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Your name is just the start

Personal Brand Week
eBook

pwc

Introduction

In today's competitive environment, students need a way to differentiate themselves from their peers. They need an "X" factor that makes them indispensable. In short, they need a personal brand.

Personal branding can be a powerful tool for professional success. Personal branding is not simply a cosmetic exercise but instead a process that helps to develop skills that increase the potential of standing out in the crowded job market.

As one of the largest employers of college graduates in the United States, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP has unique insights into what makes students stand out. But we're not keeping those insights to ourselves.

In February 2010, PwC launched Personal Brand Week and dedicated each day to a different theme. The response from across the country was overwhelmingly positive.

And now we're taking it one step further and sharing the best personal branding tips and worksheets with you in this e-book.

Take time to read through the materials. Leverage the tips in everyday interactions. Use the worksheets to become more aware of the skills that make you different. And importantly, take actions each day that build the personal and professional skills to create your unique personal brand.

We hope that you find the materials as useful as other students across the country. And, as always, we welcome your feedback. Please visit us at [facebook.com/pwcuscareers](https://www.facebook.com/pwcuscareers) to add your thoughts and comments.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Holly Paul
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP US Recruiting Leader

The foundation of your personal brand

A Tweet from one of our followers

paulcopcutt

Identify your strengths and focus on them
for your personal brand success, minimize
the impact of your weaknesses #PwCPBW



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All About You: Top 10 Personal Branding Tips for Students

What are the key elements of a student's personal brand?
Here are 10 tips to jump-start your branding efforts:

Monday tips

1. Be authentic

Before you even think about your personal brand, you have to think about who you really are and what you really want. What have you accomplished so far? What are you passionate about? What are your goals? If you find it difficult to analyze yourself, ask friends or relatives to describe your best qualities and greatest achievements or take a self-assessment test online or through your college career center.

2. Learn how to introduce yourself

Once you're more clear on who you are, the next step is being able to communicate that to others. "Tell me about yourself" is a much harder assignment than it seems, especially in professional situations. Learn how to concisely, confidently say your name, your recent history and your goals, then practice, practice, practice until you're comfortable telling your own story.

3. Show your confidence

While it's never a good idea to project arrogance, many students err on the side of self-deprecation. Even if you feel inexperienced or awkward in professional situations, never make fun of yourself or put yourself down. If you project confidence and comfort with yourself, others will be comfortable with you.

4. Develop the tools of the trade

Just as a company or product needs marketing materials, you need various items to "market" yourself to recruiters, networking contacts, grad school admissions committees and others. These materials include your résumé, cover letters, email address, voicemail message, online profiles and website or blog. Every representation helps to reinforce the brand you want to present, so be professional and consistent across each medium.

5. Show your cards

Business cards are a great way to show your professionalism and desire to keep in touch with the people you meet, and they are increasingly popular among career-minded students. Don't worry if you don't have a title or company; just print simple, professional-looking cards with your name, phone number and email address and, if you'd like, your college and major. VistaPrint is a good resource for free or inexpensive business cards.

6. Dress for success

Make sure your personal appearance matches the image you want to project. Find out what kind of clothes are appropriate for your desired industry and invest in the best you can reasonably afford. When in doubt, err on the side of formality. A great strategy is to have one or two reliable, high-quality outfits that are appropriate for a job interview or professional event and keep them clean and pressed at all times.

7. Build a professional online image

Everyone is Googling everyone else these days, so be vigilant about your online identity. Even if your social network settings are tight, take down any photos of partying, drinking or "unprofessional" behavior just in case. Then, enhance your brand online by creating a strong profile and becoming active on LinkedIn, the professional social network.

8. Take a writing class

Guess why the "I Judge You When You Use Poor Grammar" group on Facebook has over 400,000 members? Even in the days of IM, texting and Twitter, writing and speaking skills still matter. Use proper grammar, capitalization and spelling in all professional communications (that means no LOLs, BRBs or ROTFLs!).

9. Ask for feedback

Find a professional you trust—a friend, relative, professor, etc.—who will be candid with you and ask this person to tell you if there are any areas where you're getting in your own way. For instance, do you say "like" or "you know" too much? Do you come across as hyper, entitled or uninformed? If necessary, take a class or get some coaching in any area where you could use some polish.

10. Reassess your personal brand regularly

Your experience, ideas and ambitions are going to evolve as your career develops, so make sure your personal brand is keeping up. Just as you should regularly update your résumé, remember to regularly revisit your self-introduction, wardrobe, online profiles and other elements of your personal brand every few months. Be flexible. "Brand You" is always a dynamic work in progress.

Your Elevator Pitch: The Foundation of Your Personal Brand

**Monday
worksheet**

What is an elevator pitch?

Imagine stepping into an elevator in a downtown office building. As the doors close, the person standing next to you says, “Hi, I’m a recruiter at your dream company. Tell me about yourself.” Are you prepared for an opportunity like this? Could you concisely introduce yourself, your background and your career aspirations in the time of a quick elevator ride—30 seconds or less?

“Elevator pitch” is a popular term for the basic introduction of who you are and what you’re looking for. It can be used in a variety of professional situations such as networking events, career fairs, cover letters and formal interviews. (The elevator, of course, is optional).

Why is an elevator pitch important?

In most situations, you won’t have time to tell someone your life story or to list every accomplishment on your résumé. The best elevator pitches provide enough background information and enthusiasm so the other person wants to continue a conversation with you.

Here is a simple 4-step process for developing a strong and effective elevator pitch:

1. Know yourself

The first step to introducing yourself effectively is knowing who you are and what makes you unique. Ask yourself the following questions and jot down your answers:

Which of your previous jobs, even if they were part-time jobs, internships or volunteer positions, provided you with experience relevant to what you hope to do now? If none, what about your college major or extracurricular activities?

