

FACULTY & DEPARTMENTS

ALUMNI

CAREERS & RECRUITERS

- Employment Statistics
- ▼ Graduate Students
 - Services
 - Incoming MA-HRIR
 - Recruiting
 - ▼ Resources
 - Vault
 - Aspire
 - MA-HRIR NewsLetter
 - Career Library
 - Career Handbook
 - Carlson Recruiting Companies
 - Case Interviewing Resources
 - Company Research
 - International Careers
 - Interviewing Skills
 - Wetfeet Press
 - Job Research Links
 - Networking Resources
 - Resume Development
 - Interest Statement
 - Positioning Statement
 - Career Planning
- Undergraduate Students
- Alumni
- Business Career Center
- Recruiting Resources

EXECUTIVE & PROFESSIONAL

GO

Positioning Statements

Creating a Personal Positioning Statements

As a graduate student, you will be called upon to define yourself to others every day. A Personal Positioning Statement – also known as an “elevator speech” – creates a clear and vivid picture of who you are and what you have to offer to potential employers. It helps you present yourself effectively and position your capabilities in the mind of the listener.

- WHAT VALUE DOES A POSITIONING STATEMENT HAVE
- WHERE CAN I USE MY STATEMENT?
- POSITIONING STATEMENT GUIDELINES?

- POSITIONING STATEMENT
- SAMPLE POSITIONING STATEMENTS

What value does a positioning statement have?

Eric Lunstrum, MBA '02, who created his positioning statement prior to a Silicon Valley site visit, shares this story about his success:

"During our tour of Silicon Valley, A.T. Kearney invited the MBA students to a reception. Within a couple minutes of our arrival I met a Senior Consultant who asked me, 'What can I tell you about A.T. Kearney?' This is where having a well-rehearsed positioning statement paid off. I began listing my work experience and interests concluding with, 'How would my skills be of value to your organization?' We then spoke for about a half hour on the e-business consulting opportunities at A.T. Kearney. I am confident that I left a positive impression."

According to Maury Hanigan, CEO of Hanigan Consulting and MBA marketplace expert, an ideal candidate is focused, self-aware and articulate. Creating and articulating a strong statement with recruiters is the first step in landing your dream job.

[Back to Top](#)

Where can I use my statement?

- At networking events: receptions, dinners, and pre-interview gatherings when meeting people for the first time
- At interviews to respond to the question "Tell me about yourself"
- When introducing yourself to company representatives over the phone

[Back to Top](#)

Positioning Statement Guidelines

Your positioning statement is a way to introduce yourself professionally. These guidelines apply to all positioning statements:

- **Make it clear and concise.** Challenge yourself to edit the statement so you can present yourself in under a minute. It's best to develop a short (10-second) version for conversational introductions as well as a longer (1-minute) version for interviews.
- **Always relate your statement to the person with whom you are speaking.** Focus on the firm, the industry, or the position you are seeking.
- **Speak in the present tense.** Place both yourself and your profession in the present, i.e. "I am a marketing professional with three years' experience in the pharmaceutical industry."
- **State your interests clearly.** Companies looking to hire individuals who are focused and know what they want. You may choose to express why you want to work in a specific functional area or why you want to work for the specific company. "I am interested in working for Company XYZ because it is a leader in wireless technology." "I am interested in brand management based on my experience in advertising and market research."
- **State your expertise and unique strengths.** Articulate those individual qualities that differentiate you from others in your field. You may emphasize a particularly deep (and marketable) technical knowledge, an exceptional approach to problem solving, or some other specialty or focus. Taking the time to locate and verbalize the professional strengths you have developed will set you apart from the crowd. "I speak French, Arabic and English fluently and plan to use my language skills in international consulting projects." "I have managed projects involving Internet security. One resulted in an ISO 900x quality system that led to a national quality award." "I have experience in database design for the financial services industry."
- **Include names of organizations for which you have worked, honors or scholarships you received, schools attended, etc. if they serve to distinguish you.**

"I am a Fulbright/Rhodes Scholar..." "I am a graduate of the top-ranked Chemical Engineering program at the University of Minnesota." "I worked with 3M in research..."

- **Summarize the types of organizations or environments in which you have employed your talents, such as Fortune 100 firms, large businesses, emerging companies, etc.** You may also mention other types of activities, such as teaching, participation on the board of a business or non-profit, or leadership in a professional association. "I have worked with large firms like Ernst & Young, as well as a small, family-owned business." "I really enjoy cross-functional team environments. At Wells Fargo I consulted with 66 different business units during a successful ERP system consolidation."

[Back to Top](#)

Positioning Statement Worksheet

This guide will help you create the first draft of your positioning statement.

Positioning Statement Worksheet

Sample Positioning Statements

Click the link below for some sample MBA and MA-HRIR positioning statements.

Sample Positioning Statements

[Back to Top](#)

University of Minnesota

1-110 Carlson School of Management
321-19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455

Business Career Center

(612)-624-0011
(612)-625-8840 fax

For problems or questions about this site contact bcc-web@csom.umn.edu

[| Privacy Policy |](#)