

## How To Create A Great Personal Profile

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Like it or not, being good at your work is not the only prerequisite for a successful career. You can qualify and reinforce your technical skills, these fundamentals are essential! Yet do you find often that given your hard work and good results, you miss out on prospects and interesting assignments? It is not only about what you know, but also, who you know. That relates to both your current workplace and to colleagues externally. You cannot count on other people to increase your profile for you, including your boss!

To build a personal brand that accurately reflects your personal and professional identity, you first need to know who you are. Be introspective, and create a list of your strengths and weaknesses. If you're struggling to answer these questions, ask friends, family, and co-workers how they would describe you. Once you're more aware of the different facets of your personality, you can decide how best to brand them. Keep in mind that many people struggle to choose a specific niche because they don't want to limit themselves. Realize that your brand, like many corporate brands, will change as your career grows. The best strategy is to choose a particular area you'd like to focus on and let it evolve.

Your brand is more than a reflection of who you are today; it is a roadmap of where you are going. In addition to understanding your existing skills and competencies, assessing your strengths and weaknesses as they relate to whichever industry or career you want to break into next is of importance. By doing this, you will uncover the skills and traits that make you distinct, as well as the areas where you need to improve or gain new knowledge to advance. Forecasting where you want to be in five or ten years and the attributes you want to be known for can help you better determine what steps you need to take to get there.

Before you start crafting your brand, you also need to determine who you are trying to reach. The sooner you define the audience, the easier it will be to craft your story, because you will better understand the type of story you need to tell. For example, if your goal is to reach hiring managers and recruiters, you might start by creating or [updating your LinkedIn profile](#). Why? Because [92 percent of recruiters leverage social media to find high-quality candidates](#) and, of those, 87 percent use LinkedIn. On the other hand, if you are a graphic designer trying to impress existing clientele and attract new customers, you might choose to tell your story via a personal website or portfolio, where you can better express your wide range of talents.

As you start mapping out the careers you want, find out who the thought leaders are in whatever field you are interested in, and do not just follow them but go online and find out if they have blogs, or where they contribute their thinking. Look for people who are successful and examine what they are doing. Imitate them, and then do even better than them. In building a personal brand, your goal is to stand out but you cannot rise to the top without taking inventory of who is already there.

Now we do not recommend that you aspire to become a celebrity of sorts, but that having the right discussions with the right people will open doors to exciting new career opportunities. By increasing your access to key individuals, as those opportunities occur, you put yourself at the forefront. This is particularly important if you are working remotely because people could forget you if they do not often see you in person.

- **TALK TO PEOPLE PHYSICALLY INSTEAD OF SENDING ANOTHER EMAIL**

This is one of the easiest and few things to do. You do not want your colleagues to be disturbed by having them talk through every single idea or problem. Do not waste any of their time. Be pleasant, and directly ask them what you need or want to arrange, and the matter is done. Try to do this at least once a day with a new person. You are much more memorable than an email.

- **SPEAK UP**

Your opinions counts and they should be heard. In meetings, in networking situations, listen first and then use the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge. If the whole idea of speaking up makes you feel uncomfortable then try to plan ahead. Read the meeting agenda beforehand and think about the questions you want to ask or the points you want to make. Even at an event, have a look at the session topics and prepare questions to discuss in advance. No one needs to know you have done this, but it will go a long way to making you feel more confident if you are prepared.

- **CHOOSE PROJECTS CAREFULLY**

If an opportunity arises to work with people in other teams or departments, offer to take the lead. When projects arise that have a big impact on your organisation's bottom line, get involved. Do not wait for projects to be assigned to you, ask to work on them when you find out about them. These projects will help you build relationships with people in other parts of the organisation, and you might get more exposure to decision makers such as senior managers and executives.

- **GET A MENTOR**

Mentors can be a valuable source of advice and also can help you make useful connections. Mentoring can be appropriate at any stage in your career. Although traditionally thought of as an experienced colleague acting as a mentor to a young mentee, it can also be useful at later stages in your career, especially if you have moved to a new sector or you get to take on additional tasks. It is also important not to just make anyone your mentor but a person with relevant experience in the field you wish to develop knowledge in.

- **NETWORK**

This is not an easy task for many but the first step is to change your mindset. Actually attend. Go to the event, the meeting, the work social. Networking in essence is simply having a chat. It does not even have to be about work or industry related things to start with. Break the ice by talking about the weather if you have to. Remember most feel the same way about it, some just hide it better than others. Once you build up the confidence, you can start being more strategic about the people you want to network with.

Finally, give praise where praise is deserved. People love to be complimented whether they admit to it or not. People will remember when you talk to them and admire their achievements if you are sincere about it. Also, remember to always recognise other people's accomplishments by giving credit where credit is due. The one thing you do not want to be remembered for is claiming ownership of work that is not yours.

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