



4 SIMPLE TIPS TO LAND YOUR NEXT JOB IN ANALYTICS AND DATA SCIENCE.

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LOOKING TO LAND THE PERFECT ROLE? TAKE ACTION NOW

This guide is for you...

- If you are new to the data field and you're looking to jump into analytics, or have a technical background and are looking to become a Data Scientist
- If you are an IT veteran looking to differentiate yourself
- If you have an unconventional or creative background, and you're looking for a more data-driven role in things like marketing analytics
- If you feel overwhelmed by bootcamps, competition, and the current emphasis on data science
- If you're working on a visa or can't seem to get more than contracting roles

Congratulations on your first step in making the effort to land the role you'd like.

Getting a job as a business analyst, data scientist, business intelligence professional and project manager can be mystifying. As there are so many bootcamps, master's programs and more you might find yourself overwhelmed especially if you have an unconventional background. However, if you think like an analyst or a designer, you can make the process a lot easier—and even make your background work for you! I want to help you land the job that makes you the most money while also taking advantage of your talents.

In the text that follows, I outline what you need to be successful. At a glance, here's what you need:

1. Be bold and differentiate yourself
2. Have a killer resume
3. Ace the interview
4. Iterate until you've found what works



1. BE BOLD AND DIFFERENTIATE YOURSELF

Being bold means that you own your background, talents, and experience. In helping many people find jobs, I find that they think their backgrounds work against them. For instance, I recently helped a young man with a creative writing background craft a resume for a data-driven position. He feared he was being passed over for roles because he didn't have the experience they were looking for.

On the contrary, someone with creative writing skills knows how to tell a story. In his interview, I instructed him to say, "because of my background and my data skills, I have the unique ability to tell the story around data that will keep stakeholders engaged and show the process from bringing to analysis to deriving insights."

Another bold strategy is to use LinkedIn to find your position's hiring manager. I've done this before—and it works. Once you've applied to a position, go to LinkedIn and find who the talent manager is. If you can find them, ask for connection. If the connection is accepted, send a quick note:

Thanks _____ for connecting with me! I've just applied for the Business Analytics Role (job id: #####) on your website. This position sounds exciting! If you have any questions about my application, I'd be happy to answer them.

Hope you have a great rest of the week—Jordan

This action will never work against you. You're saving time for the hiring manager by making yourself stand out more. They don't want to wade through 30 resumes. They'd rather have the solid candidates stand out to make their lives easier.

2. CRAFT A KILLER RESUME

Crafting the perfect resume deserves its own series but there are small touches you can do now that will make your resume immensely better. Follow the advice in this section to give your resume a boost.

- ✓ **Come up with a personal title that describes who you are and append it to your name at the top of the resume.**

For instance, on my main resume (yes, it's a good idea to have multiple resumes with personal titles you can tailor to the roles to which you're applying), I am *<my name>, Data Science Leader*. I've also used terms like *Data-Driven Management Consultant*.

Pro tip: use the title of the role to which you're applying to help you. So if you're applying to a Business Intelligence role, your resume can be titled, *Joe Schmoie, Business Intelligence Developer*.



Pro tip: Stay away from words that denigrate your expertise. Do not use titles like Aspiring Data Scientist, Business Intelligence Enthusiast. I've hired a few people over the years, and I will always prefer someone who is more than just an enthusiast or an aspirant.

✓ Start your resume off with an Executive Summary

The Executive Summary should be a concise list of your skills and/or your accomplishments. If you're new to the field, you might only have two or three short sentences. The important thing here is to give the reader of your resume the best information about you. That's what's going to help them keep reading and help you stand out from the crowd!

The Executive Summary doesn't need to be long. Here's one I helped my friend craft for her resume:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Goal-Oriented Data Science Manager with 8+ years of experience. Skilled in project management, data-drive problem-solving, presenting results with clarity, liaising with multiple stakeholders and departments, and cultivating crucial interpersonal relationships.

✓ Use impact phrases to describe your work

This recommendation isn't new. It's the bread-and-butter of resumes. But instead of saying *I did this* you need to add some quantity or impact to it. Fear not: if you're analyst or a designer, just pull from your skills. Here are some examples:

- Very first analyst in an organization of 70 people—a job I helped create and write the role for
- Spearheaded two-month effort to implement Tableau across 3 departments building a total of 10 dashboards



3. ACE THE INTERVIEW

Having a positive interview (or series of interviews) is crucial to helping you land the job. Never go into an interview emptyhanded. Always bring a notepad and a pen as well as extra copies of your resume if it's in person. If it's on the phone or online, be prepared with a list of questions you'd like to ask. The more prepared you look, the more receptive your interviewer will be to you.

