



THE ART OF SELF-PROMOTION IN YOUR JOB SEARCH

***Job searching is about sales and the product you are selling is you!
If no one knows about your product, who will buy it?***

A job search is no time to be modest. Think hard about all of your abilities and take credit for your distinctive achievements and talents. Your marketability is affected greatly by how much you believe you are qualified and marketable for a particular job. It is important to realistically assess your education, experience, and skills and learn how to promote your talents.

- What do you have to offer an employer?
- What qualifies you to perform a job effectively?

ARE YOU SELF AWARE?

Before you can begin to market yourself, you must first be aware of your strengths and weaknesses. Your ability to communicate your worth is a function of your ability to recognize value in your own experiences and see how it can be translated into new capabilities.

Sell your strengths and demonstrate your:

- **Knowledge**
 - An employer needs to know that, through your education and experience, you've learned the information, techniques and industry vocabulary appropriate to the level and responsibility of the job you are seeking.
- **Skills**
 - Can you perform the actual tasks required by this job function in this industry?
- **Abilities/Accomplishments**
 - An employer must determine if you are able to do the job. You will have to demonstrate that you have successfully done this job elsewhere or that you have the necessary skills to succeed in this position. Your best chance of success is a combination of both.

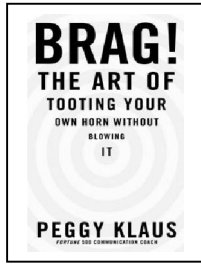
Do not discount your nonprofessional experiences. Instead of worrying that you have no professional experience, think about the amateur experience you do have.

Take the attached "**BRAG! Take-12 Self-Evaluation Questionnaire**"
(from *Brag! The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It*, Peggy Klaus, 2003).

Your answers to these questions will help you begin to assemble your "brag bag," a collection of information about you – your accomplishments, your passions and interests, the colorful details that describe who you are personally and professionally.

BRAG! Take-12 Self-Evaluation Questionnaire

from *Brag! The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It* (Warner, 2003) by Peggy Klaus
www.bragbetter.com



Don't feel that you have to answer these in order. You can start anywhere and skip around. As you move through the questions, you'll likely think of things you might have overlooked when answering earlier ones. In fact, you'll probably want to go over your responses once more after you have completed the evaluation. Remember, the more time you put into this exercise, the more specific details you provide, the easier it will be to create brag bites and bragologues that will be crystal clear and interesting to those who don't already know you well.

1. What would you and others say are five of your personality pluses?
2. What are the ten most interesting things you have done or that have happened to you?
3. What do you do for a living and how did you end up doing it?
4. What do you like/love about your current job/career?
5. How does your job/career use your skills and talents, and what projects are you working on right now that best showcase them?
6. What career successes are you most proud of having accomplished (from current position and past jobs)?
7. What new skills have you learned in the last year?
8. What obstacles have you overcome to get where you are today, both professionally and personally, and what essential lessons have you learned from some of your mistakes?
9. What training/education have you completed and what did you gain from those experiences?
10. What professional organizations are you associated with and in what ways—member, board, treasurer, or the like?
11. How do you spend your time outside of work, including hobbies, interests, sports, family, and volunteer activities?
12. In what ways are you making a difference in people's lives?

When it comes to bragging about yourself, you need to be creative in telling your story. If you recite boring facts and speak generically you will come off as colorless and unmemorable. The information you convey to others must be authentic, compelling, and delivered in a conversational way. The information should help create a vision of you in another person's head.

A Special Note for Career Changers:

Make connections between your past experiences and your future aspirations by identifying your transferable skills. These are skills you can use in many different jobs because they can transfer from one job to a very different one. Many examples fall within the following categories:

- Dealing with Data
- Working with People
- Using Words/Ideas
- Leadership
- Creative/Artistic

LEARN HOW TO “PACKAGE” YOURSELF

Now, that you are more self-aware, you will be more effective in finding ways to make yourself stand out from the crowd. You have the power to create a positive personal brand or image.

- Your particular combination of experience, education, skills, interests, and knowledge can be appropriate for many different kinds of work because they can be packaged and repackaged in different ways.
- Understand and appreciate the value you bring to a prospective employer or career opportunity and communicate that value by focusing on your achievements.
- Don't sell yourself short by underestimating the value of what you do. You might think it's nothing, but others would think it's something.
- Recognize your personal strengths and gifts.
- If you can do it, it's not bragging!
- Think about how you best connect with people.
- Consider what your target audience needs and wants.
- Identify the value you deliver to meet those needs and wants.
- Communicate in a way that reaches your constituents in their hearts and minds via the channels that work best for you and them.
- Recognize the gaps in your personal brand/identity.
- Invest time and energy to overcome those gaps.

YOUR PERSONAL PITCH

How much time do you have to make a first impression? It could be anywhere from as little as 3 seconds to as much as 30, and during that time, you need to give someone a nutshell version of who you are and what you have to offer.

