



Career Strategy: It Pays to Diversify

When employers look for talent, they typically settle for people with the proficiency to perform certain tasks. But what they *really* want—especially in today’s hyper-competitive market—is an adaptable person whose broad-based set of skills crosses over into a variety of disciplines.

Want proof? Poke your head into any meeting room in which star performers are present. You will likely hear a sales manager exploring the potential of XML technology; or an engineer debating the virtues of a strategic alliance; or a finance person pondering the benefits of a co-branding opportunity.

In other words, as organizations flatten, more is expected from each individual contributor. Which means that versatility is not only fashionable, it’s become a key ingredient in modern-day career progression.

To round out your resume, look for areas of weakness (or “blind spots”), and try to develop them into strengths. For example, if you’re a design engineer and you want to improve your company’s product or advance its market position, by gaining knowledge in areas that were formerly considered the domain of “somebody else,” you’ll increase your overall market value.

The more you can offer a multiple spectrum of knowledge—rather than a single colour of skill—the less likely you’ll be to paint yourself into a corner.