

Create Your Career Brand and Present a Unique Value Proposition

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Healthcare executives, if you are in the market for a new job, you already know that the competition can be fierce. In our fast-paced business world, employers are looking for outstanding candidates to lead their organization towards success. In most cases, a number of senior-level professionals are competing for one prized job opening. To beat your competition, you must outshine them in your résumé and in person. To do this, you need to present the unique value that you bring to the table – this is your Value Proposition.

A Value Proposition can be equated to a personal career “brand” which candidates will impart to the prospective employer. Using this analogy, you are the “product” and your potential employer is the “target market.” Your message must compel the target market to purchase the product. A successful Value Proposition does just that.

As a leader, you have a unique blend of qualifications, talents, expertise, and accomplishments to offer a potential employer. Determine which special features you have that your competitors do not have. By providing your prospective employer with a clear idea of your distinctive value, you take the competition out of the equation.

DEVELOPING YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION

To uncover your Value Proposition, it helps to see yourself as the “product” that you are marketing to your potential employer. Successful advertising agencies know that they need to create a unique message that compels the target market to purchase their product. In your case, the target market is your next employer. To market yourself, it makes sense to create a consistent and convincing message in your business card, résumé, professional biography, and other documents. Then, deliver the same proposition during your networking efforts and in the job interview.

A well-designed Value Proposition presents your very best features to the employer. Additionally, to stand out, you cannot be the same as all the other executives that may be applying. So, it's best not to copy your colleagues' résumés. Instead, study the job, company, and industry that you are targeting. Then, independently identify your very best strengths as they relate to your target.

Once you understand your target and your strengths, you are prepared to develop a powerful Value Proposition by answering three simple questions:

1. Exactly how will your employer benefit financially from hiring you?
2. What special experience or credentials do you bring to the table?
3. What additional talents and expertise do you offer?

Here's a condensed example of how an executive director answered the three questions:

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1. The employer can benefit financially from me because I have a knack for launching and leading efficient and cost effective healthcare centres and developing profitable strategic alliances.
2. I have over ten years of experience in general management within the healthcare industry, have launched a multi-department centre and I have a Masters of Business Administration.
3. My additional offerings are that I have extensive experience in implementing best practices. I am an industry expert and a keynote speaker on strategies for grants and fundraising.

DESIGNING EFFECTIVE MARKETING DOCUMENTS

The key to developing effective marketing documents such as the résumé, professional bio, and letter of introduction, is to use your Value Proposition. In each document, lead in with a strong outline of your value. When the recipient gets this message, he is going to want to learn more about you. Follow up the profile by creating a theme that runs through your document. Think strategically about every aspect of your background and only include items that support your Value Proposition. The idea is to create a distinct message that intentionally encourages the reader to pick up the phone and call you.

Here's how our executive director incorporated his Value Proposition into his résumé profile:

“Dynamic healthcare executive director with outstanding educational credentials and over ten years of experience in general management within the healthcare industry. Talent for launching and leading efficient and cost effective healthcare centres and developing highly profitable strategic alliances. Industry expert and keynote speaker on strategies for grants and fundraising with a career-long record of implementing best practices to ensure organizational success.”

VERBALIZING THE MESSAGE

In order to win the job offer in an interview, it is most important to articulate your Value Proposition. Since your interview is likely to be conducted in relation to your résumé, you must ensure that the value you communicate in both your résumé and your interview are consistent. Develop a number of statements and examples that support your Value Proposition.

To prepare for the interview, practice responding to questions with vivid examples of how you used your strengths to achieve corporate objectives. With practice, you will be able to present a clear and concise response to your prospective employer.

Here's how our general manager answered the interview question: "Why should I hire you?"

"I would like to support this organization and our stakeholders by creating a top-performing healthcare environment. I am able to do this because I have a knack for launching and leading efficient and cost effective healthcare centres and developing profitable strategic alliances. I also bring to the table over ten years of experience in general management, a Masters degree in Business Administration, and a reputation within the industry as an expert in strategies for grants and fundraising. Therefore, in addition to expanding the market, I will be able to implement best practices that will contain costs, enhance quality of services, and improve overall efficiency, which will directly translate to the bottom-line."

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Outshining your competition is easier than you think. Once you have developed your Value Proposition, start to use it in all aspects of your job search. With your consistent, powerful, and compelling message, you will secure top spot and a superior job offer.

About the Author

Sharon Graham is an executive résumé writer, employment interview strategist, and author of Best Canadian Résumés. With multiple certifications in résumé, interview, and career strategy, Sharon has elevated the industry by delivering cutting-edge innovations to résumé writers and career practitioners across the nation. She assists six-figure job seekers through her consulting firm Graham Management Group, www.GrahamManagement.com and is executive director of Career Professionals of Canada. You can reach Sharon by e-mailing info@GrahamManagement.com.