

## Selling yourself

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What does it mean to “sell yourself”? The idea of selling yourself does not translate well across cultures, which is to say it’s not received well or it’s not accepted well. Many people in the US think and say something like “You’ve got to sell yourself”. This means promote yourself by speaking about your skills and accomplishments. This means speaking about all that is good about you, and speaking about all that is good about you as though it is great, *not* as though it *were* great. To some other people, this is conceit or narcissism. However, it translates to many Americans as self-confidence, which in turn could translate to competence. Self-confidence is a laudable quality among Americans, though not if you overdo it. If you overdo it, then you could come across as arrogant. Still, what’s practical here is to understand that selling yourself and self-confidence are ideas to take extremely seriously. Just as confidence is something to build, selling yourself is something to practice - and get good at.

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/conceit>

conceit [k n si t] *n* 1. a high, often exaggerated, opinion of oneself or one's accomplishments; vanity

Don’t think that selling yourself is “conceit” because it’s not. However, everything has boundaries and guidelines, so be careful you don’t come across as self-centered, too self-important, or, what are even worse, arrogant and haughty.

The idea of “selling yourself” comes into play during an employment search and employment interviews. However, that’s not where it ends. Everyone continues to sell themselves at work - whatever they do. Let’s consider a few expressions that could help you continue to sell yourself even after you’re employed and doing excellent work.

1. Go above and beyond - This means do more than what is normally expected to get something done, to provide a result, or to succeed in providing a benefit for the company. Go above and beyond to be both efficient and effective.
2. Can-do attitude - This means that your attitude is such that you believe that nothing can get in the way of accomplishing something. It means there’s no trying; there’s only doing.
3. Do whatever it takes - This speaks for itself. This expression places emphasis on the result, and this means that if the process is not entirely desirable or palatable to all those involved, it might not matter. Just do whatever it takes to get the result.
4. Go all out - This means do everything possible to get the result or achieve the desired outcome. Use every possible resource.
5. Be proactive - This means you don’t wait for someone to tell you what to do. You recognize what there is to do, and you do it.
6. Think out of the box - This means use processes and thinking that are unconventional. The process to arriving at the solution is not conventional if you’re thinking out of the box. Then again, it could be that the solution itself is not conventional. Be creative, do something different, and stop at nothing to get it done. In a way, that’s what “think out of the box” directs us to do.

What do you do to continue selling yourself even after you’re employed? Note that this is not about *what you can do*; it’s about *what you do*.

You search for and find ways to **go above and beyond**. You portray an image and use language that tells people you have a **can-do attitude**. You do **whatever it takes** to get it done, get a result, or achieve a highly desirable outcome. You **go all out** to reach objectives and achieve goals. You work in a way that tells people you are **proactive**. And you **think out of the box**. Don’t place limitations on yourself. And because you are **not** better than anyone else, no matter who they are or what they do, provide equal respect and consideration to **all** those around you in all circumstances, and don’t place limitations on those around you.

If you do all of these, you will be worth a lot, and you will sell yourself very well. Selling yourself will build your confidence and your competence. So for as long as you’re in the USA or working for an American company, be sure to sell yourself. Selling yourself goes over well; at least in the USA it does.