



A Jobseeker's Guide to Personal Branding




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What is personal branding?

In today's fast-paced and competitive world, the notion of "Brand" has gone beyond a product or company. The idea of 'personal branding' may seem unusual to many people but, it is key if you want to market your professional skills and expertise. So what does personal branding really mean?

PersonalBrand.com defines personal branding as a 'conscious and intentional effort to create and influence public perception of an individual by positioning them as an authority in their industry, elevating their credibility, and differentiating themselves from the competition, to ultimately advance their career, increase their circle of influence, and have a larger impact.'

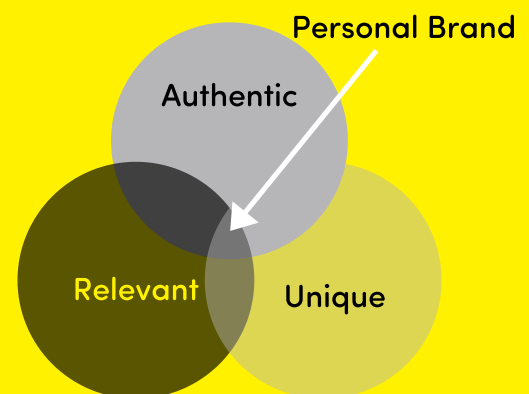
Why personal branding is important?

Having a personal brand can be a great opportunity to showcase your skills, uniqueness, experience, and personality. Personal branding helps you tell a story about yourself in a way that other people are able to build their impression of you, which eventually translates into professional standing and credibility for you.

In their article "Why Building a Personal Brand Is More Important Than Ever", Entrepreneur.com describes several reasons why it has become increasingly important.

A personal brand...

- Allows you to build more trust between you, your colleagues, and employers
- Boosts your reputation and motivates others to want to work with you
- Helps you excel and reach your goals
- Manifests a positive impact on others
- Helps establish you as the go-to authority or subject-matter expert



Developing a jobseeker brand

Before you decide to promote yourself as a potential jobseeker, begin by thinking about your personal and professional strengths. Determine what you want your brand as a jobseeker to represent? Think about what are your aspirations, core values, future goals, what motivates you, what do you want an employer to perceive you as? Perhaps a strategist, evangelist, or specialist? It is imperative to identify this perception so that you can strategize your brand accordingly. Start the process by identifying and constructing a suitable brand statement using the below formula & examples.

● Personal brand statement formula

**I am (professional identity)
who helps (who/ your target audience)
do or understand (your unique solution/ skill)
so that (transformation/ benefit/expected outcome)**

Some examples:

- "I am a CPA who helps start-up businesses leverage Canada's tax system so that they do not underestimate their tax obligations at the end of the year."
- "I am a customer service manager who helps financial services organizations give the best call centre experience to their clients so that their clients feel that their needs were well taken care of."
- "I am a mechanical engineer with a P.Eng who helps large global energy companies replace old or redundant equipment with new energy-efficient alternatives."
- "My passion & purpose is to transform HR into a business-savvy function that'll enable organizations & people to deliver stunning new results!"
- "My overarching commitment is to instill confidence in setting ambitious business goals reigniting performance/productivity by positioning culture & talent as your competitive advantage."
- "I'm a turnaround management expert in the Federal sector."
- "I'm the person that you call when you have more months at the end of your money."



● Driving value to your brand

It is imperative to know that branding is not a one-off event and requires continuous monitoring, updating, and evolution. With growing experience, your personal concept of the brand will tend to evolve as you add new skills and knowledge. In the meantime, driving value to your personal brand through consistent engagement with your audience is a must. Here are quick ways to engage with your audience and stay on top of their mind:

- Comment, like, and share thoughts, posts, and news that is impacting your area of interest.
- Make sure you are offering valuable tips and helping to solve challenges via your engagement.
- Participate in online discussion forums like Quora or Reddit and contribute to topics you are passionate about.
- Follow thought leaders and influencers to hear their latest perspectives on relevant industry topics.
- Research your industry and where it is heading to gain a futuristic perspective on your role.



