UND Alum Angie Freeman's Accelerate to Industry Guide for Job-Seekers!

Who is Angie Freeman? Angie Freeman is the Chief Human Resources & Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Officer at C.H. Robinson, leading the company's global talent and environmental, social, and governance strategies, including recruiting, compensation, learning and leadership development, sustainability, and diversity, equity and inclusion. Angie joined C.H. Robinson in 1998 and during her career at the company has progressively expanded her scope and responsibilities, serving in a variety of positions including leading Investor Relations, Marketing and Public Relations, and Government Affairs. Angie also serves on the Board of Directors and as Chair of the HR and Compensation Committee for The Shyft Group (NASDAQ: SHYF), a manufacturer of commercial specialty vehicles. In addition, she serves on the Board of the University of North Dakota Alumni Association & Foundation, the C.H. Robinson Foundation Board, and the Gartner Global Chief Human Resources Office (CHRO) Board.

Angie holds a Master of Science degree in Comparative Politics from the London School of Economics, in addition to a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education from the University of North Dakota. During her time at C.H. Robinson, the company has hired thousands of people, and so she has been able to observe how employers identify and select new employees, and what makes top candidates stand out. What follows are her tips to employment success, based on both her own sense of the in-demand skills and abilities, but also those of her HR peers across organizations.

Three key measures of any prospective employee:
- Skills
- Capabilities
- Mindsets

We live in a time of rapid, incredible technological change, which means that while deep subject matter expertise is important, the relevance of that technical knowledge/expertise is fleeting and we must rely on continuous learning. Change is a constant, and perhaps even more so in what may be the fourth technological revolution: Generative AI.

As such, ensure that your technical, deep knowledge is kept fresh and current and that you demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning: at the same time, here are some key considerations and potential differentiators for candidates looking to put their best foot forward.

Four key questions enabling articulation of the power skills that all employers want:

What are Power Skills? While power skills have historically been referred to as the "soft skills," that term does not accurately or sufficiently articulate their intrinsic and explicit strong value in any workplace; as such, Angie refers to the skills demonstrated within the following four questions as the **Power Skills**, which will be essential to short-and-long-term employment success.

How do you learn: we live in a time of rapid change. Can you handle change and continuously adapt? Are you committed to continuous learning from multiple sources of information? Are you able to quickly take in new information and adapt it to your work? Do you have a growth mindset, wherein you prioritize continuous improvement in yourself and your team? In essence, do you have, and can you demonstrate your commitment to **Learning Agility**?

How do you think: this does not refer to your or any one individual's opinions/perspectives, rather it speaks to your mindset. How do you approach or look at the world; how do you think about things? Are you a critical thinker who has and regularly uses the analytical skills needed to detect patterns, to theorize, to observe, and to make decisions while looking at multiple factors and balancing different inputs? Do you have and can you regularly demonstrate creativity; can you innovate, can you devise new ways of solving problems, can you move beyond the usual assumptions, habits, and traditional ways of doing things, can you detect bias? Are you adaptable and can you regularly demonstrate adaptability in your work: can you embrace new ways of thinking and doing, can you manage change and new situations when there's no roadmap? Are you able to manage your time effectively and prioritize what's most important in the moment to maximize the time and expertise of you and your team? In essence, do you have **Change Agility**?

How well do you communicate: Surveys demonstrate over and over again that employers prize good communicators, both in oral and written communication. Communication is key to any employee's success….no one can be successful without it. Are you able to be persuasive, to sell ideas, to convince others? Are you able to harness your communication skills to enable and enhance collaboration and teamwork, to get everyone on the same page and working toward the same goal(s)? Are you able to set a vision and persuade and influence others to follow that vision through to fruition? Are you able to communicate, whether oral, written, or through presentation, the impact of what you've learned, what you've proposed, what you've led, what you and your team have accomplished? In essence, do you have **Communication Agility**?

How well do you relate to others: work is a team sport. Most work is done in teams, which means creating success through and with others. Can you manage people, can you build and strengthen relationships, can you create clarity and focus for others, can you understand their needs, can you coach them and give effective, constructive feedback? Are you a collaborator, can you build trust, can you maintain credibility, can you manage priorities across individuals, can you balance individual goals with team goals? Along these lines, empathy is a key power skill; are you able to understand people and their needs to enable them to succeed and bring their best? Can you read the room? Can you negotiate well within competing interests? Are you able to understand and work well with people from diverse backgrounds? Can you influence without authority, can you articulate the strength of your ideas within the context of others' motivations and find the common ground necessary for all to succeed? In essence, do you have **People Agility**?

While knowledge and expertise are important, the keys to success are the power skills articulated through the above four questions.