

# TALENT!

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



I recently spoke at the NZIFST conference. My topic was *What employers are looking for in Graduates in 2015*.

It is interesting to ask the same question for not only graduates but all employees.

Employers want a lot when looking for employees in 2015 ... they want what they call Talent.

But why? The answer is we live in a V U C A. world.

## A new era of talent spotting

Its true to say that recently we have come into a new era of talent spotting.

The first era lasted Millennia. We selected people based on physical attributes. If you wanted to erect a pyramid, dig a canal, fight a war or harvest a crop you chose the fittest, healthiest, strongest people you could find. These attributes were easy to assess and despite their growing irrelevance we still unconsciously look for them.

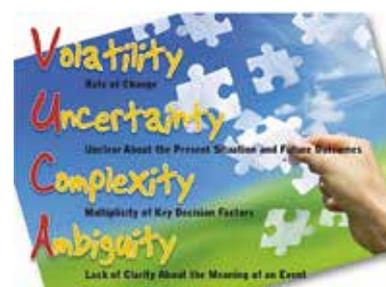
In the second era we selected on Intelligence, experience and past performance. Throughout much of the 20th century much work became standardised and professionalised. Most roles were relatively similar across companies and industries and from year to year, past performance was considered a fine indicator.

The third era – by the 1980's technological evolution and industry convergence had made jobs much more complex and increasingly, experience and performance in previous positions became less relevant. Instead jobs were broken down into competencies and we started looking for candidates with the right combination of them.

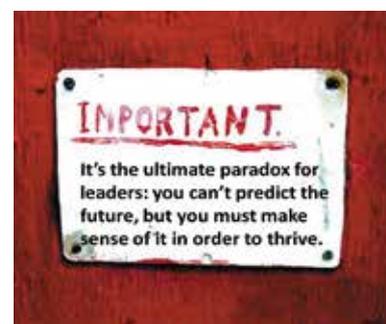
So competence rather than intelligence, experience or past performance.

We are now at the dawn of a fourth era. But there is an elephant in the room, and the elephant is V U C A. We all operate in a VUCA world.

- 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 impacting decision making, it's more **complex**.
- It is difficult to extract meaning in events, there is increased **ambiguity**.



We all operate in a V U C A world. From a career perspective we must ensure we can sustain our careers within V U C A.



## Employing for potential

As a result we now enter the fourth era of Talent Spotting – “Employing for Potential”.

Competency-based appointments are becoming increasingly insufficient.

What makes someone successful in a particular role today might not do so tomorrow if the competitive environment shifts, the company's strategy changes or he or she must collaborate with a different group of colleagues.

So the question has become not whether a company's employees and leaders have the right skills: it's whether they have the potential to learn new ones.

There are 5 common indicators used when recruiting for Potential and we will investigate these in our next article and provide you some strategies on how you can be seen as Talent to your existing and future employers.

Create a sustainable career in the New Zealand food industry by developing the skill sets required for success in the V U C A. world.



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.