

Strategy Call Summary

Your Current Situation

Background:
Information Technology (No Degree)

Applications Sent:
~20 (last 90 days)

Dream Role:
Network Architect

Current Certification:
Studying for CCNA (Testing Feb 2026)

Goal:
Land Network Engineer Role

Location:
Des Moines, Iowa

The Core Challenge

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You're in a strong position—**proven experience, great communication skills, and clear direction**—but facing some common roadblocks in the IT networking space:

- ✗ **No four-year degree**—while not always required, AI recruitment tools and some HR filters can screen you out before a human sees your resume
- ✗ **Certification gap**—some Network Engineer roles want CCNP (next level up from CCNA) or additional specialized certs
- ✗ **Recently laid off**—caught in acquisition/layoff at Come and Go Maverick, unemployed ~1 month
- ✗ **Moving up fast**—trying to jump from help desk → engineering quickly, which can trigger "not enough experience" objections
- ✗ **Competing offers not optimal**—you've received job offers, but they're more hands-on/entry-level than where you want to be

✓ What's Already Working For You

✓ Exceptional Communication Skills

7-8 years of customer service experience, trained by strong communicators. You're articulate, confident, and polished—a major differentiator in IT

✓ Diverse Technical Background

Started building PCs at age 11-13, Geek Squad, Casey's IT Specialist, Come and Go network administration—progressive growth trajectory

✓ Hands-On Networking Experience

1.5+ years of network administration at Come and Go—routers, switches, firewalls, network racks, point of sale systems, real production environments

✓ Currently Upskilling

Actively studying for CCNA using Wendell Odom's official certification guides—shows initiative and commitment to growth

✓ Fire-Fighting Experience

Handled high-pressure situations on help desk—stressful calls, guiding non-technical users through complex troubleshooting, crisis management

✓ Mentorship Track Record

Learned from and collaborated with strong mentors (Adam Hulcom, CamL)—shows coachability and ability to grow from feedback

✓ Clear Career Vision

Know exactly what you want (Network Architect) and the stepping stones to get there (Network Engineer → Network Admin)

✓ Right Attitude

Willing to help others, open to feedback, growth-oriented mindset—exactly the type of candidate companies want to invest in

💡 The Insight

You're in a unique position: **you have the experience and communication skills that most IT candidates lack**, but you're being filtered out before anyone can see that. The degree requirement is often a proxy for "can this person learn and communicate?"—and you already prove that in spades.

Here's what we need to do:

1. **Reframe "no degree" as "non-traditional path with accelerated growth"**—your trajectory from building PCs at 13 to network admin at a multi-state company is more impressive than most CS graduates
2. **Quantify your impact**—how many stores did you support? How many tickets per day? What was the uptime you maintained? Numbers bypass the "not enough experience" objection
3. **Lead with your communication edge**—in IT, most candidates are technical but can't explain things clearly. You can do both. That's rare and valuable.
4. **Target the right roles**—companies that say "bachelor's or equivalent experience" are your sweet spot. Avoid companies with hard degree requirements for now.
5. **Stack the CCNA timing**—February certification + polished resume + interview skills = perfect storm for spring hiring cycles

Your experience + communication skills + CCNA (soon) = Network Engineer material. We just need to package it right.



The Plan Moving Forward

The 21-Day Job Launch Blueprint

3 × 90-minute 1-on-1 sessions over ~21 days

Each session includes **live resume building, story development, and mock practice** tailored specifically to your network engineering job search.



Session Timeline

NOW

Pre-Session 1 Materials

"The Quick Win Package" — Job sourcing + networking prep before we even meet

Jan 20

SESSION 1: Deep Resume Transformation

Turn your diverse IT experience into an interview-generating resume using the Impact Bullet Formula™

Jan 27

SESSION 2: Interview Strategy & Story Mastery

Build your Master Story Vault and learn to answer behavioral questions with confidence

Feb 3

SESSION 3: Live Mock Interview & Refinement

Full mock interview experience with real-time feedback—right before your CCNA exam

✓ What You'll Walk Away With

- ✓ A fully transformed, ATS-optimized resume that bypasses degree filters
- ✓ A Master Story Vault with 15+ polished STAR stories
- ✓ Full mock interview experience with detailed feedback
- ✓ LinkedIn optimization for IT networking visibility
- ✓ A modular bullet library for quick tailoring to each application
- ✓ Interview Cheat Sheet for quick reference during interviews
- ✓ Strategic job sourcing plan targeting "bachelor's or equivalent" roles
- ✓ Cover letter template and application tracking system

Pre-Session 1 Materials

"The Quick Win Package" — Feel the value BEFORE our first call




1. The Job Sourcing Strategy™

Quality over quantity applications

What it is: A framework that explains why applying to random jobs fails, and how to use strategic targeting instead. You'll learn the 70/20/10 rule, the Supplier Hack, and the Hidden Job Market Timeline.

