

Career Growth Strategies for Business Aviation Professionals

+ *Personal development and career growth strategies for business aviation professionals*



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01

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR CAREER WHILE YOU'RE EMPLOYED

By Sheryl Barden

So you've landed that job you were looking for . . . congratulations! Now that you're gainfully employed, it's actually the best time to make sure that you're taking some steps to improve your career readiness.

After all, you never know when you'll pick up that phone call offering you a fantastic opportunity—be it someone from within your own organization seeking a leader, an industry organization tapping you to serve as a committee member or even a local aviation group looking for a keynote speaker.



Whoever it might be on the other end of the phone, they're going to want to know what you've done in the past, what you're doing at present and, finally, where you're headed and how you plan to grow your career to get there. So it's always best to be prepared.

Here are a handful of handy tips to stay in peak career advancement mode while you're employed.

Six ways to improve your career while you're employed:

1. Update your resume and/or curriculum vitae

You might not be looking for a new job at the moment, but things can change at the drop of a hat.

Your resume is the first, most important document to have updated at all times.

Many of our leadership-level candidates also use a curriculum vitae (CV).

The difference?

Resumes are usually no more than one or two pages in length whereas a CV is a fairly detailed overview of your life's accomplishments, especially those most relevant to the industry involvement.

These are recommended for tenured professionals who are vying for a senior-level position.

Whatever document you choose, keep it current. Have you added bullet points with your latest projects and successes? Does it include positive comments from your latest review? Are all the dates and little details correct? Do you need to add any new memberships or training, or update your flight hours?

It's important to be specific and try and quantify your results.

As a recruiter, I'm always looking to measure the degree of impact a bizav professional makes on his or her company.

Instead of simply saying that you "managed the budget," get into the nitty-gritty a little more and list what you specifically did to impact the profit and loss statement.

Rather than say, "I managed fuel contracts," perhaps tell me that you "negotiated fuel pricing and saved 12 percent per annum over the past five years."

And, if you happened to have volunteered on a committee, what were your specific accomplishments in that role?

2. Ensure that your LinkedIn profile matches your resume

In this digitally focused age, having an online career profile is becoming vitally important. In fact, more and more professionals use LinkedIn (and other online services) to vet an organization or an individual.

Recruiters spend a lot of time searching for candidates online, which is why having keyword-rich content is valuable.

If you're aiming to be a chief pilot, would a headhunter come across your profile if she/he was searching for a "captain," "line pilot" or "pilot"?



What you say about yourself online might help you expand your network, make a good first impression on prospective new hires who are researching your organization, or even help you get tapped for a new opportunity—either with an industry group or your own firm.

Having a presence on LinkedIn is much more than simply searching for a job, or maintaining an electronic “rolodex.”



Making a point to update your online profile and resume also helps increase your own self-awareness.

Maybe you’re not doing enough to improve your career at the rate that you’d like.

Maybe you’re feeling stalled. Maybe your résumé shows gaps in knowledge or training.

Comparing your own LinkedIn bio with those of other people in your industry will not only help you refine what you say about yourself, it also is a great motivator to try and improve yourself while you’re still employed.

3. Join a mastermind group

A mastermind group is a small gathering of like-minded industry professionals who come together to share best practices and/or gain new insights. It’s a great way to network and get the pulse of what’s happening in the industry. Examples include the Aviation Directors Roundtable, Chief Pilots Roundtable, Safety Roundtable, et al. If one doesn’t exist, start one!

4. Grow your professional network

My colleague, Colleen Kelly, recently wrote a blog about the benefits of building your network—especially when you’re not looking for a new job.

I highly recommend the read and consider adding the task of “networking” to your to-do list on a weekly, if not monthly, basis. Here also a follow-up blog on how to take action when it comes to networking

5. Educate your mind

Take a class to build a skill that will help you improve your career and advance to the next position. Go back to school and finish your degree or consider getting an MBA. The benefit of being employed is that you might be able to take advantage of tuition reimbursement funds. If you're not into classroom settings, make sure you're reading the latest leadership and management books. My industry colleagues at Gray Stone Advisors compiled a great list in their blog, Reading for Leading.

6. Set and achieve your goals

Hopefully, there are at least a few of these tips that are already on your *goals-oriented* to-do list. If not, I highly recommend creating a “goals to-do list” and make sure that you review it weekly. If you have particular values and aspirations that are not being met, it's time to create an action plan that will set you up for long-term success.

So there you have it: just a few easy ways to grow professionally and ensure that you're positioned for success to improve your career. Even if you think that your next career step is in the distant future, you just might be surprised. It's always best to be on top of your game and ready for anything.



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THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

By Sheryl Barden



Professionalism is an important quality to nurture in any industry or business, but in our world of aviation, it takes on even more critical significance.

It's a long-standing topic in our industry, but the idea of professionalism in aviation has been on my mind recently.

That's after a former API candidate alerted me to a new American Airlines newsletter that had picked up and recirculated a 2014 article on the topic.

That article, published in *Aero Safety World*, was "Parsing Professionalism."

In it, author Heather Baldwin asked me to share my thoughts on the issue of aviation professionalism.

"Among people who work in aviation, casual definitions of professionalism typically touch on two components: *technical proficiency* and *emotional/relational proficiency*," I explained.



The resurgence of that article got us thinking about why "professionalism" is still so widely discussed and covered in aviation circles. Beyond the more obvious reasons of the need for it in a work world where competency and character sometimes appear to have slipped their moorings, we asked ourselves why is it still so important?

Professionalism in Recruitment

At API, we look at professionalism through the lens of recruiting job fulfillment and, as such, the 2014 article stated that "aviation is a very precise career, demanding excellence and the ability to follow a lot of rules. You can't make it up as you go along or just decide you'll do it later, as we are seeing in many of our millennials."

But sparked as I was by this reminder of the importance of professionalism, I recently began an excellent book on the topic.

It's entitled *Executive Presence: The Missing Link Between Merit and Success*, by Sylvia Ann Hewlett.

In it, the author lays out a clear case for how performance, hard work and sponsors get top talent recognized and promoted.

But “leadership potential” alone, as she says, isn’t enough to leverage men and women into the executive suite.

Leadership roles are given to those who also look and act the part.

How one presents oneself has a lot to do with professionalism, I would say.

How candidates (and incumbent employees) dress, what their demeanors reflect, how much confidence they appear to have—all these aspects of professionalism play a role in their attractiveness to companies, as well as their success in getting a job offer.

The Experts Speak

So, with all of this in mind, I reached out to two trusted industry colleagues to ask them for their definition of professionalism in business aviation, how they see it in their roles in our industry.

Director of Aviation William Baldwin, said:

“Great success is rarely produced from mediocre efforts. The very successful individuals or companies we support would expect and deserve nothing less than our absolute best efforts. And he also said: “We are all ambassadors for our companies. We must never forget this important fact. What do they say about first impressions?”

Richard Walsh, NBAA board member and former Chairman of its Safety Committee, defines professionals as those who pursue *“continuous improvement to excel in their role” and people “committed to sharing and developing the talent around them.”*

“This works in two directions,” he notes. A professional must have the expertise to mentor and the humility to be willing to be developed.

Walsh says he has observed “a real paradigm shift” over the last several years in this area, with growing numbers of intern programs, value-sharing across different corporations, job shadowing and other human development initiatives.

The NBAA Safety Committee itself has identified professionalism as:

“The cornerstone focus area of any Safety Management System in which professional behaviors rule and safe actions become a byproduct. Professionalism in aviation is the pursuit of excellence through discipline, ethical behavior and continuous improvement.”

Following are a few other notable viewpoints on aviation professionalism:

Professionalism: a ‘Must Have’ for all Aviation Workers, by Dr. Bill Johnson

3 Ways to Maintain Professional Distance in Business Aviation, by Kim DiMetro

Professionalism in the Cockpit, by Wally Moran

Sumwalt Keeps Pressure on Pilot Professionalism, by Curt Epstein

Professionalism in Aviation Essay, by Nicole Mantalvo

Professionalism, A Necessary Attribute in Aviation, by the Charter Safety Advocate



ARE YOU READY TO LEAD A FLIGHT DEPARTMENT?

By Colleen Kelly

Do you find yourself ready to lead a flight department?

If so, how do you know that you've adequately prepared yourself to be successful?

Being able to understand your true motive(s) is critical at this stage.

Why?

Because the next position you're seeking might not be the "dream job" you've always seen yourself in.

Leadership often comes with a price tag, and it's not always "glamorous" at the top.

The answer as to whether you're ready to lead should largely rely on your ability—and desire—to work well with people. After all, by far, the number-one challenge a business aviation manager will face is "people-related."

The next page has an example of a magazine layout. After that, you'll see the underlying grid used to create it.



Whether it's managing, coaching and mentoring, people can reveal themselves to be our greatest asset or our most confounding challenge.

Complicating the situation is the fact that, more often than not, it's a combination of both.

Here at Aviation Personnel International, we adopted our tagline, "It's About PeopleTM" for good reason!

In fact, what our clients are typically seeking is someone who's a great leader of people—someone with the versatility and knowhow to manage human resources up, down and across.

By "managing up," I'm referring to your boss (e.g., CEO, CFO, or director of security), and by "managing down" I mean leading your team.

It's also important to "manage across," and be able to work effectively with your cross-functional partners.

Know Your Environment

As you contemplate your next career move, I can't emphasize enough the importance of being prepared.

Know in advance whom you're talking with, what the job requirements (the good, the bad and the ugly) are, what are the cultural issues that you'll face with the team, along with how you'll fit into that culture.

Also make sure that you know your audience and environment well in advance.

Will you be overseeing a five-aircraft department that supports corporate and report to the C-suite? Or will you oversee a smaller private aircraft operation and report to a high-net-worth individual?

