

BRANDING YOURSELF

By Monica Poe, MVA-GVA



What comes to your mind when you hear the names Oprah, Martha Stewart, and Lovie Smith? (And just for the record, Lovie was a good coach.) No doubt, you recognized their names, and you can picture their faces. Why? The individuals I mentioned have a strong brand. I'm sure you have heard of the book "The Purple Cow – Transform Your Business by Being Remarkable" by Author Seth Godin. Well, what about "The Purple You?" Much like branding your business, you also have to think about branding yourself. Here are three steps to help you improve your personal brand and show "The Purple You."

1. Define YOU – as a brand.

First of all, sit down, dust off your resume and take some time to assess your skills as a professional. Ask yourself some questions, such as: what skills do I possess? What skills would I like to possess? And what are my strengths and weaknesses? Don't be afraid to say you have weaknesses. Everybody has them. The most important thing is to acknowledge them and make an effort to improve in that area with education and professional development.

Brainstorm your aspirations with a spouse or close friends. And take a look at your last job review for feedback. The feedback from people around you can help you get to where you want to go. By assessing your skills, asking yourself pointed questions, and listening to feedback you are defining who you are as a **professional brand**.

2. Know where you want to go.

After you have assessed your skills and have defined **YOU**, now you need to know where you are headed and what necessary steps you need to take to help you get there. Do you want to stay in the same company or move to a different position? Once you have determined where you want to go, now it's time to create your personal brand profile, **aka: your resume**. Update your resume with all

your accomplishments, education, and work experience that highlight your strengths. Add any other positive information you gathered about yourself that **delivers value** to an organization. Your resume should highlight exactly what quality and skills you possess and give direction as to where you want to go.

3. Communicate your brand to the right people.

Now it's time to communicate where you want to go effectively to the right people who need to know what value you bring to the table. Communicate with recruiters and human resource professionals. **Network. Network. Network.** Make sure you communicate through discussion groups and other social communities you belong to. Let people know where you want to go so they can help you get there.

Remember, that branding yourself is an ongoing process and not a one-time occurrence. In order to stay relevant, you have to keep improving yourself. The job market changes constantly. You have to keep evaluating your skills to adapt to the necessary changes.

There you have it. Three steps to help you get started "**Branding Yourself**." So what are you waiting for? Get out there and show the world "**The Purple You**."

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