



A WEEK IN *Learning*

ARTICLE

LET THEM TALK: BUILDING YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

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Have you ever wondered, “What are people saying about me?” Even the most self-assured of us might be curious about what people think of us. What if there was a way to take back some control on how we’re being perceived? We’ll never have complete control over perceptions, but there’s a secret weapon available to each and every one of us: our very own personal brand. But what exactly is a personal brand, and how can we use it to reign in the narrative?

A personal brand is defined as **the process of deciding and promoting what you stand for as an individual**. This is typically based on a culmination of the experiences, skills, and values that make you, you. How do we get better at communicating exactly who we are to our colleagues? Try out these five steps below to build your brand.

1. Figure out your goals

Social entrepreneur Marcos Salazar says the starting question should always be, “What do you want your personal brand to help you accomplish?” Maybe you’re looking to upskill into a new role within Goodwill. Or maybe you want to highlight the work you’ve put into developing leadership skills. No matter what it is, figure out what specifically you want your brand to accomplish and write it down.

2. Be clear on what you want to be known for

Controlling the reputational narrative is a major perk of being intentional with your brand. You can ask yourself, “What exactly is it that I do?” Are you a team player who values cultural awareness and transparency? What about a go-getter that meets challenges head-on and never stops learning? If you leave the narrative to chance, likely someone else will choose your representation for you.

3. Consider your audience

Cultivating a personal brand does indeed start with you, but surprisingly it’s not really about you at all; it’s about the people you want to be known by for your skillset. Think about the ways you can best explain to them what you have to offer and how your talent is of interest to their specific needs.



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4. Create a mission statement

At Goodwill, we know the importance of a good, clear mission statement. It's the cornerstone of who you are, what you represent, and why you do the work. We all have a concept of what that looks like for us personally. The challenge is to move the mission from a notion to action.

5. Start building your brand

A major way to build and share your brand is via your online presence. It may seem daunting, but give real thought to the benefits of creating a personal website. No other online avenue will afford you the same level of control over your digital reputation as a site written by and for you. You'll also have the opportunity to share information about your personality and career in ways you think will best highlight your mission statement.

You don't have to define who you are on paper overnight; it's actually better to spend some time contemplating how you want to be seen in the world. Just like with any other goal, though, if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. So, plan to empower yourself by your personal brand and give them something to talk about.

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