What are your strongest skills?

What are your strengths and passions, career-wise?

What kinds of jobs, companies or industries are you pursuing now?

What can you say about yourself that will set you apart from other entry-level job candidates? What makes you memorable and special?

2. Craft your pitch

Think of your pitch in three parts:

1. Who are you?

Remember that your primary goal is simply to introduce yourself. Share your name and place yourself in context by explaining what school you attend, what you're studying or where you currently work.

2. What are your major accomplishments/passions/unique skills?

Leverage the skills you listed earlier and frame them in a way that is meaningful to a potential employer or networking contact. What can you say that will make a recruiter remember you or a networking contact want to know more about you?

3. What do you want/Where are you going?

Laura Allen, founder of 15SecondPitch.com, calls this the "call to action." This is the part of your pitch that lets the other person know what you're looking for and the topic you're interested in talking about. Don't be pushy or aggressive, but do be forthright about the fact that you're looking for a job.

Finally, be sure to tailor your delivery to the interpersonal circumstances of the moment: the goal is to maintain a conversational tone and not sound rehearsed. Think of the above elements as "sound bites" that you can mix, match and cater to each unique interaction.

Some examples:

"Hi, I'm Natasha Brown. I'll be receiving my BBA in Accounting in May from UT-Austin and I interned last summer at PwC in the Assurance practice. I also participated in the firm's community service project in New Orleans, which was an incredible experience. I'm also the vice president of UT's business fraternity. I'm currently seeking an auditor position in the Chicago area, which is why I'm here at this conference."

"Hi, my name is Rob Smith. I'm currently a junior at Boston College majoring in business with a minor in Chinese language. I spent last semester in Beijing, where I studied and had a really exciting internship with a small American marketing firm working with Beijing's tourism agency. I saw that your agency has added some Chinese clients lately, which is why I'm eager to apply for one of your internships."

"Hi, my name is Marcos Sanchez. I'm an English major at NYU and I'm pursuing publishing internships. I'm really active with several organizations on campus, helping them design their websites. I'm also a big advocate of social media and have helped some nonprofit organizations create their Facebook fan pages. I saw that your magazine is doing a lot of great things in the social media space..."

The power of passion

A Tweet from one of our followers

@DanSchawbel

Be the real you because everyone else is
taken and replicas don't sell for as much
#PwCPBW



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Carpe Diem: Top 10 Ways to Incorporate Passion into Your Career

What differentiates the mundate careers from the meaningful ones? Passion is the “x” factor. Here are 10 tips on how to find and express your personal passions every day:

Tuesday tips

1. Be (authentically) enthusiastic

Authentic passion is attractive and demonstrates traits like commitment, well-roundedness and enthusiasm. While networking or interviewing for a job, don't be afraid to express that you have deep passions and big goals, but always stay true to your personality and values. (If you're shy, there's no need to pretend you're a comedian!)

2. Say yes more often

Be an explorer at work as well. Many people discover their calling through the moves they make at work. Be open to new experiences—assignments, projects, trips, games, trainings, networking events and more. Say yes to new things—passionately.

3. Find your bliss

The first step to incorporating passion into your work is determining what you're passionate about. What activities, causes or topics are you most committed to? What could you talk about for hours? What makes you lose track of time? If you're not entirely sure, dedicate yourself to finding out. Remember back to activities you loved as a kid or take some assessment tests. Everyone has passions; find yours.

4. Get rid of the “shoulds” and “shouldn'ts”

If you think it's “bad” or “unprofessional” to show your passion at work, you may be dealing with some predetermined fears that aren't necessarily true. The reality is that passion is a career asset, even in conservative fields like accounting, finance and law. If you're not convinced, read biographies of successful people and talk to professionals you admire—you'll likely find passion everywhere you look.

5. Be proactive

People who incorporate passion into their careers don't just “fall into” this situation. They very deliberately incorporate their interests into their jobs. If you love to write, volunteer to pen more reports or contribute to their organization's intranet. If you enjoy being social, offer to attend every conference you can. If you love photography, bring your camera to events and snap away. Here's where the magic happens: the more your manager and colleagues see you in your element, the more likely they are to find additional ways for you to shine.

6. Hang out with passionate people

Look around your life for other people who share your passions—or any passion. Find the other artists, runners, gamers, hockey fans, stargazers, etc. Just as you network with other professionals in your industry, network with other professionals in your interest areas. The best professional connections are often forged outside the office (lunch, anyone?).

7. Hang out with passionate people—online

For every possible interest there are a zillion LinkedIn groups, Facebook fan pages, online communities, listservs, Google and Yahoo groups and more. Especially if you're short on time or resources, look to these web-based passionfests for ideas, discussions, event listings, networking contacts and more.

8. Give back passionately

No matter what your day job, one of the best ways to incorporate passion into your life is to volunteer your time and talent. If you love animals, volunteer to work at a nature center, zoo or animal rescue center. If you love science, donate your time to a hospital or science museum. Many employers will give you time off for community service and may even introduce you to new projects that uncover a hidden passion.

9. Support others

Another great way to find meaning in your work is through the relationships you forge with colleagues, clients and others. Be passionate about helping and supporting other people. Share job leads, event invitations, networking contacts, advice and moral support. “Paying it forward” makes you feel good and it's bound to come back to you in wonderful ways.

10. Be curious

Read a magazine on a topic you know nothing about. Go to StumbleUpon.com and wander aimlessly through websites you might never otherwise find. Take a different route home from work. Talk to the one person in class today who seems the most different from you. New passions can arise in surprising places.

The power of passion

**Tuesday
worksheet**

Why is passion important?

Passion is powerful, attractive and exciting. It's an "x" factor that differentiates an okay career from an extraordinary one. Let your passion, enthusiasm and uniqueness shine through!

