

Personal Branding by Diane Miller, M.Ed.

Brand or be Branded! You are the CEO of YOU!

It's your reputation. It's what people say about you behind your back. Your brand is your unique AUTHENTIC promise of your value, strengths, purpose, passions, and goals. Branding is intentionally enhancing what you already have – it is your Unique Promise of Value (UPI). It's what others say about you when you leave the room.

Self-awareness/reflection: When you get clear on who you are and your unique promise of value you become more confident. Research shows that branding and effective leadership begins with self-awareness. Use this time of reflection/thought to bring greater clarity to who you are – in life and in career while being your best self.

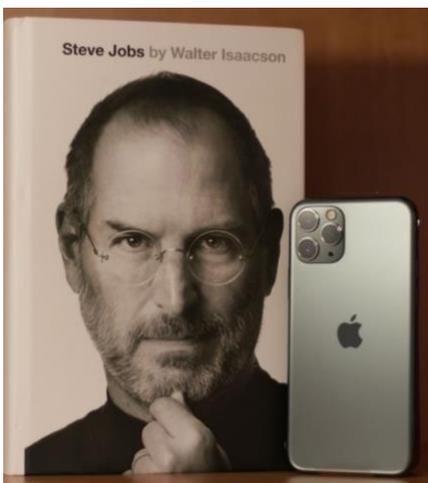
A compelling, cohesive brand will weave together a Unique Promise of Value in 3 ways: authenticity, advantages, and attraction. You must be genuine to who you REALLY are, not what the world or family expects of you. A strong brand conveys an ROI (Return on Investment)! What do you bring to the table? And finally how will you naturally attract others and cause others to be drawn to/engaged with you.

It's YOUR TRUTH!



First Impressions

Look at these people and share what impression people have of them? Why do you think they have this impression?



Steve Jobs

What impression do you have?

Kim Kardashian

What impression do you have?

Justin Bieber

What impression do you have?

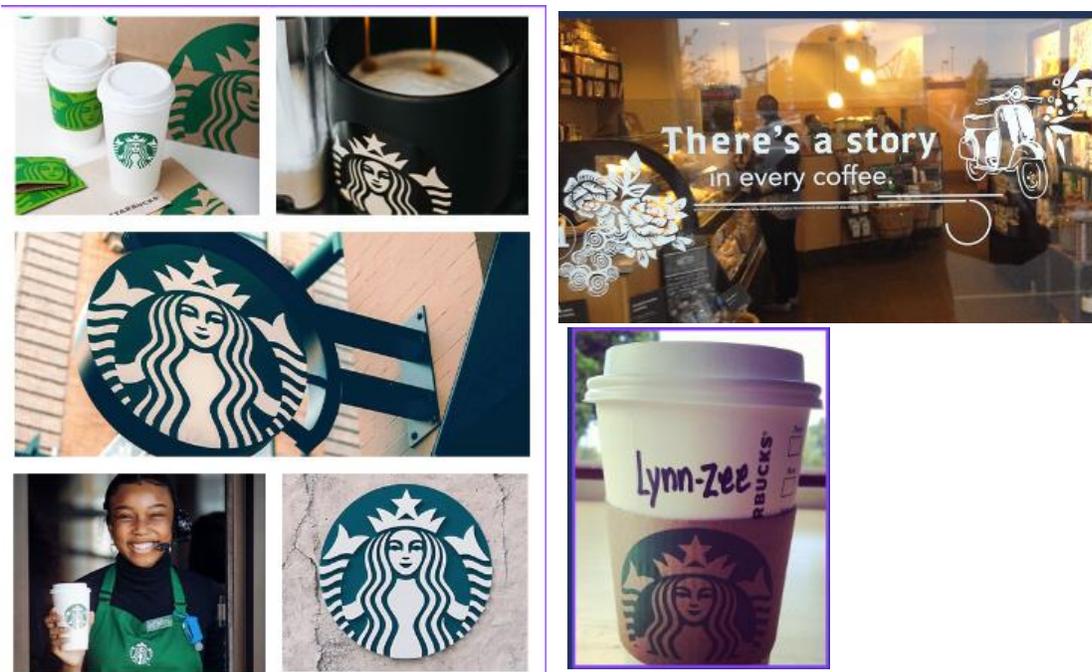
What gives people this impression? Clothes, language, etc?

