

## 6.4: Selling U - Developing and Communicating Your Personal FAB

### Learning Objectives

- Understand how to develop your personal FAB message.
- Learn how to make your FAB message memorable in an interview.

You can see that FAB is a powerful way to build an emotional connection with a customer. It is also an excellent way to stand out to a prospective employer in an interview. You'll learn more about the interviewing process in the *Selling U* section of Chapter 10, but now it's a good idea to do some advance preparation.

You've already done a lot of work that will serve you well as you network and interview—you've identified your brand positioning points in the *Selling U* section of Chapter 1, put them to work in your résumé and cover letter in Chapter 2, and developed your elevator pitch in Chapter 5. All these activities help you bring your personal FAB (feature, advantage, benefit) message into focus. Your FAB message will help you tell the details about your brand and will help you tell your "stories" about your experience and accomplishments during your interviews.

### Stories Paint Pictures

If getting the job or internship you want were only about the facts, you would only need to present your résumé on a job interview. But prospective employers are looking for that "certain something," an emotional connection that helps them know that you are *the* one. Bryan Eisenberg, "Buying Is Not a Rational Decision," ClickZ, November 26, 2001, <http://www.clickz.com/927221> (accessed August 1, 2009). Every candidate comes into an interview trying to impress the interviewee and saying how much he wants the job. Why not stand out, show, and sell?

Think about your three brand positioning points you developed in Chapter 1. Now, think about the stories that demonstrate each one in terms of FAB. Table 6.4.4 shows you some examples.

Table 6.4.4: Personal FAB Example

Brand Positioning Point	Feature	Advantage	Benefit
Marketing Experience	Had an internship at an advertising agency	I worked on the Limited, Too account developing Twitter conversations with target customers.	I can help SpitFire engage its customers directly and learn about shopping preferences using social networking.
Customer Service Experience	Worked as a server at Olive Garden	I interacted with customers and provided excellent customer service under pressure.	I understand how to handle multiple tasks under pressure without losing my cool.
Leadership Experience	President of Young Entrepreneurs Club	I developed a forum for local investors to regularly hear pitches from student entrepreneurs, which led to the launch of three new products.	I understand the process it takes to turn ideas into profitable businesses, and I'm able to be the driving force behind bringing people, ideas, and money together.

### Every Picture Tells a Story

Take your FAB one step up and create a **portfolio** that you can show during job interviews. When you *tell* someone about your experience and accomplishments, that's good, but *showing* them really helps you stand out in the crowd. If you are lucky enough to get an interview, capitalize on the opportunity to sell yourself. Keep in mind that most companies interview at least two or three people, and sometimes more, before they make their hiring decision.

A portfolio isn't just for creative or advertising people; everyone should have a portfolio. It is simply a collection of samples of your work from class projects, internships, volunteer projects, and any other work that demonstrates your skills. "Job Search: Back Up Your Resume with a Portfolio," WorkForce2.org, [www.workforce2.org/resume-portfolio.htm](http://www.workforce2.org/resume-portfolio.htm) (accessed August 5, 2009).

Creating a portfolio is as simple as putting samples of your work in a three-ring binder. You might find it helpful to view this video about how to create a portfolio.

*How to Create Your Portfolio*



Source: MonkeySee.com

You probably have more samples of your work than you think. And each sample is an excellent way to show *and* tell your FAB. Here are some ideas about what to put in your portfolio:

- **Class projects.** Choose those projects that demonstrate your skills, especially in your major. For example, if you did a sales presentation, include a video clip along with your selling aids. Or if you created a PR plan, include the plan along with the exhibits. Group projects are acceptable as long as the group names are included on the title page. A team project allows you to talk about how you provided leadership to the team or helped the team get focused.
- **Internship projects.** If you had an internship or multiple internships, include samples of the projects on which you worked. For example, include copies of Web pages, brochures, flyers, graphs, presentations, or other samples of your work.
- **Volunteer projects.** If you have been involved in a student group, community service, or other service organization, include samples of the projects on which you worked. For example, if your group did a fundraiser for breast cancer, include the flyer for the event along with photos and a summary of the contributions.