Keep in mind that if you'll be supporting a private owner, you'll still require leadership skills, but, in many instances, the customer service skill set becomes elevated. Understanding the intricacies of a family office, for instance, and knowing that you're there to support them and their needs (not a corporation) will be key.

Remember, too, that private owners may require a different type of customer service from start to finish. You have to know your boundaries.

A corporate-based operation means that you'll have more layers to proceed through to get what you need—and you'll have to be able to work with the finance department to put together budgets and other presentations to gain their support.

Again, with reference to corporate, a key skill is to know how to make your voice heard in what possibly will be a multibillion-dollar company. (Ask your interviewers during your meeting with them if they even want your voice to be heard.)

Will you be there to manage finances, make strategic purchasing decisions and work on long-term fleet plans? These are important factors to understand and consider.

If you're planning for your next rung up the ladder into a leadership role, it's important to be able to share with the hiring manager and/or recruiter the due diligence you've done to prepare for the new role.

Examples might include: volunteering for a project, demonstrating your ability to do more more, or taking classes that indicate your desire to get ahead by working for it. It might also mean working with your team leader to help save the company money.

Another point of consideration: the aviation manager role—be it flight

operations manager, maintenance director or aviation director—requires you to wear many hats.

There's no ready answer—nothing written in stone—for what you might be called upon to do when you're leading a team of people and managing all of the processes up and down your chain of responsibility.

In any case, preparing yourself for advancement will help you formulate the question, "What do I need to do to be a professional leader?" And it will also help you answer it.

As you progress in your aviation career, take time to reflect on your personal and professional motivation and experience. Only you know when you're really ready to lead. I wish you the best of luck!

WEIGHING THE BENEFITS OF A CAM CREDENTIAL

By Sheryl Barden

As a recruiter focused on the aviation business, I'm often asked by our candidates how important obtaining a Certified Aviation Manager (CAM) credential is. And, with some consideration to their particular career track, nine times out of 10 my answer is resounding "yes."

That answer is echoed by many CAM-holding aviation industry leaders, including Aviation Department Manager **Scott Moore**, Captain/Safety Manager **Bryan Berkbigler** and Director of Aviation **Chris Lima**. I'll share with you some of their insights below.

In business aviation, a CAM credential identifies the bearer as a qualified professional, prepared to lead flight departments and to play a commanding role in companies that use business aircraft. I often compare it to a CPA.



For example, becoming a CPA as an accountant tells other professionals as well as their clients that they're absolutely serious about the financial profession, that they've attained a level of proficiency in that particular body of knowledge. The same is true of holding a CAM credential.

Not only does the CAM offer a sense of personal achievement and the recognition of your peers and your employer, but the certification can often open doors for you that make it easier to perform your job at the highest possible level.

But, like a CPA, a CAM does take some thoughtful planning to measure the benefits of earning one against the upfront investment it takes to get there.

Benefits of the CAM Certification

The first question you might ask is what specific benefits you stand to gain by investing in a CAM certification? Plenty, according to the NBAA's CAM program benefits overview. Among other rewards, they say you'll enjoy:

- An industry-recognized title that earns you a seat at the table of business aviation leaders.
- A tool to help current managers begin a succession program for recognizing future leaders.
- Added motivation to continue your professional development and stay at the top of the industry.
- Access to a network of industry professionals to help you succeed.

These certainly are worthwhile, as anyone might agree. What I like about CAM is that it enables people to stretch, and gives them a way to say that they're doing something "above and beyond" to prepare themselves for the next level.

CAM = Career Leverage?

One of the primary CAM benefits, in my opinion, is the leverage it offers job seekers in our industry. Many also believe they have much to gain from having achieved their CAM.

"Initially, it was just a personal validation of my career," explains Chris Lima, with the PNC Financial Services Group. "But a couple of years ago, when I was unexpectedly searching for a job, it became a differentiator."

My current reporting executive asked about the CAM designation on my resume during my interview, which led into a wonderful discussion about our industry, and became the focus of the interview.”

Bryan Berkbigler, of Scotts Miracle Gro, agrees. “When I lost my job five years ago due to a flight department closure . . . I received the most overwhelming support from many flight departments because I had my CAM certification,” he says. “This kind of response was proof positive that having a CAM is recognized industry-wide, and does, in fact, have its advantages.”

Point System Guide

If these benefits look like something you’d care to add to your professional profile, there are, in fact, certain requirements—prerequisites—that you’ll need to have in place before you embark on a CAM program.

The NBAA CAM program offers what’s called a “point qualification system,” a benchmarking tool to assist you in gauging your own readiness for the program.

It’s fairly straightforward: a list of aviation-related qualifications are assigned a point value, and the total number of points you’re awarded based on your particular qualifications help determine your readiness for the CAM distinction. The point value categories include:

- Formal educational background
- Employment history
- Licenses and certifications you’ve obtained
- Continuing education

Price of CAM Credential

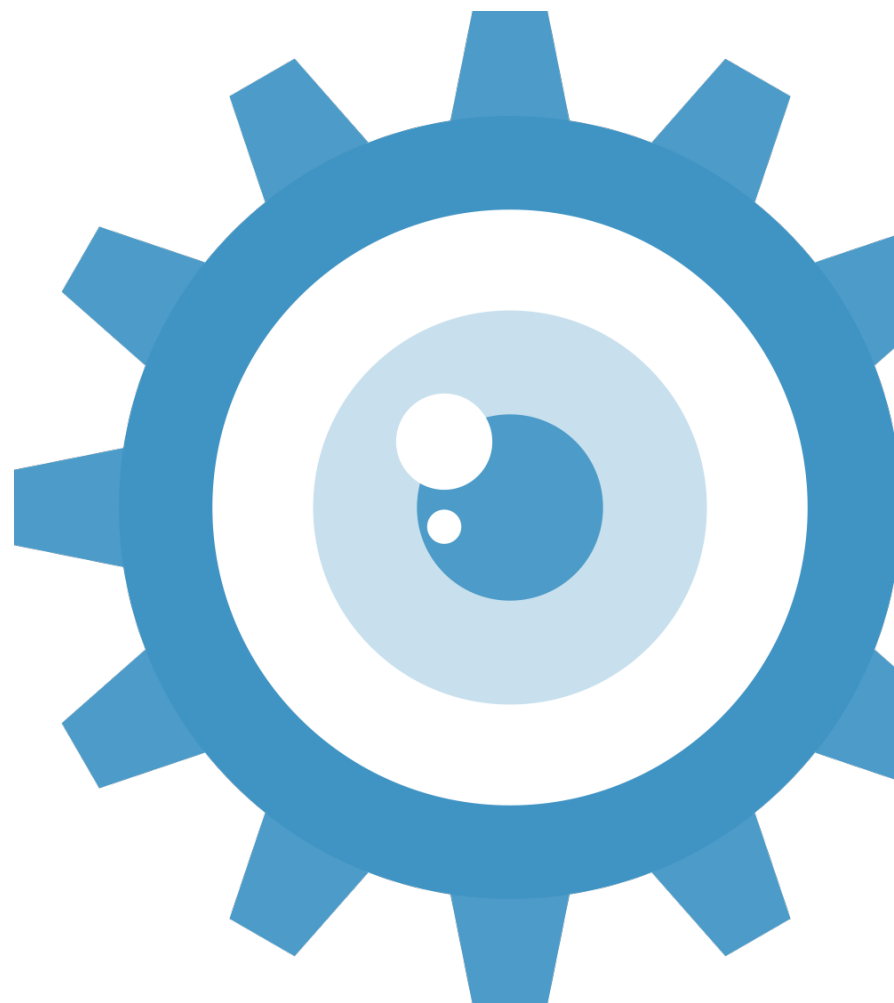
Likewise, before you apply for a CAM program, you’ll want to understand the costs—what it takes money-wise to achieve the credential. While it isn’t too exorbitant, it’s not cheap, either. A very thorough cost breakdown can be found on the NBAA site.

The Luck Company’s Scott Moore estimates the price at roughly \$1,000, start to finish. He adds, “Although my company didn’t, I think that many companies would pay for all or at least part of CAM certification.”

CAMs are Great, But “Leadership” Counts

Of course, having a CAM is not the “be-all and end-all” of professional achievement in the aviation industry. It’s a wonderful program, for certain, but the sort of knowledge having a CAM credential confers can never trump the actual practice of performing your job and performing it well. Being an aviation leader requires true leadership capabilities, and they are something that no high score on a test can ever offer or measure.

What the CAM says about you is that you’re the type of person who raises his or her hand and says “I can do that,” when something needs to be done. And that’s worth its weight in gold.



7 WAYS TO GET A JOB PROMOTION

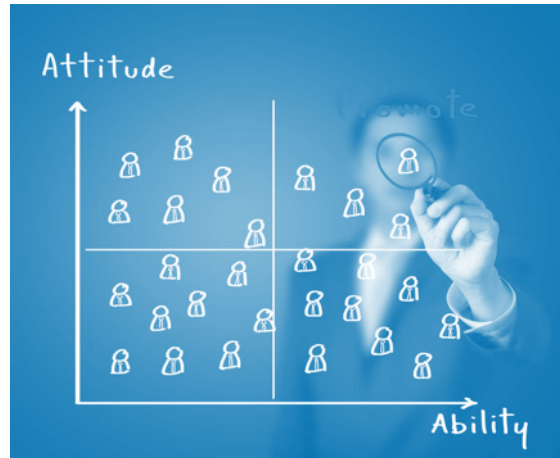
By Colleen Kelly

Have you set your sights on the next step up in your flight organization?

If so, that's great. But as you know, it's very unlikely someone's going to simply tap you on the shoulder one day, say "Congratulations!" and hand you a job promotion.