Branding as a jobseeker

One of the most commonly expected outcomes of personal branding is finding a job. Jobseekers who have a well-established internet presence are able to distinguish themselves from others with similar interests, skills, or professional accreditation on the basis of their personal brand. Moreover, as almost all employers these days tend to use search engines and social media to check the background of their potential candidates and job applicants, it makes even more sense to invest efforts to create an impressive internet presence, especially during your job search phase.

Here are some potential advantages of having a jobseeker brand:

Drawing from the definition of “personal branding” mentioned before, the three most obvious outcomes of personal branding are:

- **Establishing authority in a particular industry:** Credibility and trust are crucial aspects of any personal or professional success. To loosely translate just like consumers need to believe in a product to buy or use it, as a jobseeker, potential employers need to trust you to do a task/job that they are looking to hire a person for.
- **Elevating credibility:** You may already be an expert in a particular skill, but having a digital presence where people are talking about your expertise/skills helps to add to your credibility.
- **Differentiating from the competition:** According to research on average, each corporate job attracts 250 resumes, and out of those only 4-6 get a call for an interview, while 1 gets finally selected. In today's digital hiring world, the first thing that an employer, hiring manager, or recruiter first notices are what is different about your profile from the competing resumes.



**54 percent of
employers have
rejected candidates
based on their social
media profiles**

Here are some ways to build an impressive brand as a jobseeker

● Monitor & manage your internet presence

If you are not monitoring and managing your online presence, you may be unknowingly hurting your chances of landing a job. Hiring managers and recruiters almost always look at a candidate's online presence. A simple Google search of your name can help them look at all the profiles associated with you.

How to recognize your online brand? Google your name and look for the search results. The kind of search results that show up will comprise your social media profiles, pictures, posts, or opinions that you may have shared on various discussion forums over the years under your name. These search results are essentially a reflection of your online brand.

Make a list of every social media profile and decide which of these profiles you want potential employers to find when they Google you. For the profiles, you choose to share, focus on telling a consistent and compelling story about your skills, work history, education etc. You can also upload a resume if you have the option to. In addition to professional social accounts, you may have some personal accounts on Facebook or Instagram. If you want to keep such accounts for your personal use only, increase their security settings so that only your approved contacts can view them in full.

43 percent of employers use Google Search to research potential new hires

Source: The Manifest 2020 Recruitment Strategy



● Managing social media platforms

Social media is key when establishing your brand as a professional. Build a social media profile that catches a potential recruiter or hiring manager's eye. Stay current and topical on your professional profiles and frequently update your professional achievements and assets on them. Make sure your profiles look succinct and relevant and reveal your key competencies in an easy-to-understand, organized, and professional tone.

Use the same profile picture, ideally a professionally taken headshot across all professional social media platforms for easy identification. Keep your job information, timelines, and career list consistent across the platforms. Here is a social media-wise quick breakdown of how you can further optimize your brand as a jobseeker on each platform:

LinkedIn

- Your LinkedIn picture is the first thing potential hiring manager/recruiter will notice. Make sure you have a professional-looking picture.
- Consider adding a short video of yourself, like an elevator pitch to introduce yourself and your key skills and achievements.
- Keep your job description relevant and result-oriented.
- Consider adding any certifications or upskilling you might have undertaken.
- LinkedIn also has an "Open to work" plug-in that you can use, to let recruiters, hiring managers, or anyone visiting your profile know that you are an active jobseeker.
- Regularly write content pertaining to industry-relevant topics. It reflects your passion and interest.
- Keep your tone of voice consistent with the brand you are trying to build.



Facebook

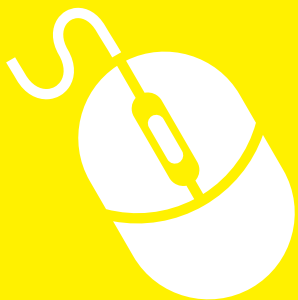
- It is uncommon for hiring managers and recruiters to look into your Facebook profile. It still makes sense to tighten up your profile controls so that your personal pictures, activity, etc. are not accessible by potential employers.
- You can still use the 'life events' field in Facebook to highlight your achievements or manage your timeline, for instance when you started a particular role in an organization, etc.
- Recheck your privacy settings at all times to ensure that only information you are comfortable sharing is accessible by the public.