If you're not entirely sure what your passions are, it's worthwhile do some exploring. It doesn't matter if your passions are small or huge; what matters is finding the activities, people, causes or places that inspire you deeply and bring out the very best in you.

Take time to discover your unique passions and find ways to incorporate them in your life and work. Here are four exercises to help.

1. Get back in the sandbox.

Think back to the activities you loved as a child. Did you love building things? Making friends? Dancing in the backyard? Collecting bugs? How could you incorporate some of these childhood pleasures in your professional life today?

Activities I loved as a child

How I could include this in my life today

Example: Playing with my dog

Example: Telling stories

Volunteer at the animal shelter once a month

Sign up for a local Toastmasters speaking group

2. Keep a passion list

Buy a little notebook or keep a running document on your computer with a long list of things that make you happy or fulfilled. Try not to censor yourself at all; just write. As your list grows, you'll begin to see patterns of what kinds of things attract you. Then you can begin to look for these themes (e.g., creativity, logic, the environment, Asia) in your work and personal pursuits and to brainstorm ways to incorporate them more into your life.

Here are some prompts to get you started:

Whom do you most admire?

Where would you most like to travel? What are the best places you've visited?

What section(s) of the bookstore or newspaper most appeal to you?

What classes have you most enjoyed?

What causes or nonprofit organizations do you consider most important?

3. Create a vision board

Magazines, websites and newspapers are overflowing with stories and images of people, items, places and experiences that might spark your passion. Over the next few weeks, clip stories that motivate you and save them in a passion folder that you can look through for inspiration. If you're a visual person, you can put your favorite images together and create a "vision board"—a poster board on which you paste a collage of images that inspire you. The idea is that, when you surround yourself with images of what you want, you will be more likely to find those people, places, experiences and things in real life.

For more tips and examples of inspiring vision boards, check out the "How to Make a Vision Board" article on www.eHow.com.

4. Put your passion to work

You might be thinking, "All of this sounds great, but what does it have to do with finding a job and building my career?" It may surprise you to learn that some of the most successful people are the most passionate. They find ways not only to be passionate about their jobs, but also to incorporate their personal passions into their day-to-day careers. Here are some examples:

- Passionate golfers take clients out on the golf course and talk business on the links.
- People who are passionate about diversity issues volunteer to serve on nonprofit boards and to mentor less experienced people.
- Photography lovers bring their cameras to events and publish their photos on the company's intranet or in newsletters.
- Professionals who love socializing attend lots of networking events and always have plans for lunch with a friend or colleague.
- Creative or imaginative people express themselves by being innovative all the time. They are constantly trying new approaches to old problems and finding clever solutions for everyday tasks.

How can you put more passion in your work?

Management consultant Regina Barr proposes asking yourself these five questions:

1. What is your passion inviting you to do?

2. What would your life be like if you were able to incorporate some aspect of your passion into your life every day, beginning right now? Would you participate in different organizations? Volunteer? Try a new class or hobby?

3. How would adding more passion to your life benefit you? How would it benefit your school or the organizations you're involved with?

4. What obstacles are standing in your way?

5. What is one small step you could take to move you forward and begin adding more passion or authenticity to your life today?

Now, go forth and live with more passion!

Additional Resources

- www.pwc.tv – don't miss the rest of our Personal Brand Week Worksheets and Top 10 Lists
- *Finding Your Own North Star: Claiming the Life You Were Meant to Live* by Martha Beck
- *I Could Do Anything If I Only Knew What It Was: How to Discover What You Really Want and How to Get It* by Barbara Sher
- *Zen and the Art of Making a Living: A Practical Guide to Creative Career Design* by Laurence G. Boldt

Relationships and mentoring

A Tweet from one of our followers

TheRealDanSfera:

Good stuff Dan! @DanSchawbel: Make your
life one giant networking event #PwCPBW



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So You Think You Can Network? Top 10 Dos and Don'ts for Building Relationships

Your relationships are unique to you and are an essential component of your personal brand. Here are 10 tips on building, maintaining and enjoying your professional work:

Wednesday tips 1

1. DON'T wait until you need a network to build one

Networking is not something to do only when you need a new job or promotion. It's not something you can cram, buy or borrow the night before you need it. It must be a regular part of your life and activities as an ambitious, success-oriented student. Just like friendships, the most authentic and meaningful professional relationships evolve naturally over time.

2. DON'T overlook the obvious

Too many students think that they have no network because they fail to "count" the people all around them. Your parents, siblings, cousins, neighbors, classmates, professors, career services staff and everyone else you know are all members of your network. In fact, one of the best ways to grow your network is through personal referrals from your friends and family.

3. DO make sure all networking relationships are mutually beneficial

While you may feel you have nothing to offer more experienced contacts, you never know what you might be able to do for them. Simply ask any networking contact, "Is there anything I can do to help you?" and see what happens. The best way to combat a discomfort in asking people for help is knowing that you're always willing to return the favor.

4. DO become an active alum

No matter where you go to school, alumni connections are among the most valuable you possess. This is because one of the keys to networking is having an affinity with the people you want to network with. Get involved now with networking events, fundraisers, online networks and other opportunities that will expose you to your school's alums. And remember to help students after you graduate!

5. DO volunteer to build your network

Volunteering is one of the most effective and most fulfilling ways to meet new people. Other volunteers and nonprofit staff will share the affinity of the cause with you and may be potential sources of job leads, career advice and mentorship. Most of these contacts would be happy to help a dedicated volunteer.

6. DO join industry associations

Professional membership organizations exist to help people in an industry connect with each other. Don't miss out on this instant community. When you join, be sure to subscribe to all publications and news alerts to be fully informed about events, mentoring opportunities and other benefits. Note that association memberships can be expensive, so always ask for student or entry-level professional rates when you join.

