



Many people don't really sell their skills.

Most people need to identify and market 10–20 skills. If properly communicated in resumes, letters, phone discussions and interviews, they can significantly expand their appeal.



2 Sell your transferable skills

Sell your transferable skills... and dramatically expand your marketability.

You'll need to do more than just present your background. Don't trap yourself by thinking, *"This is simply who I am, where I've been and what I've done."* People fail because they never surface and communicate all that is marketable about themselves... and they never build their appeal beyond factual credentials.

Your starting point is to organize your lifetime of experiences and achievements. Whether you are a young attorney or a company president, there is probably much more to your story than meets the eye.

Experience has proven that many people never identify 50% of their own assets, simply because they're so close to their own situation. We've learned that most people need to identify 10 to 20 skills which, if properly communicated, can make a major difference in their career opportunities.

Each year, about 20% of the clients who come to us have settled for less, simply because they are not able to communicate their real skills. For example, one client was earning a \$65,000 base after almost 20 years. Three years later, she is earning \$180,000. Another executive came to us at \$125,000. Three years later, he is a CEO at many times that amount. The key in both situations was to market their true assets.

It has been said time and again by psychologists, spiritual leaders and coaches that the most restrictive limits you face are those you put on yourself. So, don't put any limits on your thinking, and look at some factors that you may have overlooked... which will expand your marketability.

Your knowledge and personality are marketable

Do you have knowledge of a job, a product, a process or a market... from work, hobbies, alumni relationships, research or suppliers? If so, it may be marketable.

Personality, of course, is just a word for that combination of traits that either attracts us to someone or leaves us unimpressed. More employment decisions are based on personality and chemistry than any other factor. For example: *"He's certainly professional and quick-thinking. I like him, and better yet, I trust him. He'll fit in with our team. I need to get him into the firm."* The perception of your personality has to do with your interest and enthusiasm. How many people get hired because they showed real interest? *A lot!*

Your transferable skills are marketable

Identifying transferable skills is critical (*e.g., organizing, group presentation skills, problem solving and so on*). Employers place a premium on men and women who can move from challenge to challenge, handling assignments that draw upon different skills.

Naturally, your experience can also be reviewed according to various "functions" that apply to most businesses, such as sales, production, accounting and human resources. All areas in which you have knowledge must be identified. At the same time, you need to think of your experience in terms of "action words" that de-

scribe what you did, and then translate those activities into achievements, *e.g., controlled, wrote, reshaped, etc.*

Your leadership qualities are marketable

If there is one quality you want to communicate, it is leadership ability. Experts say that leaders possess and communicate real convictions—strong feelings and principles that have grown with them over time.

Leadership is also attributed to those who create an image of operating at the leading edge... into new products, new services and new solutions. We expect our leaders to have the vision and talent to develop new things.

Another skill common to most leaders is their ability to assemble teams and motivate them to peak achievement. Often creative, intuitive and passionate, they project integrity and trust. If you have these traits, they should be marketed. Image, attitude and presence also play a role.

If you're not sure of your skill sets and experience factors to market, review the next four pages. The more ways you describe your experience, the more you will qualify in many industries.

Most people are unaware that selling their transferable skills is vitally important. Those skills are what reassures any employer that you can do the job they have in mind.



200+ skills & experience factors that employers want. Which ones describe you?



SKILLS & CAPABILITIES

- Ability to get things done quickly
- Action-oriented
- Ambitious
- Analyze situations rapidly
- Astute researcher
- Bring order out of chaos
- Bring out creativity in others
- Broad administrative skills
- Consistently find new alternatives
- Conceptual thinker
- Contacts at highest levels
- Creative
- Decisive
- Diplomatic
- Direct large meetings skillfully
- Drive "out-of-box" thinking
- Easily win people's confidence
- Effective at dealing with the public
- Effective at organizing labor
- Effective moderator and mediator
- Enterprising / dynamic
- Entrepreneurial strengths
- Excellent recruiter
- Excellent trainer
- Exceptional people skills
- Exceptional team player
- Flair for putting on events
- Genuine & sincere
- Grasp technical matters quickly
- Handle rapid change easily
- High achiever / gives 100%
- High energy / enthusiastic
- Highly articulate
- Highly charismatic
- Highly competitive
- Highly professional
- Highly social / outgoing
- Highly organized
- In-depth technical knowledge

