

What is your personal brand?

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Have you ever wondered what people say about you when you are not there? According to Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, "Your brand is what people are saying about you when you are not in the room." Some people cringe at the thought of what may be said, but did you know you have the power to influence these perceptions, simply by building your personal brand?



What is a personal brand?

Branding is a crucial part of success. Think of the biggest companies around the world today, these brands stand out from the crowd. Brand identity was, until recently, exclusive to the business world. But we now know that almost anything or anyone can have a brand, such as celebrities or political parties and most importantly you!

Your personal brand is what makes you unique. These are characteristics that people associate with you. It may be your voice, your fashion sense or compassion. Personal branding however does not involve being fake and putting up an act or show. It's about creating the perceptions you want, just like professional branding.

Why personal branding is important?

Personal branding is very important for everyone, especially if you want to stand out among thousands of job seekers. It does however require time and effort to develop. This involves a proactive way of controlling how you develop your career and how you are perceived in the marketplace. A personal brand is therefore a way to attract new opportunities.

STEP 1: Decide on a platform

You need a place from which you can market yourself. This could be social media accounts such as YouTube, Facebook or Instagram, and a personal website where you can interact with your fans and followers.

STEP 2: Focus on your strengths

Understand your own strengths, what makes you unique from all others. Just like a business, marketing yourself requires you to be aware of who you are.

STEP 3: Become an authority

Once you know what makes you different and what your strengths are, get even better. Absorb as much as possible about the topic and share your thoughts as an authority through videos, social media and blog posts.

STEP 4: Setting your priorities

The whole point behind branding is to reach a goal. This could be growing a loyal following, making more sales or increasing profits. Think about what it is you want and let that guide you in the direction you want to go.

STEP 5: Be yourself

There is only one you in this entire world. This is the most important part about personal branding. You have to be yourself. Don't follow the crowd, in fact, the more you are yourself the more successful you are likely to be.

STEP 6: Be consistent

Define who you are quite early on and stay consistent. Although it's possible to evolve over time, brands must be able to recognise your brand.

Remember, personal branding is not just about selling or marketing yourself. It's the best way to make sure that people perceive you as the person you want to be. Unfortunately, others may consider it bragging or self-promotion – but it really is just taking charge of your reputation.

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