7. DO research before any networking event

It's great to sign up for lots of networking events, but too many students show up and say, "Well, here I am. I hope something really great happens!" You have to be more strategic. Any time you sign up for a conference, recruiting reception or other event, research the attendees and what organizations or topics will be discussed.

8. DON'T bail

When you sign up for a networking event, go. Period. You never know which meet-and-greet may be the one where you make the connection that leads to your dream opportunity. You also never know who in your network might be in attendance and be unimpressed by the sight of your unused nametag.

9. DO follow up fast

The best time to follow up is directly after meeting someone, while you're still fresh in his or her mind. Never forget that networking is about building and maintaining relationships. You can go out and meet dozens of people, but what's the point if you never keep in touch with them? Take the initiative and make the first move.

10. DON'T forget to say thank you

Expressing gratitude when appropriate is one of the most important elements of professional networking. Send an email, e-card or handwritten note to anyone who provides you with advice, ideas, a referral or anything else. Never let a good, helpful deed go unthanked. Gratitude is an essential component of the best professional networkers and the best personal brands.

Inquiring Minds Want to Know: Top 10 Questions to Ask Mentors & Informational Interviewees

To make the most of any informational interview or mentoring conversation (or even a conversation at a career fair or employer information session), here are 10 questions to guide your conversation:

Wednesday tips 2

A valuable personal branding and networking practice is to ask professionals in your industry for advice, guidance, ideas or networking referrals. The official name for this practice is informational interviewing and it's a crucial strategy for finding jobs and building your career. In some cases, these informal meetings can turn into more formal, ongoing mentoring relationships.

- 1.** What is a typical day like for an entry-level professional in your position/organization/profession? (Try to get a balanced perspective by asking for pros and cons).
- 2.** Tell me about how you made the decisions in your career path—why you chose this field, why you took positions and left positions.
- 3.** What does your company/industry look for in the people they hire?
- 4.** What activities, classes or other parts of your college experience best prepared you for your career? What is the best decision you made as an undergraduate with respect to your professional life?
- 5.** What skills and experience are most impressive in your field? How would you recommend I get that experience?
- 6.** What media outlets (blogs, magazines, newspapers, Twitter feeds, etc). should I be reading or watching to be in the loop in the industry?
- 7.** What organizations and online groups do you recommend I belong to, and what events should I attend? In general, how have you built relationships and networked effectively?

8. What do you think is the future outlook for your industry?

9. Would you be willing to review my résumé and offer your opinion and advice? (You'll only want to ask this question if you feel comfortable and the interview seems to be going well).

10. Would you be willing to connect me with anyone else you know who might be able to offer some advice? (If you've formed a nice connection with your informational interviewee and he or she seems to want to help you, one of the best outcomes of your meeting is to find another person to interview. You can either ask your current interviewee to make an email introduction for you, or ask if it's okay to use your interviewee's name when contacting the person).

Your Network: How to Build & Maximize Professional Relationships

**Wednesday
worksheet**

What is networking?

For those who think they don't know how to network or worry that they are too shy, remember that networking is just about talking to people and maintaining relationships. You don't have to network with CEOs or VIPs to benefit, and networking doesn't have to mean shaking a million hands at a conference or making 100 cold calls.

Here are four exercises to help you build and maintain a strong professional network:

1. Start with people you already know

The best networks start with the people you already know. And your existing network is probably much bigger than you think.

Take a few minutes and fill out the names of people you know and trust in each of the following categories. As part of an active job search, you'll want to reach out personally to each of these people – with an email, phone call or social networking message – to let them know you are job hunting and ask for their support.

Once you begin a dialogue about your career interests, you can begin asking these people to introduce you to other people in their networks. If you are gracious and genuine, most people are more than happy to provide some advice and connections. Always remember, however, that networking must be mutually beneficial, so be sure you give as much help and support as you receive.

List people in your existing network to whom you can reach out for advice and referrals:

Family friends

Relatives

Others (check your phone contacts!)

Professors

Other college staff

Your friends and classmates

Internship and volunteering contacts

Alumni

2. Step up your networking efforts.

Beyond reaching out to the people you know, it is valuable to put yourself in situations where you will continue to build your professional network in an authentic way. Here are some suggestions—see how many of these opportunities you can check off in the next few months:

- Attend a company information session on campus.
- Go to a meeting of an organization or club you've never tried before.
- Visit a professional association meeting or conference (check for student rates!).
- Check out a local alumni event for your university next time you're home for a vacation.
- Register for event announcements from your career center and sign up for a workshop.
- Show up at a book reading, museum opening or other cultural event.
- Set up a profile and join your university's group on LinkedIn, the professional network.
- Invite someone you don't know very well to meet for a coffee.
- Give your time to a volunteer activity.
- Take a new class outside of your regular curriculum (e.g., study a new language or try Pilates).
- Strike up a chat with an interesting-looking stranger at the gym or in line at a coffee shop.
- Go to an event you weren't planning on attending. You never know what can happen!

3. Keep in touch.

Networking isn't just about making connections; it's also, and perhaps more importantly, about maintaining them. As you continue to build and expand your network, use these techniques to stay in touch with people in a positive, memorable way. Here are some suggestions:

- Forward an article you come across that would interest someone you know.
- Invite a connection to attend a networking event or volunteer activity with you.
- Update your status on LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter with some professionally related news.
- Comment on someone else's status update in a positive way.
- Send a note or e-card to people on their birthdays or other special occasions.
- Send personalized holiday cards (e-cards are fine if you want to save some cash).
- Update people when you finish the school year, start a new job, have a new address, etc.

