

Branding What You Have to Offer

Know Yourself



It's very important to position yourself for a successful job search. To do that you must be able to effectively articulate your personal brand. Your reputation, credibility, personality, values and style are important parts of your personal brand. Each component shows a value you will bring to an organization. Being confident with sharing your personal brand allows you to stand out from the crowd.

It's also very important to clearly communicate your career objective, skills and work experience both verbally and in writing. Without a clear vision of your desired job and how you will use your skills and experiences to be successful, it will be difficult for you to convince a hiring manager you are the best fit for the job.

One way to consider what you have to offer is to think of yourself as having a new job. Your title is President of the _____(enter your name here) Company. Your responsibility is to go out and sell your product to customers. The product you're selling is YOU!

With this challenge what would you want to know about the product in order to sell it? Naturally customers (prospective employers) aren't going to want to buy just because you say it can do something. They're going to want to see and hear evidence of the success others have had using this product. They want to understand how this product will help them with their specific needs. You need to know what you're selling!

To do a good job of selling, we suggest that you spend some quality time getting to know yourself so you can develop your "brand," as well as articulate your knowledge, skills and abilities. How you bring all of this together greatly influences your customers experiencing you as the best candidate for the job.

Branding

Let's start with branding. Your personal brand is the marketing tool you have for differentiating your product - yourself. Through your branding, you want to be able to tell a story that emphasizes the depth and breadth of your experience, accomplishments and the value you bring to an organization. What unique value proposition do you offer an organization?

Branding (continued)

Use the questions below to help you create your story. Depending on your past experiences, you may not have answers for every question. Capture what you can. When you're finished, summarize your answers into a story highlight the depth and breadth of your experience, accomplishments and the value you bring to an organization. Practice this story and be able to share it with others in a confident and conversational manner.

My top five areas of expertise are:

My marketable skills include:

My top three achievements are:

My former managers would say I excel at the following:

My former co-workers perceive me as:

My unique value to an organization includes:

Branding
(continued)

I can differentiate myself from other candidates because of the following (knowledge, skill, experience, training, education, background, etc.):

My areas of development and/or improvement include:

When and where have I taken on a leadership role?

What business or people problems have I solved, and what results did I get?

Use this information later to write your 30-second commercial to highlight the skills, abilities and accomplishments that differentiate you from the crowd.

Transferable Skills

No matter what position(s) you have held in your career or what industry you have worked in, you have acquired transferable skills. These are skills that can easily be used in a different position and/or industry.

Transferable Skills (continued)



As you prepare to develop your resume, network to find information and job openings and prepare for interviews, it is important that you know what you have to offer and have established how you are branding yourself. Spend some quality time identifying the key skills and skill sets you have to offer a new employer. Use the following lists to guide your thoughts about your past roles and responsibilities. Don't forget to include the skills you use in your volunteer efforts, as well as the military, if appropriate. We want to make sure you get credit for all you can do. If you're just graduating, think about those skills you used in teaming project teams, or facilitating presentations, etc.

For each skill you identify, be ready to tell a work-related story describing the experience and linking it to your education and/or results. The lists presented on the next few pages are general in nature. Please feel free to expand them for other specific skills you will want to share with prospective employers.

Definitions: Skills Skill Set Technical Skills

To help you clarify what you have to offer think of **skills** as *functions or competencies that you have practiced enough to do well*. A **skill set** as *several skills required to perform a task which are accompanied by a body of knowledge*. The knowledge of how to perform the task may have been acquired through training or on-the-job experience. **Technical skills** as *acquired through technical training, formal education and on-the-job training*.

Communicating

- Corresponding
- Emailing
- Drawing
- Editing
- Facilitating
- Interviewing
- Negotiating
- Relating to customers
- Filing
- Writing
- Taking customer orders
- Listening
- Video Conferencing
- Conference Calls
- Training
- Others:

Coordinating

- Cataloging
 - Following up
 - Researching and resolving problems
 - Recording
 - Reporting
 - Scheduling
 - Correcting
 - Others:
-

Accounting



- Budgeting
 - Auditing
 - Controlling
 - Financial analysis
 - Financial planning
 - Fund raising
 - Managing finances
 - Cost accounting
 - Accounts receivable
 - Accounts payable
 - Petty cash
 - Expense reports
 - Computer systems
 - Others:
-

Team Member/Leader

- Hiring and firing authority
 - Work performance coaching
 - Job performance assessment and evaluation
 - Helping others
 - Motivating
 - Teaching
 - Team building
 - Developing
 - Others:
-

Organizing

- Administering
 - Assigning
 - Filing
 - Records Management
 - Categorizing
 - Developing work plans
 - Projecting
 - Tracking
 - Restructuring
 - Setting priorities
 - Others:
-

Branding What You Have To Offer

Managing/ Supervising

- Decision making
- Developing processes and systems
- Directing
- Approving
- Formulating
- Implementing
- Instructing
- Developing and interpreting policy
- Managing details
- Managing people
- Handling performance issues
- Managing tasks
- Project management
- Leading change
- Delegating
- Others:



