

Narrative

Now, that you *love* the job search, let's talk about how you see your career. If we were to ask you "why did you join your last job?" What would your answer be? How about "What did you do there", or "Why are you leaving?"

Most people spend *very little time* thinking about these questions. Let's go over some examples.

Why did you join your last job?

It may be a story of some accident – "My friend worked at this company, so I asked him for a referral, and now I'm here"

If you answered with an accident story, the recruiter may think that you had no real purpose to your choice, so you don't care deeply about your career.

Why are you looking for your next job?

You may have had a negative experience, and answer: "I disliked the environment", or "I wasn't growing anymore." Or perhaps you answer with something generic "I want to grow more", "I want a change, and I want to try something new"

If you answer with a negative story, it could make the recruiter wonder — was it your coworkers, or was it you? If you answer with a generic story, the recruiter will think perhaps you don't care about their career

How do the best candidates answer these questions?

The best candidates form strong answers, on where they came from, and where they are going in their career. They form a **narrative** that demonstrates **conviction** and **direction**. They demonstrate a purpose driving their choices, and how the work they did helped them grow. They show a north star vision which looks like an exciting journey.

The best candidates also demonstrate a framework for their choice — they are looking for specific kinds of growth, and they are considering *multiple* options to realize that growth — that can even involve staying at their current company.

When a recruiter hears all this, they begin to sense that **they have landed on a star**. Your criteria may be the perfect fit for them. This make the recruiter excited to close you, and even better, they can now imagine **a path to convince you to join**. They begin to show you how working with them fits the framework for your choice. Furthermore, they can pass this information to hiring managers

and get them excited too. All of a sudden you have a company that is thrilled to interview you.

By forming this narrative you also make it **easier for your community to help you.**

Imagine you meet up with an old mentor and are asking them for advice. If you're "looking for a change" — how can they help you? They can't just open their rolodex and send a hundred emails.

However, if you paint a story, and show them your *ideal* next company, now it's easy for them to help — you have almost written the email they're going to send to introduce you!

You may be wondering though — what if my story isn't exciting?

This is often a mirage. If you spend a few hours to think about what your north star vision is, you'll begin to see a story unravel — and you'll get very excited about it.

If you don't believe us, let's *try it out*.

In your homework, we want you to spend 2 hours, and give us your answers to "Why you joined your last job", "What you did", and "Where you're going".

For demonstration, Stepan has included an example with his answer

As you answer these questions, you'll uncover the exciting path you've been on, and be ready to start the job search strong.

Homework

Take a moment to reflect about your journey. What are your answers to these questions?

- Why did you join your last job?
- What did you do there?
- Why are you leaving?
- What are you looking for in your next job?