4. Build a "circle of mentors."

Owning your career today requires all of us to actively build our network with peers and to create an expanding circle of mentors. If you are interested in having a mentor – and you should be – you have to be proactive about it.

While you might get lucky and find a great mentor through a formal program at your university, employer or a professional association, many formally assigned mentors are like forced friendships. And, it's a big mistake to limit yourself to a single mentor as the key to opening doors for you. Today's business world is too dynamic and unpredictable. Research on networks in organizations has shown that broader networks are more valuable than deep ties to a single individual.

A better strategy is to build a “circle of mentors” – a network of more experienced professionals to whom you can turn when you face challenges or important decisions. Here are some tips:

Your first mentor can be your boss

Make sure you are getting everything you can from this relationship, whether it’s a boss during an internship or a full-time position. There is nothing like having a boss who is your biggest fan, a person who will advertise your abilities and potential to more senior leaders. While it starts with high performance, make sure that your direct supervisor understands your career aspirations.

Consider a “co-mentoring” relationship

In this situation, you and your mentor will help each other. In a co-mentoring relationship, you (the more junior person) can offer an understanding of new technology, new trends or other guidance. In exchange, your more experienced mentor can offer you the wisdom of experience.

Look one step up the ladder

A mentor doesn’t have to be a CEO. A former classmate or work colleague who is a few years more senior can be an excellent professional guide.

“Meet” any way you can

In today’s busy world, it may be hard to have regular, face-to-face meetings with a mentor. Or, you may want to develop a mentoring relationship with someone who lives far away. This is absolutely fine. You can have a productive mentoring relationship over the phone or with email interactions.

Ask your mentor to make you accountable

It’s a great idea to find a mentor who is willing to help you set deadlines and follow up with you about your goals. This also means that you should always be prepared when you meet with your mentor: have specific questions or situations ready to discuss—it’s totally appropriate to bring a list of items you’d like to discuss.

Show your gratitude

Remember that mentors are donating their time to you, so always send a thank you email or note after every interaction.

List 3–5 potential mentors here:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Good luck and enjoy your networking!

Additional Resources

- www.pwc.tv – don’t miss the rest of our Personal Brand Week Worksheets and Top 10 Lists
- *Never Eat Alone: And Other Secrets to Success, One Relationship at a Time* by Keith Ferrazzi
- *The Networking Survival Guide: Get the Success You Want By Tapping into the People You Know* by Diane Darling

Social media and your career

A Tweet from one of our followers

DottieL:

Build an engaging social network and use it
as a stepping stone #PwCPBW



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You.com: **Top 10 Online Branding Tips for Students**

Make no mistake about it: your professional networking contacts are Googling you. Your online image is incredibly important, and your web-based networking activities can make or break your job search. Here are 10 tips for professionalizing your virtual presence:

Thursday tips

1. Google yourself

Google your own name and make sure the results reflect the image you want to project. If you don't show up in search results or you don't like what appears, create one or two professional social networking profiles and post bylined content in your school newspaper or a club or association website.

2. Email impeccably

Email is a very important component of your online image. Since this is likely the primary way you'll interact with networking contacts and potential employers, make sure you always communicate in writing like the professional you want to become. Answer all emails within 24 hours and use proper grammar, spelling, capitalization and professional etiquette at all times, even if you're responding from your BlackBerry or iPhone.

3. Make sure your social networking profiles are rated PG

According to a 2009 CareerBuilder survey, 45% of employers admit to using social network scouting for applicants as part of the employment process. Would you be comfortable with a recruiter or other professional looking at any of the content you've posted online? If not, change it.

4. Become an active user of LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the largest professional social network, so you need to be part of it. Set up a complete profile including keywords a recruiter might use to find someone like you. Then connect with everyone you know by uploading your email contacts to see who's active on LinkedIn. Next, join groups (starting with your college alumni group) to build your connections and visibility.

5. Tweet

While Twitter, the micro-blogging site (in which each 140-character message is called a "tweet"), seems frivolous to some, to others it has led to job offers and much more. Twitter is a great resource for following industry leaders, career experts and recruiters tweeting out real job opportunities. Follow people you admire, and then jump into the conversation on topics related to your professional interests or personal passions.

6. Bring offline relationships online

Spend 30 minutes a week sending a few "hello" emails to people you haven't spoken to in a while—former classmates, internship colleagues, family friends, etc. Ask your connections if there is anything you can do to help them, and update them on your news or career goals.

7. Share your professional status

A great way to stay on other people's radar screens and further build your personal brand is to update your status on Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter at least once a week with some career-related news. Tell people about events you're attending, major projects you've completed, professional books you're reading, successes you're celebrating or any other news that you would tell someone at a networking reception or on a quick catch-up phone call.

8. Get some online bylines

Review books on Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com or comment on news articles and blogs related to your industry or interests. Sharing your point of view (as long as it's appropriate!) is a terrific form of networking and brand building. Note that for maximum exposure you should register to post any articles, comments or reviews with your real name and not a username.

9. Add links to your email signature

Once you've built up a professional online presence, make sure you don't get lost in cyberspace; you have to direct people to find you. Include a link to your favorite pieces of online content or the URL of your LinkedIn, Google or Twitter profile in the signature line at the bottom of your email messages.

10. Stay diligent about your online presence

Just like the web itself, your online image is a never-ending work in progress. While you don't have to monitor your online identity minute-to-minute, you should check in on your virtual self regularly. Set up a Google alert on your own name (including any misspellings or nicknames). This is particularly important before you venture out on an informational interview or formal job interview, when others are more likely to be checking you out online.

Your Online Personal Brand

*Thursday
worksheet*

Why is an online personal brand important?

You have many opportunities to create your own personal brand, including on the Web. Never forget that professional networking contacts might be checking you out online. Are you happy with what they will discover when they Google your name? Just as you work hard to build a strong résumé and in-person presence, you have to put equal time and effort into developing a professional online presence. Promoting yourself virtually is no longer optional.

