

Personal Commercial

Career & Internship Services

CCAPS • CDes • CFANS

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

198 McNeal Hall (St. Paul) • 411 Bruininks Hall (Minneapolis) • 612-624-2710 • www.careerhelp.umn.edu • careerhelp@umn.edu

What is it?

Your personal commercial is short introduction to a potential employer, mentor, or important professional contact. Knowing your personal commercial and being able to say it confidently can help you significantly in your job search. You never know who you may meet and being prepared with your key qualifications will help you in any career-enhancing situation.

What to include:

- Name
- Major
- Year in School
- College/University
- Career Goals
- Relative Experience/Skills
- If appropriate, or to keep the conversation going, you may want to end with a question:
Do not ask: Do you have any jobs?
Ask instead: Do you have any advice for me? Could you tell me more about this field?

When to use:

- Career fairs when you approach employers
- Introducing yourself at professional events or informational interviews
- Answering “Tell me about yourself” in job interviews

Tips:

- Write down your commercial to remember it
- Practice out loud to get comfortable with the introduction and talking about yourself in a conversational way
- Practice on others to make sure you have enough information and can speak smoothly at a proper speed

Example:

Hello my name is Amber Johnson and I am a junior in the Applied Economics major with an emphasis in Marketing. I have extensive marketing coursework as well as two years of experience in a professional setting working as an office assistant. This summer I hope to secure a related internship and I was wondering if you could tell me a little more about the executive marketing internship that I saw posted on your website?

Engaging in Conversation with a Professional

Questions to ask professional:

These are questions that might precede or follow your personal commercial in a dialogue with a professional. Be ready to ask, and answer them.

- What do you do?
- What do you like most about what you do?
- What got you started in that direction?
- What do you love about you work?

Networking Event Tips:

- When reciting your personal commercial, stay in the moment and observe carefully what kind of reception you are getting
- Focus on building a relationship with the contact instead of “selling” yourself
- Be an active listener and show genuine interest in the other person
- Be focused and brief - when there is a natural break in conversation, exchange contact information and if there is a reason to follow up with them ask when might be a convenient time to do so
- Stay positive and well mannered
- Practice - while others may look like born networkers, they are likely just more experienced
- Remember: people generally like helping other people