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## CASE STUDY

### **FROM SENIOR ARMED FORCES OFFICER TO A LUCRATIVE ROLE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR. HOW MDN FACILITATED THIS SUCCESSFUL CAREER TRANSITION.**

#### **1. THE SITUATION AND THE CHALLENGES**

Our client had been in the Army for some time and felt that his extensive skills were being underutilised, unappreciated and undervalued. He was ready for change. He knew that staying would lead to more frustration and indeed stress. He knew he had to plan his next moves carefully. With a wife, two very young children and a mortgage, he was the major breadwinner. He had to be cautious as to what his next steps would be if he was to make his move successfully. He knew what real apprehension was as he had been in action and knew his training would help in re-charting his next career move.

Trained in tactics he knew his experience in dealing with civilian life was limited. So how was this vast amount of management training in all manner of skills going to be translated into strengths. He was chasing work in the private sector with a more commercial focus. He needed a fellow tactician, since he had no real idea of how to go about securing a successful transition to a new and more satisfying and similarly remunerated role.

#### **2. MDN STEPS IN TO HELP**

Tactical plans need allies. Through a contact, he met with Mark Nicol, a specialist who worked in career transition. In Mark, he found the ally he was seeking in his quest for a new and more fulfilled life and career. Thus the journey began. Initially, he took advantage of the free one-hour session that Mark offered. In that hour he knew he had a pathway to re-engineering and re-framing his skills and career.

Accordingly, Mark proposed to:

- a) Provide him with honest and pragmatic feedback and guidance including a strategic Career Plan covering various career options, targets, roles, industries, new sectors, remuneration elements and related opportunities available to him and which he could realistically pursue. This was particularly confronting in a very competitive, complex and challenging employment environment.
- b) Assist him in clearly articulating his unique selling points, value proposition and points of difference and particularly building his confidence that his skills, experience and competencies were transferrable to many employment situations and scenarios.
- c) Redesigning, reconfiguring and “civilianizing” his Resume/CV, application letters, LinkedIn Profile, personal business card and related collateral to capture the key elements of a) and b) above and ensure that at least initially “on paper”, he was far more marketable and appealing to a wider potential employer audience beyond the armed forces and preferably, far beyond the public sector.
- d) Fine tuning his interview and presentation skills to ensure the outcomes of the above three steps were appropriately articulated and promoted by him at interviews, networking events, presentations etc.
- e) Provide him with ongoing assistance and support in respect of networking skills and introductions to relevant contacts and other networks to enable him to source and secure potential senior employment opportunities.
- f) The client quickly agreed with MDN’s strategy and action plan and immediately commissioned MDN to undertake the above programme.

He found Mark to be sensitive, empathetic and attuned to his concerns about his future pathways. Re-branding yourself is not an easy task if you try to do it alone. You need someone to help you on this journey of discovery. You need someone who can see how subtle changes in your core strengths can create within yourself, a new understanding of your saleability to a new range of prospective employers.

The program which our client decided to undertake was done over about 5 weeks. Mark opened up many possible career pathways/options that he could pursue including the level of remuneration they may pay for the right person. Just how tough was the competition for employment? What were his core skill gaps pertinent to those industries? The vast amount of training he had been given was cause for great excitement as he began to discover that he was more in the game than he thought.

A critical component in any Career Transition is the CV. Just what is a CV? In the simplest terms, it is truth told well. It is about taking all the major features of your past experiences in the workforce and developing them into benefits for any prospective employer. This takes time and great skill. Mark brought every one of these skills to the table to help rewrite a truthful and openly honest CV that the client was proud of, seeing him in a favourable light for any prospective employer.

Mark also worked with the client on how to present at interviews. It is no different to being on stage. Mark was able to skilfully help him to tell his story. Our client had a wonderful story to tell. He just needed to tell his story differently, yet accurately and truthfully.

### **3. WHAT ENDED UP HAPPENING?**

The program was finalised and the client was able to set about implementing Mark's advice. He left the armed forces and found an executive position in the private sector, only a few weeks after commencing the MDN Career Transition program. This role was a perfect fit for his skills, experience, qualifications, etc.

As indicated above and of particular note, was that we were able to significantly re-engineer and re-design the client's resume, not to detract from its' veracity or accuracy, but rather to give it a "different spin" and overriding theme. This involved essentially downplaying and de-emphasising his armed services background, making it something that was more generic and appealing to a wider commercially oriented audience.

In fact, it is interesting that at the interview for the role which was successfully secured by our client, the interviewer asked the question "Now reviewing your resume and just to clarify, did you actually work for the armed services or was it somewhere else?"

The new resume was not deceptive, false or misleading. It simply sold and profiled our client in a very different light and his interview skills (honed via MDN) ensured that he presented himself in that way. This resume and the interview skills, were the "keys that unlocked the door" to other career opportunities.

### **4. WHAT NEXT?**

To see the steps in this program and to enjoy a free one hour consult with Mark, click on this link to go back to the MDN website.

<https://www.mdn.com.au/career-business-mentoring-coaching>

If this case study "strikes a chord" with you or others you know, please get in touch with Mark Nicol of MDN, on 0418 366493 or email [mdnconsulting@bigpond.com](mailto:mdnconsulting@bigpond.com)

We have over 35 years' experience in situations similar to the above or otherwise when redundancy, retrenchment or self-driven career transition is contemplated. We really can help and be relied upon and trusted to assist and support you with your career transition, search and related needs.

MDN adopts a gender-sensitive approach to all client work whether in recruitment, career coaching, transition, mentoring or other related management and HR consulting engagements