

## In Context Season One: Changing Career

Episode Two Guest: Luo Ping (罗平)

Music credits (sourced from [freemusicarchive.org](http://freemusicarchive.org) & [purple-planet.com](http://purple-planet.com)):

*Chad Crouch's Wilson's Snipe*

*Purple Planet Music's Fearless*

*Circus Marcus's Yorgan*

*Lee Rosevere's Easy Life*

*Lee Rosevere's Quizitive*

*Glad Rags's Wonder Under*

*Blue: Anita's narration*

我们的老大来了，这也是我第一次见到他，这也是我最后一次见到他。然后他来了就说大家分批进，我进去看到我领导在哭，然后整个公司的CEO在哭。

**Q: 你当下的第一反应是什么？**

A: 其实我更多的是一个relief，我觉得可以思考一下下一步该怎么走了。我觉得 somehow 也不算是我真正的就是职业。我做的是最junior的职位，但是我的年龄不是最junior的年龄。我的年龄是比较大的了。

这是2014年年底的上海。罗平当时在一家外资数据科技公司做销售，这是她的第二份工作。她原本对这份工作充满期待。但入职还没到半年，公司就因为业务调整辞退了当时在上海的几乎所有员工，包括她在内。

面试的时候，罗平被这家公司的国际化和强调“独立自主”的描述打动。她的岗位是销售，每天的工作是通过电话或邮件做客户回访。这份工作说不上有太大的成就感，但对于能够在上海安定下来，和一班职业素养较高的海归同事共事，这好像距离她从小的愿望更近了一些。

罗平出生在湖南省衡阳县人口大约25万的西渡镇。她的父亲曾是名佩枪干警，母亲是个小生意主。她还有一个双胞胎姐姐。罗平从小为父母的职业感到自豪，她乐于向我讲述她的童年经历。

Our big boss arrived. This was the first time I saw him, and this was the last time I saw him. He came in and invited everyone in by group. When I went in the room I saw my leader crying. And I saw the CEO of the company was crying.

**Q: What was your immediate feeling?**

A: Honestly, I felt relieved. I thought that was the moment when I realize I needed to think my next move. Somehow I didn't consider that as my formal career. I was doing the most junior job, but I was not junior by age. I was relatively older than my peers.

This was Shanghai at the end of 2014. Luo Ping was a sales representative at a foreign data technology company. That was her second job. She had high expectations for this job, but within six month she was told the company had to lay off most of its staff in China because of business adjustments.

While at the job interview, Luo was impressed by how "global" this firm seemed to be. She liked that the firm valued "independent thinking" in candidates. Her role was in sales. Her everyday work was to follow up sale leads via email or phone call. This was not the kind of job that brings high level of accomplishments. But it brought her closer to her childhood dreams, to be able to work alongside highly professional and skilled

A: 我妈因为做生意，那个时候她开始卖自行车。我那个时候有了整个镇上第一辆就是那种儿童骑的自行车，后面还有两个轮胎来支撑这个自行车。我妈有时候回想我们的童年都说，你们两个的童年都是无忧无虑的，那是的。别人没有的时候我都有。

我父母是狂热的电影爱好者，所以我很小的时候什么虎胆龙威蝙蝠侠这些我全看过。然后我妈也鼓励我去买什么科幻杂志漫画杂志。她还给我买很多绘画的杂志，什么《世界美术》，我完全看不懂，因为那个是给专业的美术的人、大学层面的人，那个时候我还是个小孩子。但她就是觉得有好的就要带给（我）。在我很小的时候她就带我来上海，然后她给我灌输的就是我们要么去北京，要么去上海，就是要去这种大城市。

2004年罗平参加高考，她在公检法系统工作的父亲包办了她的高考志愿，第一目标就是走出湖南省。

A: 我爸填了很多的城市都是选学校都是选城市，上海、北京，还有大连。

选的专业也都很有讲究。

A: 我爸爸总是觉得这种他可能也经过他的人生阶段，他发现可能体质上东西它有些是不能改变。然后他又觉得他想让他的女儿好过一点，他选的学校都是一些什么海事大学，或者是就是有一个体系——有个大的庞大的系统，你可以在里面当一个小螺丝钉。

罗平最终考取了江南大学，这是一所位于江苏无锡的211高校。20多小时火车的颠簸没有带给她丝毫的疲惫，她即将在江南大学法政学院的行政管理专业度过她的本科四年。父母希望她能在毕业以后在城市里考个公务员。

本科毕业后，她如愿考入位于广州的中山大学，修读行政管理的硕士学位。她

colleagues and start a new chapter in Shanghai.

