

Self-Marketing, Self-Branding and Self-Promotion

by Dave Dolak

One way to have a more successful career is to wisely promote your accomplishments and use effective self-marketing and self-branding techniques. Make yourself visible and let your accomplishments be known. After all, if you have had an exceedingly successful career up to this point, it does you no good if nobody knows about it.

In order to understand how important self-marketing is, think beyond your current position. Think about what your next career step will be and how you can start positioning yourself for it *now*. Do you think you would have a difficult time providing evidence that supports your qualifications for your next job or assignment?

If so, then you need to start promoting your accomplishments and begin your self-marketing efforts *now*. Don't hide your light under a bushel basket. Let your light shine! Let others know about your skills, accomplishments, knowledge and abilities.

Self-marketing is a learned skill. It is never too late in your career to teach yourself effective self-marketing techniques.

One of the keys to successful self-marketing is clearly identifying your goals and knowing what direction you are taking your career. Firmly understanding the direction in which you want to take your career will dictate the most important accomplishments to promote and how to go about promoting them.

On the topic of personal branding, leading management consultant Tom Peters says, "you must advertise". You must create a brand.. and that brand is you. Become known as the guru in your specialty then advertise and sell your brand. The more well-known you become, the easier it gets.

Don't brag incessantly or be pushy, intrusive, obnoxious or dishonest, but rather take advantage of natural opportunities to promote your accomplishments and let others know what you have done.

Use your expertise to help others reach their own goals. Make yourself known within your profession. No matter what your age, there will be a next step in your career and the more you make your accomplishments known now the easier it will be to make the transition.

Here are few self-marketing and promotional tactics you can employ to promote your personal brand and improve your career:

1. Let people in your organization know when you met with success. Send out an email, memo or project report outlining the process you used and report the measurable results you attained. One bit of warning: if you choose to use email, assume your e-mail can and will be forwarded outside your department and organization. You should never disseminate proprietary information or divulged any company secrets.
2. Convert your success stories and expertise into one-page case studies or tip sheets that have an appeal to a broader audience. (The document you are reading now, in fact, was written by me as a "Career Tip of the Month" in 1996 when I operated a career coaching and resume writing firm). Document your process so others can repeat it for themselves. This type of document can go a long way in enhancing your credibility, creating awareness and highlighting your professional standing.
To create your case studies, a) Outline the process & give an overview or scope of the project. Then b) list the major steps you executed and describe the rationale behind those steps. Most importantly, c) quantify the

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results and the positive impact they had on your organization.

Tip sheets and case studies are great to circulate at association meetings or when meeting new prospects or existing customers. They might even come in handy during your next job interview.

You should not overlook the possibility of submitting these case studies to trade journals, professional magazines or newsletters. If you can help others by reporting your results, they will be grateful and remember where they got the information.

3. Conduct an ongoing campaign to make others aware of your successes. Avoid being boastful or braggadocios, rather, simply tell others about your accomplishments in terms of the actions taken to support organizational goals and objectives. Winners can always tell you about a very recent success so be ready with your own stories of a recent “win” you were responsible for in your organization.
4. Look for opportunities to get published. You can do this by writing articles or contributing to company or industry newsletters, submitting tips to trade publications, journals, magazines or local newspapers and business journals. When you are published, make sure you are given a credit line with your name and a way for people to get in contact with you. Getting published will increase your visible and provide you professional credibility.
5. Look for opportunities to speak to groups. Public speaking is one of the best ways to let other people know what you do and how you do it so they might be able to benefit from the information. Presenting to groups establishes you as an expert and gives you an avenue to network and increase your visibility.
6. Always put your teams’ accomplishments ahead of your own. Try to get as much done through others as possible and share the credit. Your name will soon be associated with winning teams and people within and outside your organization will notice.
7. Network with others in your profession and industry. Keep track of who’s doing what and who’s going where and make sure others know exactly what you are doing. Cultivate a strong, effective network and share war stories.
8. Keep score of your accomplishments using a

written list or by updating your resume frequently. Your accomplishments will soon be forgotten if you don’t write them down and keep track of them.

9. Most importantly, understand your true passion and create a unique position based on it. A strong personal brand depends on a strong passion and since you are unique, you should be able to create a brief statement that describes how you can provide a “total offering” not available anywhere else. Define that offering and market it.

One of the best ways to know you are executing your self-branding and self-marketing strategy properly is when you can powerfully state a 10-second self-introduction. Your succinct introduction lets others know who you are and what you do. You should be able to state your introduction within the first 10 seconds of meeting a person and word it in such a way that it hooks them so they want to ask questions because they want to know more about you.

If you promote yourself properly and use effective self-marketing techniques, you will make yourself stand out above the pack and get noticed. Diligently practice these techniques and you will put yourself on the career fast track.

About the author:



Dave Dolak is an author, speaker and consultant on marketing, branding and business development issues. His works have been cited and published by many sources including: Brandweek, Ernst & Young, and Marketing News.

*Dave’s unique approach to marketing, including his **Top End Alignment** process, promises measurable results. Dave helps companies, organizations and individuals present themselves and their products effectively to build long-term brand equity.*

Dave is a Professional Certified Marketer who holds an MBA in Marketing from The University of Northern Virginia.

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