What gives people this impression? Clothes, language, etc?

What gives people this impression? Clothes, language, etc?

Company Branding

3 C's: Communicating with Clarity, Consistency, and Constancy



Name of Company:

What impression do you have of this company?

How does their branding message, values, work, behaviors support this impression?

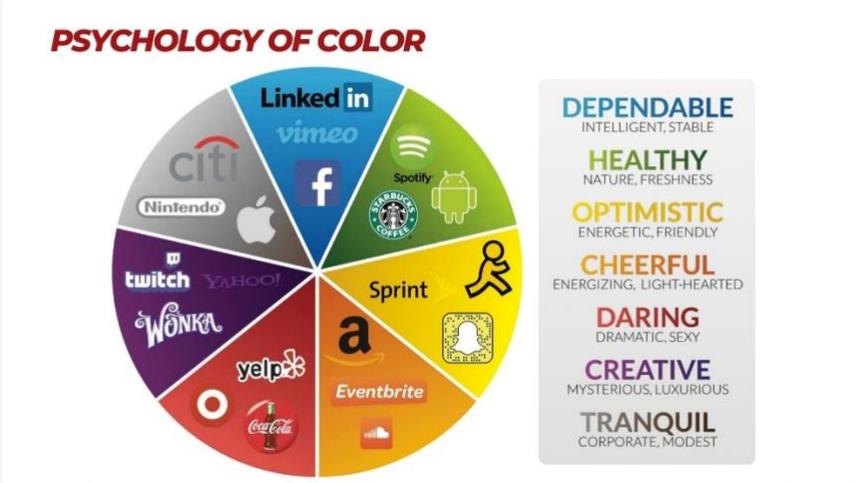
Brand Vs. Commodity

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?
Brand vs. Commodity

\$5  **\$2** 

"To inspire and nurture the human spirit – one person, one cup, and one neighborhood at a time."

PSYCHOLOGY OF COLOR



- DEPENDABLE**
INTELLIGENT, STABLE
- HEALTHY**
NATURE, FRESHNESS
- OPTIMISTIC**
ENERGETIC, FRIENDLY
- CHEERFUL**
ENERGIZING, LIGHT-HEARTED
- DARING**
DRAMATIC, SEXY
- CREATIVE**
MYSTERIOUS, LUXURIOUS
- TRANQUIL**
CORPORATE, MODEST

Look at yourself in a new and more defined way.

The unexamined life is not worth living



Define your X-Factor

People with strong personal brands are very clear about who they are and what they represent. They know and maximize their **STRENGTHS, SKILLS, and DIFFERENTIATORS** (stand out) to their advantage.

Super Strengths

These can be a combination of positive attributes (integrity, reliability, positivity, creativity, warmth) or skill-based strengths (leadership, critical thinking). Utilize the StrengthsFinder.

[StrengthsFinder Online - \\$20](#)

[Via Survey of Character Strengths](#) – free version

[16 Personalities](#) – free version of MBTI with descriptions and career alignment

[Big 5](#) – Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism

What strengths do others notice in me?

When working in teams, what role do I naturally turn to?

When was I successful and why?

What technical or transferrable skills do you offer employers or team members?

What skills energize you?

What skills have you mastered but I would rather not use – I don't enjoy them?

Which strengths will help me with my career goals?

What makes me STAND OUT – what are my differentiators? ([Stand Out Assessment](#) by Marcus Buckingham)

What word describes you to a T?

What are your top five strengths – your super powers and give a brief definition in your own words.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Validate: To validate this exercise ask your peers, classmates, coaches, or family how they view your strengths, skills, and ways you stand out.

