



Career Designer. Dancer. Writer. Fashion Week model dresser. Violinist. Recruiter. Milkmaid. Sometimes the most interesting jobs are the ones we never even dreamed of when we were little kids.

Who is Ilona (“rhymes with Fiona”) Vanderwoude? She’s a playful, inquisitive, intuitive, and energetic Career Designer, whose passion is helping multi-talented and multi-passionate individuals create exciting lives and careers. She offers tailored career and life coaching, and resume writing services to “Renaissance Personalities” – those modern-day movers and shakers with too many skills and interests to just pursue one. Ilona’s energy, enthusiasm, and straight-shooting advice enable clients

to trust her and make progress quickly. And unlike other “don’t rock the boat” career coaches, her playful, quirky style helps clients have fun along the way.

Career Coaching with Style

Job searching is not what it is used to be. And if anything drives Ilona crazy, it’s the dizzying amount of contradictory (and often incorrect) job search advice available online or from well-intentioned friends and family. Ilona believes that job searching – the process of finding what truly makes your heart beat a little faster and your eyes shine a little brighter – should be fun and focused. So she clears away all the clutter and hype for her clients so they can relax, focus, and quickly follow the right path. And this gal has what it takes. As a resume expert nationally published in 15+ books with 10 years of experience and elite coaching and resume writing credentials, her experience sets her apart from other career coaching professionals.

She is New York City’s only certified Master Résumé Writer (MRW) and Academy Certified Résumé Writer (ACRW). Worldwide, there are only 28 MRWs and 22 ACRWs. Ilona holds multiple qualifications that benefit her clients, including designations as a Certified Career Management Coach (CCMC), a Certified Professional Résumé Writer (CPRW), a Job Search Trainer (CJST), an Employment Interview Professional (CEIP), and an Image Consultant (the latter through the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York). She also trained under M. Lobenstine, groundbreaking author of *The Renaissance Soul*.

She knows what she’s talking about.

Ilona lives, eats, and breathes career management. She was once a recruiter, which has given her valuable insights from the other side of the table. And she is well-versed in the latest and greatest job search strategies as a member of 5 major industry associations: the Career Management Alliance (“the Alliance”), the National Résumé Writers’ Association (NRWA), Career Directors International (CDI), Coachville, and the Association of Image Consultants International (AICI). For several years, Ilona served as the Newsletter Coordinator for the NRWA and compiled and created its weekly newsletter for distribution to its members. She also acted as e-list moderator for the Career Management Alliance.

Artist, Communicator, Escapee from Cubicle Nation

Ilona knows what it's like to change careers repeatedly and not live the "standard life." Her creative skills were evident as a classically trained violinist. While pondering her life's purpose and vocation, she attended a prestigious secretarial school and became an executive assistant. In that role, she focused on writing and communication, whether it was writing newsletter articles, conducting new hire interviews in creative ways, or writing and editing corporate marketing materials. She honed her skills for effective branding and communication in this role and now uses this every day with clients to help them package themselves and their resumes with freshness and creativity.

In Holland, Ilona lived the corporate jet-setting life when working for a real estate hot shot that was the Dutch equivalent of Donald Trump. But she found that luxurious designer offices and company cars did not really speak to her true calling. As many of her clients do, however, she "made the best of it" but longed for something more in her long-term career.

Creativity and the arts were still strong influences in her life and impacted her innovative approaches to work. After violin, her creative passions included jazz and hip-hop dancing (where she competed in shows and contests), singing, writing, perfume-making, ceramics, and acting. Ilona searched for clarity in choosing the right career that might leverage her artistic side. "Fear" has never been in her vocabulary so she brazenly dived into many adventures to find her true calling. Her experimentations included a summer milking cows on a dairy farm in Switzerland! And she eventually made a move to Manhattan.

A true renaissance professional in every sense of the word, Ilona did not settle for one interest or career as her own life evolved – a perspective her clients appreciate. While in New York, she took courses at NYU in feature writing, copy editing, and interviewing. She also became an active ASPCA volunteer, furthering her passion for animal welfare. Ilona also completed the image consulting program at FIT (Fashion Institute of Technology) and even volunteered behind the scenes at the Bryant Park Fashion Week tents, dressing the models.

With all these experiences and her writing skills, friends started coming to Ilona for resume advice. Eventually, she found an entire industry devoted to helping others find jobs, switch careers, and follow their dreams so she tapped a mentor, took courses, and got credentialed several times over.

Helping Renaissance People Overcome Their Fears, Embrace Their Gifts, and Create a Life Where They Don't Have to Choose

Naturally gifted with a creative soul and athletic intuition, Ilona has done more activities in her life than most people do in four lifetimes – among other things: ice dancing, photography, sailing, wind surfing, paragliding, horseback riding, yoga, skiing, and krav maga (Israeli self defense). Her adventurous spirit and zest for life has given her a "no fear" attitude to excel at whatever she tries – and she passes on this philosophy when working with clients.

"All my adult life I've been chasing 'my one passion' to pursue, only to find that there will never be just one for me. Once I realized my personality type is just different from those of specialists – the people heralded in today's society – I stopped feeling as if something was seriously wrong with me. After reading two recently published books on the topic, my perspective on life shifted. This is a huge relief, but then you need to start figuring out how to fit it all into your daily life. Many Renaissance professionals feel the same way so I really enjoy showing people that there is nothing wrong with them for not being able to find their "one true passion" in life either. Many people are just afraid to

choose, have too many interests, or need new challenges after they finally achieve success. It's okay to pursue different interests and passions, whether you are 20 or 50. No one says you ever have to settle down into one career, even though that seems to be common consensus. We live in a time where people can cycle through 3, 4, even 10 different careers over the course of their working life. It's also about redefining success and designing a life as well as a career that works for the modern-day Renaissance man or woman. It's about making all the pieces fit so each endeavor supports the bigger picture. I can help them design a unique life and career so they don't feel they are giving up any options."