Like anything else worth earning, you are going to have to create a plan to achieve that goal and job. And that means preparing yourself—and the organization as a whole—for your place in the succession plan.

Following is a checklist of seven productive measures you can engage to help speed you on your way to a job promotion.



1. Assess Your Current Work Performance

The first thing to do is take a good, honest look in the mirror.

How are you and the work you perform viewed by management, co-workers/peers, clients and suppliers?

Do you think they perceive you as a leader, as someone with the “right stuff” to handle the additional responsibilities of the job you’re seeking?

It’s also a good time to look inward a bit and assess the level of your passion and attitude.

Do you, yourself, think you have what it takes to succeed in your next position?

Or are you merely suffering from job burnout in your current role and looking for a lifeline?

It’s also important to recognize that you might have to actively seek out opportunities to get some additional training and education to improve your readiness for a new position.

2. Ask for Feedback

As tough as it might be at times, asking your aviation management, peers, clients and suppliers for an honest assessment about how they perceive you and the work you do can be as eye-opening as it is necessary.

This kind of “360-degree evaluation” can help immeasurably to improve your current and future performance because it helps illuminate how your work is viewed from several different perspectives.

3. Talk to Your Boss

Whoever manages your work right now is very likely to play an instrumental role in advancing you, so there’s no reason why you shouldn’t let him or her know directly what your goals are.

You might be amazed how valuable and refreshing having a frank

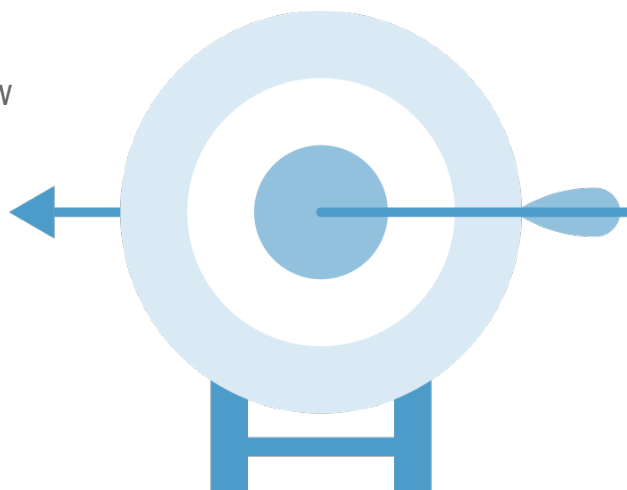
discussion with your boss can be, and how much it might help your cause as you aspire to a promotion.

By the same token, although it might be more formal, you can put together an individual development plan and share it—point-by-point—with your boss in a meeting that you request.

Along these same lines, talk to your manager about opportunities within the flight department or elsewhere on the airfield.

If you learn that there’s no room for advancement at the present time, you might even ask him or her for a referral. That means you should consider talking to other managers in your department, especially if you’re working for an aviation organization with multiple opportunities.

While you’re talking to your boss, it might also help you to take some initiative on a new task or project. You can volunteer to take on more, and ask for bigger, juicier projects that take you outside of your comfort zone. Or you can ask to learn about a potential new role in the flight department (e.g., schedulers meeting with the flight crew and vice versa).



4. Update Your Resume

This one should be a no-brainer, but you'd be surprised how many aspiring job promotion seekers get caught without their resume in up-to-date shape. When you do work on it, don't forget to list all of your latest certifications, training and qualified contributions, e.g., your work's impact to the business bottom line expressed, whenever possible, in dollars and cents.

5. Find a Mentor

This takes some real thought and planning, but being mentored can be invaluable. He or she might be someone who's your age, or they might be older or younger.

They don't have to be a fellow employee; it can be someone

from your church or your gym, even a family member. Whoever it is has to be someone who can be thoughtful and direct, and give you unbiased advice and feedback that you'll respect and profit from. An important key is to find someone who will hold you accountable to your goals.

6. Avoid Drama

Another no-brainer for getting your next job promotion: don't ever put yourself in a position to be a part of the gossip train. It's petty and lacking in integrity, and it might paint you as a non-team-player. Most importantly, it's never the sign of a true leader.



7. Create Your Own Opportunities

Sometimes, using a bit of good, old-fashioned ingenuity or creativity can help speed up your job promotion plans.

If you don't see a job for you within the current organization, why not create one?

Do a little bit of legwork to outline a new position based on need or potential benefit to the company. It never hurts to try.

Your job creation journey might involve you becoming a safety leader, an operations manager, or many other important roles within the aviation department.

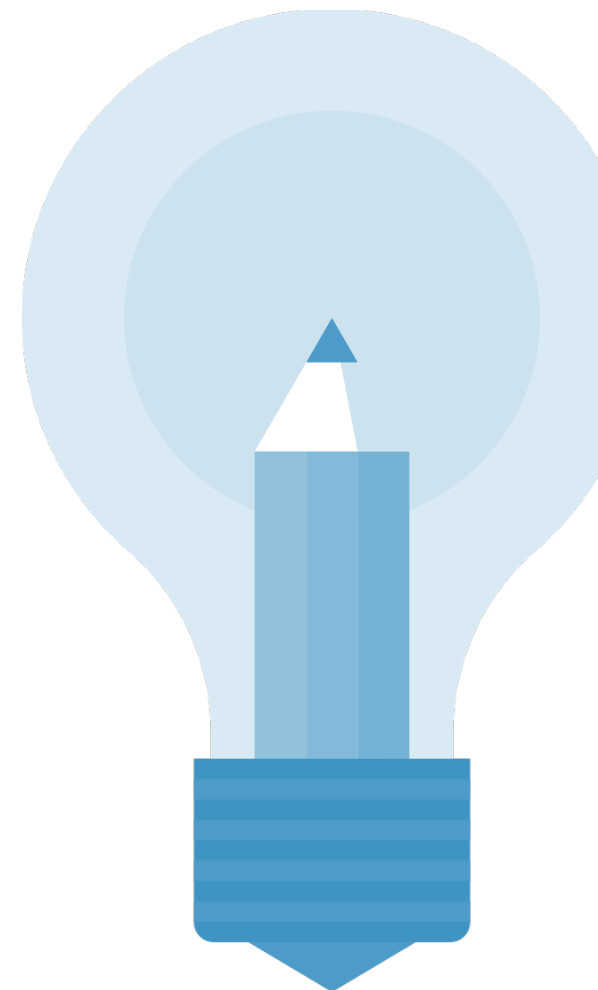
That's just a handful of the many, many things you can do to take the reins for your career advancement.

But try not to get too far ahead of yourself in your job aspirations.

Keep in mind that, in order to be a general, you must first be a very good lieutenant.

That means you can't put into action any of the items above if you haven't first proven that you can perform your current duties with consistency and well beyond expectations.

Remember, time can definitely be on your side, especially if you help bend it a little to your advantage!



CLIMBING THE AVIATION CAREER LADDER

By Colleen Kelly

Nearly everyone in business aviation that we come into contact with here at API is “upwardly mobile” and looking toward the next rung of the career ladder.

The only alternative might be to those who are reaching out to celebrate their pending retirement.

Whether you're a captain looking to take a chief pilot role, a maintenance tech hoping to get slotted in as a supervisor, or a flight operations manager positioning yourself to be an aviation director, the benchmarks for these upward moves might be a little more challenging than you think.

As aviation recruiters, we hear from countless career professionals who tell us they're ready for a move.

But in reality, many aren't really prepared for it. Nor are they able to articulate their readiness and what experience they'd bring to their next role.

So if you think you're prepared to climb the next rung up on the aviation career ladder, think about your plan of attack and your “pitch.”

How do those making the decision to move you up perceive your readiness for that next big job? And what criteria they might use to decide if you're ready.



Work with what you know

Let's start with the basics—how you got to where you are today.

One thing you must realize is that moving up the ladder has very little to do with how long you've worked in your organization.

So please don't expect an amazing promotion and compensation package to be dropped in your lap.

Even with the aviation talent shortage, you cannot simply raise your hand and say “I’m ready” based strictly on your longevity.

It's all about actively demonstrating your readiness by selling yourself and your fitness for the position. You must also have a proven track record of managing/leading special projects on your own.

You need to talk to the right people, in the right way and at the right time.

A word of advice: If you know in your heart and mind that you want more than flying or fixing airplanes, you need to verbalize your desires directly with your manager as well as your professional network.

Along with recognizing and understanding that important rule of thumb, there are also a few other aspects of upward mobility that you ought to know.

Below we'll share a few tips if you happen to be job searching.

Know your Environment

Talk to your mentor(s) and manager and get a sense for how he or she thinks you're doing.

If you get a good review, let them know you're ready to take on more responsibility and more authority.

And, if your organization offers skip-level manager meetings, you may want to communicate your desires to your boss's boss.

Know your Skill-set Boundaries

A great pilot or a great maintenance professional doesn't necessarily make a great team or department leader. The view isn't always grand at the top.

So if you see yourself as a future Director of Aviation or Director of Maintenance, you've got to love people, managing problems and working with your owner or corporate leadership team.

Know your Mindset

If you're feeling burned out, do something to take control of your situation and make a change. If you don't have a great attitude now, how is that going to change in your next role?

Know Your (Next) Job Description

Every leadership role within a flight department has a unique job description. If you're moving up within your current organization, what is required of you in the next position?

Once you find out, you'll need to demonstrate that you understand what's expected of you, and that you have the talent and skills to take on the new challenges.

Know Yourself

One of the most important considerations to ask yourself is whether or not you think you can move from being a “doer” to a “leader.”

This goes back to a few suggestions above about working through people—not taking on everything by yourself.