While there are many places to interact and promote yourself online, three websites stand out as essential venues for personal branding: LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Here are rules to follow and actions to take for each of these sites. If you're active on other social networks or online communities, you can use these tips as a guideline for those sites as well:

1. LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional online network. It is the place to build a professional online profile and to network with the site's 60 million+ members. The following tips are adapted from Grads. LinkedIn.com [likely changing to College.Linkedin.com], the training site for students using LinkedIn:

Build a 100% complete profile

You can't build connections if people don't know you exist or what you have to offer. Your LinkedIn profile is your online business card and résumé — introducing you to new people and showing friends and family your professional side.

Display an appropriate photo

Remember that LinkedIn is not Facebook or MySpace. If you choose to post a photo — and LinkedIn recommends that you do — select a professional, high-quality headshot of you alone. Party photos, cartoon avatars, and cute pics of your puppy don't exactly project professionalism.

Include all of your experience

One of the most valuable aspects of LinkedIn is the way it connects you with former classmates and colleagues. You're alerted when someone joins LinkedIn from your school or a former employer. Don't miss out on these great connections (and potential opportunities) by leaving your "Experience" section incomplete.

Upload your contacts

The best networks begin with those you know and trust, and then grow based on personal referrals. Start building your LinkedIn network by uploading your online address book and connecting to friends, relatives, internship colleagues and professionals you already know.

Join groups you're connected to in the "real world"

Another way to form authentic online relationships is to join LinkedIn Groups with which you already have an affiliation. This might include your university, volunteer organization or professional association. Once you're a group member, you can comment on discussions, find exclusive job listings and connect with people who share your interests.

Personalize every connection request

As you reach out to people on LinkedIn, always customize your connection requests with a friendly note and, if necessary, a reminder of where you met or what organization you have in common. You'll impress people with your personal touch.

Research people before meeting

Before an informational interview, a job interview or a networking get-together, use LinkedIn to learn about the background and interests of the people you're scheduled to meet. This will make you feel more prepared and confident about the get-together and give you some good conversation starters.

2. Facebook

Facebook needs no introduction. However, you might not realize that the world's most popular social network plays a role in your personal and professional brand. Here are some tips on what to do — and, perhaps more importantly, what not to do — on Facebook.

Set your privacy to the max

Facebook has excellent privacy options; make sure you take advantage of them if you want to keep your personal and professional life as separate as possible. Take time to customize every setting to control who sees what content.

Delete any inappropriate photos or posts

Even if your privacy settings are tight, you never know if a professional networking contact still might come across your Facebook profile (it happens). To be on the safe side, remove any photos or posts related to drinking, drugs, nudity, vandalism or anything else you wouldn't want a professional contact to see. Moving forward, be very, very careful what you post. It's always better to be safe than sorry.

Join groups related to your professional interests

Thousands of Facebook groups exist that provide helpful information and networking opportunities, ranging from industry groups to summer internship groups to groups run by career experts. Take advantage!

Become a fan of companies you want to work for

Many companies are using their Facebook fan pages as their primary way of marketing to students and potential employees. Fan pages — like PwC's at www.facebook.com/PwCUSCareers — are a great way to learn more about companies on your prospect list and to stay up-to-date on their news and events. (Remember to keep your comments appropriate as each interaction you have with an organization is part of their image of you).

Use apps with professional potential

While most of the applications on Facebook are just for fun, there are quite a few with professional benefits. For instance, check out apps related to books you've read and write reviews of books related to your professional field of interest, or download cause-related apps to share information about your volunteer efforts.

Post content related to your career or job search

Use your Facebook profile as a place to display interesting articles related to your career interests, status updates related to your job search and invitations to career fairs and professional networking events you're attending. This is a great way to show that you are actively looking for a job and building your career, which your Facebook friends will remember next time they hear of an available opportunity.

3. Twitter

If you're not familiar with Twitter, it's a free social networking site that allows only 140 characters per announcement or "tweet." Get rid of any preconceived notions you might have that Twitter is a waste of time where people post silly messages about what they had for breakfast. While some people do tweet about nonsense, there are many ways to use Twitter for professional benefit.

Choose an appropriate username

If you're going to be making professional connections on Twitter and want to be taken seriously, register with a version of your real name or a user name that you wouldn't be embarrassed for a recruiter to see. Remember that every tweet you send will appear next to the user name you choose.

Tweet wisely

As with all online content, you never know who might see your postings. Twitter is also indexed by Google, so your tweets will show up when people search on your name. Make sure that nothing you write about would damage your professional reputation.

Follow your prospects

Unlike other social networks, on Twitter you can follow anyone on the site, even if that person is not following you. One of the best uses of the site is to follow people you admire or with whom you want to work someday. This includes recruiters, industry leaders, company CEOs, corporate Twitter feeds, graduate programs and much more. Following your prospects will help you learn what those people and organizations are thinking and talking about, which will come in handy as you network and apply for jobs.

Discover new prospects

As you become active on Twitter, you'll begin to see "retweets," which happen when someone you follow wants to share the content of someone else. This is a helpful way to discover new people to follow whose tweets might be valuable for you. You can also search for the leading twitter users on a wide variety of topics on the Twitter directory site www.wefollow.com.

Keep up with the news

Following news outlets on Twitter is a terrific way for busy students to keep up with current events. Follow local, national, international and industry publications to ensure you are always in the know.

Social media is evolving every day, so keep your eyes and ears open for new opportunities to build your brand online!