Keep in mind you need to back these up with short stories

- Industry leader
- Innovator / imaginative
- Inspire others to top performance
- Instincts for what will sell
- Introduce change smoothly
- Intuitive decision maker
- Know international markets
- Knowledge of key markets
- Likable, friendly
- Loyal
- Make forceful group presentations
- Meet demanding objectives
- Motivator
- Natural leader
- Operations-oriented
- Perfectionist
- Perform against tight deadlines
- Persistent
- Personal contacts for new business
- Plan major conferences
- Precise thinker, logical
- Problem solver
- Proven record of success
- Public speaker
- Quick thinker
- Recognized authority in my area
- Relate easily to people at all levels
- Reliable / responsible
- Remain calm under pressure
- Resourceful
- Risk taker
- Seasoned competitor
- Self-motivated
- Sense of command
- Sense of humor
- Shirt-sleeve approach / hands-on
- Simplify complex problems
- Skilled at governmental affairs
- Skilled at union relations
- Skillful / seasoned negotiator
- Sophisticated
- Source of ideas that work
- Special visual and design taste
- Strong at consumer selling
- Strong at corporate selling
- Strong executive image / presence
- Strong group communicator
- Strong social skills
- Strong theoretical grounding
- Strong verbal communicator
- Successfully promote new ideas
- Superior sales closing skills
- Superior writing skills
- Synthesize diverse ideas
- Tactician / strategic thinker
- Troubleshooter / problem solver
- Verbally persuasive / compelling
- Versatile
- Very personable & good natured
- Very positive / upbeat
- Visionary
- Well respected
- Willing to try new approaches
- Win cooperation at all levels
- Work alone or as part of a team

EXPERIENCE FACTORS

- Achievements in international
- Acquired operations
- Aggressively managed new inventories
- Applied leading-edge technologies
- Authored major business plans
- Avoided chapter 11 filings
- Built cross-functional teams
- Built loyal teams
- Built self-sustaining teams
- Built strong marketing alliances
- Built strong technical alliances

200+ skills & experience factors that employers want. Which ones describe you?



- Chaired civic or social organizations
- Chaired multifunctional teams
- Closed millions in consumer sales
- Closed millions in corporate business
- Closed under-performing operations
- Coached winning teams
- Conceived innovative promotions
- Conducted major seminars and conferences
- Consulting firm experience
- Corporate officer level achievements
- Designed efficient systems
- Developed strategic alliances
- Developed new systems
- Directed diversification
- Directed startup
- Division officer level achievements
- Enhanced corporate image
- Entrepreneurial experience
- Established new standards
- Experience with market leader
- Experienced at change management
- Experienced at cost control
- Experienced in growth firms
- Experienced with regulatory agencies
- Formulated top policies
- Fortune 1000 experience
- Handled strategic planning
- Have had P&L responsibility
- Helped clients grow revenues
- High-tech experience
- Implemented sweeping changes
- Improved customer relations
- Improved productivity
- Improved sales / profits
- Increased shareholder value
- Installed superior controls

Only 5% of all professionals aggressively sell transferable skills and personal strengths.

- Integrated new technologies
- Joint venture experience
- Large material responsibilities
- Led major expansion
- Long-range planning experience
- Made go / no-go decisions
- Managed a large downsizing
- Managed a lot of people
- Managed a successful operation
- Managed complex operations
- Managed large budgets
- Managed large investment portfolios
- Managed rapid growth
- Managed succession planning
- Manufacturing experience
- Minimized liability exposure
- Minimized litigation
- Modernized manufacturing
- Multi-plant experience
- Multi-product / multi-market experience
- Large company experience
- Negotiated foreign contracts
- Negotiated mergers or acquisitions
- Negotiated major deals
- Nonprofit experience
- Opened new markets
- Opened new plants
- Orchestrated major change
- Overhauled ineffective methods
- Overhauled vendor relationships
- Participated in a breakthrough
- Patent / invention holder
- Planned fundraising programs
- Private company experience
- Procured major funds, grants
- Project management experience
- Public company experience
- Published author of articles
- Published author of books
- Recapitalized organization
- Recovered tax payments
- Recruited top performers
- Recruited substantial volunteers
- Re-engineered processes
- Reorganized and revitalized
- Restructured debt
- Revamped operations
- Revamped supply chain
- Salvaged unprofitable operations
- Served on civic boards
- Served on corporate boards
- Served on key committees
- Served on nonprofit boards
- Service firm experience
- Skilled at crisis management
- Skilled at outsourcing
- Sold off undesirable properties
- Started prototype operations
- Streamlined processes
- Substantial line experience
- Substantial staff experience
- Substantial startup experience
- Succeeded in declining market
- Succeeded where others failed
- Ten+ years experience
- Top management experience
- Turned around operations
- Twenty+ years experience
- Upgraded investor relations
- Work a 60+ hour week
- Worked closely with top mgmt.

