

## Module 2: Personal Branding

### Overview

- Building your story & knowing yourself
- Applying your brand
- Branding for a job
- Reflective Practices

### Section 1: Building your story & knowing yourself

- “A personal identity that stimulates a meaningful emotional response in your target audience... It is the word or phrase you want people to think when they think of you.” (O’Brien)
- In today’s marketplace, it is tough to stand out. The secret to standing out is to impress recruiters with the unique and authentic you – in person, on paper, online.” (PwC’s Personal Branding Workbook, 2014)
- Developing your personal brand can seem overwhelming. Where do you start?

#### Awareness of yourself:

- What makes you unique
- What you do well
- How you can prove this
- How you can communicate this

#### Awareness of others

- Manners, Kindness (Vaynerchuk, 2015)
- Keeping your word, and delivering (Martinuzzi, 2014)

#### Getting to know yourself

There are many different parts to who you are and the experiences you have had. Gaining work or volunteer experience, working on personal projects, participating in a club or activity or a competition all contribute to the skills and knowledge you have gained. All of these experiences contribute to your brand and can work towards building one incredible story of who you are. Continue to explore your field of interest by continuing to learn and develop your skills further in the following areas to not only build your brand but remain competitive among your peers:

#### Take Training & Develop a New Skill

- Prism Resources
- Speaker Series

#### Learn about the Industry

- Career Services & Co-op Speaker Series
- Join Campus Clubs & Activities

#### Gain Experience

- Volunteer On or Off Campus

- Take a Community Service Learning Course (placements or projects)

#### Complete Career Research

- Visit Career Services to book a career planning appointment
- Consider completing career assessment tools to help narrow your career interest such as Myers Briggs (Personality Type Assessment) and EQ Testing (Emotional Intelligence Assessment) to learn about your individual preferences and behaviours that might impact the enjoyment and success in a career.
- Search Careers by Major
- Review Experience Guides
- Review Co-op Student Spotlights (Co-op Resources Page)
- Read Co-op Work Term Reports (MyLS)

#### Talents & Passions

What kinds of abilities and skills can you draw from your activities, hobbies, or personal projects? Look for connections between the task you complete within that hobby and how it may relate to a workplace or co-op position. View your activities as transferable skills that you have gained in one aspect of your life and relate how they apply to an employment situation or job posting.

For example, if you enjoy gardening, gardener must be constantly working towards a goal, paying attention to the changes, making constant adjustments and improvements. Perhaps these examples could transfer over into a role in project management or a new venture. You can also draw in characteristics and such as being nurturing, caring, and other characteristics. Learning how to relate your previous experiences to a role you apply for is part of understanding how to brand yourself well.

## Section 2: Applying your brand

Knowing how to apply your brand can help in the recruitment process, as your brand is intertwined into many aspects of recruitment including your networking and job searching, intro statements and elevator pitches. Understanding and applying your brand can help you to communicate your abilities and values within your resume and cover letter. It can also help you to answer questions within interviews, such as the “Tell me about yourself” and other behavioural questions.

#### Managing your Brand

Consider what your brand says about you and remember that your presence online and digital footprint reflects your brand. Ensure that your presence online is in line with the brand that you are selling to employers. You may wish to Google yourself to determine where you show up in searches and adjust your photos or messages accordingly on social media.

#### Creating an Introductory Statement Activity

The purpose of an introductory statement is to help start the conversation when networking, that can serve as a foundation for your personal brand. Building an introductory statement also allows you to practice storytelling and building connections with your audience. What you choose to talk about will change depending on what you think your audience wants to hear, or what you plan to ‘sell’ them on.

Main criteria of an introductory statement are your **values, strengths, and goals**.

Answer the following guided questions.

Part 1: Basic Information about yourself.

Begin by saying your name, and what you do (or) who you are. This can also include your program.

Part 2: Your Passions/Values

What are your passions? What do these passions or values say about you?

Part 3: Think about your strengths

What are you good at? What characteristics can you draw? Can you prove it?

Eg. "I am really good at \_\_\_\_\_ and I enjoy learning about \_\_\_\_\_"

Part 4: Vision or Goals

Eg. "I am looking for a role where..."

"My goal is to attain employment in..."

"I would like to learn more about ..."

Part 5: Engage your listener

Your goal is to engage in dialogue, back and forth conversation

Eg. "Can you tell me about yourself?"

"You mentioned that you..."

"Can you tell me more about..."

Starting with your intro statement, delve into some of your passions, strengths, and values, then conclude by explaining what your goal is.

Imposter Syndrome

Imposter Syndrome is the psychological experience of believing that one's accomplishments came about not through genuine ability, but as a result of been lucky, having to work harder than others, or having manipulated peoples' impressions (Clance & Imes, 1978).

In reviewing job postings or expectations of a particular career, this may raise feelings of inadequacy or self-doubt as you begin to wonder how someone can be all of those items. It may call into question as to whether or not you are fit to apply or if you have the necessary qualifications. It is important to note that these feelings are common for many people, and imposter syndrome might be at work including any of the following concepts:

- **Perfectionism** – Despite meeting 99% of goals, feel like a failure for 1%
- **Experts** – Feel the need to know every piece of information before they project
- **Natural Genius** – If success comes with struggle, means not good enough
- **Soloists** – Feel they have to accomplish tasks on their own, asking for help is failure
- **Super[human]** – push to work harder than those around them to prove they are not an imposter (Young, V. 2011)

Imposter syndrome can cause individuals to obsess over minor details in their work, push themselves to work harder to prove themselves, or can cause self-sabotage. Imposter syndrome may also come from a place where you don't feel a sense of belonging because you may not see yourself represented in the workforce. Perhaps the roles of stereotypes, discrimination and bias can be responsible for creating these 'norms' but also may create these spaces for people to feel inadequate or unbelonging.