Some people simply do not feel comfortable occupying a position where they have to delegate tasks and responsibilities to others.

Leading people and processes through the fine art of delegation is something you might need to study and prepare yourself for.

If your leader is open to the idea, ask him or her for educational support, CAM certification, attendance at aviation conferences, the ability to volunteer on a committee and access to other preparatory resources.

Know Your Leadership Philosophy

If you think you're ready to take advantage of our industry's talent shortage, it's important to know how you intend to lead and what your strategy might be for improving on the status quo.

The key to next-job readiness can be a bit more elusive than it might seem. What's your own experience been like in this regard?



10 WAYS TO PREPARE FOR YOUR ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

by Sheryl Barden

It's the end of the year, and that means it's likely time for your annual performance review.

Maybe HR has a template for you to complete online. Or perhaps your VP or Director of Aviation will give you some indication of what he or she wants to see from you in an annual review.

But this is your chance to shine.

Don't wait to be asked. Instead, be well-prepared to sing your praises so it's not a last-minute rush at the end of the year.

But, first, ask yourself, why is the performance review process so important for your career? Because it's an opportunity to positively influence your leader's perception of you.

Take it upon yourself to proactively tell your boss what you've been up to. Otherwise, you're only cheating yourself.

As a business leader and people manager, following are 10 things I like to see in an employee evaluation.

Failure is an essential component of growth

Consider your biggest disappointments from the past year. How did you learn from the situation? Acknowledging where and how you didn't meet your expectations enables you to spend the rest of the time focusing on where you did meet and exceed them (your successes)!



Putting failure first shows humility and vulnerability; it also lets you get past the failure to let your boss remember your achievements.

2. **A positive workplace “culture” is a must in business aviation.**
How have you lived the values of your flight department?
3. **Project management is an excellent way to stand out.**
Which departmental projects did you lead this year?
4. **Managers love metrics.**
What have you accomplished to meet—and exceed—your personal and professional goals? What do you characterize as particularly exceptional results?
5. **Budgets are fundamental to aviation operations.**
What impact did you make on saving money for the company? Remember to be specific with your numbers.
6. **Document your “extra” effort.**
Describe how you’ve tackled collateral duties or responsibilities outside your usual area of expertise. Here’s your chance to share what you’ve been up to and demonstrate why you should be tapped to handle other opportunities within the department.
7. **List your certifications, training and new skills.**
Did you achieve a new type-rating? Or did you attend NBAA’s International Operators Conference and make a presentation to your coworkers, formally sharing with them all of the key takeaways to strengthen the team?
8. **Short- and long-term goals are important for everyone.**
What do you hope to achieve in the coming year? What about three and five years from now? Be as specific as you can about what you’re hoping to do in the future, and when you’re hoping to do it. For example, you might want to be leading projects, or moving from a maintenance supervisor to a chief of maintenance within, say, five years.
9. **Aviation directors promote leaders.** What unique leadership abilities do you plan to fine-tune this year? Give examples such as mentoring teammates, getting involved in hiring and/or leading team meetings.

10. Lastly, this is the time to subtly influence the changes you would like to see in your boss's behavior.

Share with your boss what you need from him or her to be successful.

How can he or she help you with your development planning, performance goals or the chance to take on more responsibility?

The Annual Review: A Two-Way Street

The last thing you want is for your leader to ignore the performance appraisal process altogether.

And it's definitely not a review that is "given" to you, the employee. Instead, it should be completed by you and discussed as a team with your manager.

To be effective, your annual appraisal must be a collaborative, two-way discussion that is never-ending, as opposed to a yearly task that must be accomplished to merely satisfy your human resources team.

+ *Career Search Advice*

The Ultimate Guide to LinkedIn

How to Stand Out Amid a Talent Shortage

Apply Online, Network or Use a Placement Agency?

How to Use a Recruiter to Gain the Greatest Exposure

20 Aviation Interview Questions to Nail

9 Ways to Succeed in a Phone or Video Interview

02

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO LINKEDIN

By Codi Quick

The most popular social media tool for business, LinkedIn is still proving itself a great tool for a variety of reasons—networking being the biggest one.

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In a sense, LinkedIn is becoming like a “digital business card” for professional people everywhere, replacing the printed ones that no longer make it into our desktop Rolodex.

This means your LinkedIn profile is your first impression, digitally.

While you might think of LinkedIn as a job search tool, the best reason to use it is to manage your growing network. It's also great for researching, communicating and exchanging ideas.

Because it's such a powerful part of your personal brand, we came up with this Ultimate Guide to LinkedIn for aviation professionals.

The Ultimate Guide to LinkedIn

Because it's such a powerful part of your personal brand, we came up with this Ultimate Guide to LinkedIn for aviation professionals.

Following are our 11 “DOs”:

1. DO add a Recent Photo

Spend some money on a professional headshot that shows what you look like now (not from 10 years ago or the last time you were at a wedding).

Your photo will be the first impression that everyone, including recruiters, will see. It should be a headshot (from the waist up), and in it, you should be dressed to impress in business attire (or a uniform, as the case might be).

If you know of a budding photographer who will do it for free, great! If not, plan to spend around \$100. At API, we encourage all of our candidates to do the same. When you take yourself seriously, everyone around you will, too.

2. DO use LinkedIn as a Branding Tool

If done right, it can offer proof that you're a serious, credible professional in your field.

Consider this networking platform as your online handshake with your business aviation network. And, just like keeping your photo current and professional, be sure that the content you post is first-impression-worthy, so that you stand out in a positive way.



Be sure to use keywords that people in your industry are typically searching for.

3. DO Update your Headline

If you're like most people, you just use your current job title and company as your headline, but this is a missed opportunity. Your headline might be the only part of your profile that a recruiter or hiring manager looks at.

It's important to create one that's professional, not cheesy or confusing, but also one that captures your uniqueness. Include the what, who and how, and also add proof that you are who you say you are.

LinkedIn even gives you helpful suggestions with their "show examples" button, or their "see what other users in your industry are using" option.

4. DO Ask for Recommendations

LinkedIn provides a really convenient means of asking your LinkedIn connections to write something on your page about your professional qualifications—a little testimonial of sorts.

If you're job hunting, this can be really valuable and help offer third-party verification of your skills and abilities to potential employers.

It makes sense that a hiring manager would prefer to recruit someone who has been recommended by another professional in the field. Think of this as being similar to the references you would provide a potential employer.

5. DO Write Meaningful Recommendations

If you're asking others for an endorsement, be sure to reciprocate and write meaningful recommendations for the people who are doing so for you.

Best of all, write something unsolicited and heartfelt for someone else, even if they didn't ask you. After all, giving your current or past colleagues meaningful feedback in the form of a recommendation can go a long way.

Bonus: Recruiters and hiring managers can view your recommendations for others (on your profile and theirs), and they likely will pay attention to what's being said.

6. DO Sweat the Details

LinkedIn has a nifty “wizard” that guides you through the process of adding content—and the more complete your profile is, the higher a score you’ll receive. Remember to never “fudge” the truth.

If your resume does not line up with your online profile, it will raise question. So go ahead and add company logos from your previous work history, and use the section to update your skills and interests as well as to follow companies that you’re interested in.

Having logos on your profile for your past workplaces and college alma maters gives your page a “pop of color,” and can help break up the page amid a sea of content.

7. DO Quantify your Milestones

We encourage you to write short, succinct descriptions of each company you’ve worked for and your role within those companies.

As described in Jennifer Steele’s post covering resume writing tips, focus on the positive impact you’ve made in your past roles.

Use bullet points to quantify your value to the company (e.g., the revenue impact on a program you might have implemented, etc.).

Use acronyms (e.g., SMS, FOQA, and IS-BAO) and check spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Have someone else look over your LinkedIn profile and critique it like they would a resume on paper.

8. DO Sign Up for LinkedIn Groups

The business aviation community on LinkedIn is widespread, and it’s easy to find some large professional groups or organizations that you can join.

Doing a quick search brings up a long list, including “Aviation Professionals” and “Business Aviation Network” to name just a couple. You don’t need to follow them all. Just find a few that you really want to actively engage in.

Having a couple of active groups that you actually participate in is better than joining 50 that you don’t.

9. DO Mention your Volunteerism

Sometimes, networking through volunteering is a great way to meet people in the industry. And, at the same time, you're helping to further a valuable organization that does meaningful things in your industry.

10. DO Add your Resume

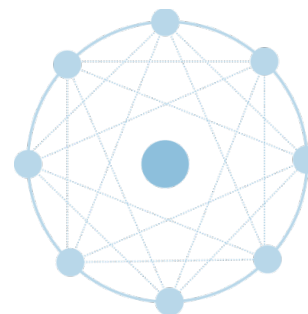
Some might say it's better not to include your resume on your LinkedIn page, so that if a company or recruiter is interested in you or your skills they have to contact you and request it from you directly. But make sure to include it and it ends up being easier on a hiring manager, who can quickly scan your resume and your profile to make sure you're the right fit.

It can help save your valuable time and theirs, by helping everyone decide if a position is right or wrong for you. Just be aware that anyone can look at your resume once it's uploaded, so make sure you've removed any personal information, such as your home address or cell phone number.

And, last but not least is our eleventh tip:

11. DO Grow your Network

Remember, this is a powerful tool and probably one of the best, most effective ways of networking. And, on top of all that, its basic package is free!



On behalf of the API recruiting team, we encourage you to dedicate some time to updating your profile prior to attending networking events like NBAA's BACE. Similar to offering a contact your business card, your online "virtual" business card is one of the first impressions. So make it count!

P.S.: Before you start updating your LinkedIn profile, go to your "settings" control on the top right, then to your "privacy" controls, and turn OFF your activity broadcasts. This will keep everyone from seeing each and every change you make in their feed.

