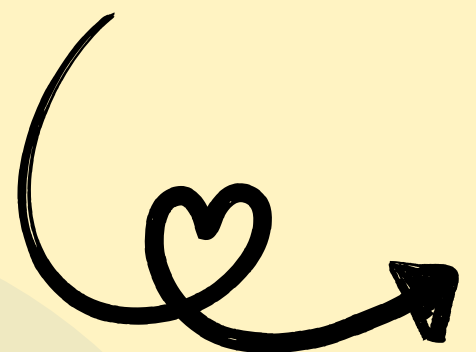


Diary of a Gen X Job Hunter

Chapter 3 & 4 - The Learns

Curiosity, Clarity, Courage

*By Nick
Williamson*



A QUICK REMINDER

Chapter 1 was about my story, journey and reflection on redundancy. Chapter 2, potential ways to navigate the noise out there and making decisions with better clarity.

I've decided to combine Chapter 3 (Learns) & 4 (Launch), which will be my final chapters. This is good for those out there that said "I hope there aren't many more chapters" - Not ideal for a budding author but obviously they meant that with the best intention. Getting a job is the whole purpose of this exercise!

What have I actually learnt and what am I going to do about it?

Let's look at the sources of learning whilst you're navigating job hunting. Day time TV has been very educational.



THE UNEXPECTED CLASSROOM.

Dickinson's Real Deal - You only need to watch the last ten minutes. That's when the big deals are done and where you learn whether the buyers turned a profit.

Gold is always worth a watch, porcelain animals not so much.

Tipping Point - If you haven't got the star coin onto the bottom level with only 1 category to choose from, you've no chance. No one gets the science question for 3 coins.

The Chase - Where contestants introduce their name, where they are from and what they do at the very start and the host asks them it all again before their individual cash builders.

4 in a Bed. Forensic specialists say every time you go into a room, you leave a piece of you in it. You can't underpay The White Heart Public House £18 because a particle of the person 3 hours before you, has been left behind.

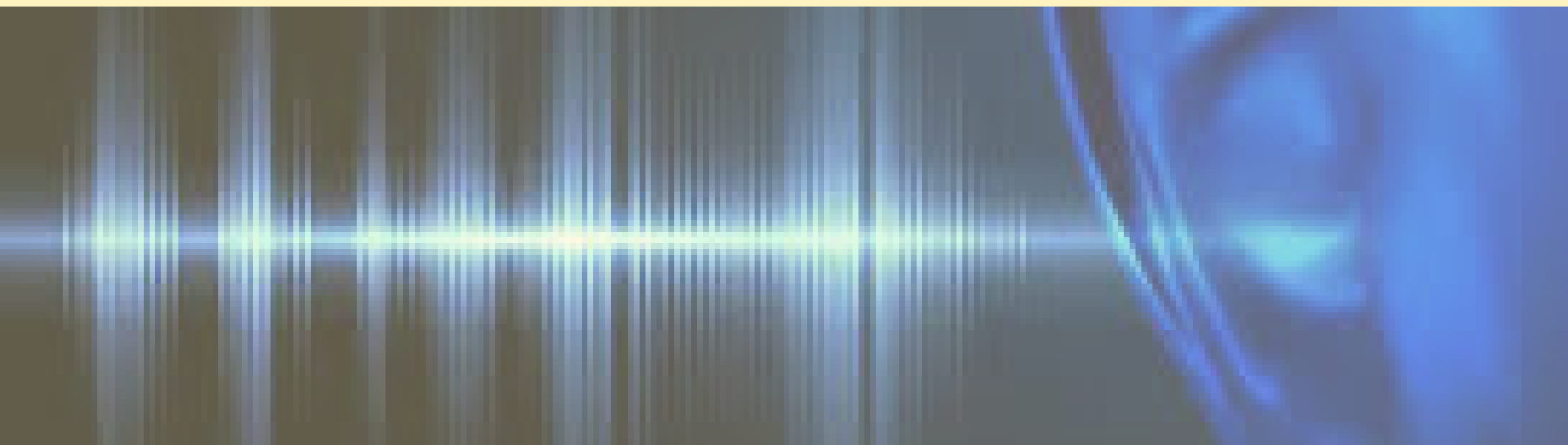
#Loveanunderpayment

Deal or no Deal - Noel Edmonds did it best. The only box you should ever be emotionally attached to is either the corporate or safety deposit variety. Not box 16 that our Sophie (age 6) dreamt about and scribbled on a napkin.