Additional Resources

- www.pwc.tv – don't miss the rest of our Personal Brand Week Worksheets and Top 10 Lists
- www.Mashable.com – Social Media News and Tips
- *Me 2.0: Build a Powerful Brand to Achieve Career Success* by Dan Schawbel

Career momentum

A Tweet from one of our followers

@Brandyourself

Success is the sum of small efforts,
repeated day in and day out. -Robert
Collier #PwCPBW



www.pwc.tv

facebook.com/PwCUSCareers

twitter.com/pwc_us_careers

linkedin.com/company/pwc/careers

The New, New Thing: Top 10 Ways to Be Open to Opportunities & Change

Change is the only constant in life...and in your career. Never let yourself become too comfortable and complacent. Here are 10 tips to keep you on your toes.

Friday tips

1. Do one thing every week to advance your career

Spend some time each week (or each day if you're actively job hunting) reading a career advice blog, working on your public speaking skills, taking a new colleague for coffee or doing anything else to help your career prospects. Just like getting good grades or learning an instrument, being successful in your career requires daily commitment and daily action.

2. Cast a wide net

Think broadly about all the career paths that are open to you. Don't unnecessarily limit yourself to "rising up the ladder" at a big corporation or pursuing a career based on your college major. If you're willing to be flexible, there are endless career possibilities, and we don't even know yet what jobs will arise thanks to new technologies and new markets. Think broadly and keep your eyes and ears open for new directions.

3. Get in the know

Set up free, online keyword news alerts for employers, industries, products, events and people related to your current industry and any industries you want to explore. This will ensure that you're the very first to know about new opportunities. Plus, if you decide to make a career change, you'll have a head start on learning about that career direction.

4. Study the stars

Pay close attention to the people you admire in your industry or elsewhere. Scour their online profiles, read their articles, follow their tweets, watch what they wear and how they speak. You can learn a lot by studying and emulating the actions, attitudes and relationships of leaders and luminaries.

5. Be a leader

Of course you don't just want to watch the stars; you want to be one! Raise your hand for opportunities to join new projects, gain new experiences and meet new people. If you have an idea for a new solution to a problem, research it and share your findings. When you join a professional association, volunteer to lead a committee. Leadership positions are crucial to building experience, getting noticed and earning increased responsibility.

6. Keep in touch with the people you meet

Spend maybe 30 minutes a week sending a few "hello" emails to people you haven't spoken to in a while—friends at other colleges, former teachers or employers, family friends, etc. Ask your connections if there is anything you can do to help them, and ask them to keep an eye out for career opportunities that might be a good fit for you. Seventy to eighty percent of jobs are found through networking, so the more people you know—and who know you—the more opportunities you will be exposed to.

7. Pack your bags

Business happens everywhere, so don't limit yourself to one location or even one country. Many successful professionals will tell you that an overseas assignment provided their greatest professional development. Be open to relocation to another town, another state or another continent.

8. Visit (or revisit) career services

When in doubt, ask for help. There is no situation too small to ask a few trusted friends or advisers for guidance or reassurance. In particular, your college career services office has plentiful (and usually free) resources—exclusive job and networking databases, résumé critiquing, mock interviewing, personalized career counseling and more. Many even offer phone or online programs and support.

9. Be more than willing to learn

If people consistently tell you that you need a certain degree, a certain class credit or a certain skill set to attain the career you want, take the advice seriously. With online learning, community colleges and corporate training programs, you can find almost any course you need to fit your schedule and budget.

10. Don't be afraid to fail

Failures will happen to you during your career, and probably already have. Some employers won't hire you. Some "dream" internships will be disappointing. Some bosses won't promote you. Congratulations! Once you've got some certified failure experience, you'll be better at knowing how to recover the next time it happens. Failing isn't much fun. But real failure comes from never trying something in the first place.

Keeping Your Career Momentum: Ongoing Strategies for Success

**Friday
worksheet**

What are the keys to building a successful career over the long term?

A career is a marathon, not a sprint. So how do you stay on track through the days, months and years of your working life? You have to develop ongoing habits that will keep you moving forward one day at a time, while always keeping an eye on the big picture.

Here is an outline of activities you can pursue daily, weekly, monthly and yearly to keep the momentum in your career:

Daily Career-building Habits

Do your best in any job you hold

Sir William Osler, known as the “Father of Modern Medicine,” declared, “The best preparation for tomorrow is to do today’s work superbly well.” Keep that thought in your mind, even if you find yourself in a job that you don’t like. Doing excellent work always provides an opportunity to demonstrate your talent and to get noticed by important people. This includes excelling on whatever task is in front of you—when you excel at smaller tasks (like cheerfully photocopying documents for a client), people will trust you with the bigger ones. Always perform for the job or work you want, even if it’s not the job or work you currently have.

Consume important media, not just social media

As a professional in any industry at any level, you absolutely must be informed about current events in your profession and the world at large. This means reading qualified information sources and not just watching the videos your friends post on Facebook or re-tweet on Twitter. At the very least, skim the headlines each day and read the first few paragraphs of major articles. Examine the news more thoroughly when an article covers a topic related to your work. Note that reading the news doesn’t have to be time-consuming or expensive if you subscribe to a media outlet’s RSS feed or e-newsletter.

Clean your desk

Even if you’re not the most organized person in the world, end each day by setting yourself up for a good beginning the following day. You can’t really function at your highest capacity if your desk is cluttered with coffee-stained papers, your email inbox is overflowing and yesterday’s lunch is sitting half-eaten by the printer. Start creating good organizational habits while you’re still a student: As your last action of the day, unclutter your desk and take five minutes to write a fresh to-do list for the next day. You’ll thank yourself in the morning—and for the rest of your career.

Take time to recharge

Working hard is incredibly important and amazingly satisfying, but don’t let yourself become so over-worked that you neglect your own wellbeing. Take time every single day for a bit of relaxation, even if you can only fit in a 10-minute walk around the block or a quick phone chat with your best friend. Learning to manage stress is a crucial career accomplishment.

