

WOULD
WINNIE
THE POOH
FIND
WORK
IN THE
WIRELESS
WORLD?



text and illustrations by

Jane Rose Speiser

a.k.a.
how to scale
the heights
of the job market:
an instruction manual
for modern times



for all of the Silicon Valley parents,
who read bedtime stories
to their children,

(and for the rest of us,
common mortals,
laid off and looking,
whose nightmares
in the early morning light
pursue us from dawn to dusk
and into the still of the night.)

- the ubiquitous disclaimer, --by way of an introduction

This is a book for intrepid readers. It will take you off of the beaten track and onto the bumpy roads of uncertainty. It is the product of five days of observations and interviews in Silicon valley and some hard day's nights of writing, drawing and dreaming. Its side effects are unpredictable: they include laughter...and tears.

for M.W.U. who believed in me
when I no longer believed in myself
for A. who told me how hard it is
for T. & K. who made it sound easy
Jane Rose Speiser, author and illustrator

- Winnie the Pooh has been known throughout history to be a bear with little brain: Therefore he needs a coach. Her name is Martha and she is an elephant; a patient, kind, thoughtful, encouraging elephant. It is she who tells the story, in the first person.



- where to start

It is not easy for an elephant to lift herself into the air; but if you are agile, and you have sturdy rope, you will eventually reach that desk, on which there sits....a job. You must proceed in steps, of which there are many.

Elephants are pretty good at this, as they can hold on to the rope with their trunks as well as their feet.



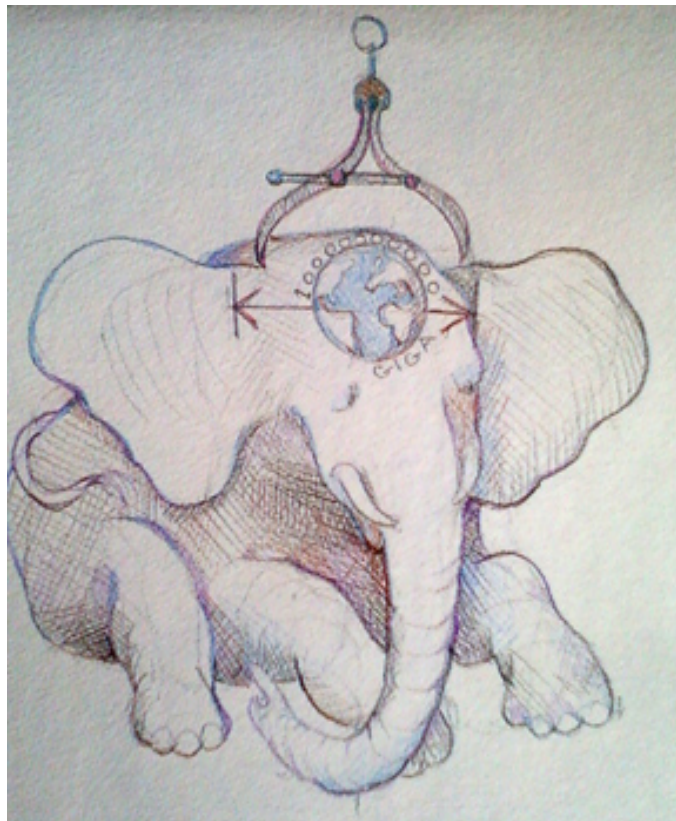
- how to darn the holes in your resume

That was the year in which I wrote the great American novel, designed a solar oven, danced with a jazz group, hitch hiked from Oakland to the Orinoco, survived the tornado of the Tangail in Bangladesh, shot a documentary about a horse drawn circus etc. etc. Elephants are very versatile animals. They do lots of different things as the seasons pass. Some of them pay, some of them don't, but that's all right. It makes for an interesting life.



- how to shine a light on your experience and talents

An elephant is equipped with a very large hard disk that reaches from one ear to the other. It is called the elephant's memory, a.k.a. 'judgement'. Judgement comes from storing everything that has happened, for a very long time; then weaving this infinite amount of information into complex, coherent and imaginative patterns. That is why elephants are good decision makers. When they have to make choices or invent solutions for their work, they have a lot of material to draw on, and nearly total recall.



- how to use verbs in your resume

Companies like verbs. Verbs indicate that you are doing things, not just sitting around showering yourself with adjectives.

No, not *those* verbs: «I bashed my employees with banana leaves» «I charged my previous employer» is not what the company wants to hear. An elephant is supposed to be a graceful and diplomatic animal, who never gets into a confrontation with anyone in the working world...unless she is seriously provoked. You must choose your verbs carefully.