Discover your Y-Factor (WHY)

Knowing your Y-Factor (WHY) is imperative in designing a plan that aligns with your values, passions, and purpose. When this is congruent, you will feel energized and more engaged with your work and may have an impact on society and others.

Values

What's your true north? Your values are similar to your GPS – they will give you direction and clarity as you refine your career goals and the company you want to work for. Our values reflect what is important to us. They are a shorthand way of describing our individual motivations. Together with our beliefs, they are the causal factors that drive our decision-making.

Values can be positive or fear-based (limiting). For example, integrity and trust are positive values, whereas revenge and manipulation are limiting, or fear-based values. Personal mastery involves eliminating/overcoming our fear-based beliefs. When our beliefs or behaviors are out of alignment with what is really important to us – our values, we lack authenticity.

Using the list below (or use the provided Values Assessment), identify your top six core values. As you go through the list, strike through those values that don't resonate with you. Then, from the remaining values select the six that are most important to you.

You can also take the following Online Values Assessments:

[Online Values Assessment](#) (not as detailed as the Personal Values below)

[Personal Values Assessment](#) | [Barrett Values Centre](#)

- Authenticity
- Achievement
- Adventure
- Authority
- Autonomy
- Balance
- Beauty
- Boldness
- Compassion
- Challenge
- Citizenship
- Community
- Competency
- Contribution
- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Determination
- Fairness
- Faith
- Fame
- Friendships
- Fun
- Growth
- Happiness
- Honesty
- Humor
- Influence
- Inner Harmony
- Justice
- Kindness
- Knowledge
- Leadership
- Learning
- Love
- Loyalty
- Meaningful Work
- Openness
- Optimism
- Peace
- Pleasure
- Poise
- Popularity
- Recognition
- Religion
- Reputation

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Security
- Self-Respect
- Service
- Spirituality
- Stability
- Success
- Status
- Trustworthiness
- Wealth
- Wisdom

List your top 5 values in rank order with 1 being the most important and give a brief definition.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Why are these values important to you?

Recall a moment in your life when you really lived this value?

What behaviors did you exhibit that support this value?

What values do you want to live more fully?

It's important that you are very clear about what these words mean to you because they may mean different things to different people.

Validate: What are you doing that is out of alignment and most critical to your success and happiness?

Passion (Passion fuels Purpose)

What brings energy?

Conversely, what tasks deplete you (procrastinate)?

What would I do in the summer if money wasn't an issue or I wasn't concerned about building my resume?

What type of people am I drawn to?

What do I like to do on my free time?

Am I connecting with your passions with my degree and career goals?

Purpose – Why

Purpose is an abiding intention to have meaning in your life and leave a positive mark on the world. A sense of purpose makes us physically and psychologically stronger – it becomes your reason for being. Purpose is not something we “find” and then it’s done. It’s a journey (adventure) that ultimately gets you out of bed in the morning.

Reflect and write your responses to the following questions:

1. What would you do if you knew you couldn’t fail?
2. What gets you out of bed in the morning/what drives you?
3. What bothers you most in the world – what keeps you up at night?
4. When are you in FLOW – when do you lose all track of time?
5. Purpose = Contribution/Impact. This is an opportunity to use your SUPER SKILLS. What can I do NOW, to contribute to society?

Current and Future Ambitions (Vision)

What are my current goals?

Fast forward one/five/10 years into the future and ask:

What do I want to be doing, professionally? Where do I aspire to be?

One year from now?

Five years?

10 years?

Write a brief story about the best or most influential leader you have ever encountered.

What made this person such an effective leader?

Now write about how you embody these same traits.

How can you improve?

What brand do I need to create today to help me step closer to that reality?

Professional and Personal Presence

How will you tell your unique story and value? What impact will your presence make before you say a word? How will you add value? What makes your memorable? How will you remain authentic while putting your best foot forward? How will you prepare to pursue the opportunities that align with your GPS road map? What will you do to create a network that will open doors to allow you to STAND out in an interview and in life?

