

# Top Ten Tips for Writing a Professional Overview or Biography

By [Tara Kachaturoff](#)

A professional biography or overview, showcasing your background, experience and expertise, is a necessity for every business owner. This often overlooked marketing tool is an excellent way to introduce you and your business to potential clients and possible strategic business partners. Potentially, it might open up opportunities for speaking engagements, radio or television interviews, or a feature print article. While any information about you and your business is helpful, information that is presented in a professional, well-polished manner can make all the difference in how others perceive you. Consider these important points as you craft your own professional biography.

## 1. One page wonder.

Your professional biography should be a few paragraphs and kept to one page or less. One page is perfect for copying on the reverse side of a handout or flyer. Several paragraphs, left justified make it easier to read and skim.

## 2. First, second, or third person?

Always write your biography in the third person. That is, refer to yourself by your name or she/he as appropriate. It sounds more professional as it appears that a third party wrote the text. For example, "Alexandra has been featured in the New York Times, Forbes, Newsweek, and Time magazines."

## 3. Business in brief.

Not only do readers want to know what you do, but also they want to know who you work with - because they might want to work with you! A professional biography should include a sentence or two about your business niche (or niches) as well as the types of clients you serve. A modified version of your 30-second elevator pitch might be perfect.

## 4. And the winner is....

Make sure that you include a list of awards that you have received. Readers are interested in knowing about your talents and the organizations that recognize you for them.

## 5. Organizations.

Include names of the organizations, clubs, or associations to which you belong. A reader's interest might be highlighted at seeing that you belong to the same alumni association or professional business group. Again, these connections might possibly lead to some interesting and exciting business opportunities.

## 6. Certifications and designations.

Include any professional certifications or designations you hold. Make sure you write out their names in full, rather than use abbreviations. Not everyone might know that CMA stands for Certified Management Accountant. And, perhaps, in a different discipline, it might represent something else - like a Certified Materials Analyst. If you no longer hold a particular designation, but it has played a major role in who you are and what

you do, don't hesitate to make a reference to it. For example, "Ann is a former Certified Data Processor and spent the last decade as an adjunct faculty member teaching higher mathematics at the University of Colorado, Boulder." Don't include abbreviations of college degrees, like MBAs as it looks unprofessional. The only exception to this would be for a Ph.D. designation.

#### 7. Published?

Have you written any articles, books, e-courses or e-books? Self-published or not, your works add to your level of professionalism and credibility. Showcase them in your biography and you might earn additional royalties in terms of new clients or other opportunities.

#### 8. Did I mention the media?

Have you been a guest on talk radio or television? Were you or your business featured or even mentioned in a newspaper article? If so, readers want to know. Again, these types of "mentions" add to your credibility and presence.

#### 9. Call me any time.

People who want to know about you will read your biography for just that reason. And, if its compelling, rich, and includes the information they're interested, in, they'll want to contact you. Include complete contact information like your title (if any), name, address, telephone, fax, email, and website address. Make it easy to find this information by including it in the last paragraph of your professional overview.

#### 10. Write, rewrite, and do it again.

After you have written your biography, edit, edit, and edit again. You may need to do a dozen or so revisions before you get it just right. Eliminate extra words, use descriptive words, keep the sentences short but varied in length, and write in the third person. Ask some friends to provide input as well. Make sure to revise your biography regularly to keep it up-to-date and refreshed.

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