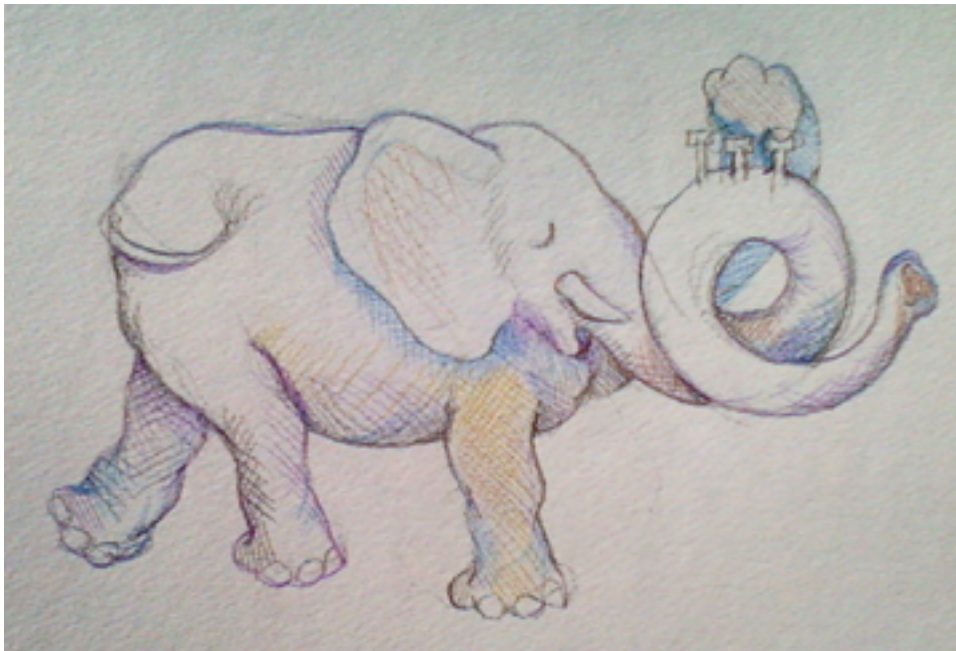
- how to ensure that your resume will be opened by anyone other than the staff robot

Does anyone ever open the mail? Today's skies are full of immense flocks of resumes trying to find their way to warmer climates. But a resume does not always have infallible aim. There is no GPS system to ensure that it will land on the right desk. Sometimes it sails through the key word sensors like an ICBM. Sometimes the winds of fortune blow it off course; or it does a crash landing because of a badly phrased sentence, such as 'with my powerful tusks I uprooted....' that is not quite the right tone.



- how to stand out from the crowd, and catapult yourself onto the radar of the V.P. of human resources

That is what the trunk is for. An elephant can use it as a trumpet to call attention to herself, when the members of the human resources staff are momentarily distracted by those other three thousand candidates, who must be evaluated, weeded out or eventually interviewed. Elephants have a lot of momentum, which would allow them to charge through the chain link fence, otherwise known as 'recruiting software.' But they are generally too well mannered to do so.



- how not to fear mice, (and other high tech creatures)

Do you speak Flash? Do you Swish your ears and tail?
Do you Weave Dreams? Do you Excel?
Open your mouth, stick out your tongue and say 'I'.
Wiggle your trunk. Now say 'T'. Now say yuuuu--eesss--
beee--beee--toooo--bbeee--to-be-or-not-to-be....ooops
wrong century. Are you in good enough health to
navigate the IT age? We hope so. All it takes is energy,
patience, endurance, imagination, and immunity to
bugs of all sorts, even those for which there are no
vaccinations. You must get over your fear of mice. It's
not the kind of mouse that should scare an elephant. It
rarely ever has a tail. It doesn't squeak. You just have to
press gently on its left or right ear to get it to listen to
you. If not, you can move your trunk *delicately* over the
screen to execute your commands.



- how to do the web dance

The web dance is not the lap dance, the shimmy, the twist, the Charleston or any other dance you've ever done. It consists of not being trapped in the web like the spider and the fly. Web dancing is something like break dancing. You've gotta' get out on the turf and meet people, talk to them, look them in the eye, before you forget how to do it. So you have to occasionally fight off those sticky virtual connections wrapped around you like gaffers' tape; set your feet on the terra firma of real life; say goodbye to the spider; he will still be there when you come back.