Luo was born in Xidu, a small town with 250,000 population in Hengyang, Hunan province. Her father was a police officer, her mother a small business owner. She also has a twin sister. Luo remembered her childhood fondly and felt proud of her parents' professions.

A: My mom was a businesswoman, and at one time she was selling bicycles. Which made me the first kid to own a kid's bicycle in our town. My mom always said that me and my sister had the best carefree childhood. Which was true. We had everything else before any other kids.

My parents were both fanatical movie lovers, so I got the chance to see lots of movies while young, including the Spider Man and the Die Hard series. My mom also encouraged me to buy sci-fi and comics magazines. She also bought me lots of professional-level magazines on painting although I couldn't understand them at all. But she thought it was worth it (because it was good for my education). When I was very little, she took me to Shanghai. She told me that either I would go to Beijing or Shanghai when I grew up.

When Luo took the national college entrance exam (namely "Gaokao") in 2004, her father, who at that time worked in the state-owned legal sector, helped her fill in the form listing the colleges the family wanted her to enroll. Their primary goal was for Luo to leave Hunan.

A: My father listed many schools that are all based in big cities - Shanghai, Beijing, Dalian.

Her father was particularly concerned with her choice of studies concentration. Her major.

相信广州具有良好的治安和民风，并因为靠近香港而具备更自治的社会氛围。

罗平本来的计划是研究生毕业后继续念博士，走学术研究的路线。但接连两次考博失败后，她不得不加入找工作的大军。

最终，在房地产行业蓬勃发展的年代，罗平选择进入一家物业管理公司的管培生岗位，公司位于广州。其实管培生是一个经过包装的说法，罗平当时的职能更偏向客户服务，她需要处理各种细微的业主纠纷，保证所服务的小区业主能够满意。

尽管罗平感激在这份工作中遇到的上司，这份工作也带给她很多公司内部颁发的荣誉。但大多数时候，她的回忆充满琐碎的细节。她苦于工作内容过于简单，尤其懊恼共事者的思维和自己不在同一水平。

**Q: 你后悔为什么当时毕业的时候博士失败之后选了这样一个公司，没有多看看吗？**

A: 我当然后悔过，但是这个后悔还不足以让我觉得第一份工作要这么快的换。你还是得做好。

**Q: 你还是有责任感的東西，它在push你？**

A: 是的。

在过去很长一段时间里，罗平对这份工作抱有消极的回忆。但现在，她会有截然不同的反思。

A: 以前可能我很傲慢，我觉得在物业公司其他人没有办法.....就是其他人都什么中专学历或者大专学历，我没办法跟他们学习。其实他们都是人精，我现在想起来他们都是人精。他们比我会看人多了，什么样是什么样的性格，他什么场合该出头什么场合不该出头。他们太清楚了，我就很鲁莽，我真的很鲁莽。可能我太想表现自己了。这不好。

My father had realized through his own experience that the Chinese *system* would never be altered or modified. He wished a better future for his daughter, so he had chosen those majors that when I graduated I would be placed somewhere in the huge system, where I could just be a small "screw" on the assembly line.

Ultimately, Luo got enrolled in Jiangnan University, a [Project 211](#) university located in Luoxi, Jiangsu. The 20-hour train ride did not bring her fatigue at all. She was delighted about the four years ahead of her, when she would be studying Administrative Management at the School of Law and Politics. Her parents wanted her to find a civil servant job in the city after graduation.

Luo's choice after graduation was to pursue a master's degree instead. She longed for Zhongshan University in Guangzhou and was accepted there in the administrative management department. She believed that Guangzhou had better public security and more autonomous social atmosphere because of its proximity to Hong Kong.

It was Luo's original plan to continue academic research as a PhD candidate. But after failing two PhD application exams, she had no choice but to look for a job.

Amid the 2005 real estate boom, She ended up at a property management company in Guangzhou, as a management trainee. Frankly, "management trainee" sounds like a better title than her actual job. Luo's actual daily work involves handling disputes and conflicts to ensure the property owners were satisfied. It was more like an admin and customer relations job.

