

## Latin American in Hong Kong

A successful job application requires you must have the necessary professional experience and knowledge. However, many applicants neglect personal experiences from their private life in their communication, which can also be professionally interesting. William Bridges refers to them as "assets" in his book "Creating You & Co.".

*Peter Näf*

I experienced an impressive example of this with a client\*. I advised him when he was on a foreign assignment for a Swiss company in Hong Kong. He had a varied and, in the truest sense of the word, international personal and professional career. He grew up in a Latin American country, where he completed his basic education. For his studies he went to the USA. He then worked for many years for various well-known companies in Switzerland, finally for the company that sent him to Asia.

### Show your entire story

He wanted to go back to Switzerland, so I advised him on his application via Skype. I knew from the person who recommended me to him that he had Latin American roots. But I couldn't find anything about it in his CV. When I asked him about it, he reacted a bit sensitively. It was not important where he had spent his youth. After all, it was about professional experience and this was evident in his curriculum vitae. I did not agree with this view. From my experience as a headhunter, I know that CVs are understandable when they are complete and give a well-rounded

picture. And I found his international background very interesting. Having successfully asserted himself in four different cultural environments is what I call an "asset" in the sense of William Bridges.

### We gain experience not only on the job

Such a personal background is hardly ever required in a job profile. And yet the whole picture gives me interesting information about the applicant. I can assume that he has the following skills and strengths: understanding of cultural diversity, adaptability and flexibility, courage and the ability to quickly find his way in new situations. He had acquired all these skills almost incidentally in his extraordinary career. Showing his whole picture communicates personal competences far more successfully than if he had described himself as flexible, multicultural, courageous, etc. under the heading "personal strengths" in his CV. At the end of the meeting, he was still a bit sceptical. .... At our next meeting three weeks later, he told me that he had taken my advice after all. And he was in contact with a company that was interested in him specifically because of his Latin American background.

\*Some details of the story have been falsified for reasons of discretion.

#Application, #Job interview, #Storytelling

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