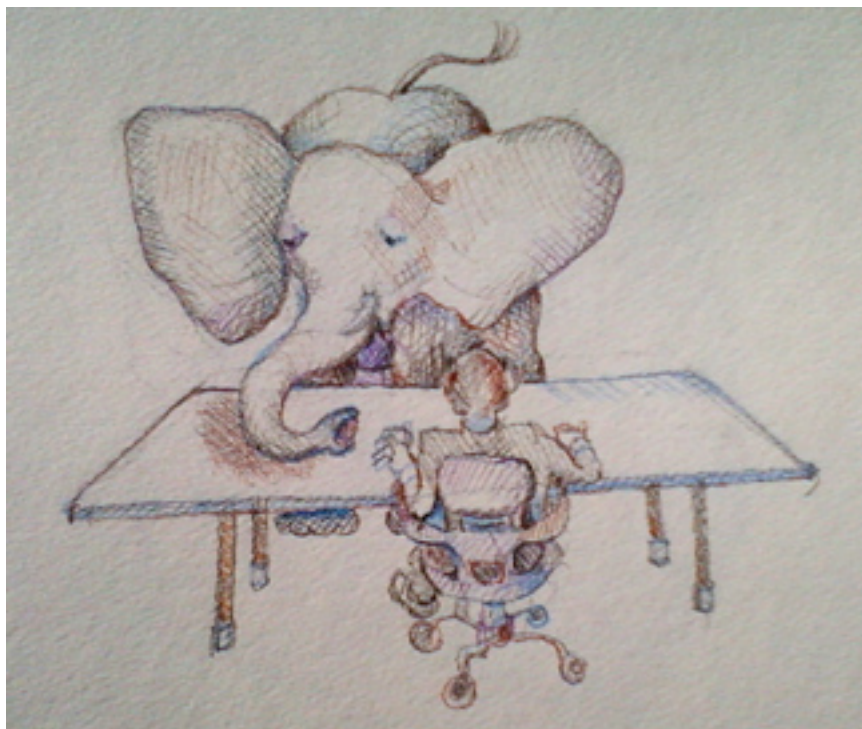
- how to slide into an interview, without slipping

The best thing to do in an interview is to spread your enormous ears very wide and listen, most intently. Eventually the interviewer will say something that is exactly what you can relate to, and you can pick up from there. In any case an elephant can only be herself. She can't pretend to be anyone else.

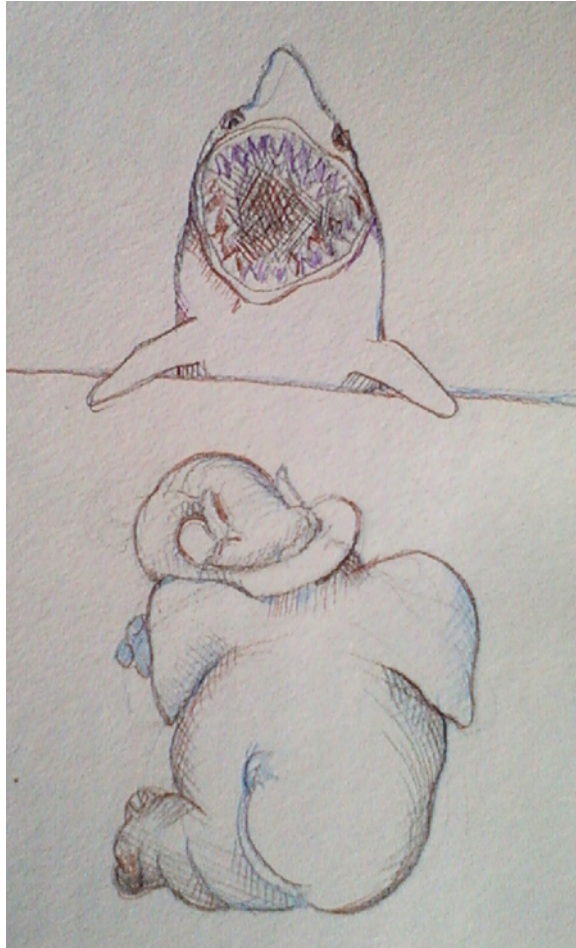


- how to answer *those* questions

Do lady elephants fly? and by the way, how old an elephant are you? and they *will* be asked, those questions. Not directly of course, but obliquely, politely, and without fail. So you might as well expect them, no point in having the boom hit you on the head in a moment of ingenuous distraction. Elephants live a long time. This is a manufacturing defect that evolution has not been able to correct. In doing so they acquire what is known as experience. Then they accomplish the great ecological feat of composting this experience into what is known as 'wisdom'. That does not quite compensate for having lived a long time, but it is a good start.



