



Where does your Personal Brand begin and your Employer's Brand end?

“Some traditionalist bosses see the Brand You notion as institutionalized disloyalty. In my opinion, nothing could be further from the truth. Brand You is about people profoundly committed to personal growth — and it goes without saying [I think] that people committed to growth are by far the most engaged and valuable employees.” Tom Peters

Referencing [Daniel Pink](#), we live in the information age and are moving into the conceptual age, where we transition in and out of new jobs and careers more readily than ever before. As technology continues to evolve, offering us new media and social networking sites to promote ourselves and our expertise, not everyone is embracing this at the executive and senior professional levels – yet!

What is Personal Branding?

Tom Peters is the founder of Personal Branding, which I believe should form a part of every working person's career strategy, including executives and senior professionals. If you have not read Tom's article [‘Brand You’](#) I highly recommend it - it is an old one but a good one!

Our personal brand is about how we are seen by those who know us and how we are remembered by those we meet. It is how we package ourselves up online and offline to be viewed and remembered by the world. We have the ability to control what and how our personal brand is remembered. Our alternative is to let others create it for us and/or to rely on our employer to define it.

Personal Branding Goes Beyond Networking

In the past we relied heavily on our personal networks and still do and will continue to. Our networks offline are limited and don't reach globally. We are seeing more and more people embrace social networking sites and services such as Twitter, which have the capability to expose your personal brand globally. It is not enough that a few friends or colleagues know your specialization; you have to be out there sharing it with the world, writing about it on your blog, in relevant forums, publishing your works. It is about creating conversations about your expertise beyond your immediate sphere or reference. Are you comfortable doing this? Chances are, like most of us, you are not. Just as most of us avoid or require a lot of courage to network at an event, similarly you have to pluck up the courage and get over there and participate in the conversation and hope you have something worthwhile to say. Yes, online networking is pretty much similar to offline networking except you don't need to leave the house or office; however, it brings its own challenges. You need to learn the rules, you need to participate and be prepared for others to disagree with what you have to say. Most of all, you need to make a commitment to managing your personal brand and ultimately your career.



Some of you may be thinking, well I have my old school networks and I am sorted. To a certain degree this will assist you, however not as it once did - it forms only a small part of the successful person's branding strategy.

Separating Your Personal Brand from Where You Work

For many of us, we struggle to define our brand beyond the company we work for and the job titles we hold. What you do will no doubt form a part of your personal brand, but who you work for is not so relevant anymore. The danger people face is being comfortable in their job and with their employer and as a result failing to carve out any niche or reputation for themselves beyond their current employer. Being proud of where you work and what you do is great; however, what happens when the company no longer exists or needs to downsize? What happens when you go and look for a new job and the companies you are looking at don't know or care about where you last worked? – they actually just want to know what is your unique selling proposition (USP) and how can this benefit them and their business.

Today the majority of recruiters and hiring professionals do a Google search on those they look to interview, with figures quoted between 50%-80%. Notice that they are searching on your name, not your employer's name, which I think says it all.

In the past, having a few 'perceived' good employer names on your resume opened doors. Today the weight employer brand names hold is diminishing – your personal brand now supersedes all these things. As a 21st century worker in the information and conceptual age, personal brand management is integral to your career success. It opens doors and ensures that you are always employable and employed and that you are not reliant on the decisions of others for your financial and personal career satisfaction.

In 2008 Kelly launched Six Figures www.sixfiguresinternational.com the premium job site for \$100K+ job and contracts, a site created to provide job seekers with a trusted online source to find six figure opportunities across all industries and professions. The site offers businesses a new targeted channel to connect with six figure job seekers, utilizing current technology to feature job opportunities and information about the business in a way that appeals to today's high salary earners.

Kelly's 12 years experience working across HR, Recruitment & Career Coaching has provided her with a solid understanding of what the job market looks like, what employers look for and the common experiences and challenges they face.

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