When you tell your story, you share your strengths, stand out qualities, values, passions, and purpose in a way that keeps people's interest. Storytelling is one of the most powerful ways to engage others and help them remember you. **Remember, first impressions last and are created in 3 minutes, don't let something as professional attire of body language block all your roads before you say a word.**

Elevator Pitch

Your introduction or elevator pitch, together with your body language, personality and demeanor form the basis for first impressions. Pitch should be: brief, compelling, relevant, differentiated, and authentic. Start with a BANG. Draw your audience in and have them at hello. See the example below:

Example 1		Example 2
Strengths/Skills/Stand Out:		Strengths/Skills/Stand Out:
Relationship-building, collaboration, degree, past work		Managing people, teaching, coaching, degree
Values:		Values:
Respect, excellence, discipline, caring for others, generosity		Teamwork, winning, competition, optimism, growth
Passions:		Passions:
Problem-solving, finance		Sports, entrepreneurship
Purpose:		Purpose:
To lead a national initiative that influences the provision of alternative healthcare services to disadvantaged people		To launch a successful business that employs my love of sports and leverages my technical expertise for online delivery and engagement; To deliver team and leadership training services based on sports theory
Target Audience:		Target Audience:
Non-profit, hospitals, healthcare		Sports programs, major, campus connections

What engaging fact can you share that will “hook” the listener?

“I managed a mock portfolio of stocks and beat the S&P average.”

What year are you in school and what do you study?

“I’m a Finance and Organizational and Strategic Management student at Olin Business School where I’m planning to advance my knowledge and eventually launch a professional career in consulting.”

What represents a strength and differentiates you?

“I have strong financial and quantitative analysis, communication, and relationship-building skills. I have a track record of data analysis and making data-driven decisions and I am fluent in two languages.

How will you achieve your goals?

“I hope to land a portfolio management internship with a company that aligns with my values and desire to make a difference in society

'My love of reading and my passion for working with young people has inspired me to tutor underprivileged students and seek a degree in elementary education so I can continue helping others improve their literacy and open doors to a better life.'

What value is engaged?

What is driving you (your passions)?

Toward what target? (for whom)

What do you want to provide and why? (your purpose and impact)

Who is your brand on paper, social media, live

Social Media Presence – at work 24/7

Social media is the new digital handshake. Social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok and more can help you express your brand to a much bigger audience. You want people to see the real you in the virtual world. What does Google say about you?

Make sure you name every picture you put on social media so that you can be found in a search.

Now, your digital brand and reputation proceeds you live and in-person brand.

How can I improve my presence?

Your Brand Online

What will a prospective employer or recruiter uncover from a simple Google search, or on LinkedIn? To manage your online presence consider this:

- Be intentional about photos, images, and content you use. Choose visuals that demonstrate the qualities you want to authentically emulate.
- Utilize the “About” section of your LinkedIn profile to share highlights from your personal and professional background. Nothing is truly “private.” **Google yourself—what do you find?**
- Monitor what others say and portray about you, too. (Note: This includes how you are tagged in photos or posts by others.)

- Ask for “safe” feedback from others and determine if these impressions are consistent with your goals.

LinkedIn

90% of what is transmitted to the brain is visual so capitalize on the Headline, Photo, and Banner image.



How to have "All-Star" Profile:

- Keyword optimize your job titles, descriptions, experiences. (Consistent brand)
- Update and prioritize skills/endorsements that align to your brand
- Join industry groups, follow companies and thought leaders who are aligned to your interests and branding. Follow hashtags.
- Engage, publish content, share your expertise, communicate your skills.
- 50 connections | Photo | Industry | Experience | Skills

LinkedIn search algorithm prioritizes and rewards engagement (e.g., conversation, comments on posts).

Develop your compelling Headline Statement:

School | Major | Keywords | Purpose

Use this work to write your authentic Summary Statement (stats, values, credentials, passions, goals.)