- how to stare into the jaws of the interviewer and have no fear

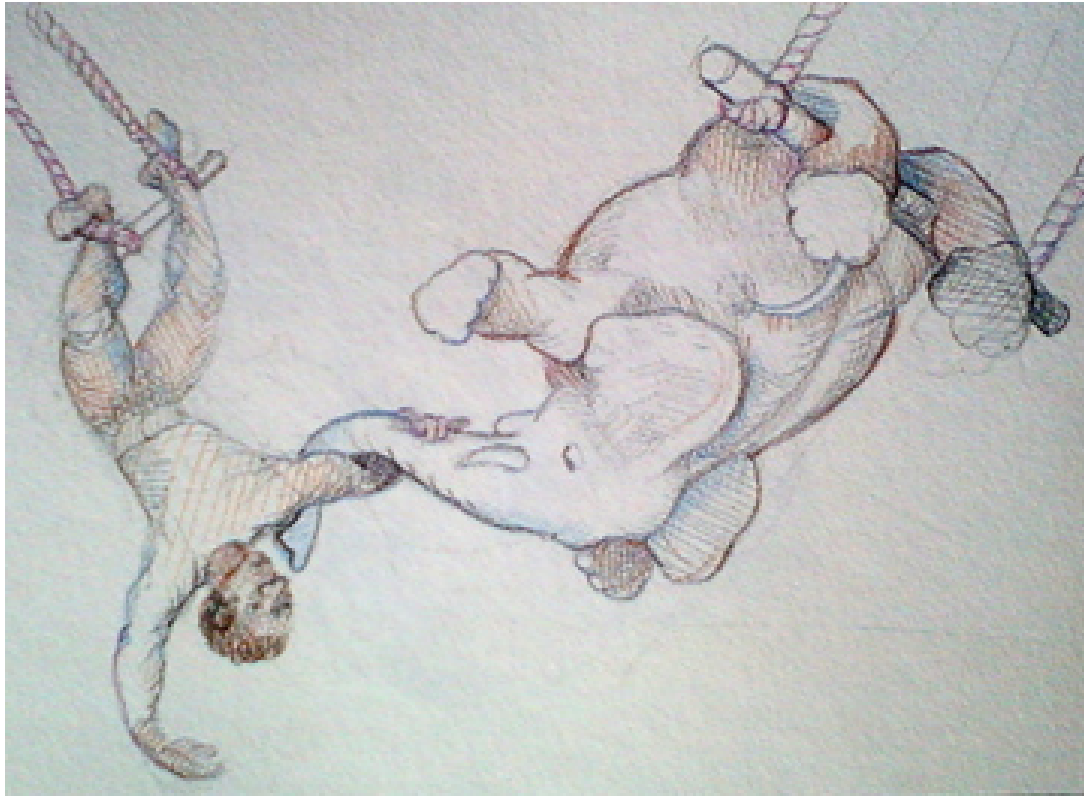


Elephants are bbbrrraaaaavvve. But they are also soft. And good to eat. But there's no need to cover your eyes with your trunk. Look straight ahead. Into the face of danger. It's not like going to the dentist. It's not like looking for a parking place in Manhattan. It's not open heart surgery. It's not like driving to the airport to catch a plane in the rush hour. It's only an interview.

- how to act like a gladiator in the ring, while you intersect with the management and the company goals

Elephants have not been trained as trapeze artists; but if need be they can swing into action from great heights, grip the bar and never let go, and meet the higher ups half way in dare devil acrobatic feats.

Elephants are shy. They take up a lot of room, but they don't always want to put themselves in the limelight. However, if they land in the middle of a three ring circus, which is what most high energy, innovative companies are, they can multitask better than many other animals.



They just need bigger hoops
to jump through,
than tigers do.