Instagram

- Instagram is probably one of the least used platforms for professional branding unless you are in a creative job profile such as a designer, architecture or art director.
- When used efficiently, Instagram can create a very professional-looking and impressive collection of your artwork or images.
- Choose quality images and try to weave a visually impactful story around your artwork.
- Even if you are not in a very creative occupation, you can consider using Instagram to share images that reflect your passion, hobbies, or interests outside of your work. Doing this adds more dimension to your personality and you will be perceived as a multifaceted professional.

Twitter

- Twitter has lately become a popular public platform especially when you want to share your opinions in a few short words and hashtags.
- Make sure to update your bio and follow people and places that are professionally aligned with your interests. You can also highlight your achievements and aspirations to reflect your personal brand.
- Use the list function to set up lists such as for leads, news, business, etc.
- Take cognizance of who follows you and who are you following on this platform
- Unfortunately, recruiters and potential hiring managers may be able to view any posts, tweets, comments, or reactions you may have given using a simple Google search. Make sure that your Twitter tweets, posts, and comments are in line with the brand you wish to present.
- As a general rule, refrain from tweeting, commenting, or reacting to posts that may seem inappropriate or address sensitive topics.



- Seventy-five percent of HR departments are required to search job applicants online.
- Eighty-five percent of U.S. recruiters and HR professionals say that an employee's online reputation influences their hiring decisions at least to some extent.
- Nearly half say that a strong online reputation influences their decisions to a great extent.

TikTok

- TikTok has lately emerged as one of the fastest-growing social media platforms in the world (<https://www.oberlo.ca/blog/tiktok-statistics>) and hence it is hardly a surprise that the platform is diversifying as a job search tool.
- In 2021 TikTok introduced a pilot program to help people find jobs and connect with potential employers via TikTok. To apply for jobs via TikTok, jobseekers will need to post a short video of their professional summary, which will be then shared with employers.
- As the company continues its pilot testing with few beta companies for entry-level jobs, it may not be long before elevator or professional summary TikTok videos may become the next big trend in the job search market.
- If you are a current TikTok user and jobseeker, you can use TikTok to elevate your jobseeker brand by posting relevant and insightful content. For instance, consider sharing knowledge from your past roles or tips that helped you do your job better or perhaps skills you gained from your past employment.
- You can also share a short elevator pitch highlighting your skills and professional information and share it on other social platforms.
- Be mindful of the topics and content you choose and use it as an opportunity to showcase your best.

YouTube

- YouTube has been traditionally perceived as the "how-to" resource for everyone and jobseekers often use it as a resource to polish their skills learn new skills and update their knowledge.
- But as a jobseeker you can also use it to build your brand as an excellent candidate for a role.
- YouTube offers a great platform for jobseekers to post videos elevating their personal brand through videos.
- Jobseekers can use videos to showcase their skills, knowledge, expertise, education, professional experience and build their brand as an excellent candidate for potential employers.

Quora/Clubhouse/Reddit

- One may define platforms such as Quora, Reddit, etc. more of a discussion forum rather than social media platforms, but from a jobseeker brand perspective, these platforms present a great opportunity for you to interact with like-minded professionals and share knowledge.
- Although conversations from these platforms may not directly lead to employment, they allow you to demonstrate your skills, knowledge, or technical expertise on relevant topics, thus elevating your personal brand.