To expand your marketability, you have to sell what employers are BUYING! They think in terms of phrases that people associate with solving problems or capitalizing on opportunities.

Key phrases should be communicated in all your resumes and letters... and in all phone discussions and interviews. This will expand your marketability beyond your factual credentials.

The importance of having a communication strategy

To appreciate a communication strategy, consider the platform of a presidential candidate. It anticipates questions on issues and formulates statements to guide the candidate's answers. Now, when any of us recruit, we have a concept in mind. In the final analysis, we hire others for the skills and abilities that certain key descriptive phrases imply.

To expand your marketability, you must develop stories that incorporate those phrases to create maximum interest. Without stories, most people will forget what you say in a matter of minutes. We all remember good stories. To ensure your points are memorable, we suggest a method for creating interesting stories. SOAR is an acronym that stands for Situation, Opportunities, Actions and Results. It offers a process for describing your past experience.

Our SOAR process & how it works

- **Situations.** Describe a job by outlining the situation when you began, making it interesting.
- **Opportunities.** Then describe the opportunities the job presented. For example, "When I joined the firm, sales had been declining for three years. I saw the opportunity to target new areas."
- **Actions.** Next, move to actions taken by you and others (the team). These actions are the most important part of the SOAR process, and a great place for the descriptive phrases.
- **Results.** Then relate what results occurred. For the "R" in SOAR, try to quantify the results. For example, you cut costs by \$100,000 or 20%. In many administrative situations, you can measure results using state-

ments like "I did it in half the time" or "The system I developed was adopted throughout the company," or "I won an award."

Indicate positive things you did to help your organizations. Describe how you helped your management meet their goals, and the results they achieved. Show how you demonstrated a skill or a personal quality.


Create stories that demonstrate benefits you can bring. If you successfully managed the integration of two teams following a merger, and the new business gained market share and/or costs were reduced—by all means say so. Wherever possible, quantify with dollar amounts, percentages, etc. Even an average SOAR story is better than none at all.

Examples of SOAR stories

- **Situation/Opportunity.** When I joined MBC Sales, the company had lost nearly \$7.5 million on a new product release. I recognized an opportunity to employ my Procter & Gamble experience in marketing.
- **Action.** With the help of the Y & R agency, I relaunched the brand, created a new television advertising campaign, and refocused all marketing efforts.
- **Result.** Within a year, we turned an \$8 million loss to a \$4 million gain—30% of the firm's profits.
- **Situation/Opportunity.** The company recruited 5,000 people a year but never had a training program.
- **Action.** I created the firm's first training course. With a staff of 20, we introduced it in 57 markets.
- **Result.** The firm was able to bring in recruits who produced within four weeks. In the following year, sales by newcomers accounted for \$3,000,000.

When you start selling skills... people will start calling! It builds your appeal far beyond your factual credentials.

*“If you board the wrong train, it’s no use running along the corridor in the other direction.”
—Dietrich Bonhoeffer*



#2 RECAP
Market your transferable skills in all that you do

Experience has shown that many people never market 50% of the skills they really possess.

Chances are that you have 10 to 20 skills which, if properly communicated, can dramatically expand your marketability.

The whole idea is to sell the skills and experience factors that employers want.

Quick action steps for transferable skills

Use our free marketability profile with hundreds of “in-demand” skills to check. On your own if you prefer, you can also list the skills you’ve used and delete those which could not be used in another industry. For each achievement, note the challenges faced, actions taken and results achieved, so you can tell memorable stories.