



Your Online Presence: Relevant to Employers Current & Future?

Having a positive personal brand has always been a good idea, however more than ever your profile is now visible across many channels. As such, consistency has become crucial for anyone serious about their career in 2013 – and beyond.

Personal brands are no longer one dimensional. It's not just about your CV or how you present yourself to a potential employer – it spans your presence on social media, your relationships with past employers, your work network and personal networks, including how you work with recruiters.

“Your personal brand is your reputation – what you are known for – and harnessing this will help you demonstrate what you have to offer an employer long before you meet a recruitment consultant or potential new boss in person”.

“Companies want to make sure that prospective employees are a cultural fit, as well as having the right competencies. Social media makes it easy for employers and potential managers to check you out online so it is imperative that you take control and actively create and manage your personal brand online and offline.

“Employers will be even more discerning in 2013 and articulating your personal brand will help demonstrate the value you would bring to an organisation if you're hired.”

Use these five tips to get started on developing your winning personal brand.

1. Conduct a "brand review"

List the words you believe people use to describe you such as “strategic”, “proactive”, “focused” or “disorganised”, “lacking passion”. Put some thought into what is working for you and what is holding you back. Ask for feedback from a manager or mentor but be prepared to hear the truth. You cannot change a habit or behaviour if you are not prepared to acknowledge it.

2. Social media

Your personal brand is only a click away from being viewed by recruiters, employers and potential managers and social media offers a quick and easy way to build, maintain and control your personal brand. But you need to ensure you align your online profile and activities with the personal brand you want to project. For example, if you are building a personal brand that stands for leadership and creative problem solving then you don't want your online activities to be counter-productive.

3. Stay in touch with former employers

It's worthwhile staying in touch with former managers and other referees to let them know when you are considering a career move. Not only because you may want to call on them as a potential referee but also to ask for their input as to the move you are contemplating. Ensure you remain respectful of people's time but provide updates about your skills and level of responsibilities where appropriate and congratulate others on their career wins. You never know who will be in a position to hire or recommend you.

4. Make the best use of recruitment consultants

Building a relationship with a recruiter is an important way to promote your personal brand to employers. Recruiters are also a great source of information about employment and salary trends and, of course, the details and inside knowledge of any job they put you forward for. If you develop a strong relationship with the right recruitment consultant, they can become your career advocate with potential employers.

5. Make time for networking

There is no point in putting time and effort into cultivating a personal brand if you never put it to work. Continue to update your social media profile you have created such as a Twitter feed or industry blog. And be sure to keep up with employment and salary news. At least once a month you should make time to think about what you have done or need to do to further your career. It deserves to be nurtured!