● Website as a job search tool

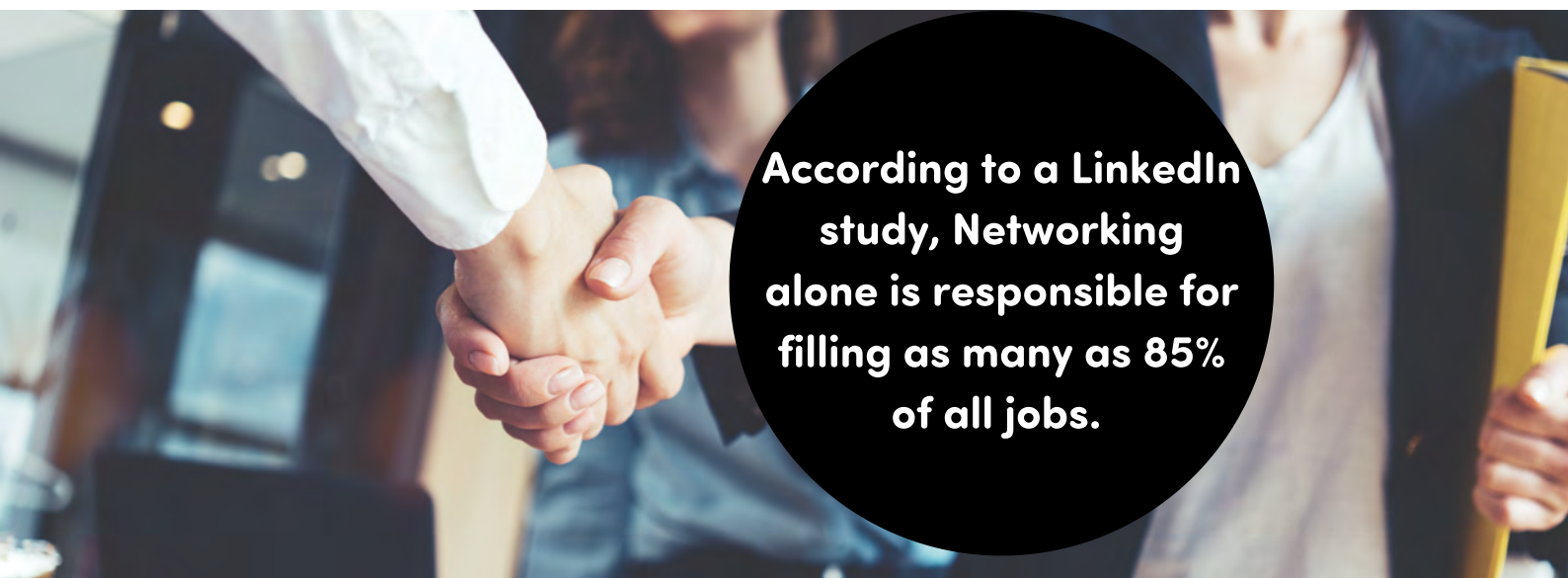
Shopify, MailChimp, Wix, Squarespace, the options are endless if you are looking to build a website to showcase your expertise. These websites have versatile in-built capabilities to host both images and content to match your requirements. Consider investing in a suitable platform to build yourself a website. Make sure to keep it updated with your latest skill information, certifications, creatives, or any project information that may be of interest to a potential employer. Don't forget to write long-form content such as blogs, white papers, etc. to showcase your professional expertise and knowledge. The look and feel of your website must be consistent with your brand's look and feel.

● Other job application tools

Have you ever noticed how you are able to remember products that create a consistent experience for you, whether it is through using the same kind of language, ads, logo, etc? Your jobseeker brand can also work in the same way. Whether you are using a resume, cover letter, or just writing an introduction email to a potential employer, bring out key branding statements from your social media, website, etc. Create a consistent masthead, letterhead to tie your pieces together. This enables easy to recall and attention to you as a candidate. After all, you will want to stay at the top of a potential employer's mind if they have a job opening.

● Meeting an employer

Meeting a potential employer in person is a rare occurrence these days, but virtual networking has emerged as a powerful platform for jobseekers to build their brand and share their individual journeys, opportunities, and challenges. You can promote your skills and professional expertise to a large audience through virtual networking. As many workplaces have also shifted to remote work, you no longer need to restrict yourself to a particular geography. With one click your jobseeker brand could reach worldwide employers.





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1.855.622.1200

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Accommodations for job applicants with disabilities will be provided upon request during the recruitment, assessment, selection, and placement process. An alternative format is available on Request.