



STORY BY ROB SALISBURY

PERSONAL MARKETING, branding and YOU INC.

STATUS AND TALENT CAN ONLY get you so far.

By the mid 1980's, the band U2, CEO of Virgin Airlines Richard Branson, Madonna, Oprah, Tiger Woods, Mother Teresa and Princess Diana were already skilled experts in the areas of personal marketing and branding.

Early in their chosen careers and public roles they realised that status and talent alone would not take them to the top nor keep them there. They found in using their own style and skills that personal marketing and branding was an art form to master.

In a pure sense, this is a science with a proactive focus on calibrating public perception until exponential attraction and mass appeal is achieved. In this regard, anyone can learn these lessons and adopt them successfully given time and a concentrated focus.

Today, millions and millions of people are taking note in the power of personal marketing and branding, yet with a unique new spin. It is the personalisation of branding and personal marketing that is bringing new rewards to individuals in a vast dimension of business and public work.

The age of individualism

Heavily watched television shows like The Amazing Race, Survivor, The Idol series in America, Europe, Australia and Singapore, The Apprentice, featuring billionaire Donald Trump, and Dancing with the Stars are teaching both the participants and home viewers the rewards of self promotion, marketing and branding.

Show participants understand that they must "sell" the viewing public, judges and fellow competitors on their accomplished tasks, contributions and personality each week. Anything less is nearly a guarantee on The Apprentice to hear Donald Trump say "You're Fired!"

The viewing public loves the drama and exploits of these shows. Most of these shows are hitting top 10 most viewed ratings each week. Something sponsors love to see at each commercial break and will back with hard dollar advertising. The real lessons are not in who wins the show contests, but the methods in which the participants survive each week until they win or are eliminated.

These weekly lessons highlight individual strengths yet the flexibility required of a person when needed to work within a team environment. Here are six key areas that when defined by yourself, can begin a process of personal marketing and branding to transform your future and career, very quickly.

1. Promote your personal strengths: the phrase “God given talent” often stands out. Learn to highlight your positive personality, language, accomplishments and communication skills as they will highlight you.

2. Market your unique skills: the commercial market pays for value not for the time a person puts into a job or project. How have you brought measurable results to your employer, customers or the marketplace in recent time?

3. Present your personal style: in a world of sameness and wearing labels to fit in, the individual who takes a different path often stands out. Take stock of the ways you are unique while creating value that supports your personal style and skills.

4. Selling the benefits to clients: There is an old saying, “if you take care of other people’s needs first, you will be taking care of your own second.” What are the most important benefits you bring to your employer, customers or clients? Knowledge in this one area will help you stand out in any crowd.

5. Delivering unprecedented value: when clients, employers or team-mates get more than expected, you shine. Make a list of the ways in which you have delivered value. Keep adding to it as part of career highlights.

6. Positioning your expertise through referrals: when a person does a great job others take notice. Keep in touch with those that value your contributions. It will not be long before you are either promoted or offered a new opportunity because of your contributions in your role to your company or community. Apply these six points and the future and career of YOU Inc. is assured.

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