Luo appreciated the help she had received from her boss, as well as the awards she has received from the company. But most of the time she was complaining about the

2013年，罗平因为家庭原因，申请从广州调岗到上海。不久后，她提出辞职希望在新城市有个全新的开始。后来，她加入了我们开头提到的因为业务调整而辞退员工的外资数据科技公司。

这次失业后，她也开始重新反思自己的职业生涯。她丈夫的经历让她看到一种可能性。

A: 你是一个程序员，你可能一开始只能写是业务上小的，然后后面你会做底层架构的设计什么的，就是越做越负责任的事情更多了。你会有一个职业的路径越做越专越做越深。

罗平也希望找到一个具有完善成长体系的工作，并且希望此前在行政管理和销售方面的经验能够得到延续。她发现人力资源是个不错的方向。她原本希望进入企业内部的人力资源岗位。但因为缺少相关方面的直接经验，这条求职道路并不顺畅。她最后加入一家小型的民营猎头公司成为猎头顾问。

猎头的工作给出罗平7000元的月薪。这对名校硕士毕业的非应届毕业生来说并不高，但罗平没在薪资问题上有任何纠结，对她来说，尽快走上职业正轨是更紧迫的事。

**Q: 你还记得你上班第一天的状态吗？**

A: 我记得。开早会1月5号，九点到，跟大家认识。然后团队的每个成员也要报一下今年他们想要完成的业绩。

**Q: 刚进入公司和这个行业就听到大家描述一年的目标你会被吓到吗还是很憧憬的？**

A: 我当时也要给自己打气，人家能做到你也能做到。

**Q: 大家当时说的那些愿望在你刚进入行业的“小白”看来，你会觉得是个很大的挑战吗？**

A: 我没有概念，没有概念。

people she was working with. She thought they were not thinking at the same level as she did, and that her job was too simple and very trivial.

**Q: Have you ever regretted that career choice? Did you ever say to yourself, “I should have looked more opportunities?”**

A: Yes, for sure I regretted it. But I did not realize I needed to quit so quickly. I said to myself I needed to first do the job very well.

**Q: So you are talking about responsibility of doing a good job? That was pushing you to stay with the company?**

A: Yes.

For a long time in the past, Luo had kept negative memories of that job. But now, she thinks differently.

I might have been very arrogant at the time. I didn't think there was anything for me to learn from those people I worked with at the property management company, because those people barely finished college but they were street smart. They were smart-ass. They knew how to read people, knew when to stand out and when not to. I did not know that at all. I was very reckless, really reckless. Maybe I was too eager to express myself, to show what I could do. Maybe that wasn't a good idea.

In 2013, Luo asked for a transfer from Guangzhou to Shanghai for family reasons. Soon after, she resigned from the property management firm, hoping to have a new beginning in the new city. Later, she joined the foreign data technology company that we mentioned at the beginning of our episode. That data technology company ended up closing very soon.

This unemployment prompted Luo to rethink her career. She took her software engineer husband as a role model.

**Q: 你觉得没有概念带给你更多的是恐惧还是一种初生牛犊的感觉?**

A: 因为大家说出来的时候就是那种很平常的, 也是不是说的很明确。可能一个million, 1.2个million。然后我记得有一个人说一个million, 老板还给他鼓励说1.2。

所谓的1个或者1.2million, 指的是一个猎头顾问一年为公司的带来的收入。我们在之后会具体解释这个概念。

转行的第一年里, 罗平均每天工作10小时, 忙起来一天只睡4个钟头。因为压力和不规律的作息, 她的脸上长满了红肿的青春痘。和任何初入猎头行业的人一样, 在这一年里, 她每天的主要工作内容是搜简历、给候选人打cold call。

A: 其实最主要的是心态, 那个时候就让我打电话。我觉得那些人我怎么manage他? 我怎么他对上话? 但是后面我又想, 这些人我干嘛要怕他? 我更多的就是给他介绍一个机会, 然后告诉他有这样的一个机会, 让他自己判断合不合适。我是给他带来好消息的人, 我又不是来干嘛的。我解决我心理障碍之后, 我打电话就通顺多了。

你去找几份简历, 然后问他们这些信息: 第一她英文好不好, 第二他现在的抬头是什么, 第三他汇报对象是谁, 然后他带了多少个人, 跟他平级的是谁? 然后他的业绩怎么样。我就把这些问题就列成一个表, 然后每打一个电话就照着这个上面去问去照着问, 当然后面开始了我就开始自己加东西了。因为人都是有主观能动性的。我会花很多时间去看这个行业里的信息, 每个公司的就是去网上去搜每个职业。

以快消为例, 我会去搜marketing、trade marketing、product manager。我都去搜, 我会去自己学习很多, 这是功夫在其外的。一个搜公司的过往, 一个是搜普遍的职位描述。然后你电话里要问就是架构和旧公司的架构, 彼此之间是怎么合作的, 然后他们所认为的好的好的公

A: You are a programmer, you may only be writing lines after lines at the beginning of your career, but then you will be responsible for the architecture of an app and you'd have more responsibility over your shoulder. You will have a clear career path and your expertise would become deeper and deeper.