Why it matters for you: With 20 applications out, we need to shift from volume to precision. Focus on roles that explicitly say "bachelor's or equivalent experience" and companies known for valuing certifications + experience.

 Attached separately




2. The Job Board Hierarchy™

Where to apply for maximum ROI

What it is: A ranked list of job boards from Tier 1 (company career pages, 15% response rate) to Tier 10 (Indeed, <1% response rate). Includes IT-specific recommendations.

Why it matters for you: Dice, LinkedIn, company career pages, and IT-specific boards will outperform generic sites. Prioritize MSPs and enterprise IT departments in Des Moines/Iowa.

 Attached separately




3. The Warm Intro Protocol™

Turn connections into advocates

What it is: The exact 4-step process to reach out to former colleagues, IT professionals at target companies, and convert conversations into referrals. Includes the "Researcher Script" that gets 30-50% response rates.

Why it matters for you: You have a network from Geek Squad, Casey's, and Come and Go. CamL is already an example—let's activate more of those connections strategically.

 [Attached separately](#)




4. The Application Pipeline™ (Template)

Track applications like a sales pipeline

What it is: A Google Sheets template to track every application: company, role, date applied, source (LinkedIn/referral/direct), status, and next steps. Includes dashboard for response rates.

Why it matters for you: With ~20 apps already sent, this gives you a system to track what's working, follow up strategically, and avoid duplicates as you ramp up activity.

 [Attached separately](#)




5. The Application Timing Strategy™

When to apply for maximum visibility

What it is: Data-driven guide on the best days/times to submit applications (hint: Tuesday-Thursday mornings beat Friday afternoons 3x). Includes posting age strategy.

Why it matters for you: With your CCNA exam in February, we want to time your refreshed applications to land right after certification—maximum impact.

 [Attached separately](#)




6. The Resource Activation System™ (Worksheet)

Map your entire professional network

What it is: A worksheet to map your network across 4 pillars: Former Colleagues, Industry Contacts, Certification Communities (Cisco forums, study groups), and Local IT Groups.

Why it matters for you: You've worked at multiple companies with strong mentors (Adam Hulcom, CamL). This helps you systematically activate those relationships for referrals and intel.

 [Attached separately](#)




7. The "No Degree" Advantage Playbook™

Turn your non-traditional path into a strength

What it is: A mindset and messaging guide that reframes "no degree" as "self-driven, continuously learning, and battle-tested." Includes specific language for resumes, LinkedIn, and interviews.

Why it matters for you: Building PCs at 13, Geek Squad certification path, CCNA self-study—this is a story of initiative and self-direction that many degree holders can't match.

 [Attached separately](#)




8. The IT Networking Target List™

Companies in Iowa that value experience over degrees

What it is: A curated list of MSPs, enterprise IT departments, and tech companies in the Des Moines/Iowa area known for hiring based on certifications + experience rather than degrees.

Why it matters for you: Targeted outreach to the right companies > 100 random applications. We'll identify companies where your background is exactly what they're looking for.

 [Will build together in Session 1](#)




9. The Asset Mindset Shift™

See your experience as valuable before Session 1

What it is: A mindset prep guide that teaches you to see every help desk call, network troubleshoot, and fire-fighting situation as a "hidden asset" for your resume and interviews.

Why it matters for you: You have incredible stories from Casey's and Come and Go. This prepares you to extract and present them powerfully.

 [Attached separately](#)

Actions Before Session 1 (January 20th)

Please complete before our first session—these will make our time together WAY more effective:

- ❑ Set up the **Application Pipeline spreadsheet** (track your ~20 past applications + prepare for new ones)
- ❑ Identify **10-15 target companies** in Des Moines/Iowa area for Network Engineer or Network Admin roles
- ❑ Review 5 job postings that say "**bachelor's or equivalent experience**"—screenshot or save links
- ❑ Send **3-5 LinkedIn connection requests** to former colleagues or IT professionals at target companies
- ❑ Gather all **resume materials**: current resume, list of major projects/incidents you handled, certifications, any documentation of your network admin work
- ❑ **Bring your current resume** to Session 1 (even if it needs work—that's what we're fixing)
- ❑ Write down **3-5 "fire-fighting" stories** from your IT career—times you solved a tough problem under pressure
- ❑ **Post an introduction** in the Skool community (just a few sentences about who you are and what you're looking for)

💡 **Pro Tip:** Don't stress about perfection. The goal is to gather data and start building momentum. We'll refine everything together in Session 1. Remember: progress, not perfection.

Let's turn your experience into your next Network Engineer role.

You don't need a degree to prove you're capable.

You just need to show them what you've already done.

Your communication skills + hands-on experience + CCNA = **exactly what they're looking for.**

Let's package it right.

Excited to work with you, Ethan!

— Mansour

Launch Path | LaunchToLead

Confidential — Prepared for Ethan Swagger