



BRAND YOU



In a world of endless options (think of the supermarket toothpaste aisle), brands are increasingly relevant because they are a shortcut around intellectual proof. Brands are typically thought of as products (iPhone) or services (FedEx). But I'd like you to consider yourself as a brand. And this is relevant to anyone within a firm who wants to stand out and thrive. To paraphrase Tom Peters in his seminal Fast Company article, *A Brand Called You*, start thinking of yourself as the Chief Marketing Officer of Brand You. Since I brand myself as a branding expert, I'd like to share three ways to build Brand You.

1. What's Your Story?

A brand is a story told in the marketplace. So step one is to unearth your story. Since people buy with emotion and justify with fact, a compelling story is what helps you to persuade. So, what is it that makes you unique and valuable? What are you most passionate about or proud of? What would your clients or colleagues say is your greatest strength? Think back to the last few times someone complimented you about your work. Is there a pattern of consistent praise that is unique to you? If you can't remember, start a victory journal that records your accomplishments and compliments. Still stumped? Do a little market research by asking your friends, family and co-workers. It'll boost your self-esteem and provide insight. At this point, don't worry about the exact words of your story. We'll address that next.

2. Brand Positioning

A brand's positioning is the mindspace you occupy in your audience's head. It is the articulation of your story highlighting what you do that adds remarkable, measurable and distinctive value. This positioning statement becomes your networking introduction when someone asks "what do you do for work?" It should be around 15 words and ideally be something that only you can claim. It should include the following elements: "I am a [occupation] providing [range of services] to [categories of clients]. My [unique selling point] provides [specific benefits]." Like the premise of a good movie, your positioning must be clear and compelling so others will spread your story via word-of-mouth.

3. You Deserve Promotion

Brand awareness is the final step in building your brand. Your target audience needs to know you exist and what you can do for them. I'm guessing that Superbowl ads and billboards aren't in your budget, so here are some cost-effective tips. If your employer allows, do some moonlighting (either freelance or volunteer). I learned all about e-mail marketing and met many contacts as Marketing Chair of USGBC. Try teaching or making presentations to demonstrate your expertise. If you are verbally challenged, writing for trade publications is excellent visibility. As long as you are learning, growing, building relationships and delivering on your brand promise, both Brand You and your company will benefit.

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New ADG Brochure



Design: LecoursDesign, Inc.

Recommended Reading:

The Success Principles
Great habits for personal growth
by Jack Canfield

I'll be Speaking Next:

USGBC GreenMeet - 10/21
Brand You for LEED APs
SDA - 11/19 *Social Media and Marketing*
SMPS Breakfast Series 2010
Becoming a Creative Superhero

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