

Personal Branding as an Asset

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Do you have a personal brand? The answer should be YES! We should all have a personal brand.

“Personal branding” is when you are intentional and purposeful about your reputation, and invest in your career instead of just hoping for success. Personal branding allows a person to establish their desired reputation and values, which should include their identity as someone people can trust. Personal branding is a person’s most important asset and should be managed and safeguarded. A negative personal brand can destroy or stagnate a career; it is difficult to overcome negativity or gain credibility once it is lost.

Over the years, I’ve had the pleasure of mentoring many professionals from various backgrounds. Often, they don’t understand why they may be having difficulty advancing in their career. They are looking to leverage mentoring as a means to move to the next level and desire specific feedback that could assist in achieving their career goals.

As we work on our mentoring relationship, one of the areas of focus is always their personal brand. When accepting the role of mentor, the first question I ask the person is, “What do you want to accomplish?” One of the key success factors in a mentor relationship is being honest and straight forward in providing feedback, even in areas that may be difficult to accept. The role is to assist in exploring areas where improvement may be needed.

During the course of a few months I usually see these individuals evolve and transform as they gain self-confidence. They start to develop a personal brand as they refine their life goals and gain a better understanding of themselves, as well as recognize their self-imposed obstacles and how others perceive them.

While I am by no means an expert on personal branding, I’ve witnessed success on more than one occasion when individuals set out to promote their personal brand. Focusing first on the outward appearance of their brand may include what they are portraying in social media. Other steps past mentees took included: accepting their uniqueness, focusing on self-awareness and other’s perception, and sharing their backstory while developing deep relationships to earn the trust and loyalty of others.

When you cultivate a personal brand, others gain an understanding of what you believe and value. Remember, others will know if you are being authentic. Therefore, be genuine—it’s much simpler. Use yourself and your story to benefit others, which establishes credibility and transparency. Engage with people inside and outside your profession and spend time paying it forward.

You must take time to continually learn and focus on personal growth. Let your immediate leader and others in the organization know that you are genuinely interested in new initiatives and want to be considered as changes occur. Remember your most important asset is YOU, and when changes occur in an organization you personally want to be on the shortlist for consideration of those new opportunities—by leveraging your personal brand, you can be.

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