Loose Women - I have NO desire whatsoever to hear about the late night intricacies between Janet Street Porter and her latest (5th) husband!

THE UNEXPECTED CLASSROOM.

Music was always going to feature again in this chapter. Radio has been a huge source of learning for me. I stopped listening to Radio 1 & Radio X many years ago as I just wasn't getting anything from them.



I switched to Chris Evans where I just find everyday is a school day. In my learning journey I've gone from taking everything he says as gospel and leaning into every word, to now challenging his interviewing technique and sometimes, some of his opinions.

Periodically he'll have the star guests promoting movies, box sets and books. What I like is the lifelong learning interviews he has. I get as much from them as I do blinkists and podcasts, if not more.

My staple diet of music right now, listening to Virgin Legends and more 60s & 70s music than I have in my entire life.

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE NOISY

Then there's LinkedIn. In the last 5 months I've learnt about weddings, engagements, first house purchases, driving test passes, deaths, births, graduations, political opinions and of course most recently caricatures. None of this has served a purpose that has helped my cause. Right there is just more Chapter 2 noise.

However to provide balance it has had its fantastic uses. The Get Hired Forum was enlightening. There's another call Friday, recruitment and AI which I'm looking forward to. That network really help me build a relevant, up to date and attractive profile.

They were supportive and offered time outside of their day jobs. The comments that have come through for my diary in public and personal have given me a different perspective on my skills and where my focus is.

“You should be an author” OR “add author to your skills” was a regular theme.

NETWORK AWAKENS

These following comments/statements/learns as a direct result of my LinkedIn activity, really shaped my final steps in this process. I'll tell you why.

“The likelihood of you being chosen from 300 profiles is slim, especially when the organising is already courting an internal candidate”

Focus your effort on roles that speak to you. Do not submit 46 apps and hope.

“Your job is waiting for you within your network, you just don't know it yet”

Understand who your network really is. They could be reading your comments, your profile or diary.

“Comment on relevant posts more regularly with something meaningful to say”

Doing this validated I still belonged. I know stuff. My opinion has been given and valued. It's boosted my confidence.

“Why don't you try contracting, that'd be right up your street”

You may know from chapter 1 I've always preferred the safety of large organisations. I have bills to pay like everyone else. I wouldn't know where to start with contracting, which doors to knock on, how to set up a business. I was at a fork in the road, again. Decision time.

CURIOSITY

A good friend advised the best time to apply for roles is January and April. Year ends and budget clarity.

In the first week of January, I applied for 4 jobs. 2 I knew where well within my gift of delivery. 2 I knew were a stretch and not classically within my wheel house but it was an early test of the market. I was notified I had been declined for one of each.

The last two, I'm still to hear anything. The first two have at least demonstrated that if you want to, you can and therefore should inform applicants of progress.

In the background, people were asking if I could help with projects they're involved in. You guessed it, my network. This is when I seriously started looking at contracting as another option.

BUILDING NRW CONSULTS

I met with a close friend who walked me through the steps to setting up a business.

Fast forward a week, a wrestle with HMRC Gov website and here I am, almost the middle of February, the Director of my own company, NRW Consults.

I have some great opportunities in the pipeline and I honestly did not see this coming. That's not where I thought I would land up. I was dug in, ready for battling the noise and securing that position with company X, clear on what I wanted for myself and what I thought they needed.

I mention in previous chapters I love flexibility, diversity of work and travel. I wasn't applying that to my current situation as much as I should have been. I was thinking, how could I get all that in one job and narrowing too far. What a learn that has been.

FINAL WORDS

I'm a huge fan of gratitude so I simply have to say thank you for the reactions. Thank you for the feedback and the words of encouragement and support. Thank you for the potential opportunities this series has brought.

I hope you will have taken some learns from it but my takeaways from the experience to date are:

Expect the unexpected.

Get yourself out there if you're not already.

Have your story ready.

Keep a sense of humour. You just have to.

So thanks again, I have absolutely loved creating this series.

If you or your business are looking for a BPO specialist that can support with BPO services then reach out at:

NRW@NRWConsults.com

