**Personal Brand Model Answer**

Please note that the purpose of the model answer is to provide you with best practice guidance – but your answers will be very personal to you. There are some examples of the types of answers you could have given, but yours will be right for you, as it is all about you! When you are reflecting on the model answer, take time to look back at what you wrote and see if it needs to be added to or changed in any way. Use the prompt questions to help you identify this. Use this time to really pinpoint what you want to stand for, what you want people to say about you and how you are going to make this happen.

Please answer the following questions in as much detail as you can to help you to create your own personal brand:

1. What are the top three words to describe you?

Have you managed to select three strong and powerful words to make you stand out from everyone else, or have you chosen every day words that could relate to everyone else? Remember, this needs to be authentic to you – what do these words actually say about you. Try not to just use ‘buzz’ words but make them meaningful and interesting so people would want to find out more about you.

* How did you choose your words?
* Are any of them unique?
* Do you feel proud using those words to describe yourself?
* Did you ask anyone for help? (Try asking 5 – 10 trusted people to describe what you stand for in 1 word)
* Do your chosen words match the type of attributes needed in the area you want to work in?

This is your chance to stand out from the crowd and really succinctly say who you are. Here are some words that can help:

* Adaptable
* Ambitious
* Brave
* Calm
* Cultured
* Current
* Dynamic
* Efficient
* Faithful
* Fearless
* Helpful
* Honourable
* Industrious
* Instinctive
* Knowledgeable
* Noble
* Original
* Reflective
* Self-assured
* Sincere
* Thoughtful
* Unique
* Vivacious
* Zealous

Remember, don’t just pick words that sound good to you – they need to be authentic and represent you correctly. What is that word saying about you? Try looking at the words you have previously written, or choose new words from the list. Can you now add a follow up statement after that word to bring it to life and demonstrate why you chose it? This will help you to see if the words you’ve chosen are the right ones to bring to life your brand and what you want to say about yourself.

2. Who is your audience? Think about who you want your personal band to speak to.

Have you really considered the types of jobs that you want here and what you want that person who is recruiting to think about you?

* What do they want to hear about you to pique their interest?
* What pieces of information are they looking for?
* What skills and experience will they want to identify?
* What do they want to know about you as a person?
* What has been identified that makes you stand out from the rest?

Depending on the industry you are applying to, you will need to tailor the answers to the above questions. You could start by writing a list of your talents and skills, then cross match those to what different companies and industries want and what makes you different from everyone else. Think about your unique selling points. These could be what you based your dissertation on or a volunteering project you have done or a role you held at University; anything to make you stand out form the crowd.

Above all, look at the employers ‘brand’ to see how you can match your own unique personal brand to that of the company and industry you are interested in working for. A powerful way of considering this is to think about ‘what’s in it for them’ whilst you are showcasing yourself.

3. What value do you provide? Think about what ‘problems’ you solve with your skills

When you think about the value that you can add, a good way to position this is to think about what problems people/companies/industries may need to be solved and how your skills can help them to do this. You’ve already chosen your three top words to describe you and you’ve identified ‘who’ you are speaking to, so now you need to match this up with ‘how you can help them’. Think about the work the organisations you are interested in do and their objectives for the business – how can you add value to the business with your specific skills?

* What problems need to be solved in the area you want to work in?
* How can your skills help their customers?
* Why do you want to work in the business area you do?
* What skills are you bringing with you?
* Is there anything you do which is unique to you in regard to your skills?

All these questions will help you shape your thinking about the ‘value’ you can provide. Try to think of this as your ‘unique selling point’ (USP) and make sure there is a link to your ‘top three words’ and your identified audience.

4. What have you accomplished?

Everyone has accomplished unique things, so here is your chance to show what you’ve done that no one else has done. Here you can really stand out from the crowd with your experiences and achievements. They can be paid or unpaid experiences, as they all count and they all build a picture of who you are and of your personality.

* What have you achieved that you are most proud of?
* Why was this achievement so important to you?
* What does this achievement say about you?
* Have many other people achieved this too?
* How does this link to your ‘top three words’?
* How does this link to ‘problems you can solve’?

Now that you’ve got your outline for your personal brand, you need to know how to make the right first impression based on your personal brand. Please answer these following questions:

1. How can you demonstrate your personal brand when you first meet someone virtually?

You need to really think about what you stand for (the answers to the previous questions) and how you want to be remembered by the impact you have. You get one chance to make the right first impression – and it’s no different virtually as opposed to face-to-face; this is your first chance to ‘wow’ someone.

Virtually there are a few more things to think about though:

* What is in the background that can be seen?
* Is the camera angle right (no nostril/ elbow close ups!)
* Are you free from interruptions?
* Are you physically and mentally ready for this meeting?
* Do you know the technology you will be using?
* What are you going to do/say first and how does this demonstrate your ‘top three words’?
* What are you wearing? (it can still be seen on screen! And even clothes that can’t be seen may impact how you feel – i.e. shorts vs trousers)

Really consider what you are wearing – you don’t need to be ‘suited and booted’, but you do need to make the right first impression, so smart and professional. Don’t go too formal and overboard, but do look groomed and presentable as this shows that you care. Just as important here is what is in the background of your camera – what does this say about you – do you look cluttered and disorganised or organised? (think about all the journalists we’re now seeing on TV and how they have arranged their backgrounds to say something about them). All of these things add to the first impression you are making.

It’s easier said than done to avoid interruptions; but where possible, make sure you are away from any interruptions so you can fully concentrate on the meeting. This could include - shutting a pet out of the room; telling other people in your household that you can’t be interrupted; shutting yourself in a private room (whilst considering what room it is and what your camera will show).

Make sure you’ve taken the time-out to be mentally and physically ready for the meeting – just like you would for a face-to-face meeting. This links with knowing the technology platform that you will be using – have you used it before? If not, spend some time researching it so you can be as ready to use it effectively when required; always assume it will be a meeting with a video steam, then you will never be caught out.

As part of your preparation, plan your opening line – don’t script it, but you can rehearse it to be confident and make sure you have included some of the information from the first set of questions, linked to how you want to be perceived.

2. What are the 6 top tips to help you elevate your presence on a virtual meeting?

The article ‘How to elevate your presence in a virtual meeting’ gave the following as the 6 top tips:

* Focus on your camera, not your colleagues
* Maintain a strong voice
* Frame yourself wisely
* Be present and mindful
* Don’t become your own distraction
* Use the hat window as your partner

It’s not enough though to just ‘know’ these things, it’s more important to consider ‘why they are important’. Remember, this is all about creating the right first impressions, so if you can do the ‘6 top tips’ then this all aids in creating that strong first impression. Revisit this article and come up with your own ‘top tips’ to help you know why you are doing it and create it as a prompt sheet you can use when in meeting (so only key points as reminders).