

**Chapter 2 The Marketing Plan  
Career Chatroom Career Profile**

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**Q What do you do at work?**

**A** As my title indicates, the buck stops here. Because we are a small company, the buck also starts here. As a strategic marketing consulting company, we specialize in insight generation, brand positioning, portfolio management, and communications optimization. We are a tool for marketers, brand/strategic planners, and market researchers. Most of our clients have worked with us in the past. My job includes keeping clients satisfied and pleased with our work, and participating in the analysis phase and final delivery of our projects.

**Q What was your first job in marketing?**

**A** I started in advertising. I've always been fascinated by the potential of tapping in to the target market's beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. I believe the solutions to many marketing problems can come from the people to whom we try to sell something *if* we really know them. That belief has been a cornerstone of my business since we first opened in 1988.

**Q What skills are most important to you?**

**A** Listening is a key skill for insight and strategy specialists. People hear, but they don't always listen. You have to listen to understand the *why* behind the *what* that is being discussed. Other important skills include being able to think inductively instead of deductively; being able to connect the dots and see the big picture; and being able to focus on the core of a marketing issue, problem, or opportunity.

**Q What is your key to success?**

**A** I treat each client's business as though it were my own. Simply put: I care. Every client knows that all my actions, opinions, and decisions come from doing what I believe is best for his or her business. I've never lost business because I cared too much, but I certainly have kept and won business because of it.