

The 1 Thing You Must Say to Be the Job Candidate They Remember

Job search success requires you to leave a positively unique impression



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IMAGE: Getty Images

A quick search on what employers are looking for in job candidates reveals a good, solid list of precisely what you'd expect: confidence, adaptability, reliability, and dependability.

These are all great qualities, but they're tough to say credibly about yourself and are best left for other people to say about you. So, if you're looking to strengthen your bio, resume, or interview answers, none of these will do. While these are all important traits, they're difficult to convey in a bulleted list of aspirations or accomplishments. They're more subjective, more difficult to measure—at least on paper. They're also risky because they immediately cause a listener to tune in for proof. Lastly, they're what everyone else is saying which makes it tougher to stand out. LinkedIn is one popular spot for our bios with 414 million profiles, and the average user visit to the site is only

For example, LinkedIn is one popular spot for our bios with 414 million profiles but the average visit to the site is only [17 minutes per month](#). That's not a lot of time to capture someone's attention. Instead,

So, instead of going with the norm consider sharing examples of **your willingness to invest**.

Typically thought of in terms of time or money, we also choose to invest our time and energy for a specific business purpose or to achieve a goal. How you invest the resources at your disposal says a tremendous amount about you and your potential contributions. Thinking broadly about how you might use this concept:

- In a job interview, your investments in your education and professional experiences are an indicator of what you can and will do in the future for a new organization.
- In a presentation, your investments provide context and describe why and how you got to be standing in front of this crowd at this moment to share your message.
- In a pitch to a client, your investments spell out why your solution is the unique and the only viable solution to a buyer's problem.
- In networking, your investments provide a foundation and a level of understanding of each other

from which you can mutually build stronger relationships.

We all invest, and by sprinkling the word into your introduction signals the listener to pay closer attention to what you're saying. The reason is that investments are deeply individual and reflect our values and personal choices. The combination of your past investments lead to you being you-the professional you are right at this moment. Your current investments also sum up your aspirations for the future.

How to do this is simple and [here](#) is a worksheet to help. First, think about how you typically respond to, "so, tell me about yourself." Search for where have you already mentioned something- education, optional training or coaching programs, travel, professional communities, etc. Select one that you feel would be of most interest to your next audience and rephrase the language to reflect how you invested your time (and potentially your money) and what you gained. The benefits of tweaking the wording include:

- Investments are objective and can be measured.
- Investments have an outcome that has happened or will happen. These are the basis for all of our lessons learned and the equity you've earned and should claim credit for as you accumulate professional experience.
- Investments convey a sense of ownership-which is what all employers and partners want to see: a person standing in front of them with the confidence to claim responsibility for their choices to celebrate the good outcomes and grow from the bad.

Recasting the actions in your bio as investments is unexpected and is the kind of language that helps make you stand out from the crowd and shows that you take your experiences seriously. A job search that drags on is hard, no doubt. Get creative but don't give up.

If you're interested in reading about how to apply these and other techniques in verbal communications, check out [this article](#) on how great leaders command a room.

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