HOW TO STAND OUT AMID A TALENT SHORTAGE

By Jennifer Steele



There's little doubt we're in the midst of the long-anticipated talent shortage.

And this shortage applies to nearly all disciplines within aviation—be they in maintenance, pilot, cabin crew or leadership. Its widespread impact affects Part 91, 135 and 121 operations alike.

Simply put, this situation is very good news for aviation job seekers. But it's not great news for employers.

In fact, some of the biggest brands in business aviation are struggling to find the right cultural fit.

In this September 2016, Business Aviation Insider article, “Is a Staffing Shortage Looming?” API’s Sheryl Barden discussed the lack of qualified, professional aviation candidates.

“Before, you’d post a job and you’d be flooded with quality resumes in no time,” Barden said. “Today, the resumes are still coming in, but there is less potential in those candidates.”

The fact that we’re seeing less-qualified candidates for our client projects, though, is, once again, good news for those who are qualified. This is your time to stand out and shine.



Passive Aviation Job Seekers: Time to Move?

For those who are employed and find themselves happy and/or content in their current role, now might be the best time to consider making a move.

Aa “passive aviation job seeker” you’re more attractive to employers, precisely because you’re in a position to be more discerning about career moves.

As such, you’re only going to make a change for a truly compelling opportunity, which often results in longevity.

So what should you do, even if you’re not actively looking? For starters, consider your ideal role. Take the time to reflect on your wants, needs and qualifications. What would you be doing if location, money and title were no issue?

Next, update your LinkedIn profile and resume with your latest awards, achievements, training, education and references. Update your API Registered ProfessionalTM profile, too.

Then review the market at your own pace for opportunities that may be a fit for your future. Is there anything that sparks your interest? Do you have the qualifications, and are you truly prepared for those roles? If so, you just might be motivated to start taking steps toward a move.

A word of caution: I’m always surprised by the number of aviation job seekers who feel they’re ready to seek out a leadership position, yet they haven’t taken steps to advance themselves and prepare for such a role.

It’s important to remember that tenure alone doesn’t automatically equate to successful leadership.

For more on this topic, learn how to prepare for future leadership roles.

To set yourself up for a leadership role, consider getting involved in the industry by:

- Earning your Certified Aviation Manager (CAM) certification
- Volunteering for additional collateral duties within your current organization
- Engaging with your local regional group and network with peers in leadership roles

Active Job Seekers: Step Up Your Game

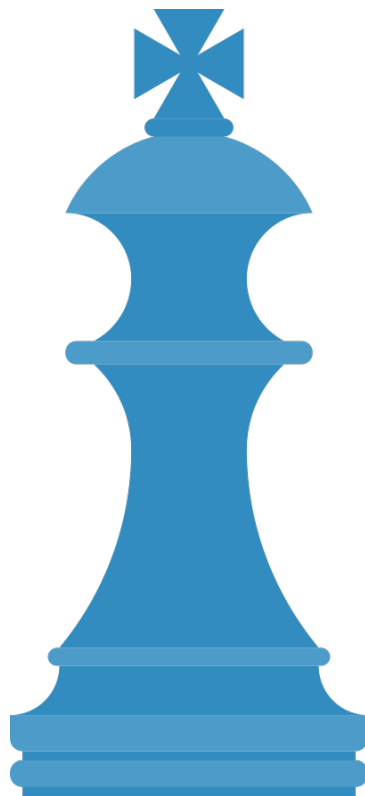
If you're actively seeking employment, be mindful not to interpret the talent shortage as a "sellers'" market.

Although the demand might be high, the caliber of talent required is no less.

And this is not the time to become complacent or lackadaisical in your job search.

Active job seekers must be diligent about composing informative, succinct and well-written resumes. You have to be discerning in your pursuit, and research the companies to which you would like to apply.

Although it might be tempting to blanket the market with your resume, it's a far more effective strategy to identify opportunities that would be a fit for and benefit from your skillset, and then apply only for those.



Channel your energy into presenting the most competitive package to those employers.

The Grass is Greener (Sometimes)

If you do happen to be a dissatisfied aviation employee, the grass truly can be greener on the other side. So now may be an enticing time to test those waters.

But as I mentioned earlier, just because there's a high demand for talent, make sure you're not feeling *overly* confident. Job dissatisfaction—coupled with overconfidence—can be a recipe for even further unhappiness in the future.

It's natural to want to make compromises and be easily "wooded" by prospective employers when you're dissatisfied.

But it's likely that we all know an acquaintance or colleague who swapped one ill-fitting job for another.

If you're disengaged at your current employer and aren't feeling assured about your future, you have to be even more conscientious and deliberate in your search.

Ask yourself: "Why am I dissatisfied?"

Be honest when reflecting on what might be your own culpability for being disgruntled.

Other questions to ponder:

- "Is there something I need to change?"
- Have I become negative?
- What do I need to change going forward?
- Is my job *really* the problem?"

If you answered yes, to some of these, what aspects of your job do you find unfulfilling?

And what might you do in your next professional role to overcome this?

It's important to truly reflect on these questions before seeking out new employment.

After all, prospective employers will easily sense any negativity you might be harboring.

That means you must reach some state of contentment before turning that searchlight on.

To sum it up, despite—or perhaps because of—the impact the talent shortage is having on aviation employers, it might be the perfect opportunity to make a move. Especially the gainfully employed passive jobseeker, the unemployed and/or merely dissatisfied aviation professional.

I'd like to leave you with one last bit of advice: Remember that "fit" is important for both you and your future employer. After all, business aviation isn't about planes, "It's all about people™."

APPLY ONLINE, NETWORK OR USE A PLACEMENT AGENCY?

By Jenny Showalter



The process of applying for your next aviation career opportunity has been turned inside out and upside down. We have the internet to thank for this! But understanding the most effective approach can be daunting for aviation professionals.



The process of applying for your next aviation career opportunity has been turned inside out and upside down. We have the internet to thank for this! But understanding the most effective approach can be daunting for aviation professionals.

While it may be easier and faster to apply online for aviation industry jobs, is it the most efficient use of your time?

Should you leverage your existing network in business aviation?

Or, would you have more success taking a longer-term approach and teaming up with aviation placement agency like API?

There are pros and cons to all of the above, and determining the best approach isn't always clear.

The answer isn't necessarily a singular one. Rather, it likely takes a blend of these methods when finding a new job.

Define Your Personal Best Path

Here at Aviation Personnel International, we help each business aviation candidate identify their own personal "best path" depending on their unique goals.

Then, if it makes sense that we partner together over a longer time period, our API Registered Professional™ program helps prepare them to take what might well be one of the most important steps in their career.

One of the many benefits of working with an aviation placement agency such as ours, is that we often learn about new job opportunities before they're posted online. In fact, API exclusively fills many of our high-end clients' projects, so they are never posted online.

Following are a few important guidelines for taking that all-important, potentially life-changing step to "package" you for the job market. (These are some of tips you should receive when you work with a specialized aviation recruiter).

Start Job Searching While You're Still Employed

If you're already in a solid professional position, it makes it that much easier to work yourself into another job.

Simply put, you're more attractive to prospective hiring managers when you're already employed.

So take a proactive approach if you think you might be wanting to make a change in the next six months to two years. Put out your feelers well before then. It's up to you to make the first move instead of waiting until an opportunity comes knocking.

In my role, I often speak to people who are currently out of work, and I can usually pick up on the sense of urgency in their voice.

Although it is sometimes unavoidable, it's much more engaging and far easier to speak with someone who's not meeting you from a position of uncertainty or desperation.

Work your Referral Network

It's critical to network when you're looking for a job because referrals are huge. Leads from within a job seeker's network represent 30-50 percent of hires in the U.S.

If you know someone who works at a flight department you're interested in working for, you have a whopping 70-80 percent better chance of getting a job.

That's right! If a current employee from your target company refers you, your chances improve five times from what they would be if you applied "cold" to the company.

This level of trust also comes as a result of working with API.

When we introduce candidates to our clients, it's because we've taken the time to get to know them, learn about what motivates them, and understand their current job situation/job search.

That way, when we discuss a candidate's qualifications with our client, it gives the hiring company a sense that they already know the person. They trust our recommendations.

For those select few candidates who do get presented to one of our clients, we make sure that our client "sees" each individual—in a way they would never be able to if their resume was sitting deep within a pile of them on their desk.

Research Decision Makers

If you don't have a personal connection, and aren't already working with a recruiter, you'll

need to conduct your own research to learn the names and titles of the likely decision makers. (Use online tools such as LinkedIn and your own network to help you find out.)

If you don't happen to know someone on the target company's team, try and learn as much about them as you can through an industry connection, acquaintance or by other means.

Learn the Company Culture

You'll always hear us talk about making the right cultural fit. That's one of the biggest reasons our aviation clients hire us to make their placements. Well, that and the fact that we're really good at what we do!

And if you're wondering what we mean by a "cultural fit," we're referring to the close professional and collegial bond of flight department members and their prospective new hires.



Custom-tailor Resumes and Cover Letters

No matter which method you choose for finding a new job, you need a solid, professional, well-written resume at-the- ready.

Although API isn't in the business of rewriting our candidates' resumes, we do offer a lot of guidance and advice about resume writing and formatting.

If you choose to apply online, put in the time to custom tailor your resume for each position. That way you know exactly what you've applied for and to whom.

Be sure to provide those "keywords" and phrases that you've picked up from the ad itself.

For example, if your target company is looking for an "international captain,"

make sure to include that very phrase in your resume if it matches your qualifications.

A word of caution when using automated resume engines: These services will automatically send off your resume if it "matches" your experience with an online listing—possibly without you even knowing it. But your resume will be in a pile with hundreds of others and will be buried without the customization that recruiters are looking for.

