100 Content Marketing Examples

See how companies big and small from various locations and industries are producing creative, and successful content marketing campaigns across multiple online, in person and print channels. [Find it here!](#)



Content Marketing World

THE premier annual event for content marketing, where thousands of content marketers come together in one location from around the world.

[Find out more about CM World today!](#)

About the Authors

MICHAEL KIRSTEN

Michael Kirsten is the B2B content strategist of Kelly Services. In his role he is responsible for developing, designing and managing Thought Leadership content at Kelly Services. He holds a masters degree in Political Science and Business Administration from the University Hamburg, Germany.

MARK SHERBIN

Mark Sherbin is a freelance writer specializing in technology and content marketing. He is a regular contributor to Content Marketing Institute.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Getting the Content Marketing Job You Want

Tips to Engage the Best (Progressive) Employers

Written by Michael Kirsten & Mark Sherbin

Illustrations By Andy Moir and Bigstock.

Design By Kristen Morabito