#### ✓ You've Got the Power: Tips for Your Job Search

##### Keep a Copy

Whenever you work on a class project, internship, volunteer project, or any other type of project that demonstrates your skills, keep a copy for your portfolio. The same is true when you begin working; keep copies of all your projects to continue to build your portfolio throughout your career. You never know when you will need to show samples of your work. It's best to avoid including any confidential or proprietary information from companies or organizations.

- **Other work samples.** If you enjoy photography, writing, design, selling on eBay, or other activity that has application to the position for which you are seeking, include that work. In other words, print the Web page for your eBay store along with the feedback you have received, include photographs or other projects on which you have worked to show your work. If you don't have samples of your work for your portfolio, consider starting a blog and print copies of your entries.
- **Letters of recommendation.** Ask for a letter of recommendation from former supervisors, colleagues, team leaders, professors, and other people who will be happy to write a letter about your skills. Maureen Crawford Hentz, "How to Obtain and Use References and Recommendation Letters," Quintessential Careers, [www.quintcareers.com/references\\_recommendation\\_letters.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/references_recommendation_letters.html) (accessed August 5, 2009) If you have had a summer job or internship, ask your former boss and other people with whom you worked to write a letter of recommendation. Keep the copies of the letters in your portfolio and show them to prospective employers during your interview. Although these letters are different from references, they serve the purpose of *showing* your prospective employer how highly people regard you and your work. You will be asked for references after the interview process if you are one of the final candidates. See the *Selling U*

section in Chapter 4 for more information about how to contact and submit references, including how letter of recommendation from references can help set you apart.

## Tips to Make Your Portfolio Even More Powerful

After you gather all of your work samples, here are a few tips that will help you organize them for an effective visual story.

- **Choose a few work samples.** Select samples (no more than five or six) that reflect your brand positioning points. If leadership is important, be sure to include projects, results, pictures, and other visual elements that will demonstrate your leadership story.
- **Create a summary page for each work sample.** Include bullet points for the project name, objective, approach or strategy, and results. A sample is provided in Figure 6.4.13. This will help you quickly summarize the key points when you are showing your portfolio.

<b>Project Name:</b>	Rold Gold Pretzels Integrated Marketing Communication Plan Semester Project for MKT 2335
<b>Project Objective:</b>	Create an integrated marketing communication plan that will reverse the negative sales and market share trends
<b>Project Strategy:</b>	Reposition Rold Gold pretzels as the cool, must-have treat for college students
<b>Project Results:</b>	The three-person agency team presented the plan and won the class competition as judged by four advertising executives

Figure 6.4.13: Sample Summary Page

- **Use clean copies, in color where appropriate.** Avoid using papers that include comments or grades. Use fresh, clean copies of all samples. If you need to make a copy of an original document that was in color, splurge and pay for color copies; it's worth it.
- **Include extra copies of your résumé.** Your portfolio is a great place to keep at least three or four extra copies of your most current résumé printed on twenty-four-pound paper. Although your interviewer may have already received your résumé before the interview, he may not have it handy when you come in. Or you may be asked to meet with some people that were not on the original interview schedule. If this is the case, you can be the consummate professional and offer your interviewer a reference copy of your résumé. It's also the perfect time to mention your portfolio.
- **Use a professional binder or portfolio.** Visit a local or online art supply or office supply store and get a professional three-ring binder or portfolio. You can include your work samples in plastic sleeves, but it is not required. Many portfolios include plastic sleeves for your samples. Ask if the store offers a student discount.

### ✓ Make It Memorable

As you develop your FAB and portfolio, think about the stories you want to tell about each one. Stories are much more powerful than facts. For example, "I can really appreciate what it takes to go the extra mile for a customer. When I worked at J&J Catering, they needed someone to mix the giant vats of cookie dough. Needless to say, I spent hours working with the dough, but I wanted to make it interesting, so I learned how ingredients work together, and I created a new recipe for lemon cookies that became the signature dessert of the company."

