

## SELLING YOUR SELF

### *Translate your non-working years into marketable skills*

Seeking someone who is creative, energetic, organized, efficient, and flexible, also needs to be a problem solver, a decision maker, a team player, and an effective communicator.

Does that sound like the ideal candidate for any job or like the skills you need to run a household and raise a family? The simple answer is -- both. As a mom, you have already done it all. If the person on the other side of the desk doesn't think so, it is your responsibility to disabuse them of that belief. The problem is perception, yours and theirs. The first step is to believe it yourself. You must not only know you can do it, but that you *have* done it.

Pick any day last week and think about what skills you needed to accomplish your day. Get the kids up, dressed, and fed. Make sure they have their homework, lunch money and get to the bus on time. Before 9 a.m., you have already displayed the ability to multi-task, manage time, be detail oriented, organized and responsible. These are essential qualities of an office manager, recruiter and event planner.

You run errands, pay bills, think about Halloween costumes and science projects, schedule play dates and carpooling with other parents, clean the house and figure out how to be at your daughter's recital and your son's play on the same night. You have relied on your creativity, decision-making and problem solving skills, not to mention your ability to cope with stress in order to host a play date at your house. I bet you are constantly employing team management, conflict resolution and communication skills when dealing with a group of emotionally charged youngsters. Managing a team of teenagers working at a retail store or restaurant doesn't sound that different.

Dinner is done, dishes washed and the kids are in bed, now you have time to work on the fund-raising project for your local charity. Did you know that many non-profit organizations pay a percentage of money raised to those who organize the effort?

After a day like that, do you have any challenge believing you display energy and stamina? Now think about what you contend with on a day that does not go smoothly? Convinced? Still not sure others will see it? Your stories of life challenges and creative solutions are not only compelling and transferable, but also highly desirable for any employer. Don't worry how simple the task may sound. What's important is your approach to solving it, accomplishing it or just plain getting it all done.

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Need ideas? Below are some everyday tasks the marketable skills they exemplify.

Are you creative and comfortable working with technology? Perhaps you would enjoy graphic design, working on magazine layouts or starting your own greeting card line. Is your strong suit conflict resolution, multi-tasking and leadership? Envision yourself managing a store, restaurant or a community program. There are an abundance of accounting, bookkeeping and office management jobs for detail oriented and organized women that are good with numbers or have QuickBooks experience. If you like working with people and are at ease with communications, consider a career in sales, fund-raising or real estate.

If none of this rings a bell with you, then think about what you would like to do and get some life experience to launch yourself into that next career. Working for free is a great way in the door of your next employer.

SKILLS / TRAITS	EXAMPLES
Communication & Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Teaching about sharing</li> <li>■ Telling a parent their child misbehaved</li> <li>■ Dealing with other parents and teachers</li> <li>■ Managing family emotions and priorities</li> </ul>
Conflict Resolution Decision Making Problem Solving & Negotiation Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Resolving fights over a toy</li> <li>■ Settling sibling rivalry</li> <li>■ Coordinating attendance at conflicting events</li> <li>■ Selecting a school, doctor or after school activity</li> <li>■ Deciding who gets to choose which TV show to watch</li> <li>■ Keeping the peace</li> </ul>
Leadership Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Volunteering your time (girl scouts, sports team, PTA)</li> <li>■ Chaperoning school field trips</li> </ul>
Multi-tasking Efficiency & Time Management Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Dealing with every moment of every day with grace.</li> <li>■ Getting everyone up and out each morning</li> <li>■ Completing an exhaustive list</li> <li>■ Determining the order in which to accomplish tasks</li> </ul>
Technology & Design Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Using QuickBooks to prepare taxes</li> <li>■ Creating an online family photo or web page</li> <li>■ Designing and printing party invitations</li> <li>■ Using Microsoft Word to write letters</li> <li>■ Using Palm, Mac or other software to maintain a calendar</li> </ul>
Finance & Budgeting Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Managing family finances</li> <li>■ Stretching a dollar, using coupons</li> <li>■ Paying bills online</li> <li>■ Buying a car</li> </ul>
Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Helping with art and school projects</li> <li>■ Planning birthday parties and fun learning assignments</li> </ul>
Energetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Being constantly on the go</li> <li>■ Multi-tasking daily</li> </ul>
Flexible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Adjusting priorities when a child is sick.</li> <li>■ Handling with sick days and school holidays</li> </ul>
Organized Punctual & Detail Oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ensuring everyone is in the right place at the right time</li> <li>■ Managing the family calendar and to do lists</li> <li>■ Picking up kids from school</li> <li>■ Attending after school programs</li> <li>■ Navigating the every day</li> </ul>
Team Player	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Working with spouse to share responsibility</li> <li>■ Sharing load with other parents</li> </ul>
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ You're a mom – enough said.</li> </ul>