Weekly Career-building Habits

Keep adding skills and knowledge

While there are no final exams in the “real world” (thank goodness!), there are unlimited opportunities to continue learning after graduation. Learning is truly a lifelong experience, especially for ambitious professionals. Even the smallest learning opportunities have big rewards: Look up a word you don’t know in an online dictionary. Watch a five-minute tutorial to discover how to better use a computer program. Read an article about a country you’re unfamiliar with. You never know what you might stumble upon or

how the information you learn could benefit you in the future. Every few months, it's a great idea to dedicate several hours or a full day to a training session, workshop or class to further develop a new skill or delve deeply into a subject that interests you.

Stay in touch with your network

Since the best networking relationships develop authentically over time, dedicate some energy to checking in with a few people in your network every week. Send a few hello emails, comment on the status updates posted by contacts on your social networks or stop by the desks of a few people in your office whom you don't see frequently. You might even schedule a 30- to 60-minute block in your calendar each week dedicated to keeping up with your network. Otherwise you'll blink and realize you've barely spoken to any of your professional contacts in months or even years.

Keep up with industry media

Just as it's important to read or watch the news every day, you should also subscribe to "must-read" media for the industry in which you work (or an industry in which you might want to work someday). Subscribe to e-newsletters, blogs, Twitter lists or other information sources that will keep you up-to-date on issues related to your field. If you're not sure what to read, ask successful people in your profession what media are essential parts of their reading and viewing routines.

Add to your online presence

To keep your online professional image thriving, take action on the Web in a professional way. This might include commenting on a LinkedIn group discussion about a topic related to your industry, commenting on a former classmate's new job announcement, sharing your expertise by answering a question posted on Twitter or commenting on a blog post related to your career.

Monthly Career-building Habits

Google yourself

In addition to diligently building your online professional presence, keep an eye on your overall Internet persona to be aware if someone else is posting anything about you. Even better than checking your online presence manually, set up email news alerts for your own name. That way, if your name appears anywhere online, you'll receive an email with a direct link to the mention.

Schedule time to attend live networking events

Take a look at your calendar each month and see if you have any upcoming plans that involve professional networking. If not, scan your social networks, association calendars and other event listings for one or two opportunities to connect with people in person. Try to attend at least one face-to-face networking event every month, such as a professional association get-together, library lecture, college alumni association event or casual one-on-one coffee date. If you're shy, it's especially important to keep getting out there. The more you interact professionally, the more comfortable you'll become in live networking situations.

Volunteer

Besides the good feeling of helping others, volunteering has many tangible career benefits. Donating your time once a month (or more!) will keep you in a positive frame of mind, plus you will meet new people and potentially develop career-related skills such as leadership and teamwork. Don't be shy about asking for specific responsibilities when you are volunteering—most organizations are delighted for you to share your professional skills. If you're strapped for time, ask organizations about opportunities to volunteer virtually through computer and phone-based work.

Yearly Career Habits/Best Practices

Review your résumé

Your résumé is always a work-in-progress, developing alongside your career. Take a peek at this important document every few months or at least once a year, even if you are not actively job hunting. Make sure that you are recording your accomplishments, experience, volunteer activities and new skill sets. (p.s. Whenever you update information on your résumé, update your online profiles at the same time).

Set goals

New Year's resolutions don't have the greatest record of success. The real way to improve your life and achieve great things is to set clear, specific, action-oriented goals that will carry you through all 12 months (or longer), not just the first 12 days of a new year. In fact, there's no reason to wait until December 31 to set goals. At any time you can analyze where you are and where you want to be in the next year, three years, five years or whatever time frame feels comfortable to you. What's important is having tangible goals and a clear idea of what you're working towards. That way, you will know that your daily tasks are building to a larger vision of success. Be sure to write all of this down in a place you can refer to often for motivation. Note that these goals can be your own personal career goals in addition to whatever annual review process might exist at your company.

Make every communication personal

Because there are so many ways to communicate these days, it's easy to forget that communication is meant to be personal. When you send someone a birthday note on Facebook, do you add an extra sentence beyond "Happy Birthday"? If you mail or email holiday cards, do you personalize each one with a thoughtful note? Every time you send an email, social networking request, e-card or anything else, take time to think about the other person's needs. No one likes a form letter or mail addressed to "Occupant." Remember that networking is only valuable when it's authentic and mutually beneficial. Small gestures make a big difference, even if you only connect with someone once a year.

Reflect

As a new professional, you are no doubt busy and have a lot on your mind. Relax for a minute; take a deep breath. It's important to stop every once in a while and reflect on your life and career. At least once a year or so, take some time to check in with your goals, assess your values and skill set, evaluate your appearance (including your wardrobe, haircut, briefcase or tote bag) and revisit your personal marketing materials (business card, social network profiles, etc).. If you're not sure how to assess yourself, ask a trusted friend, relative or mentor to provide some honest feedback. If necessary, save up and invest in some coaching, training, new clothes or whatever else you believe will help you to be your best professional self. Above all, make sure you are building a career that contributes to your health, happiness and fulfillment.

Additional Resources

- www.pwc.tv – don't miss the rest of our Personal Brand Week Worksheets and Top 10 Lists
- *The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be* by Jack Canfield
- *Becoming the Obvious Choice: A Guide to Your Next Opportunity* by Bryan Dodge and David Cottrell
- *Your Best Year Yet! Ten Questions for Making the Next Twelve Months Your Most Successful Ever* by Jinny S. Ditzler

What will your personal brand look like?



www.pwc.tv

facebook.com/PwCUSCareers

twitter.com/pwc_us_careers

linkedin.com/company/pwc/careers