

How to build a personal brand for the perfect job



What does your personal brand say about you? Do you have or even need one? And what exactly is it?

When building a personal brand, you are aiming to portray who you authentically are and what you want to be known for. As you embark on your job search, it is helpful to have a well-rounded understanding of yourself, the ideal employer, industry, and job opportunities to show the company that you are the best candidate for the position. Imagine your personal brand as a way to advertise yourself to your ideal employer. When advertising something, you need to understand your audience and why they want to buy what you're selling. Once you understand your audience, you've done all of the hard work. Always remember, the person who knows you best is you!

Research Job Opportunities and Employers

Whether you are looking to stay in the same field you are currently working in, looking at related opportunities, or starting something new, it is important to have a comprehensive view of the landscape including competency requirements, trends, demand and outlook. This approach can help you develop your personal brand by aligning your experiences, skills and personal brand with the posted background requests outlined in the job opening.

Take time to research and explore the industry and alternative positions outside of what you may be imagining for your future. When learning how to research job opportunities, you need to understand that there are many career paths that you can take and career exploration tools that you can utilize, but it's up to you to pave the way. The [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#), published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, for example is a reliable source of information about hundreds of professional fields. It allows you to search by criteria such as entry-level education, on-the-job training, projected industry growth rate and historical median pay. The Handbook periodically highlights featured occupations, many of which you may not have heard of, like Desktop Publishers that use computer software to design page layouts for traditional printed or digital media. Another great resource to help with this resource is [CareerOneStop](#) which allows you to learn about job requirements, skills, industries, and outlook demand by particular fields.

Job search sites such as [Indeed](#) and LinkedIn also help you review in-depth details about both the industry that you are targeting your search in and the employers you would be interested in working for. Conduct your research from macro to micro by identifying the top performing organizations in the industry as well as targeting the top employers in the area you are searching within. Reviewing job descriptions is helpful when learning more about industry.

It's All About You!

Outline your experiences, skills, traits, personality, behavior and everything that makes up you! Identifying these characteristics ahead of time will help you find a position that will work best for both you and the employer. This time it's not about being selfish, it's about being confident. After all, in order to build your brand, you need to know yourself. Forbes presents a simple four phase process to help you [build your personal brand](#) which we highlight below using Disney as an example of utilizing the model:

1. Determine Your Emotional Appeal

(Disney - "Fun")

This means thinking broadly about your personality and how it affects the experience someone will have interacting with you. Make a list of words that best describe specific features of your personality, like being super organized or having an awesome sense of humor. The words in this list are called emotional modifiers. Consider the following questions in this phase:

- How do I make people feel?
- How do people benefit from working with me?
- What words do others use to describe me?

2. Determine Your Description

(Disney - "Family")

Now that you have your emotional modifiers, it's time to come up with descriptive modifiers. The purpose is to describe what the brand is for. As a professional yours might be an industry such as education or health care, or it could be a tangible skill such as creative or strategic. Consider the following questions in this phase:

- What field or industry am I in (or what do I want to be in)?
- What are the words I can use to describe my work?
- Who is my target audience?

3. Determine Your Education

(Disney - "Entertainment")

Next, write down what, exactly, you do (or will do). It could be something that directly relates to your career such as writing, graphic design, or financial planning. Are you a manager, a creator or an organizer? Do you connect people together? Consider the following questions in this phase:

- What service do I offer to people?
- What do I do that makes me stand out from everyone else?

4. Put it All Together

(Disney - "Making Dreams Come True")

The final phase is to look at your three lists of words, and find a way to combine them into one short sentence or phrase. This should be no more than five words in length - simple and memorable - and should serve as your mantra as you brand yourself for others to understand who you are and want to be.

Building and Maintaining Your Brand Online

Remember that part of your essential career survival kit, it is important to build and maintain a professional online presence. The contributing writer of the featured Forbes article, known as The Muse, reminds us that employers will likely Google you before they give you a chance during the formal interview. This means that your digital presence will be a key aspect in your branding strategy since many demands of your job search will likely be online activities such as filling out an application, submitting your resume and networking with your peers. Prepare by proactively by following the survival kit guidelines and Google search your name to see what future employers may find. Free tools such as [BrandYourself](#) and LinkedIn [Profile Grader](#) can help keep your online presence and brand on the right professional track.

Once your online presence is ready, it is time to build and share your personal brand. You'll be able to use anywhere online including the main job search channels and social networks. Be sure to complete your entire LinkedIn profile. By doing so you are able to help your network and future employers connect with you and find the right opportunities that meet both of your goals.