A lot of people fail because they don't prepare correctly. Here's what you need to do to prepare.

✓ Don't talk about salary

Don't talk about salary until you're made an offer. Interviews are all about building a rapport. They'd like to know if they can work with you, and you them. Usually, in the first interview the hiring manager or HR rep will ask about salary. **This is a trap.**

Your response should always be, "At this point, I just want to make sure I'm the proper fit for this role. Right now, I'm looking for challenging work. I'm sure you'll make a competitive offer if and when we get there."

If the interviewer presses you—and they might because they want to weed out people with unrealistic expectations—here's what you say, "I can tell you what I'm making now, which is \$50,000. However, as this role has more responsibility, I'm hoping to make a salary reflective of my additional responsibilities. Honestly though, at this point, I'm really looking for a job that has interesting challenges and people, so we can talk about salary when the time is right."

✓ Why do you want to work here?

Inevitably, you'll be asked why you want to work at the place you're applying. This is where you make your background work for you! If you have a creative background and you're applying to, say, a company that manufactures clothes, you can say,

"From my artistic background, I felt I needed to work somewhere where art is a central point of the business. I think my creativity given your space will allow me to give you a lot more than just being a simple data person."

Don't be a sycophant about how great the place you're applying to is. Empty flattery will get you nowhere. Before going into the interview, have a good sense of how you'll answer this question as it often trips people up.



✓ Why are you leaving your last position?

This is also a question that trips people up. They waver between answering too honestly and coming off kind of arrogant to being suspiciously vague. You're allowed to tell the truth about why you're leaving but there are better ways than others to say it.

Most of us leave a job because: we want more challenges, more work, more authority, more autonomy—in effect, *we want a promotion*. If that's you, then say these things tactfully and factually: "I liked my old company. But it's a growing small business, and there's less structure around my role. I'm ready to work somewhere that has a built-out analytics presence using the latest technology with a career ladder I can count on. I see this new job as a promotion from what I was doing, and I'm ready to tackle even greater challenges."

A lot of us will leave jobs that are toxic work environments. If you talk shit about your past company, it may be well deserved, but it won't look good. If you're leaving a toxic environment, you can still adapt the previous response. But if the best you can do is keep it short and sweet, simply say, "You know, I'm just looking for a different opportunity. I think the role to which I'm applying is a better fit for me."

✓ But you don't have a data background?

Again, this is where you need to make your background work for you especially if you have solid years working with data.

Not being like every candidate is an asset. Say, "Because of my unique background, I come at problems differently. I'm not someone who will sit behind a desk in a darkened corner. My background means that I can communicate well to a lot of different people. That means translating business needs from my manager to my fellow coders. It also means helping the coders explain what they did to other parts of the company! My background has really showed me the importance of communication, and I think that's something I bring *does make me unconventional*, which is a major benefit to you."



4. ITERATE UNTIL YOU'VE FOUND WHAT WORKS

Finding a job is like playing a video game. You will fail a few times, but with persistence, you'll find what works for you. So, again, it's especially important you approach this like a designer or analyst (whichever you happen to be). If you are making it to the final round interview stage for multiple positions but not getting an offer, it can feel super defeating.

But take stock in the fact that you made it so far while others with more traditional backgrounds did not—so you must be doing something right!

It's very easy when looking for jobs to feel rejected when you've made it to the final round. Often that sense of rejection happens for a job we didn't even care that much about until they showed some interest in us. Remember, though, you want a job that's the right fit. Some companies aren't going to be a fit for you, even if they showed promise. It's not a bad thing to not be made an offer. Sometimes it happens. And, often, with time, you find it wasn't really what you wanted in the first place—you were just hoping to ease the stress of looking for a job.

All of which is to say, the more disciplined you are about finding work, the more you test new things, the more successful you will be. Iterate. Iterate. Iterate.

CONCLUSION

Finding roles in analytics and data science can be tough despite your background. Even as job opportunities in this space grow exponentially as companies look to bring on more data-driven capabilities, there is a disconnect between applicants and the jobs they seek. With small resume improvements, answering interview questions well, and making the entire process an extension of your skills you will be well on your way to landing the role you'd like.