Instead, be selective about where you send your resume and send a tailored cover letter.

By the way... we love cover letters here at API.

Why?

If your customized cover letter is done well, it will catch our eye and garner your resume a closer look.

In one recent example, a job seeker personalized his note to our President, Sheryl Barden, effectively saying,

"This is who I am, this is what I'm looking for and this is what I can bring to a potential employer."

Communicate Successfully

Similarly, make sure your entire job posting response package—cover letter, resume and related documents—is on target, using keywords, and that it is as free as possible of typos, misspellings, grammar problems and other errors.

Use proper sentence structure, but try not to sound too stuffy or wooden. Make your response “relatable.”

Here at API, our aviation recruiting team wants each candidate to be able to communicate effectively, both verbally and in written form.

Make sure to have a couple of additional pairs of eyes look over your response package and proofread it before sending. And follow directions from your recruiter or the prospective employer.

For example, if you’re given explicit directions (e.g., “respond via email by putting the words ‘International Captain Application’ in the subject line”), and you don’t follow them, what does that say about your follow-through?

It might seem like a small detail, but it can be quite telling for the recruiters evaluating resumes.

Use Social Media to Your Advantage

Social media, an almighty force in today’s aviation job-seeking business, sits out there just waiting for you to tap into its power to help you fine-tune your job search.

But, like any tool, it has to be used correctly to avoid some potential pitfalls inherent in the medium itself.

Remember, we vet our candidates on social media before deciding if they are presentable to our clients.

Make sure you are who you claim to be without embellishing the facts (i.e., FAA license, A+P license, medical license, education, etc.).

And, don’t forget to maintain as visible a presence as you can, posting relevant information and inquiries on industry boards and group sites, such as NBAA Air Mail.

Again, the API Registered Professional program can open doors for you that you never knew existed, to help you stand out and increase your chances of being offered a position—the RIGHT position, the one with the potential to change your life.



HOW TO USE A RECRUITER TO GAIN THE GREATEST EXPOSURE

By Colleen Kelly



If you're in job-search mode, you may be wondering how to use a recruiter to gain the greatest exposure.

There's no doubt that in some fields—business aviation among them—using a recruitment firm can help propel you to the top of the list and put you in front of the right people.

Sometimes you can use your own established network or look for open job postings to help you make the right career move.

At other times, though, creating a lasting relationship with a recruiter can be a real “job accelerator,” and ultimately the best path forward.

There are two solid reasons to use a recruiter, and the first is to become a member of the recruiter's expansive network, so you can expose yourself to positions that don't happen to be posted online for everyone to see.

If you were working with API, for example, you would complete our registration process and then get placed into our extensive database of qualified candidates.

Though no recruiter can guarantee a job placement, working with a recruiter like API will certainly strengthen your chances of being exposed to some of the most compelling job opportunities.



After all, if a company is willing to invest in API's recruitment services, it shows that they are committed to their aviation department and their people.

Additionally, a recruiter like API can guide you through the process of fine-tuning your resume and keeping you in the loop for possible business aviation job openings.

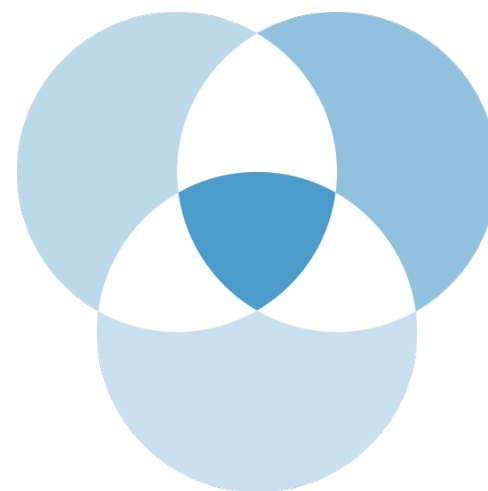
A common myth about recruitment firms is that they can positively find you a job ASAP. Of course, recruiters want to help their candidates succeed, but there's another, critical factor involved: they also must ensure that they're meeting the specific hiring needs of their client, the hiring company.

Following is just a short list of what you should do (and what you can expect) if you want to know how to use a recruiter like API:

Cooperation

To make sure that we succeed in our “matchmaker” role, the marriage of the hiring company (client) and the candidate must be a perfect union.

As a prerequisite, it means that all three parties—client, hiring company and recruiter—must be in the right place at the right time. In many cases, a candidate might not be ready to make a transition even if and when the perfect job comes along (and vice versa).



Accommodation

Don't be "M.I.A."—missing in action—if and when a recruiter comes knocking. We are here to help you, and it's far better to be eager, responsive and available than aloof or hard to find.

As I'm sure you know, recruitment firms work with more than one candidate at a time, and we try to accommodate everyone, but we're always working under a deadline, so it helps if you, the candidate, can be as accommodating as possible.

As you might expect, recruiters are far more likely to be engaged and supportive of candidates who are willing to put in some work on their own behalf.



Transparency

Be honest about your work history (or lack thereof). If you've recently experienced a layoff or furlough, tell us. If you're currently between jobs, let us know that, too. We've probably seen it all, so whatever it is, just be open.

Any good recruiter will, of course, verify your work history and background, so there's no point in trying to embellish it.

Just remember that some things you think might be "showstoppers," in your work or academic history might not be much of an issue after all.

Investment

After chatting with us over the phone, don't forget to keep your API file up to date. We are counting on you to follow through, and we hope that you are as invested in yourself as we are!

Working together will be easier for both of us if you make the time and effort to keep up your end of the bargain.

I can't tell you how many times I've tried to reach out to a candidate, perhaps many months after they have completed the registration process, and their phone number is no longer valid.

It becomes difficult to find you for that perfect job if the information we have on file is outdated. I often tell registrants/candidates to check-in with API on a quarterly basis.

Resume, Resume, Resume!

Think of your resume as the vehicle for helping to tell your story. Think of it as your introductory handshake!

Make it succinct, clean and easy to read. Choose a fairly generic template in Microsoft Word and select a common font such as Arial or Times New Roman.

Format your resume it in such a way that recruiters can easily locate the following: your current title, employer and tenure (at least the past 10-15 years of employment).

*Think of your
resume as the
vehicle for
helping to tell
your story.
Think of it as
your
introductory
handshake!*

Also, show a few quantifiable achievements during your time in a recent job; post-secondary education; continuing education; military service (if applicable); volunteerism (e.g., NBAA committee member); technical skills and business skills (e.g., coaching, finance, negotiating, etc.).

It's also important to list your license and certification information (e.g., Airline Transport Pilot, Airframe & Powerplant and/ or licensed dispatcher). If you're a pilot, also list your type ratings and flight hours.

Make sure that, for each position, you list what your responsibilities were. Not all titles carry the same responsibilities in different flight departments.

Don't make people have to guess what you're capable of.

Most importantly, make sure there are no typos or formatting issues. Spelling and grammatical errors show a lack of attention to detail and won't get you through the door. So please ask someone else to proofread your documents, as it's easy to miss something on your own.

Experience

Hiring companies usually have specific requirements they're looking for when it comes to technical and educational experience. For example, a client might require a minimum of 3,500 flight hours.

These days, nearly all of our company clients require that their hirees have a minimum of a bachelor's degree at all levels within their flight departments.

*Don't make
people have
to guess
what you're
capable of.*



Some even require fairly significant, advanced business education, such as an MBA. When it comes to presenting candidates, recruiters have to check all of the boxes to ensure that we're meeting the hiring company's needs.

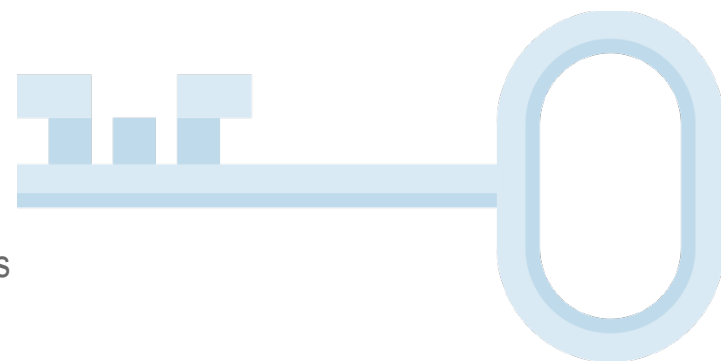
Cultural Fit

Scrutinizing top potential candidates to see whether they fit “culturally” is important. That's why business aviation hiring managers come to us specifically—because we make it a point to understand how each candidate will fit into their particular culture.

What recruiters are looking for is something not just found on your resume, but an assurance that you can personally and professionally assimilate into the client's culture.

At API, for example, we will never present our top three or four best candidates unless we have spent some time getting to know them, their capabilities and their suitability for the job they might be seeking. A “good” fit isn't always good enough. It often has to be exactly the right fit. And finding the right fit for our clients typically entails a very unique approach.

You might be an excellent fit when it comes to background and experience, but you must also have the personality, motivation, leadership skills and ethics that are a good match for the hiring company.



20 AVIATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO NAIL

By Jenny Showalter



With so many critical changes occurring in the aviation industry—most notably the pilot shortage—we’re hearing more and more from our API Registered Professionals.

Many are telling us they are relatively happy in their current positions, but that they’re also curious about other available opportunities.

You can bet that the minute they begin entertaining ideas that the “grass might be greener” somewhere else, they’ve got at least a toe out the door.

If this happens to be a situation you find yourself in, it’s important to think about what you really want before you begin to interview.

Equally important, you need to consider the numerous questions that an interviewer might ask you during your interview. Below, you’ll find a list of my Top 20.

But first things first.

Let’s figure out if a new job is really the right thing for you (right now).

