

# Personal branding.

Everything about our lives is being digitized. On the surface level, our life experiences such as holidays and events are documented through the use of cameras and videos. But what's interesting is that once intangible aspects of our lives such as our reputations and social connections are now becoming tangible. Who you are, your reputation and your personal brand is now something that can be defined, measured and cultivated through digital means such as search engines and social media sites. All of which can be accessed instantly by anyone through the internet. This has created a whole new dynamic

in terms of how business is done. Reputation has always mattered – but information was limited, so you weren't always sure who exactly you were doing business with. The modern age has changed this and transparency is now a basic entitlement that most people have. Whether you are raising funds, nurturing a customer or looking to poach that key executive, your personal brand will affect the outcome of all these actions. The people that you seek to influence and win over will be doing their research on you. And if they don't like what they see, you could be limiting your prospects.

Personal branding is the idea that like businesses, people have a brand – a reputation, an image and something they are known for – that represents who they are and what they are about. It is the idea that this personal brand can be cultivated towards a specific end such as cultivating a perception of gravitas, lightheartedness or whatever that person desires. It is about maintaining an ongoing impression of oneself through a variety of means which may include exuding personality traits, creating expert content or showcasing lifestyles or endeavors such as charitable initiatives.

## Aspects of your brand **include:**

### **personality and character.**

The person you are, or at least who you choose to show is one of the biggest factors that affect your brand. There are many different personality types and character traits and all of them project a different image and have different benefits depending on the situation. On the personality level, this covers aspects such as openness or agreeableness. At the character level, traits such as trustworthiness and humility come into play.

### **physical image.**

Your 'image' encompasses how you're perceived in a broad sense, but how you physically appear is important too. This includes things such as your posture, facial expressions, personal grooming and style. In the digital space, this will include the photos and videos of yourself and the design of your website.

### **reputation.**

Your reputation is essentially what people say about you when you're not around. It constitutes the experiences and interactions you have had with people and what you are known for. Your reputation can be a logical impression that people have in light of your work or accomplishments, but it can also be an emotional impression of who you are and how you made a person feel.

### **accomplishments and accolades.**

Being recognized by your peers in the form of awards and accolades contributes to your reputation and brand. A lot of what constitutes good personal branding is social validation and being officially recognized is a big part of that.

### **work portfolio.**

The work that you have done over the years serves as proof of your capabilities and what people can expect from working with you. People will look at your track record and create an impression about your standards, values and whether you would be a potential fit for them.

### **social media.**

Social validation in the form of followers provides a key signal into how notable you are. Typically, people assume that if you have more followers, your opinions, status or work is of higher value. Social media also showcases how you interact with people and gives people an idea of your personality.

### **media interactions.**

Before social media, newspapers, broadcasters and other outlets played a key role in shaping people's brands. They still hold a lot of weight and the interviews, contributions and press releases you create will impact how you are perceived.





## 7 reasons why you should care about **LinkedIn.**

### control **your brand.**

As mentioned, LinkedIn is the resume of the 21st century. But because it's online and usually public, anyone in the world can view your track record and experience. This means that you're effectively always 'on' when it comes to potential opportunities as you don't have to manually be talking to someone or have to send them your resume. LinkedIn is probably the most effective way to control your online brand as it will often contain all the key professional information somebody needs to know about you.

### go beyond a **resume.**

In addition to your standard experience, LinkedIn provides the opportunity to go beyond your work and education and showcase other aspects of your professional and personal life. For instance, the endorsement feature allows you to tap into social validation and highlight your reputation in certain aspects. You can also demonstrate your interests by which groups you participate in and curate a brand through content.

### find **new opportunities.**

Perhaps the main draw of LinkedIn is the new opportunities you can gain from the site. It is one of the most useful tools when it comes to recruiting new hires – not only does it offer you a broader resume but you can also reach out directly to candidates or post job ads that target your specific market. The platform is also useful for sales too. You have the ability to easily research key people and map out the structure of a potential organization. Then there's the inbound leads that can come to you organically through your resume, referrals or thought leadership. As your brand is out there in the open, you simply have no idea what opportunities could come up.

### secure **future opportunities.**

Whenever you meet somebody new or they hear about you, LinkedIn provides a way for you to keep them in your network for the long term. This is useful as opportunities that may not be here today could appear tomorrow. People change jobs and move industries which means you never know when you could need someone down the line.

### build **trust.**

Displaying your work experience, track record and connections is a sign of transparency. Due to your profile being publicly available, there is less likelihood that you will be deceptive as your information can be corroborated with others. People understand this and filling in as much detail about yourself can help build trust with the people you want to influence.

### develop **thought leadership.**

Part of building a personal brand involves developing thought leadership. LinkedIn is one of the best places to do so as it is a social site where professionals go to build connections and obtain insights. This means you have an already established platform to reach an audience and develop a following.

### use **information flows.**

LinkedIn is also useful for you if you need to obtain information. As well as being able to read and connect with other thought leaders, there is a lot of information such as industry news and the ability to easily research opportunities. As of 2019, LinkedIn has 545 million users, 40% of whom access the site on a daily basis. This offers tremendous opportunities when it comes to researching people or companies.