

You Are the Product

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A blog offering "how to" marketing tips for professional service firms and the professionals in them from Barbara Walters Price

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You've probably heard of the six P's of marketing: Product, package, position, price, promotion, and place.

Let me tell you a secret that can move you ahead of the pack -- **YOU are the Product!**

That's right. It might seem crass but remember that it is not the work you do - instead it is who you are as a trusted advisor to your clients and peers. The work you and your firm provide is the "package." YOU are the "product." If this is news to you then you must change the way you think.

You must:

1. **Continually focus on building your resume.** (Chris Mercer, my boss, years ago compiled a list of 20 things a growing professional must do to succeed. He is updating that list and I'll link to it once it is posted.)
2. **Take control of your own career.** (That means stop making excuses and figure out what moves you ahead and start to do it. Don't wait for anyone else to take an interest in you - start today.)
3. **Obtain appropriate professional designations.** (This is a must for professionals and should be a continuing activity. Don't settle for one designation if more are needed to take you where you want to go. If your firm doesn't pay for them, pay for them yourself.)
4. **Become an expert.** (Better to be a big fish in a small pond than the smartest fish in the ocean.)
5. **Learn to earn.** (Keep learning. Keep your skills fresh. Always look for new opportunities. Listen to others.)
6. **Collaborate.** (Work with other professionals inside and outside your firm to bring the best to the table and share the benefits. Life is not a zero-sum game.)
7. **Give back.** (Become active in associations that give something back to the community. Become involved right away and serve humbly. Opportunities, both personal and professional, will present themselves but the greatest benefit will come from serving others. To lead, we must serve.)
8. **Take the long view.** (Take time to reflect on your life and career goals and constantly work towards them. Do not let today's disappointments derail you.)
9. **Prioritize.** (You cannot prioritize unless you have clear goals in mind. The word "no" is one of the most powerful in your vocabulary. Use it wisely.)
10. **Think "win-win."** (While you excel, your firm excels, and opportunities are created for everyone. While it is important to stay focused on your individual goals, remember that you are not an island. Your peers and support staff assist you every day in ways you may not understand or appreciate. Focus on helping those around you "win." It's not all about you.)
11. **Have faith.** (Have faith in yourself and faith in a higher power. This life is but an instant compared with eternity but can be a fun and rewarding instant if we remember who we are and whose we are.)