Luo hoped to find such a job that would offer her a solid career path, where she would also be able to apply her skills from administrative management and sales into use. She found Human Resources a good direction. After failing a few job interviews for in-house HR position because of a lack of direct experience, she was offered a job as a headhunter at a small, private headhunting agency.

She was offered a monthly salary of 7,000 yuan (equivalent of USD 1,000)—this was not a good offer for someone with a master's degree from a well-known university and someone who already had work experience. But salary was not her main concern. For her, getting onto a professional track as soon as possible seemed more pressing.

Q: Do you still remember the first day of work?

A: Yes, I remember. It was January 5<sup>th</sup>. I arrived at 9am for the morning meeting. Every one in the company showed up and every one spoke about their targets of the year—how much they were going to earn for the firm.

Q: Hearing these targets from your peers on your first day of work, what did that make you feel?

A: I was trying to cheer myself up. If my colleagues could do it, I could do it as well.

Q: How much were your colleagues' targets? Did they sound like big challenges to you?

司是有哪些公司、做的差的公司是哪些。

就这样，罗平平均与10-15位候选人建立联系，那一年她总共拓展的候选人超过2500个。一年到头，她发现自己成为了百万顾问。

所谓百万顾问，指的是一个猎头顾问为公司带来至少100万的业绩收入。按照猎头行业20%-30%的佣金比例计算，这大致意味着罗平在一年里帮助客户填补了大约15个年薪30万左右的职位空缺。

猎头工作有时候像是个没有终点的螺旋梯。往往找到认为适合的候选人时，这才是整个工作的开始，猎头需要对候选人的性格、技能和职业期待有全面的了解。很多时候，这无异于企业内部的人事招聘岗位，但往往需要付出4-5倍的时间和精力。猎头还需要对候选人的情绪作出协调和管理。

A: 能够做成一个case，首先你对这个行业肯定是要有所了解，而且你要在客户要求的时间段内准确的去送到几个人。而且这几个人当中你要知道，你是经过比较，知道哪些人是比较有chance能够成功的。然后在profile合适的时候，你还要不断地可能manage他的心态和表现。主要是帮助他控制好他的情绪，因为不是一次面试就定的，他可能有好多。然后中间如果他还有别的人approach他，你怎么帮他调解？然后这可能这个过程非常的漫长。

今年是罗平进入猎头行业的第五年，她也已经成为公司的中坚力量，负责培训每个新人。在职业步入正轨的同时，我开始好奇她如何看待如今在上海的生活和工作状态，这符合她小时候对大城市的想象吗？

Q: 你觉得你现在上海的状态和你小时候对大城市的向往，以及你小时候你父母对你的期望，这之间有差距吗？你觉得你现在达到他们灌输你的那个状态了吗？

A: I had no idea. I knew too little about the industry.

Q: Hearing what they said, did that make you feel nervous or inspired?

A: I can't really be sure now. What they said at the time seemed vague to me now. I recalled someone had a target like 1 million or 1.2 million. Something like that. And my boss encouraged them when they spoke.

The so-called 1 or 1.2million refers to the income that a headhunting consultant brings to the company in one year. We will explain this concept in detail later.

For the first year, Luo worked an average of 10 hours a day sometimes slept for 4 hours each day. She had red pimples all over her face because of pressure and unbalanced work-life. Her routine job in that first year was to search resumes online and give candidates cold calls.

A: It was all about managing your own mindset. I was afraid at the beginning that I had to make lots of phone calls. How was I going to manage those candidates? How would I start my conversation with them? But later I thought to myself why be so timid? All I was doing was to introduce opportunities to people so they could make their own decisions. I was bringing people good news, so why would I be afraid? Once I realized that my job became a lot easier.

A lot of the time our job involves searching for good candidates based on their public profile. Then we would go phone interview them and try to understand the following: 1) how good is his/her English? 2) what's his/her current role? 3) who is s/he reporting to? 4) how big is his/her team, and who sits on the same level with him/her? 5) how is his/her job performance?

A: 他们灌输的可能就是自由。其实我那个时候没有职业观念，没有具体的生活方式这个观念。他们以为的大城市可能是轻松一点的，实际上是不轻松的。

想象的就是出去当年出去广州打工的人没有区别。我就是在上海打工的人。你不要把我想象得很高大上。我要返回来告诉他。因为他的生活节奏是不快的事，相对来讲很慢的。他们觉得六点下班是很再正常不过的一件事情。

在我们看来，你为了这个业务，你哪怕你今天熬夜在都是很正常的事情。不值得拿出来说的一件事情。

**Q: 当你有这样的反馈的时候，他们是什么样的反馈？**

A: 他们就一直长期以来觉得你很辛苦。可能他们自己也慢慢老去了，因为老的时候他就更加那个了……你可能会到了一定的时刻，你会发现其实就是他们年轻的时候奋斗的时候你是不懂的。

