



ENLIGHTENED LEADERS NETWORK

Develop Your Brand Exercise

A persuasive personal brand convincingly and enthusiastically promotes the exceptional value you bring to an organization. Begin to develop your personal brand by probing your stand-out experiences, skills, and talents, with the following statements:

My background is unique because

My _____
makes me different from others who do the same job.

As a [insert career title here]

I've developed a reputation for

At the heart of my experience are these three strengths:

My former managers/peers would agree that the reason I am so good at what I do is

I have a natural talent for

which makes me better than most at what I do.

The two most important investments you can make in this "self interviewing" process are time and thought; so, please don't cheat yourself. This is not an exercise that can be completed in 15 minutes; it requires thoughtful soul-searching and reflection on your career.

Many of us chafe at "bragging" about our accomplishments and skills. We tend to down-play our achievements and gloss over what makes us great -- a hazardous tendency in today's competitive marketplace. To ensure that none of your assets fall victim to omission by modesty, solicit feedback from current or prior bosses and colleagues or anyone who would be willing to provide you with their honest input. Outsiders' perspectives help us see ourselves in a more objective light, can validate what we suspect might make us unique, and can mitigate any anxiety we have about showcasing those gifts to the world.



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Look for Themes

Once you've collected your own thoughts and others' input, look for themes. Determine which skills, talents, and experiences repeat themselves. Which make you feel most proud? Which reflect best what you love to do? Which do you do better than anyone else? These are the building blocks of your personal brand.

As in the retail world, only part of the power of a personal brand is found in delivering on the unique value promised. Regardless of your unique strengths, your brand will only be as effective as how compellingly you communicate it.

Optimize Your Language

Think about automaker BMW. What if, instead of, "The Ultimate Driving Machine," BMW employed the slogan, "A Really Good Car?" Which slogan do you think commands the \$50,000 - \$100,000 price tag attached to most of BMW's models?

Like BMW, you must promote yourself powerfully with language that commands the attention of an employer through compelling, value-driven branding statements.

Instead of, "I'm a great listener," you might say, "I have the ability to listen to people so that they truly feel heard and understood. For that reason, I am able to build trust and long-term relationships with even the most difficult customers."

Instead of, "I'm great at closing deals," you might say, "I specialize and have a proven track-record in identifying, pursuing, and successfully closing complex, multi-million and -billion dollar technology contracts that meet customers' specifications and propel my employer to new levels of revenue and profitability."