1. Home page - Your First Impression

Your site’s home page is the first page of your website, that people will see as soon as they land. A good home page will draw people into your site.

If your website is your first encounter with a potential employer, then your home page is their first impression of you. The goal is to draw them in, like a giant magnet. What you'll need to include:

1. Your Name  - (You got this.)
2. Photo  - (A medium to close-up shot is best (positive and professional)!
3. Background theme - (photo or video).
4. Title (optional\*)  - A casual greeting or short line about yourself, your work, maybe your location.

2. Personal Branding Statement

Next up is your personal branding statement. This communicates your own vision of who you are, what you do, and what value you bring to the table. It should powerfully encapsulate your uniqueness - it should describe only you, and nobody else in the world. It is what every lame, tasteless "about me" fails to be.

Once formulated, your personal branding statement can be cited anywhere, anytime - on your website, on social platforms, and in real conversations. It should make a positive, unique, and lasting impression on others.

Here are 3 questions to help you brainstorm yours -

1. *What are my most important causes, endeavors and abilities?*
2. *What five or ten words would I use to describe my true self?*
3. *What value do I ultimately try to create for others?*

3. Resume - Show Off 'The Works'

*"The Works" : A vague expression referring to 'everything'. (Yahoo Answers)*

Now that you've introduced yourself properly with your header and personal branding statement, it's time to show off 'the works'. For you, that's a mix of components such as -

* PDF Resume (via [link](http://kathryn.strikingly.com/#resume) or [button](http://www.dobdobdobdob.com/))
* Work experience
* Educational background
* Past and current projects
* Awards & accolades
* List of skills

The choice of what to include depends on what want to convey about yourself. If you're a brand consultant or business developer, you should present a list of marketable skills, as well all your projects and experience; if you're a writer or academic, a skill listing probably isn't necessary but you should include your education history, as well as links to your published work and any awards or honors received.

Let's see how some of these resume sections might look on your page, starting with 'Experience'.

 Experience

For listing experiences and education, a vertical list works well because it intuitively reflects chronological order...

 Education

... But a horizontal list can also work nicely, if your items are few enough to fit in one or two lines. This also prevent visitors from having to scroll down in order to view the entire section at once.

 Projects & Passions

Whether directly related to your work or not, sharing your projects and passions is a great way to express your initiative, creativity, and that extra edge of personality and "wow" factor that potential clients and collaborators are always looking out for.

 List Your Skills

4. Add Quality Content

*"Content is king"* - grand words spoken by Bill Gates in 1996, which have since become a marketing slogan and reality. It's true - in an online context, content is the reason why people use search engines to begin with. Websites earn high rankings in search results, by having good content that people engage with.

The same principle applies to your personal website. The content you choose to include should be relevant to you, valuable to your audience, and visually appealing to attract visitors. We can't stress that last point enough. There is so much beautiful site content out there today - if yours looks like an error message from 1990, it simply won't compete. Content must be *VISUAL*. Content must be *AWESOME*.

5. Back Yourself Up With Testimonials

*"To be trusted is a greater compliment than being loved." - George Macdonald*

Recommendations add a dimension of credibility and appeal to you. Back yourself up with two to five references. Don't be afraid to ask for them if you don't yet have any.

Keep testimonials short and sweet! It's great that you're great, but even so, no one wants to read more than a few sentences about how great you are. An epic Greek poem, a Shakespearean love sonnet - not the right place. We're looking more for a haiku, or a fortune cookie here.

Overdo them, and they will backfire on you; serve them light, and testimonials will delight.

 Presenting Your Testimonials

Present your testimonials in a paragraph, moving slider, or horizontal listing (shown below). Include professional headshot for your referrers if possible, with their positions clearly indicated.

6. CTAs -

Let People Take Action!

A beautiful site will turn heads your way - but an effective site will also move people to action.

The Call-to-Action is your closer, your dealmaker. Insert appropriate CTAs onto your site, especially towards the end, after your site visitors have seen what you are about and developed a positive understanding of you.

What type of CTAs to use, and where and how to place them, will again depend on [your goals](file:///D:\GitHub-361\itmd-361-proj01\how-to-make-a-personal-website-undo.html#2) for having a personal website. But here are some common CTAs -

* Email and social media buttons
* Contact and feedback form
* Signup form for email updates

7. SEO & Sharing

We're almost there - well done making it so far. By this point your site should be more or less completed, and it's time to share it with the world.

You'll want to perform a few SEO (search engine optimization) tweaks - we especially recommend investing in a custom domain - and then, let's go through a final checklist to make sure the most important elements of your site are all in order.

When everything is ready, you'll share your site across social media and to your email contacts, in addition to adding your site link in a few other places.

 SEO Tips

Doing a bit of search engine optimization will make your site more highly ranked and visible on Google, Bing, Yahoo and so on. This step is important for those of you whose goal is to be found by recruiters or new audiences.

 Final Checklist

Before we move on to the final step - sharing your site - this is a good time to take a step back and do a final review. All of us are blind to our own little mistakes. Take this step seriously. You'll find that some fixes and revisions are needed, and they will pay off.

Think about the start-to-end experience from your site visitor perspective, and answer these questions -

*1. Will They Stay?*

* Seconds within landing, will visitors like the feel of my site enough to stay?
* Are my site title, header, and section headings attractive and interesting?

*2. Will They Engage?*

* Is my site layout simple and easily navigable?
* Do I give my audiences valuable, relevant content to browse and interact with?

*3. Will They Act?*

* Did I clearly indicate and streamline the actions I want people to take?
* Did I provide easy, eye-catching CTAs and contact methods?

*4. Does Everything Work?*

* Do all my links, icons, and media assets work? Nothing broken?
* Are my domain, page description, and other SEO elements nice and tidy?

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