

Perfecting Your 30-Second Commercial

What is a “30-Second Commercial”?

One of the keys to your success at a job fair is to make a really strong first impression. To do this, you need to create a personal “commercial.” It is essentially an overview of your experience, skills, strengths, accomplishments and goals – all in 30 seconds!

When will I use it?

You will use your 30-second commercial throughout your professional life. Some relevant uses include:

- When introducing yourself to a potential employer at a career fair.
- At an interview
- In a cover letter –to highlight your background and key abilities.
- At professional networking events – when you are asked to introduce yourself.
- In cold calling employers for an internship future job.

What should I include in my 30-second commercial?

The structure of a 30 second commercial generally follows this pattern:

1. Who you are, plus a credential
2. A specific objective
3. How you have demonstrated your interest
4. Why you are qualified
5. Ask a specific question about their organization/available position(s), *based on your research*

What should I keep in mind about developing my 30-second commercial?

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE! Your 30-second commercial should be conversational and natural. Although prepared in advance, it should never sound memorized. You want to appear confident, enthusiastic, poised and professional. Make it memorable but not outrageous. You are competing with many other qualified candidates. Your commercial should allow you to stand out a bit from the crowd. Whether it is the vocabulary you choose or a specific achievement you mention, you want to engage the listener and give them an opportunity to see your personality.

Be prepared for follow-up questions. You may be asked for more information or to elaborate on something you said which will keep the conversation going. Part of your strategy is to develop a rapport with the interviewer and a good commercial and follow-up will help to set a positive tone. Vary your closing to fit the circumstances. At a job fair or networking event you want to be proactive and may want to consider an action question such as “May I have your business card and contact you ...”

Questions to Think about in Developing your 30-Second Commercial:

1. What is your career goal? (usually in the form of doing something for someone)
2. What skill, strength, or experience do you have that would help you realize that goal?
3. What accomplishment proves you have that skill, strength, or experience?
4. What are you searching for in a job or internship?
5. How can you immediately benefit the organization?

Starting your 30-Second Commercial

For example, your commercial might look something like this:

1. My name is _____.
2. I am a _____ major here at Binghamton and I am looking for (type of opportunity, i.e. public relations internship) _____.
3. I have experience/interest/skills in _____, for example _____.
4. I feel I could apply these same skills/abilities in your _____ opportunity. (You’ll need to do some research into what they’re looking for to be able to comment on this!)
5. Can you tell me more about this opportunity?