Your personal pitch will help you organize information to assist you in writing your resume and cover letter, and more importantly help you prepare for face to face interactions, such as networking opportunities or interviews.

To prepare your personal pitch, you must:

- Know yourself
- Be interesting and enthusiastic, but also concise
- Have an intended goal in mind
- Highlight your uniqueness
- Leave a lasting impression

Also keep the following issues in mind:

- To whom are you pitching?
- What are their interests?
- Who are your likely competitors?
- What you bring to the party that your competitors do not?

Try to prepare three versions of your Unique Personal Pitch: 15, 30 and 60 second infomercials about you containing the most important and relevant information you want someone to know about you.

- The **15-second** personal pitch is a brief, interesting way to introduce yourself.
- Your **30-second** personal pitch is a longer, more detailed response to the question, “Tell me about yourself.”
- Your **60-second** personal pitch is appropriate when you are engaging a person in a dialogue that is intended to get to know each other better.

TO COMPOSE YOUR 15-SECOND PERSONAL PITCH, simply state your name, your professional position or position you are seeking and something interesting about you.

- “Good morning, _____. My name is _____. I am excited to be student at Fordham University teaching/interning at _____. How are you?”

TO COMPOSE YOUR 30-SECOND PERSONAL PITCH, add more detailed information to your 15-second introduction. Include information about you:

- School program and when you graduate
- Work background that has prepared you for this field
- Your strengths, qualifications and unique skills

TO COMPOSE YOUR 60-SECOND PERSONAL PITCH, expand even further on your 30-second pitch by adding some of the following points:

- When and how you got interested in this career
- What aspects of your internship/student teaching/present job you enjoy the most
- What important things you have learned from your school program, practical training and professional experience
- Where you see yourself headed in your career
- Your long-term educational goals

The more you practice, the more adept you will become at selling yourself.

Peggy Klaus, author of *Brag!*, offers the following

TWELVE TOOTING TIPS FOR BRAGGING

1. Be your best, authentic self
2. Think about to whom you are tooting
3. Say it with meaningful and entertaining stories
4. Keep it short and simple
5. Talk with me, not at me
6. Be able to back up what you say
7. Know when to toot
8. Turn small talk into big talk
9. Keep bragalogues and brag bites current and fresh
10. Be ready at a moment's notice
11. Have a sense of humor
12. Use it all: your eyes, ears, head, and heart

NETWORK YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS

Now that you have gathered valuable information about your unique attributes and experiences, you can begin to effectively convey that information to others.

Networking is a lifelong, evolutionary process. Whenever you talk with others and seek their opinions to make an informed decision—even if it's just to find a good restaurant, movie or electrician—you're networking.

net·work·ing

1: the exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions

NETWORKING IS:

- the art of building and sustaining mutually beneficial relationships.
- building relationships before you need them! Then, when you need them, you know whom to call and he or she will want to help you.
- sharing knowledge and contacts.
- helping others.
- a powerful job-hunting tool.
- a life skill that you can – and should – use throughout your career.
- time consuming—you have to be patient and let it happen.
- reliant on communication skills in a variety of media.

Like any relationship, networking requires an investment of time and the willingness to consider the needs of another person. Focusing on the opportunity to build a relationship could make your next networking experience more enjoyable and much more effective.

“WHO SHOULD I CHOOSE AS A NETWORKING CONTACT?”

Never underestimate the value of any person you know

We talk most easily with people we know and with whom we are comfortable. Start by making a list of people that you already know. Disregard what they do for living or where they work. Don't push the process—just let the names come to you.

It can't hurt to ask someone—and it might just help. Most people are flattered when asked for assistance. Everyone likes to be considered an expert.

SOURCES FOR NETWORKING

- Alumni associations
- Professors
- School principals
- Supervisors and Cooperating Teachers
- Previous employers
- Family
- Friends
- Professional organizations
- Community organizations
- Classmates
- Fraternity/Sorority
- Former colleagues
- Social clubs
- Athletic clubs
- Religious organizations

What makes these lists valuable to you for networking is that all those people are folks you have something in common with. It doesn't really matter what any of them do for a living. What's important is that you have common concerns, interests, ethnic or religious background, school attachments, neighborhood interests, etc. These commonalties are what will cause any of those people to be willing to talk with you. They have a feeling of connection with you in some fundamental ways.

Many job seekers complain that they don't know enough people to allow networking to work for them. How many is "enough"? Keep in mind that you don't have to know a great many people at the beginning. Everybody knows somebody. Start with the very few you already know, and allow them to introduce you to other people they know. Pretty soon you'll have more people than you can handle. Then you can figure out what to talk about.

Remember the saying “It's not what you know, but who you know”
...and during your job search, it's who knows you!