Selling/ Marketing

-
- Advertising
 - Market analysis
 - Managing sales
 - Marketing
 - Pricing
 - Promoting
 - Negotiating
 - Relating and working with customers
 - Selling
 - Developing proposals
 - Writing contracts
 - Others:

Planning

-
- Analyzing
 - Conceptualizing
 - Designing
 - Developing strategy
 - Developing policy
 - Developing procedures
 - Reviewing
 - Organizing and leading meetings
 - Facilitating discussions among work groups
 - Others:
-

Serving

- Handling customer complaints
- Building and/or maintaining client relations
- Responding promptly
- Serving customers
- Others:

Technical Skills

-
- Computer literate
 - Designing
 - Business management
 - Legal
 - Designing systems
 - Developing products
 - Engineering
 - Inventing
 - Scientific research
 - Manufacturing
 - Programming
 - Tooling
 - Accounting
 - Human Resources
 - Marketing
 - Inventory management
 - Others:

Working With Data

-
- Assessing quality
 - Computing
 - Analyzing
 - Gathering
 - Managing information
 - Measuring
 - Setting standards
 - Taking inventory
 - Researching
 - Resolving
 - Others:
-



Others:

Transferable Skills (continued)

Don't forget to demonstrate these skills and the related work experiences in your resume and when answering interview questions. With the technology Human Resource Departments utilize, you may find it worth the time and energy to customize your resume for each role you are applying for to ensure you incorporate specific key words from each job posting and these lists. Remember that recruiters are looking to screen you out of the candidate pool - not in!

Now, get comfortable talking out loud about yourself in terms that allow new acquaintances to quickly grasp the depth and breadth of your branded talents.

Personal Characteristics Exercise

In addition to the skills you bring to the job, we all have personal traits and characteristics that make us who we are. These characteristics make us unique and enhance our ability to perform our work functions in a successful manner.

The following list offers a variety of words describing personal traits. Review this list and circle **six** traits that you believe best describe you. Consider asking others to review the list and select six personal traits that are reflective of their perception of your personality and work ethic.

As you prepare to network and interview, you should be able to easily discuss the points that you believe are important for someone to know about you. This should clearly provide evidence of how each trait influences your ability to perform work tasks successfully.

Personal Characteristics Exercise

Accurate	Expressive	Persuasive
Adventurous	Good attitude	Practical
Artistic	Hard worker	Productive
Assertive	High standards	Rational
Challenging	Imaginative	Responsible
Civic minded	Independent	Responsive
Committed	Inquisitive	Self-assured
Communicate well	Intelligent	Self-controlled
Compassionate	Intuitive	Self-starter
Confident	Kind	Sense of humor
Creative	Leader	Sensitive
Curious	Levelheaded	Sociable
Dedicated	Loyal	Stable
Dependable	Original	Team player
Efficient	Organized	Tolerant
Emotional	People-oriented	Trustworthy
Energetic	Perfectionist	Others:
Entertaining	Personable	
Enthusiastic		

Now, review the six words selected and narrow them down to the *three* you feel are your most prominent traits. Place a check mark next to each.

Don't forget to reference these traits in your resume, while networking, and during interview conversations.

30-Second Commercial



As part of your marketing strategy you will be doing a lot of networking and you want to make a positive and lasting first impression on those you meet. To help you prepare for those situations, complete the following exercise using what you've learned about yourself from the branding, transferable skills and personal characteristics exercises.

Instructions: You have just called the friend of a friend who just happens to be a manager trying to fill a position which you believe is the "job of your dreams." The manager welcomes your call and is pleased the mutual friend has sent you in her direction. She's willing to take the time to discuss the job opening with you, but before she gets started she'd like to learn a little about you. She says, *"Why don't you tell me a little about yourself."*

30-Second Commercial (continued)

This is a conversation starter you will hear again and again during the networking and interview processes. What you say in the next 30 seconds will leave the listener with an impression of you. So it's important to utilize your personal brand and make every word count. You need to be informative without going into too much detail. Be sure to monitor how personal you get while being professional and friendly.

We refer to the story (fact not fiction) you tell as presenting your "**30-second commercial**." This will be useful when you are:

- networking
- interviewing
- spreading the word that you're in career transition
- introducing yourself over the phone or in person

30 seconds doesn't sound like a lot of time, but you will be amazed at how much information you can share about yourself in such a short period. Focus your response to include the following, depending on what you believe to be the most relevant. Remember to form an interesting story. If the listener wants to know more about a specific fact that you shared, she'll ask.

- company where you are currently working or worked last, and if relevant the title of the last position you held
- company names where you've worked before the last job, **if** the companies are likely to be known to this person
- brief overview of your strongest skills, areas of knowledge and work accomplishments
- highlights of your educational background, including certifications and licenses you may hold
- key characteristics that make you a valuable employee
- major contributions you believe you can make to your next employer

Prepare your 30-second commercial and practice, practice, practice, out loud! "Wow," you say! Yes, it's a lot to say in 30 seconds, but it can be done. Think about the points noted above and begin to write your commercial using the space available on the next page. You'll have many iterations before it's ready to be read to someone. Try to write it in a conversational style – just like you were telling a story to someone sitting in front of you.