

Exercise: Know Your Assets

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Talk to your friends, family members, coworkers, former teachers, and former managers, and ask them what they believe are your greatest strengths. More than likely, you will be amazed to find what these people see in you. They might be qualities you never realized you had. Ask those people to provide specific examples of why they would make these statements about you. The supporting statements they give will be extremely valuable as you prepare to discuss your qualities with prospective employers.

Continue asking yourself, "How would the people that know me best describe me?" Allow them to speak freely about your personality, sense of humor, work ethic, values, morals, and passions. For the sake of demonstration, I will use myself as an example. Then, let's evaluate each attribute and develop each one for interviewing purposes. Don't laugh at mine, okay?

People have described me as funny, energetic, hardworking, reliable, having high standards, caring, honest, and very tactful . . . well, most of the time! If I didn't know better, I would think of those as great descriptions to mention in a job interview. Now I would like you to take a full minute to describe me out loud. Take your time.

My guess is that you have no idea what to say, other than the adjectives I provided above, because you truly don't know me, right? So think of the interview this way:

If I were to mention to an employer the same laundry list from above, the employer would still have no idea who I really was. In fact, the employer has most likely heard the same attributes repeatedly from other candidates.

English composition teachers usually tell their students, "Show, don't tell." The same valuable advice applies to job interviews.

Step 1: List the attributes that others use to describe your strengths, qualities, and personality. (example, reliable)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Step 2: Now expand on the attributes from above. (example: very consistent, always on time.)

Step 3: Prove it with a story. The proof is called your statement of credibility. (example: I have only called in sick one time.)

Step 4: Formulating for the interview. (now use your examples from above to formulate an answer the way you would use it to reply to the interviewer.)

Interviewer: "So what do you bring to the table?"

Interviewee: I think my reliability is really something that sticks out to employers. I am very consistent and always on time. In the 7 years that I have been with my current employer, I have never been late and only called in sick one time. My employer has stated in reviews that he could set his watch to me.