我妈已经退休了，我父亲也即将要退休了，今年就会退休。然后他们也不希望你很拼搏，他希望你平平安安就好了。但是在之前他肯定是希望你考试考得好什么，承担很多责任，有很多社会贡献，或者你赚很多钱给家族带来……

但是经历了很多，他们也经历了很多什么生老病死，家族成员的离开。每个家庭都可能都是一个时代的缩影，可能时代有一让一些人进步，有可能时代也磨碎一些家庭。他们经历过这些事情之后，他回过头来再来看你的时候，他对你的希望就是你平平安安，然后你生活幸福，不要你赚很多钱，你有一份工作就好了，然后你自己能有自己的小孩。

你正在收听的是《语境 | 转行》，一档关于年轻人转行的播客节目。我们好像是在聊职业选择，但我们希望走得更远一些。我是徐婧艾，本期节目由我编辑和制作。我们下期见。

Basically, I would have these questions listed out in a chart and filled in the information as I made the calls. Once I got familiar with the process, I started developing my own questions. I spent a long time learning about different industries, and I went online to read and deepen my understanding in every profession.

Take FMCG as an example, I had searched “marketing”, “trade marketing”, “product manager” to understand what qualities each role required. Those are all hard work outside my working hours. I worked overtime to better myself.

For the first year, she reached out to an average of 10-15 candidates every day. By the end of that year, she had cultivated more than 2,500 candidates. After a year of persistence, Luo became a “one million consultant,” which meant that she has brought in over one million revenue for her company, within the first year. Now let us put this into context—if you apply the 20-30% commission rate commonly adopted in the headhunting business, this means Luo has helped her clients fill nearly 15 vacancies over a year, with each candidate earning an annual salary of around 300,000 yuan (equivalent of USD 43,000).

The job of a headhunter sometimes is like climbing an endless staircase. Often times when you think you find a potential candidate, that is just the start of your job. A headhunter needs to have a comprehensive understanding of the candidate's personality, skills and career expectations. Headhunters also need to coordinate and manage the emotions of candidates.

A: For a case to be successful, a headhunter must understand fully the industry. It is also important to refer enough amount of

candidates to the client within a desired time period. A headhunter must know what each candidate's strength is, and how much chance s/he stands against the rest. Once you have the ideal candidates, you need to also manage their emotions and performance at the job interviews. Sometimes candidates may be approached by other headhunters as well, you need to guide them through these emotions and opportunities. It is a very long process.

This year is the fifth year since Luo has entered the headhunting industry. She's now a critical member at her company and is responsible for training each newcomer. While her career thrives, I'm curious about how she views her life and work experience in Shanghai. Does that fulfill her imagination of big cities when she was a child?

**Q: Between your childhood imagination of big cities and the reality, and between your parents' hope for you to live in a big city and the reality, is a gap?**

A: when I was young, I didn't think about big city from a career development perspective. I think when my parents spoke about big cities they were thinking about the freedom a big city offers. But the reality is actually a bit harsh.

Life in a big city is no easy. And I tell my parents so whenever I visit them back in hometown. I tell them not to think of me as a noble white collar or knowledge worker. I'm no different from those migrant workers they see in Guangzhou. No different! My parents are so used to small town life right now, they think being off job at 6pm is normal but in reality it is not. Not in big cities.

In my experience, it is normal to work day and night in order to fulfill a task. It is not even worth mentioning that we work so



hard (because everyone in the big city does so).

**Q: How did they react to your expression?**

A: They thought I worked too hard. Maybe it's because they are getting old. They have reached a place that they... Well, maybe they all had fight for their careers while young. But at the time, we as their children we didn't get it. Now it's vice versa.

My mom has retired. My father is about to retire this year. They don't want me to work hard anymore. They only wish me to be safe and peaceful, despite a long time ago they had high hopes for me. They wanted me to achieve high marks in school, to make contributions to society, or to make a lot of money to make family proud.

But they don't want it anymore, after they experienced a lot of life and death. Family members passed away, that type of thing.

Every family tells a story about our society, and about the era we live in. Some families prospered, some shattered. Once my parents experienced all that, they started to look at their children differently and their hopes for their children evolved. All they want now for me is to live a happy, peaceful life, not making a lot of money, but just have a decent job and have my own children. That's it.

You are listening to *In Context Season One "Changing Career"*, a podcast about young people making career transitions. You may think we are talking about career choices, but we hope to go further. I'm Anita Xu, this episode is produced and edited by me. Tune in next time.