



Personal Branding – It matters in today's employment market

As the job market has become more competitive a jobseekers key to success is the ability to differentiate themselves from their competition by managing their career strategically. Even though many understand this principle, the idea of self-marketing often fills them with dread.

In the last few years the world of work has changed beyond recognition, with dramatic economic and technological developments happening within a short time span. For some employees and jobseekers these changes have been embraced with a passion, but for many, not born into this 'new world of work', they have a strong resistance to change.

Many jobseekers are still sticking to the traditional methods, reading ads in newspapers and joining recruitment agencies hoping to bypass the new advances in technology including social media, which have changed the face of recruitment.

It is usually those who have held a position for a number of years and then have been made redundant that are affected most by these changes. They now have to encounter a job market that they are totally unprepared for which is another knock to their self-esteem. Some understand that they have to adapt quickly and keep abreast of the technological revolution but they can be overwhelmed by the question "where to begin?"

In this new job market the recruitment and selection process is not about hiding behind a CV, past experience or job title: jobseekers need to become adept in understanding how employers are now selecting candidates, what they look for and how they can become the person of choice for the job in hand. This is why having an understanding and a strategy for self-marketing is no longer something you can choose to opt into.

We live in a culture where we identify the concept of selling as arrogance, bragging or "blowing your own trumpet". So when people suggest that whilst getting a job that you have to "sell yourself", there is often a tendency to either withdraw by hiding behind standard formulaic ways of communicating or to over-sell and be seen to be too eager or pushy.

Employers now want people who exude confidence, who are self-reliant and express themselves well. Jobseekers must be able to communicate their, skills, abilities, characteristics and values authentically in their CV's, online profiles and during interviews.

There is a way for jobseekers and career savvy professionals to stand out from the crowd by promoting themselves and still keep their integrity: by using the technique of Personal Branding.

We all have a personal brand, but we don't all manage it well. A personal brand is an image that comes into people's minds whenever they think of you; it's what shapes their ideas and expectations of you and the powerful way that you communicate who you are and what makes you unique.

Personal Branding is about managing perceptions; it allows people to define themselves and then communicate effectively to everyone on-line and off-line by maintaining a clear, consistent message that is unique and meets their potential employer's requirements.

Using personal branding allows jobseekers to demonstrate what attributes they have that will be of value to their potential employer, what they have delivered in the past and the impact it made, and what they could bring to their organisation.

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To start to gain an understanding of how jobseekers and savvy professionals should start this process they can follow the four step process:

Step 1. Discover – Develop a strong self-awareness of the aspects that makes them unique.

Step 2. Communicate – Search for their name in Google, find out what first impression potential employers or recruiters would get.

Step 3. Define – Discover who is in their existing network, connect with them and continue to build their network using social media.

Step 4. Create – Work out a strategy for creating a consistent and compelling story which can be adapted for on-line and off-line communication.



Dawn Winder – Senior Consultant, HDA

Recognising the increased importance of personal branding for people transitioning their careers in a market where identity, image and reputation increasingly impact the extent to which doors are opened, HDA have introduced a new workshop: 'Marketing Yourself', developed and facilitated by our senior consultant Dawn Winder. Dawn's background in recruitment and her strength as an inspiring facilitator and coach, gives our career development and outplacement clients leverage to both a) recognise the practical changes they can make to develop their personal brands, and b) adopt the implementation strategies to make a positive impact to their career development, career transition or job search campaign.

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