

# Marketing, Sales, and Career Development: How to Sell Your Talents and Feel Good About It



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Pacific University Career Development Center

**Marketing:** Facilitation of mutually beneficial exchange relationships.

**Career Launch:** Exchanging your time, skills, knowledge, experience, and potential...for money, opportunity, challenge, skill development, experience, etc.

## Be able to talk about your skills and experience

- Consider all contexts—work, home, school, hobbies, volunteer, travel
- Identify your “dependable strengths” (successful, enjoyable application of assets)
- Practice talking, writing about these assets succinctly and compellingly
  - “In the last 5 years I have helped hundreds of students complete successful graduate school applications, achieving a 97% admission rate and 100% appreciation rate. I offer detailed, substantive critiques of admissions essays that students describe as profoundly helpful.”
  - “My experience as an RA has made me very adept at managing conflicts and crises in a 120-member, co-educational residence hall. I responded effectively to over 200 serious behavioral situations last year.”
  - “My ability to improve dysfunctional relationships recently resulted in a major turn-around of a previously flailing student organization.”

## Be able to talk about your knowledge and characteristics

- “The knowledge I gained in my market research class about responding to various market segments will serve me well in any job. For instance...”
- “My knowledge of systems and leadership theory help me to respond productively even in a work culture that is mired down in dysfunction.”
- “Courses in both Market Research and English taught me how to articulate an informative viewpoint and defend my claims with evidence.”
- “One of my greatest strengths is my ability to put people at ease in a crisis.”
- “I obtain the best results in my work when I work with a team that challenges and complements my skills.”
- “My perseverance serves me well. For instance...”

## Be prepared to discuss what you have the capacity to do in the future

- Read job descriptions, professional journals to learn the vernacular of the workplace in order to draw connections between what you have done and what an employer needs you to do.
- Conduct informational interviews to learn how to translate your capabilities into skills and abilities employers need.

## **Be prepared to describe yourself in professional terms**

- Come up with an “elevator speech”—a professional label, function, ability.
- “I’m graduating with a degree in Sociology from Pacific University, seeking an opportunity to build on client service and sales experience gained in a recent internship at Lane Marketing Communications.”
- Answer “tell me about yourself” with a very brief descriptive label, followed by a statement of need: “I’m a Business and Philosophy major pursuing a career in management, largely because I’ve always been naturally good at managing projects and people. I’m very interested in facilitating group work and seeking a challenge in a small, dynamic company with great ideas. ”

## **Be prepared to discuss trends, problems, issues, and thought leaders in an industry**

- Read widely in your fields of interest, and formulate viewpoints, ideas.
- Orient your comments and conversations around possibilities, solutions.

## **Anticipate and respond to needs in the marketplace**

- Keep marketing principles in mind: facilitate an exchange—don’t expect instant demand for your services.
- Conduct informational interviews to discover needs and problems in the workforce that you can help with.

Remember that you’re selling your skills, experiences, knowledge, energy, and characteristics. You can be true to yourself, truthful, sincere, and successful in this project, but it is essential to practice and prepare if the practices described here do not come naturally.