Determine What You Really Want

First, I recommend doing some soul searching. Ask yourself a few questions before you consider talking to an aviation hiring manager or recruiter.

These questions will get you thinking about the *right* opportunity for you—not the *next* one.

- Is my family on board with a new job?
- If yes, are they willing to move? Is it the right time in my child's (or children's) education?
- What does my “dream department” look like? Is it big or small? Am I a manager or key member of a small team?
- Am I experiencing job burnout or a lack of fulfillment in my role?
- Am I okay working for a managed aircraft operation, or would I prefer to work for an in-house flight department?
- Am I okay with flying to the same city pairs every week, or do I want to fly around the world?
- Am I content working as the sole maintenance provider, or, rather, as part of a team with resources at my fingertips?
- Would I prefer to have direct contact with the main boss, or report to a mid-level supervisor?
- What are my main motivators, what do I *truly* desire? Is it money, career growth potential, team camaraderie and/or to work for a great company brand, cause or individual?
- Am I willing to wait and only apply for positions that fit my strict criteria?
- Where in my negotiations am I willing to compromise?



Mental and Physical Interview Prep

Once you've answered all of the above to your satisfaction—and you're still considering a new gig—you should thoroughly familiarize yourself with the interview process and how best to prepare.

- **Dress the Part**

(In an interview, you should never be the least dressed-up person in the room). It will never hurt if you overdress a bit—and if you're wondering what that means, I'm talking about wearing a business suit. Along the same lines, even if you're a bit nervous—which is understandable—try to maintain a calm demeanor.

- **Check Your Verbal Mannerisms**

Try and control any tendency to say “um” too often, or ramble in your speech, talk too loudly or fidget in your seat.

- **Bring Your Resume**

Having a few copies helps in case you want to address something in it, or if the hiring manager doesn't happen to have a copy handy. It just shows an extra level of preparation on your part.

- **Check Your Documents**

Be sure your licenses, etc. are organized, neat and accurate. Be sure your spelling and grammar are correct.



- **Refer to Your Experiences**

Have stories and descriptions of your accomplishments ready for each position—what did you do, what was your role, what did you do beyond your role, why did you leave, and so on.

If you're an API Registered Professional, reread the autobiography you wrote for us to remind yourself of past accomplishments.

- **Know Your Work History**

Be ready to speak to (or defend) any gaps in your work history, or other potential “red flags.” For instance, your interviewers are going to want to know why you've had five jobs in five years, and you should be ready to address that question.

- **Update Your LinkedIn Photo**

Be sure that your LinkedIn headshot is up-to-date and professional, and accurately reflects your current age and hairstyle. Recruiters and hiring managers will definitely take note if your photo is 20 years old, or if you appear to be in a tux at a wedding. (Spend \$100 to get a professional image taken; it's worth the money!)

- **Come with Questions**

Generally, be prepared to ask the hiring manager questions to indicate (first) that you know how to probe, and, (second) to make sure you fully understand the role.



20 Aviation Job Interview Questions

Ok. Now that you're mentally and physically ready for the IDEA of an interview, it's time to be sure you're ready to nail the interview with the hiring manager and land your new job.

Following are 20 questions that we suggest our candidates should practice before every interview. (Of course, there are more, but this is just to get you started).

Think about your interview in terms of: Why am I here today?

1. Explain to the interviewer(s) **why you're looking for a job** right now, and why you think you'd be good at it compared to others.

(If you happen to be working with us as an API Registered ProfessionalTM, we'll arm you with information about the company and hiring manager, so you can tailor and tweak your side of the interview to address relevant issues with the company and the hiring manager.)

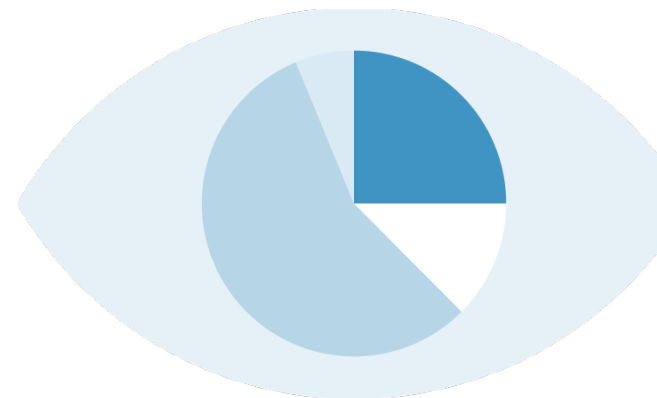
2. What is your **role in your current position**? Summarize for your interviewer what your job is today, as well as other duties, aside from directly flying or working on an aircraft. Or, if you're not currently employed, talk about your most recent job.



3. **Are you willing to relocate?** In aviation, be ready to discuss where you're willing to move to, if that's necessary for the new position. (This directly affects your family, so you should not apply for jobs that aren't in the ideal location for everyone concerned.)
4. Be ready to talk about how and why you believe that your current skills will contribute to the **accomplishment of the company's goals**.
5. How do you handle **working with different and/or difficult people**? Have a story ready to share about how you work with people who have different ideas and mindsets than you do.
6. How do you go about continuing to **develop your professional skills and knowledge**? Talk about any outside training, seminars or educational opportunities you've pursued.
7. Do you know what your **salary requirements** are, and how you would engage in a discussion about them? Doing so might make you feel uncomfortable, but remember: it's best not to give salary specifics in the first interview. If you're pressed for a number, however, provide a range. Be ready in advance, so you're not caught off guard.



8. You might be asked to offer your opinion of the **qualities of a good leader** and a bad leader. If you, yourself, are a leader, be prepared to address your leadership style and, as well, what others would say about you in that regard. If you want to be a leader, explain the type you'd like to be (and how you're currently developing yourself to eventually take on such a role).
9. What is your **greatest achievement outside of work**? If you bring it up, it opens the door for an interviewer to ask you something personal, without it being illegal. It's up to you how personal you want it to get.
10. Have an idea of what **type of culture or environment** you would thrive in. Are you comfortable with 50 percent flying and 50 percent collateral duties? Do you wear a suit and tie or a golf shirt? Are you expected to come into the office if you're not flying or maintaining the aircraft? Are you comfortable working with a high-net-worth owner or Fortune 100 executive? Are you familiar with a more formal setting and formal passenger experience?
11. What do you know about the **company you're interviewing with**? Be sure to research who you're meeting with and what the goals and visions are for the corporation. If it's a high-net-worth individual, there might not be much of anything online. But you've got to find out as much as you can before attending the interview.



12. **Share your biggest motivators** driving this job change—and rank them. Explain what you're looking for as it relates to professional growth, compensation, work/life balance, team environment, cultural fit, etc.
13. If your interviewer asked your **colleagues to describe you**, what descriptive terms would they choose and why? How would they describe your interaction with them and your general effectiveness in your work performance?
14. What has been your **greatest professional achievement** to date?
15. What kind of oversight and interaction would your **ideal boss** provide?
16. How have you had to **overcome a major obstacle** that stood in the way of your accomplishing a goal or commitment? How did you approach and resolve the situation?
19. What are the **three most important attributes or skills** that you believe you would bring to our company if we hired you?



20. If you're already employed, be prepared to talk about **why you're leaving your current employer.**

Your response will explain your values, outlook, goals and needs for the prospective employer. It will help illustrate if you're headed toward a more successful future or running away from an unsuccessful employment experience.

Whew! That's a lot to take in and process before you send off those resumes and start scheduling interviews!

As you can see, this is a big commitment and it's worth the effort to "get it right."



9 WAYS TO SUCCEED IN A PHONE OR VIDEO INTERVIEW

By Jenny Showalter

Congratulations! You've just landed an interview for your dream job!

Once upon a time, this meant practicing your interview answers, loading up your briefcase and heading out the door for your aviation interview.

Those days are long gone.

In today's digital world, and especially in the fast-paced aviation industry, it can be challenging for potential employers to schedule face-to-face interviews.

Especially for pilots and flight attendants, it can be difficult to guarantee your availability without a month's notice.

Lucky for you, we now live in the era of phone and video interviews.

This means that you can literally interview from anywhere in the world, and at a time that's convenient for both you and the gatekeepers of your next career opportunity.



But how do you make yourself stand out from the crowd when you're only a voice on the other end of the phone, or offering a video "handshake" with the person conducting your interview?

Phone Interview Strategies

I was on a call with an API candidate the other day and he said, "It's so hard to talk about myself over the phone!"

You know what? He's right. It's hard selling yourself over the phone. The lack of eye contact and non-verbal cues can be a hurdle.

So the question is: how do you make a great first impression when all the interviewer has to go on is your voice?

- **Give Yourself Some Space (Literally)**

Before the interview, identify a quiet, comfortable space where you can be yourself without distractions.

Make sure you set up for your call in a place that lends an air of professionalism to the event. Kicking back on the couch or calling from your busy hotel lobby might not set the right mood—either for you or your interviewers.

And don't forget to have a copy of your resume handy for reference, along with pen and paper to jot down notes.

- **Hold Steady**

Most of us take interview calls on our cell phones. This is okay, but you'll want to make sure you've silenced any alerts or reminders the interviewer might hear.

If you're talking on a headset, try and keep still. Little movements can sound very loud if the mic rubs on your clothing, and it might cause your voice to cut in and out.

If you have a bad connection, don't be afraid to ask for a call back rather than toughing it out.

- **Look the Part**

I'm lucky enough to work remotely from a home office. Even though I'm in the comfort of my own home when interviewing candidates, I do my best work when I put some effort into my appearance. Your phone interview should be no different. Dress for the occasion!

And don't forget to smile. If there's a smile on your face, there'll be a smile in your voice, too. Try it.

