When you are trying to convince a potential employer to hire you, a lot of questions come to mind: How can I demonstrate that I am the best person for the job? What if I haven’t had any work experience in the field I’m applying to? How can I showcase my accomplishments? The answers to these questions lie in the “Professional You.”

The Professional You is the part of you that has certain beliefs, experiences, and skills that make you a valuable employee. Therefore, this is the part of you that you want to show to potential employers. This handout will help you answer the questions above so you can put forth your best Professional You in any employment situation.

Professional Brand

The Professional You starts with your professional brand, which is a bit like your professional persona. Your unique professional brand is determined by three key factors: your skills, your behaviors, and your beliefs, also known as values.

For example, if you’re an entrepreneur, customer service and sales skills are essential to your position as a business owner. Behaviors that may best represent your professional brand might be timeliness and efficiency, and a value that may be important to you is reliability because you want your clients to know that they can count on you to deliver a quality product.

Here are some questions you can ask when developing your professional brand:

Skills
- What are some of my talents/strengths?
- Is there something that’s my “specialty” that my co-workers come to me for help with?

Behaviors
- How do others perceive me?
- How do I make people feel?
- How do others benefit from working with me?
- What words would others use to describe me?

Values
- What am I passionate about?
- What are some of my core beliefs?
By putting together some of the words or phrases that you’ve identified above, you can come up with descriptions of yourself. These phrases should weave together the skills, behaviors, and values that you want to highlight.

In the space below, list some of the words or phrases that come to mind:

Example: detail-oriented

____________________________________

____________________________________

Now, try combining these words into a few short phrases about yourself. These taglines should be catchy and reinforce the most important aspects of your professional brand.

Example: creative, organized problem-solver

____________________________________

____________________________________

Quantifying Accomplishments

Once you’ve identified, the skills, values, and behaviors that make up your professional brand, you’ll want to begin showcasing those unique attributes as accomplishments. In other words, you’ll want to find a way to show potential employers what you are capable of achieving and what you can contribute to their organization. In order to do this, you can start by asking yourself, “What have I achieved with my skills, values, and behaviors? Is there some accomplishment that I can specify or quantify?”

For example, as a restaurant manager, maybe you were able to use your ability to supervise a large staff to decrease serving time by 10%. Or perhaps you won a local best restaurant award after you implemented a staff training, capitalizing on your customer service abilities.

But what if your field of work doesn’t really deal in numbers? Here are some ways that you can “quantify” your work even if your field isn’t figures-based:

Range
What is the range of your work? Maybe you don’t have statistics on how many customers you served each week, but you know that it was between 30 and 50 people. This gives an employer an idea of the scope of your workload.

Frequency
What is the frequency of your work? It helps to show potential employers how much experience you have by giving them the number of hours per week you work or letting them know how many years you’ve been in the field.

Sometimes, it’s difficult to think about your own accomplishments. Using the chart on the next page, think about any positive verbal or written comments others have made about your performance:
Personal Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job</th>
<th>Major Responsibilities</th>
<th>Praise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waiter</td>
<td>Listened to customer complaints</td>
<td>At our weekly staff meeting, my manager highlighted my resolve to always treat customers with respect and patience regardless of the circumstances.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now look at the “Praise” column. Are any of these items quantifiable? Could you make any of them more specific?

**Praise:** Always treated customers with respect and patience

**Quantified:** Had the fewest customer complaints of any of the wait staff

Transferrable Skills

A **transferrable skill** is a skill developed in one field that is extremely useful in other fields. Some examples include working well in a large team, working calmly and efficiently in a pressured environment, communicating effectively, managing people under you, multi-tasking, planning short-term and long-term goals, motivating staff, etc.

For example, perhaps you are seeking a job as a nurse but have never worked in the medical field. In the past you held a job as a waiter at a restaurant. What do those two things have in common? As a waiter, you had to work with a team of other waiters and probably some upper-level staff in order to serve customers efficiently and to deal with any conflicts. Sometimes, emergencies might have come up that had to be handled quickly.

This information can be organized into a chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Waiter</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked with other wait staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handled emergencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed 5-8 tables simultaneously</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Nurse</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating with other nurses, doctors, physician assistants, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiently assessing &amp; implementing patient care plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking care of multiple patients in a large unit without feeling confused or overwhelmed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The middle column of this table contains your transferrable skills. Even if you decide not to be a nurse and instead want to become a wedding coordinator, you will still find it useful to be able to multitask under pressure, work with a team, and deal calmly with emotional people.

Identifying your transferable skills is not only useful when seeking employment. Realizing these skills can help you feel empowered in any situation. When you find yourself in a new situation, remembering that you have these strengths can help remind you that you are prepared, regardless of what happens

### Putting It All Together

After determining your professional brand, quantifying your accomplishments, and identifying your transferrable skills, write a few one-sentence statements that you believe capture your Professional You:

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

As a final wrap-up, make a summary statement of the Professional You.

**Example:** I am a flexible person who excels at working with others and is not easily perturbed by high-pressure or emotional situations. These attributes are highlighted in my professional life and can be applied to any situation that I come across.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

### References


