

# Looking for Potential in a V.U.C.A world

John Lawson, Lawson Williams Consulting Group

The careers experts at Lawson Williams continue to offer tips, tricks and advice on building your chosen career.

In our last article we introduced the concept of the V.U.C.A world.

We all increasingly operate in the VUCA world where the rate of change has never been greater – it is volatile.

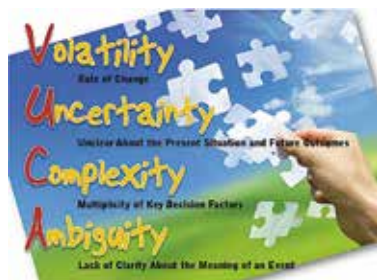
There is less clarity about the present and future – there is uncertainty.

Many factors impact on decision making – it's more complex.

It is difficult to extract meaning in events – there is increased ambiguity.

From a career perspective we must ensure we can sustain our careers within the V.U.C.A.

From a company or employer's perspective the response to the VUCA world has been to place more emphasis on assessing a person's potential, in addition to their intelligence, skills and past performance.



## Identifying Potential

When recruiting externally or when looking for succession from within there are five common indicators used to identify potential.

The five indicators of potential are:

### Motivation

- Wanting to leave their mark
- Aspiring to large collective goals
- Showing deep personal humility
- Investing in getting better at everything they do

### Curiosity

- Seeking out new experiences, knowledge and candid feedback
- Open to learning and change

### Insight

- Ability to gather and make sense of information that suggests new possibilities

### Engagement

- Having a knack for using emotion and logic to communicate a persuasive vision
- Ability to connect with people

### Determination

- The wherewithal to fight for difficult goals despite challenges
- Bouncing back from adversity

## But what does this all mean?

It's a fair question. How do we make sense of these definitions in terms of how we behave now, and how do we further develop these traits so we are identified by our employers as having potential.

The longer I am in recruitment the more I am convinced that the key for most people to be the best they can be is... to go back to the basics.

It's time for us all to do the basics well, better than before!

If you want to be identified as having potential or seen as talent within your organisation and, importantly, sustain a career in the 21st century, you must invest in mastering the basics.

## The Basics

The basics are the common traits employers look for in employees. Many research projects have been done to assess and rank these and there are considered to be approximately fifteen of them. Interestingly there is a core number that always rank at the top, the top five, and we will focus on these in future articles.

So my suggestion is, invest in the top five, become the best you can be with these.

- Communication
- Collaboration/Teamwork
- Continuous learning
- Innovation and Creativity
- Leadership

The good news is that as technical people we can be naturally good at some of these, but at others we can be a disaster. Take communication for example, did you know there are ten things you need to master to be an effective communicator in today's world of work.

So next time we will tackle "How to be a better communicator".



John Lawson is founder of Lawson Williams Consulting Group. He initially studied Biotechnology at Massey and is a Professional member of NZIFST. He now enjoys leading a team of recruitment consultants, helping people like you develop satisfying careers.

