**10 Steps to Defining Your Authentic Personal Brand**

**The Personal Branding Worksheet**

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Perceptions and definitions of personal branding vary greatly and misconceptions abound. Here's my take on it:

*"Personal Branding links your passions, key personal attributes, and strengths with your value proposition, in a crystal clear message that differentiates your unique promise of value from your peers and resonates with your target audience."*

What’s great about branding is that it generates the kind of chemistry that indicates good fit to decision makers assessing whether to hire you or do business with you.

In my practice, I've been incorporating what’s now called personal branding in my clients' career marketing communications for many years. It's always been my mission to differentiate them from their competition in the job market, breathe life into otherwise flat career marketing materials, and position them for job

search acceleration.

But there's so much more to learn. I continuously tweak, refine, and improve my clients’ personal branding development process. To enhance my expertise, I completed the Reach Certified Personal Branding Strategist program.

The process was intensive and at first overwhelming. Being introspective and digging deep was somewhat painful, but ultimately eye-opening, affirming, and energizing.

Uncovering and pulling together all of the following 10 components will arm you with a compelling personal brand message to anchor and weave throughout all your online and offline career marketing communications:

**1. What are your vision and purpose?**

Before clearly defining your brand, look externally at the bigger picture of your vision for the world, and then internally, at how you might help the world realize your vision.

**2. What are your values and passions?**

You have to know yourself and what you want and need before you can move forward. Your belief system

and operating principles are at the core of determining whether an opportunity in front of you will be a good fit for you. If the passions that drive you aren’t met, you probably won’t be happy.

**3. What are your top goals for the next year, 2 years, and 5 years?**

Work on projecting what you intend to accomplish so you can put together a strategic action plan to get there.

**4. Do a self-assessment of your top brand attributes.**

What 3 or 4 adjectives best describe the value you offer? What words do you use to define your personality? Here are some possibilities, but don’t limit yourself to these:

Collaborative, resilient, forward-focused, risk-taking, connected, international, visionary, diplomatic, intuitive, precise, enterprising, ethical, genuine, accessible.5.

**5. What are your core strengths or motivated skills?**

In what functions and responsibilities do you excel? What things are you the designated “go-to” person for? What would your company have a hard time replacing if you left suddenly? The possibilities are endless, but here are a few suggestions:

Identifying problems, seeing the details, leading, delegating, performing analysis, fact finding, crunching numbers, anticipating risk, motivating, mentoring, innovating, managing conflict, writing, listening, communicating.

**6. Get feedback from those who know you best – at work, at home, anywhere.**

The true measure of your brand is the reputation others hold of you in their hearts and minds. Notice how they introduce you to others. Ask them what your top brand attributes and core strengths are. How does your self-assessment jibe with their feedback?

**7. Do a SWOT (Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities – Threats) analysis on yourself.**

Don’t dwell on your weak points, but keep them in mind so that you don’t move into a position where that function is the main thrust of the job.

**8. Who is your target audience?**

Determine where you want to fit in (industry and niche area of expertise). Learn what decision makers in that field are looking for when they’re vetting candidates. Find out where those decision makers hang out and what key words will attract them, and then position yourself in front of them to capture their attention.

**9. Who is your competition in the marketplace and what differentiates you from them?**

Determine why decision makers should choose whatever you’re offering over the others offering similar value. What makes you the best choice? What makes you a good investment? What value will you bring that no one else will?

**10. Remember the 3 Cs of personal branding:**

Clarity – be clear about who you are and who you are not.

Consistency – steadfastly express your brand across all communications vehicles.

Constancy – strong brands are always visible to their target audience.

**Your takeaway:**

The work involved in uncovering your brand may seem daunting, but your efforts can benefit you immeasurably. My own brand development helped me re-focus the way I do business toward the kinds of work I’m most passionate about, and more deeply niche my target audience.

In job search, developing and communicating your personal brand can pre-qualify you as a good fit and accelerate your search. Your unique brand message differentiates the best you have to offer, gives a good indication of what you’re like to work with, and evidences how you make things happen.

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A C-level/Senior-level Executive Branding and Job Search Strategist, Meg Guiseppi loves collaborating with forward-focused corporate leaders to define their unique value proposition in targeted career marketing tools and strategically position them online and offline for job search success. Meg is one of only a handful of career professionals to hold both the Reach Certified Personal Branding Strategist and

Master Resume Writer credentials. She is also a Certified VisualCV Creator and Certified Professional Resume Writer. For a wealth of insider tips on personal branding and executive job search, visit herExecutive Resume Branding Blog/Website (<http://www.executiveresumebranding.com>). Follow Meg on

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