- **Be Punctual**

This sounds like a no-brainer, but trust me, you don't want your interviewer's first impression of you to be the sound of your voice mail recording. Set reminders and alarms to make sure you are ready to accept their incoming call even if it's a few minutes early.

If you're calling in, be ready to dial the number as soon as the clock strikes the agreed-upon time. Even if they might be running late, you want to make sure that you're on time!

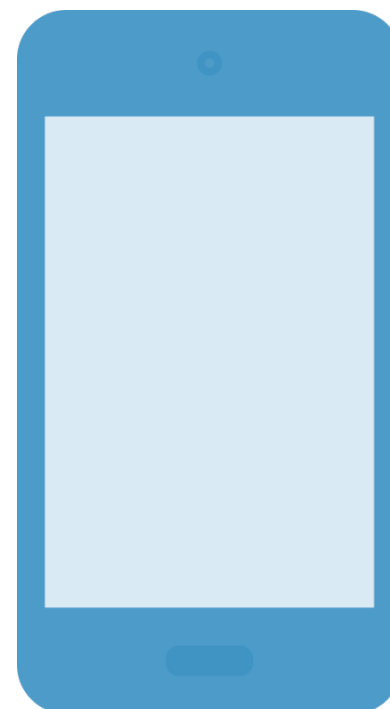
- **Listen**

A good place to start is by making sure you know the interviewer's name; then feel free to use it when addressing him or her on the call.

Every interviewer has his or her own style. Let them set the pace and tone for the conversation. And be sure that you're answering the question they asked without going off on tangents. This is where note taking can really be handy.

- **Know What You Want**

Do your research and be prepared for predictable questions that may come your way. Be ready with answers to such things as: Why are you looking for a new job? What appeals to you about this opportunity? Are you willing to relocate? How much notice do you need to give your current employer?



Video Interview Strategies

You thought a phone interview was stressful, right? Well, now it's time for a video interview.

Embrace it!

Studies show that 60 percent of jobseekers will, at some point, engage in a video interview, and 66 percent of candidates actually *prefer* video interviewing.

Obviously, most of the phone tips above may be used for video interviews too. But a video interview brings a unique set of challenges and opportunities.

So how do you sell yourself from the neck up?

- **Lights, Camera, Action**

I remember my first video interview. It was nerve-wracking. My interviewers sent the link in advance and I pulled it up on my computer to test the camera and speaker.



I checked the angle, lighting and background. I tried on different shirts that didn't conflict with the painting on the wall, straightened up the bookcase, and basically obsessed about every last detail looking and working just right.

When it was time for the actual interview, I was ready. Finally, the interviewer appeared and it was clear she had not checked her camera as I had.

For the next hour, I was staring at her neck centered on the screen because her camera angle was off the mark. Not an ideal situation, but at least I was confident I was giving her a better view than she was me.

- **Look Your Best**

When dressing for a video interview, you should outfit just like you would if you were meeting someone in person.

- And despite how tempting it may be, please wear slacks or bottoms that match your suit in case you need to stand up.

For ladies, feel free to wear jewelry, but keep it understated. And remember, bright colors come across best over video.

- **Presentation is Everything**

Be sure to look at the camera, not at the computer screen. Good posture will come through on video, so no slouching. Speak slowly and feel free to gesture, but remember to keep your hands in the screen. Don't forget to smile!

- **Follow Up**

You've just completed your aviation interview for your dream job, so now what? Follow up is critical!

- Proper etiquette suggests that you should send a thank you note to each of your interviewers within 24 hours, regardless of the interview method.

Keep the note simple and be sure to restate why you think you're qualified for their position.

This is also a good opportunity to add any information you might have forgotten to convey in the interview.

- Lastly, remember that it's entirely appropriate to send a "touch base" email after a couple weeks, if you haven't heard anything back from your interviewers. This shows that you're still interested in their position.

Heeding any or all of these tips can be a serious boon to help you make the most of your phone or video interview for an aviation job . . . so don't neglect to use them!

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ABOUT API



Business Aviation: It's Not Just About Planes... It's About People

Aviation Personnel International (API) is the longest-running aviation recruiting firm, exclusively serving the hiring needs of flight departments in private and corporate aviation.

C-suite executives, talent search professionals and aviation leaders rely on us for our proven ability to match top caliber aviation professionals based on talent, skills, values, cultural fit, work history and industry references.

Since 1971, we've offered the broadest portfolio of fully vetted active and passive candidates for aviation leadership, including pilots and maintenance professionals, along with other aviation-specific roles.

Whether it's for a Fortune 500 corporation or private flight department, API offers comprehensive retained recruitment services, including talent identification, aviation staff development and outplacement services.



API'S FIVE PRACTICE AREAS



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Sheryl Barden, President & CEO

An aviation industry recruitment and talent identification veteran, Sheryl is a frequent guest speaker and author for several aviation organizations and publications.

She is particularly regarded for applying her extensive background in employee search, screening and coaching to fulfill aviation recruiting and human resource consulting needs.

To help API's clients attract and retain the level of talent they're seeking, Sheryl serves as a trusted advisor on HR-related matters, such as aviation hiring best practices and competitive compensation packages.

Sheryl joined API in 2001, as Vice President of Business Development, and she assumed the critical role of President in 2003. She added CEO responsibilities to her position in 2013.

API has grown exponentially under her leadership, while always remaining true to the company's founding principles of integrity, confidentiality and industry-leading client service.

Sheryl is an aviation industry thought leader on employment issues, such as the aviation talent shortage and pilot professionalism, and was a contributor at the NTSB's Safety Symposium, in response to the 2009 Colgan Air accident.

A member of the NBAA and its Board of Directors, Sheryl serves as Vice Chair of its Associate Member Advisory Council. Sheryl is also a member of the Society for Human Resource Management, Flight Safety Foundation, International Aviation Women's Association, Women in Corporate Aviation and International Women's Forum of Northern California. She is the past president of IWF NorCal.



Sheryl holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Management with an emphasis in Personnel Management from Pennsylvania State University, and a MBA from the McLaren School of Business, at the University of San Francisco.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Colleen Kelly, Vice President

Colleen works closely with business aviation hiring managers and their HR partners to best understand their unique business and talent needs. To fulfill the needs of API's clients, she thoroughly analyzes each candidate's skill set, values and experience to ensure an ideal cultural fit for every project.

Colleen applies her extensive background in employee search, screening and coaching to match business aviation organizations with the industry's top talent, ranging from aviation directors to maintenance directors, flight technicians and captains.

She joined API as Director of Candidate Services in 2007, and was promoted to her current role as Vice President in 2011. Throughout her tenure, she's coached hundreds of aviation professionals during their career transitions, including one-on-one mentoring sessions via API's outplacement service, "Your Best Foot Forward."

Prior to API, Colleen held a strategic, director-level position at a multibillion-dollar Fortune 500 company. During her seven-year tenure there, she had responsibility for the profitability of a global division with \$160 million in annual revenue.

A member of the NBAA, Northern California Business Aviation Association and Women in Corporate Aviation, Colleen has been a featured speaker on the topics of career development, personal branding and interviewing best practices.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Jennifer Steele, Director of Client Services

Jennifer brings more than a decade of business aviation industry expertise to API. Her proven track record of understanding clients' needs—combined with her unique ability to inspire confidence and build relationships—makes her an integral part of API's aviation recruiting team.

In her role as Director, Client Services, Jennifer works directly with API's client hiring managers to identify their professional and cultural needs and matches them with highly vetted, qualified candidates. She also helps strengthen API's relationships with its long-term clients and assists in business development opportunities.

Prior to joining API in 2015 as Director of Candidate Services, Jennifer served as a Senior Account Manager for MedAire, an International SOS company, where she gained significant leadership experience, developed key business relationships and honed her exceptional communication skills.

Jennifer is a member of the NBAA Maintenance Committee and is also a member of the Pacific Northwest Business Aviation Association and Women in Corporate Aviation. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University of Nebraska.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Jenny Showalter, Manager of Candidate Services

Jenny brings more than two decades of aviation experience to API, a time during which she has achieved wide industry recognition for her exceptional customer service expertise.

As API's Manager, Candidate Services, Jenny is the key team member responsible for the API Registered Professional™ program, thus ensuring that the company has a strong, diverse and current pool of candidates to serve its clients. She also assists with expanding API's valued relationships with business aviation professionals in five key functional areas: administration, maintenance, flight operations, in-flight services, scheduling and dispatch.

Prior to joining API, Jenny served as the Executive Director for the Florida Aviation Business Association (FABA), and was also a member of its board of directors. For 18 years previously, Jenny served as Customer Service Manager / Director of First Impressions for Showalter Flying Service, her family's third-generation fixed-base operation. Responsible for many business areas, including service, sales and marketing, she assisted with the various needs and requests of flight departments, flight crews and passengers visiting the Orlando area.

Jenny is a member of FABA and its board, as well as a member of the National Business Aviation Association, where she serves on NBAA's Local and Regional Groups Committee. She is a former decade-long member of the NBAA Schedulers & Dispatchers Committee, and was the committee's Chairwoman from 2007-2008. Jenny is a graduate of Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida, where she attained a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Spanish.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Codi Quick, Business Manager

Codi Quick collaborates with API's recruiting team and candidates throughout the API Registered Professional™ application process, by providing seamless technology, pre-employment and communication support.

As Business Manager, she's responsible for working on various projects related to operations, technology, logistics and process improvement. She also works with client hiring managers to coordinate candidate presentations, and ensure a smooth hiring process.

Codi has vast experience as a business manager and communications specialist, having led many organizations through their start-up, survival, turnaround and growth phases.

She double majored in Business Administration and Communications, and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Ashford University.



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Thank You!

