

## Sneak Peek! Excerpt from The Anti-Résumé Revolution:

### Chapter 7

#### PERSONAL BRANDING: Be your campaign.

Okay, before we get started with anything about branding, I want to ask you a few questions. This will be interesting for you, so don't continue reading until you've done this exercise. Stay with me here.

You'll need a partner for this, so go wake up your neighbor or ask the guy with the obnoxiously large coffee at the table next to you for a minute of his time.

Got someone? Good.

Here's the first exercise:

1. You're at a networking event and you're introducing yourself to someone for the first time. You want to practice your elevator speech. For 30 seconds, you will introduce yourself. There is no conversation, just you talking for 30 seconds.

Let me know when you're done.

Okay, now ask the other person to sum up what he/she heard in one or two sentences.

Write that information here:

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Exercise #2:

You just got a call from Oprah. She wants to have you on her show for something special you accomplished in your life. Why is she calling you? What have you done either professionally or in your personal life that would warrant an interview on her show? Quick – give your answer in 1 minute.

Write your answer here:

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Okay, now you have what I call your outward self and your inward self. The first exercise addressed what you want others to know about you, and the second exercise addressed what you feel is important and you are proud of.

How can you intertwine the two elements to create a personal brand?

For instance, I recently met someone who is a Financial Advisor. He told me about where he works, how long he has been doing it, blah, blah, and then told me WHY he does it. This is where it got interesting. He told a very compelling story about a death in his family and the way they were treated by a financial professional for years afterwards. They felt taken advantage of, misled, and disrespected. He turned his outrage into a new career for himself: making sure others don't have to go through this by providing topnotch, honest service.

I don't remember which firm he works for, how long he has been there, or what it was he was selling that day. All I remember was the emotional story he told and the bond I have with him because of it.

The moral of the story: Skip all the clutter (the big words I mentioned earlier, like detail-oriented, strategic relationship builder, etc) and tell the real stories people want to hear. You'll build stronger relationships and have more meaningful conversations. Being upfront and honest about who you are helps others trust you, and isn't that what you want?

Let me back up. Branding is one of those words marketing industry professionals use to sound fancy and make people outside the industry feel dumb for not knowing what it means.

**Here's the text book definition of branding:**

*A trademark or distinctive name identifying a product or a manufacturer.*

I'd like to add "or a person" to this since it doesn't have to just be for a business.

**Here's my definition:**

The way you feel and what you think about when you are reminded of a company or person.

A great example of branding: The Mac Vs PC campaign put out by Apple in 2008. Mac attached their computer to what's cool, young, and hip. Conversely, they made the PC look old, nerdy, analytical, and uncool. What computer would you want to associate with?

## Everyone has a brand.

Remember President Obama's campaign? Which word did he want to make sure everyone knew he was associated with?

Change.

His signs didn't say "I'm running for President". They all said "Change" because this is what he stood for and this is what he wanted to be remembered for.

See if you can answer these questions:

WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR?

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE REMEMBERED FOR DOING?

It's okay if you don't have an answer this minute. They're big questions. Go ahead and think about it in the shower and while you're walking the dog in the morning.

What do you remember the following people for?

**Neil Armstrong**

The moon/Astronaut is his brand

**Richard Nixon**

President/Watergate is his brand

**Bob Barker**

Price is Right is his brand

**Christopher Reeves**

Superman is his brand

**All of these people are quickly associated with one thing they have done in their lives. If you could pick one thing that you did in your life so far, what would it be?**

Some companies use well known people, music or other branded entities to build up their brand.

Grey's Anatomy uses a lot of indie rock in the show. This attracts the kind of audience that listens to this type of music and connects the show to the music in the viewer's mind.

Stetson Cologne decided to use Tom Brady to represent their brand for their 2009 campaign. What does Tom Brady stand for? Athleticism, strength, winning, power, money, good looks, team player, star, married to a model.

What kind of company wouldn't want to be associated with him? Chances are, you don't have the money or connections to have a celebrity endorse you, so you'll have to do the work yourself. If it's easier, you can make a list of what you would like to be remembered for and then start building your future off of that list.

Back to basics:

Every company, TV show, actor, politician, college, etc HAS A BRAND.

Every person in the world has a brand. It's what you are. It's what you stand for.

So, how does this relate to you as a job seeker?  
It has everything to do with you.

Marketing campaign = job search

A marketing campaign that a company puts out is essentially a message they want to resonate with their customers.

Customers = Audience = Company = The people you want to get in front of!

It's the same for you. Your customer, in this case, is your next employer. You have the chance to create a marketing campaign for yourself, with a strong, memorable message.

Here are some ideas to get started:

What does a marketing campaign entail?  
What does a political campaign entail?

*Constant communication of the same message over and over again.*

**What are some different ways companies get their message out to the world?**

Public appearances  
Commercials  
Direct Mail  
Telemarketing  
Sampling  
Ads on TV/Radio/Newspaper/Internet  
Networking  
Books/Videos/CDs

**Here are some things you can use to communicate YOUR brand:**

Anti-Resume  
Social networking sites  
Your own website  
Portfolio  
Business card  
What you wear  
What you say  
The organizations you belong to  
The people you spend time with  
If employed: Where you work & the position you hold  
Public appearances  
Commercials  
Direct Mail  
Telemarketing  
Sampling  
Ads on TV/Radio/Newspaper/Internet  
Networking  
Books/Videos/CDs

**TO CREATE YOUR BRAND, ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:**

What do I stand for?

What do I want to be remembered for?

Who do I want to know this?

How am I going to get this information to them?

Here's a great exercise I did once when I was asked the question "How are you different" by a past employer. I thought about this for days. I have always felt different, so it wasn't a question of whether or not I was, it was just about being able to communicate this to my boss.

Instead of agonizing over it, I threw it out to my friends, family, past co-workers, networking circles, old teachers, anyone I could think of who knew me well enough to answer the million dollar question.

I sent an email out to about 70 people and here's what it said:

"I've been asked by my boss to tell her why I am different. I would like your help with this exercise, so please take a moment to answer the following question: If you could describe me in one word, which word would you pick?"

I received about 60 responses and there were two words that came up over and over again. I got a few words I didn't expect, but for the most part, the feedback was the same. The two most common words I got:

**Motivated**  
**Creative**

I used this feedback to create a year-long postcard campaign to mail out to my clients. It included photos I took and short inspirational stories. The purpose of the campaign was to introduce myself to potential clients and stay in touch with current ones.

The campaign didn't get off the ground due to lack of funding and support, but it was a fun exercise to come up with and it taught me a lot about what I'm capable of doing when faced with a challenge.

If you need a starting point, I recommend the "one word" exercise.

Points to remember:

1. If you have something to be proud of, tell the world about it!
2. Figure out what makes you different and use that as part of your marketing campaign. Instead of looking at your uniqueness as a setback, look for ways to make it an advantage.
3. Stay away from big resume words and focus on emotional connections.
4. If you can't come up with anything memorable about yourself, use today as the first day you will commit to changing this.

Feel free to re-read this chapter until the ideas have sunk in, it's okay if it doesn't happen overnight.