



JACOBSON

Marketing Yourself: Creating a Successful Sales Strategy for “ME, Inc.”

By Martin E. Murphy, CPCU, Senior Vice President, The Jacobson Group

Your ideal position just opened up and you are the perfect fit – you graduated in the top of your class from a well-known university, you have a 5-page list of related accomplishments, and you were recently named Employee of the Year at your “A++” rated employer. However, if you don’t market yourself properly, you will get lost in the masses of want-to-be employees.

In our competitive industry, it’s imperative to market yourself. You are a product that has features and benefits. You are your own company, “ME, Inc.,” and you need to market your product – you and your abilities.

Research, research, research – the foundation of a healthy marketing plan.

How do you know just what buttons to push to keep a potential employer interested in you? Do your homework.

- **Know the product – you.** Before marketing yourself, evaluate your strengths and weaknesses. Focus in on what will be attractive to employers. What will keep them wanting more? Find your brand and keep it consistent throughout the execution of your marketing plan.
- **Know the market.** Research the industry. Where is the marketplace heading? Who is your competition? Be familiar with current trends and issues, and be prepared to discuss such topics in interviews.
- **Know the consumer/client.** Research the company and position you are interested in. Know the company’s vision and what it is they are looking for in an employee. You need to clearly demonstrate how you can add value to their organization.

Keep in mind that you are not only researching; you are networking. Your information sources could become vital contacts in the future. Always leave behind your business card or resume – they may think of you the next time they are hiring.

Market yourself on paper – an advertisement (your resume).

Advertisements that deliver a laundry list of benefits and features are not powerful, because they are too busy to catch the consumer’s attention. When writing your resume, remember that employers only skim your resume. Follow these keys to creating a well-organized, relevant piece that will stand out:

- Include a summary that outlines who you are and builds upon your technical skills.
- Summarize your professional experiences, emphasizing strengths that can be linked to the position to which you are applying.
- Briefly state accomplishments that further support your objective and summary using action-oriented words.
- Highlight only relevant education and professional training.
- Use professional jargon. You are an industry professional who has researched the position. Let your language reflect your intellect.



JACOBSON

- Format your resume in a reader-friendly style, and keep it brief (no more than 2 pages, if possible).

Market yourself in person – a sales meeting (the interview).

The employer has seen your ad – your resume. An interview is your opportunity to further market yourself. Be prepared to answer the three hidden interview questions:

- Can you perform the job?
- Will you perform the job well?
- Will you mesh with the company?

Thanks to your research, you know how to answer their questions in such a way that there is no doubt that you are their ideal candidate. Articulate what you have accomplished and how you can add value to their organization, but be careful not to brag. Also, don't forget the importance of packaging – dress the part.

Frequency – keep them thinking about you.

Many fear that follow-up letters are old-fashioned or may seem pushy. Stop worrying – there is nothing wrong with showing a little appreciation for the interviewer taking the time to see you. Keep it short and sweet. This extra step will help you stand out from the crowd. A simple yet effective follow-up letter keeps your name in front of the consumer – an essential goal of a successful marketing plan.