

Tips to Brand Yourself for the Job You Want

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by Shawnice Meador

In today's working world, you have to learn how to be your own cheerleader in order to get the job you want. It's important not only to articulate the accomplishments from your existing career path, but also to build your personal brand for your dream job. Do your research to make sure the vision of the job you desire matches with the reality of what is out there. Then focus on building a strong network, updating your actual and virtual resume regularly and maintaining a professional online presence.

Follow these essential tips to build your brand and create a professional network, and get ready to land your dream job.

- **Develop a clear, detailed vision of the job that you want.** Take the time to “dive deep” into your professional vision for the future. Consider companies you want to work for, research jobs that pique your interest, begin reaching out to people in your target industry, and detail your ideal work/life balance, company values and pay. Make sure that your dream matches up to reality by ensuring that jobs that reflect your visions truly exist. Having your vision outlined will help you pinpoint the path to your goal and create a cohesive, consistent and unique personal brand.
- **Create and practice your elevator speech.** An elevator speech is like a mission statement for your career. It tells someone who you are, what sets you apart from others and how you would be a valuable asset to a department, company or professional connection. The ability to confidently articulate your elevator speech is key, and is the basis for the branding messages you place in your resume, cover letter, and on-line. It should be no more than a minute when spoken and a few sentences when written. A really effective statement takes time to create, and it is important to get feedback from people you trust to make sure it is just right. Even if you are a confident speaker, you absolutely should practice your statement enough that it comes naturally to you in conversations.
- **Update your professional profile.** A written professional profile is the first impression you give to potential employers, colleagues and other professionals, so you have to make sure it is adequately communicating your latest achievements and professional goals. This profile should be a well-rounded snapshot of you, and should effectively reflect your elevator speech. It should also include your unique skills and experiences from your existing career path as well as all of your transferrable skills that set you apart from the crowd and can ultimately lead you to your dream job.
- **Be consistent.** To land your dream job, you need a solid personal brand that you can share virtually and in-person, both casually and professionally. Your resume, cover letter, on-line profile, professional network and the conversations you have should promote the same person with the same goals.
- **Maintain your on-line presence.** Make sure to go on-line regularly to update, edit and critique your presence. Ensure that your profile is informative, interesting, professional and reflective of your personality. Utilize connections from your network to get feedback and advice from other professionals about your profile. Try to mix it up with people you know and trust as well as acquaintances. Take their advice and your profile views and connections will probably skyrocket.
- **Participate.** If you are a member of a professional network like SHRM Connect or LinkedIn,

use it! Join professional groups related to your field of interest, participate in group discussions, invite people to connect with you, post updates to your profile, and follow companies of interest. You never know who may be watching your activity and may reach out to you based on your insight and activity.

Create your value proposition and effectively market yourself for the job you want. If you put the thought and effort into creating your unique personal brand and you actively share it through various professional networks, the pieces of your professional puzzle will likely fall into place.

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