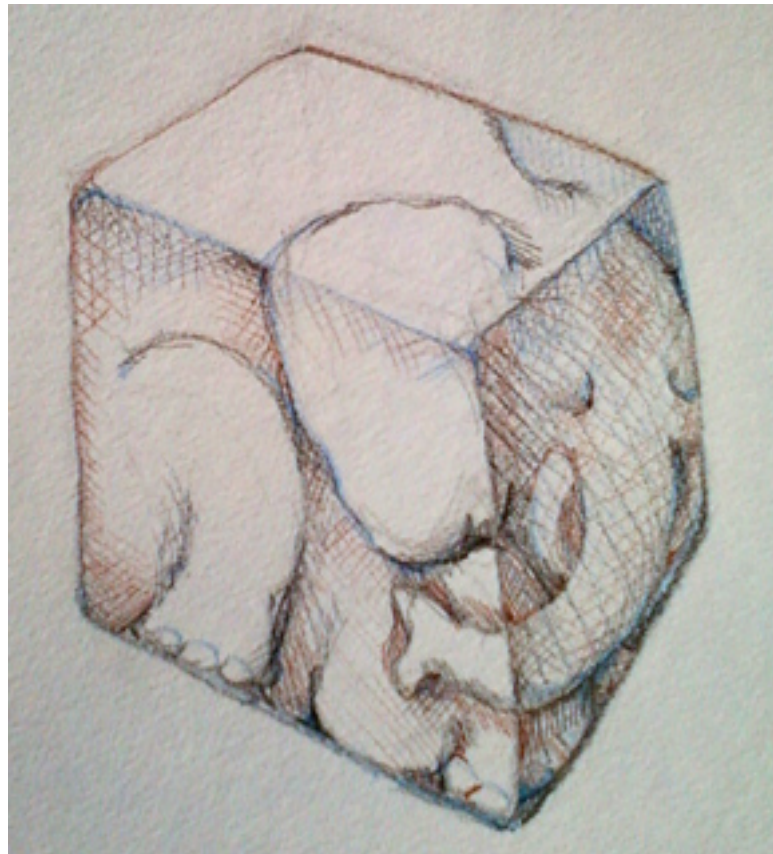
- how to walk on water/wireless/thin air

Elephants are a natural for performing miraculous feats of strength, endurance, and reasoning. They hear vibrations under the earth that no one else picks up on. They have surprising agility for such a large animal. They are wondrously unpredictable. In the Jungle there aren't many streets to practice street smarts on, but years and years of learning the habits of the ivory hunters, have taught most elephants a lot about thinking on their feet, so as not to become extinct.



- how to climb out of the box

Elephants are round. They do not do well in boxes. They don't quite fit the perpendicular sides of the container. But they are good at climbing out of the box. All they need is a very large box and a sturdy banana tree to hold onto. If hard pressed they can also gore holes in the box in no time flat.



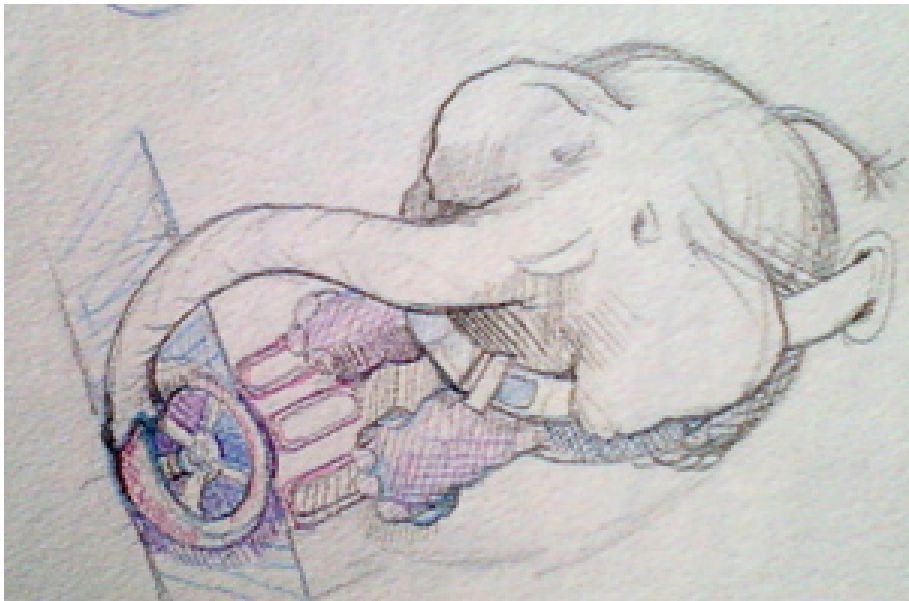
- how not to give up the ship

Sometimes that miracle happens when you least expect it to. You're hired! Then all you have to do is jump onto that fast moving train of a company, and get up to the speed of your new colleagues in one New York minute.



- what to do for an encore

And when you've gotten out of the slow lane, out of the fast lane and you're finally behind the wheel in the Lexus lane, stuck on the freeway in the rush hour, *an' you ask yourself*, would it have been better to have stayed in the jungle, munched on banana leaves for lunch, swum in the swamp and gazed upon clear skies and starlit nights...Martha does not have the answer to that.



'if an elephant can do it, so can I'
said Winnie,
as he looked adoringly at Martha
and tried to comprehend
the magnitude of the task before him



the end

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and would enjoy another copy
for a friend or colleague;
or if you might like
some images or words
to advance the marketing,
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you may reach me at:

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