If you have feelings of imposter syndrome, overcoming these feelings can be found by understanding how to find goodness in those feelings. Remember to ask yourself, are your thoughts helping or hindering you? How can you learn to value the constructive criticism and improve? Consider sharing how you feel with trusted friends, or mentors. There are many people who have feelings of imposter syndrome (all around the world, and even the most successful and powerful business owners experience imposter syndrome).

"The goal is not to never feel like an imposter, the goal is to give people the tools, insight, and information to talk themselves down faster... You may have imposter moments but will not have an imposter life."  
(Abrams, A. 2018)

### Section 3: Branding for a job

#### Making connections to job postings

In reviewing job postings, it is common to begin to create a checklist of the skills, experiences, or knowledge you have gained previously. Connecting oneself to a job posting by relating past experiences to new experiences is essential to branding. By connecting previously acquired knowledge and skills and making a link to relate how it applies to a future experience will help employers understand why candidates are the right fit or have transferable skills. By angling or branding these experiences differently, there is a variety of ways to showcase skills that pertains specifically to a particular job posting.

Example: You can apply the role of a **tutor** to many different types of co-op job postings by angling or branding your experiences differently

- In a **Business Analyst** role, you would need to have excellent problem-solving skills. As a tutor, you would also need to plan and problem-solve how to best assist your learner, and analyze their learning needs
- In **Marketing or Sales**, you require a creative thinker. As a tutor, need to come up with some creative and innovative ways to help the learner understand the material you are teaching.
- In **Human Resources**, you require strong communication skills, interpersonal skills. As a tutor, you need to learn how to communicate effectively with your students and provide understanding and support to the learner
- In **CPA/Accounting**, you must analyze financial reports and ensure accuracy. As a tutor, you need to analyze the student's learning needs and accurately identify areas for improvement

#### Branding: Different perspectives

Remember to identify which functional area you are branding yourself towards, and what past experiences and roles can you brand or angle differently. Understanding how to brand yourself plays a role in the content of your documents. is important when customizing your resume and cover letter documents because it frames what you say and how you say it. Consider personal branding a large

component of the resume and cover letter modules that will occur in upcoming modules within the course.

## **Section 4: Reflective practices**

Co-op is experiential learning, a cycle of theory, practice, reflection and goal setting. Reflecting on the information gained and your experience is an important piece of the learning process. In this course, you will submit several pieces of work including a resume, cover letter, learning goals, and objectives. In return you will receive feedback that will help you to make appropriate adjustments.

Questions to ask yourself throughout each module include:

- What did I learn today?
- Did I enjoy the experience?
- What felt hard or easy to understand?
- What has changed as a result of this experience?

### **Homework:**

- Complete Module 1 Quiz (must get 15/15, allowed re-tries)
- Complete Module 2 Reflection

### **For next time:**

- Next up is Module 3: Networking & Personal Job Search
- Remember – Attend Resume, then Cover Letter, then Interview Skills in that order (4, 5, 6).
- At the end of Resume session, you will have a tight turnaround to get a digital copy submitted. You will also be required to bring two hardcopies of your résumé to Module 5: Cover Letter

## Sources

Abrams, A. (2018) "Yes, Impostor Syndrome Is Real: Here's How to Deal With It." *Time*, Time USA, pp. 20. Accessed online from: <http://www.time.com/5312483/how-to-deal-with-impostor-syndrome/>.

Clance, P. R., & Imes, S. A. (1978). The imposter phenomenon in high achieving women: Dynamics and therapeutic intervention. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice*, 15(3), 241–247.

Hibbert, P. (2012). Approaching Reflexivity through Reflection: Issues for Critical Management Education. *Journal of Management Education*, 37(6), pp. 803-827.

Kolb, A. Y. & Kolb, D. A. (2014). On Becoming an Experiential Educator: The Educator Role Profile. *Simulation and Gaming* 45(2), pp. 204-234.

Lang, R. & McNaught, K. (2013). Reflective Practice in a capstone business internship subject. *Journal of International Education in Business*, 6(1), pp. 7-21.

Sokolosky, V. (2015). Shape Your Brand with Gratitude. Accessed online on Aug. 9 from the website: <http://www.thepersonalbrandingblog.com/shape-your-brand-with-gratitude/>

Tim O'Brien Personal Branding [unedited] (uploaded 2012). Video file retrieved from the website: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZqUSyso8hk>

Vaynerchuk, G. (2015). Stop asking me about Personal Branding, and Start doing some Work. Accessed online on Aug. 7 from the website: <https://medium.com/@garyvee/stop-asking-me-about-your-personal-brand-and-start-doing-some-work-57d67316986a>

Young, V. (2011). How to stop feeling like an imposter. On Being Human -The 5 types of impostors: Impostor Syndrome Institute. Retrieved September 2022 from the website: <https://impostorsyndrome.com/articles/5-types-of-impostors/>

Wellbery, C. & McAteer, R. A. (20XX). *Journal of Academic Medicine*, Association of American Medical Colleges. Pp. 1-5.

"Your Personal Brand Workbook: Step up to Stand Out". Personal Branding Workbook, from the PriceWaterhouseCoopers Website: [www.pwc.com/personalbrand](http://www.pwc.com/personalbrand).