## [www.You.com](http://www.You.com)

A portfolio is a must to bring on a job interview. You might be wondering if it's a good idea to also create an online portfolio. The answer is "yes." Creating your own professional Web site as a way to showcase your résumé, samples of your work, awards, and letter of recommendation is a perfect way to build your brand and demonstrate to your prospective employer that you have additional technology skills.

Your online portfolio, or Web site, should include all the elements that are included in your offline portfolio. Since space is not an issue, you may want to include even more samples of your work, especially if you have writing or design samples. This is also an ideal place to include a link to your blog.

A word of caution: Your professional Web site should be exactly that—professional. That means no personal photos, comments, or casual blog posts from friends. In other words, your Facebook page is not an appropriate place for your professional Web site. Use a business-like domain name ([www.yourname.com](http://www.yourname.com)); if you don't already have one, you can get one at Google or GoDaddy.com, for a minimal annual fee. The following article provides six steps to set up a domain name and your own Web site.

Use your online portfolio as a way to sell yourself on your résumé: add your Web site address to your contact information and mention it in your cover letter. Resumemic09, "What Is a Portfolio and How Can I Use One to Get a Job?" video, July 24, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrHI0m0B1l4> (accessed August 5, 2009). See résumé and cover letter samples in the *Selling U* section in Chapter 2.

### How to Use Your Portfolio in an Interview

It's always best to bring your portfolio to every interview, even if it's an informational interview. In most cases, the interviewer will not ask you about your portfolio so you will have to bring it up in the conversation. The following video provides some tips about how to introduce your portfolio during an interview.

*Using a Portfolio in an Interview*



*Learn how to use your portfolio to make the sale and get the job you want.*

**This is an hour long seminar on: Build Your Brand: How To Sell Yourself During the Job Search:**



Be proud of showing your work samples. The *Financial Times*, in reference to Peggy Klaus' book *Brag: The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It*, wrote, "Start bragging...if you don't speak up for yourself, who will?" Peggy Klaus, *Brag: The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It* (New York: Hachette Book Group, 2003), front cover. To ensure that you are getting all of your FAB points across, it's best to rehearse how you will review your portfolio in an interview. Keep in mind that time is short so it's best to be concise and underscore the FAB points you want your interviewer to remember. A portfolio is an excellent visual tool that makes your FAB message come alive for your prospective employer. The bottom line is, "If you walk into an interview empty-handed, you're missing an opportunity." "How to Create an Awesome Work Portfolio," ManifestYourPotential.com.

#### ✓ Key takeaways

- Develop your **FAB** message using your brand positioning points as a foundation. Develop one or more **FAB** messages for each point.
- Create a **portfolio** to bring on job interviews to visually tell your FAB messages. Include extra copies of your résumé, samples of your work from class projects, internships, volunteer work, and relevant hobbies in a professional three-ring binder. Be sure all samples are clean and are in color where appropriate.
- You can also create an online **portfolio** on a professional Web site that includes the same information as your physical **portfolio**. Also include your Web site address in the contact information on your résumé and mention it in your cover letter.
- Be ready to introduce and review your **portfolio** in an interview; you'll need to take the initiative as your prospective employer won't know you have work samples to show.
- Be proud of showing your work samples. Rehearse exactly what you will say about each sample and keep it concise.

#### ? Exercise 6.4.1

1. Write down your FAB using the chart below. What examples or stories can you tell about each one?

Brand Positioning Point	Feature	Advantage	Benefit

2. Identify at least four samples of your work that you can include in your portfolio. Discuss which FAB message each sample demonstrates. Create a summary sheet for each sample.
3. Shop online or in a local art supply or office supply store and identify a professional binder or portfolio for your samples.
4. Review your portfolio with a professor, supervisor, or other professional. Ask for feedback on your portfolio and presentation.

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