This should be relatable

- *Start with a bang. Draw your audience in with the first two sentences.*
- *Know your target audience.*
- *Know your message. What are the three things you want readers to take away?*
- *End with way to contact you.*

This is where recruiters will vet you so make sure your LinkedIn profile is optimized and quickly displays who you are professionally.

Your Brand in Person

85% of financial success comes from people skills (SPARK skills not soft skills). You are always connecting and **making professional friendships**. Every company is asking: is this person competent, likeable, and do I trust them.

Warmth + Competence = Charisma

Keep these tips in mind about as you consider how to develop and present your brand in person:

- Research the organization(s) you're interested in to evaluate the norms and expectations for that unique setting. What it means to present yourself professionally can vary greatly.
- Choose clothing options that reflect your desired personal brand, make you feel confident, and respect the cultural norms and expectations of the setting you are engaged with.
- To fully engage with people and make a great impression, minimize distractions in the workplace (cell phones, social media, email, etc.)
- Communication skills are vital to this process. These are your personal skills, enthusiasm, relatability, friendliness, and excitement. [Learn more at the Science of People](#)
- Utilize the art of storytelling when appropriate. Stories (emotion) light up 5+ areas of the brain. This is what keeps us engaging, interesting, and causes people to be curious about who we are. Emotion helps us retain facts and build trust.
- Stores + vulnerability = relatable connection

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”
Maya Angelou

Excitement → **Hi, I'm Vanessa!**

Professionalism → I would be honored to help you.

Friendliness → I'm also the bestselling author of *Captivate: The Science of Succeeding with People* and creator of **People School**.

Relatability → I'm a recovering awkward person.

You deserve more **More influence, more income, more of what you want.**

My goal is simple: Help YOU get to your goals faster. Never be overlooked, interrupted or forgotten again.

Your Brand on Paper

Printed material like your resume and cover letter, communicate a message beyond the words themselves. To manage your brand on paper:

- Make sure your written documents are easy to understand and clear. Don't use "text speak" (e.g., using emoji's or abbreviating terms). Proofread your and check for spelling errors.
- Use proper formatting (e.g., font size/style, spacing, bolding, italicizing, underlining, and/or capitalization) to strategically emphasize key information.
- Customize job search documents like resumes and cover letters so that they are **targeted** specifically to the people you're sending them to.

Ways to Strengthen your Brand

- **Target audience? Target industry?**
- Determine a tone that suits your brand, and own it!
- Cultivate brand ambassadors - networking, school events, friends, organizations
- Ask others how they see you - define these people (gain 360 degree feedback)
- What am I trying to improve upon?
- Do I have a niche?

Additional Resources for Further Development

LinkedIn Learning

[Accelerating your Career with Personal Branding](#) by Shade Zahrai

[Creating Your Personal Brand](#) by Lida Citoren

[LinkedIn Course on Body Language for the Working Professional](#)

Science of People by Vanessa Van Edwards

[Brand Yourself](#)

Udemy Course

[Digital Body Language \(Vanessa Van Edwards\)](#) – learn what your digital brand says about you through social media and more

Books

[Reinventing You](#) by Dorie Clark

Whether you want to advance faster, change jobs, or change to a new field entirely the goal is clear: to build a career that thrives on your unique passions and talents.

[Personal Branding for Dummies](#) by Susan Chritton

[Designing Your Life](#) by Bill Burnett & Dave Evans

[Jeff Su's YouTube Channel](#) includes interviewing, LinkedIn tips, Cover Letters, etc.

Personal Branding is Always a Work in Progress

Branding is not a one-time event, it is evolving and a work in progress. The questions you have answered in this process will enable you to fulfil a life filled with engagement and enthusiasm derived from living in ALIGNMENT with your authentic self, doing work that matters.

I guarantee that being YOU is more than enough for the right people

When you don't know your true self you take on someone else's' false self