

# Personal branding

A Guest Article by Steve Preston  
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### What is personal branding?

Personal branding is about what makes you unique. It relates to how people see you, what you project to others and their perception of you. Personal branding is all about how to look, sound and behave for success.

Your future depends on your ability to effectively communicate your ideas in a confident, clear and compelling way. Having a branded message about who you are and what makes you distinctive is the key to success.

We all have our own personal brand identity or PBI for short. Your PBI is an amalgamation of your assets (skills, abilities and experiences), your values (the things that matter as well as your passions) and your image (what you project to others).

Your PBI is how you look, act and sound. It's what you measure everything you do against, how you meet new people, handle colleagues, give presentations, run meetings, dress. It's what makes you stand out from the crowd, an individual.

### Perception is key

In business it's not what you know or whom you know that counts, although these are important. It's who knows you, and their perception of how well you perform.

In order to move your career forward – whether that be up the ladder, doing something completely different or running your own business – it is extremely beneficial to get training and coaching to help you to maximise your unique attributes and characteristics. This will further not only your own development but also the development of the company you run or work for.

How much time do you spend considering and reflecting on how well you understand yourself and how you are perceived by others?

In an information-technology-rich and time-pressured world, we need to learn new tools and strategies to communicate effectively.

### Take the test

How aware are you of yourself, your image and your PBI? The following quiz should take no more than five minutes, and will help you to discover how effective your personal brand is.

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### Section A: Brand review

1. Do you love what you do so much that it makes you want to get out of bed in the morning? Yes / No
2. Can you describe simply what you want to achieve in life? Yes / No
3. In relation to your career, do you know the three attributes you would most like to relay as part of your personal brand? Yes / No
4. Do you know what is holding you back in achieving your potential? Yes / No
5. Do you know how to turn your ideas into reality? Yes / No

### Section B: Defining your personal brand identity

1. Can you state simply what makes you stand out from your colleagues or competitors? Yes / No
2. Do you have a clear understanding of what your own perceptions are of how you come across to others? Yes / No
3. Are you aware of the impact that you have on others within the first 30 seconds of meeting? Yes / No
4. Can you list the five biggest hurdles to promoting and selling yourself? Yes / No
5. Can you describe your target market in terms of location, industry, demographics and characteristics? Yes / No

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### Section C: Communicating your brand

1. When someone asks what you do, do you have an answer that holds people's interest? Yes / No
2. Do you know what signals your body language sends? Yes / No
3. Do you know what your paralanguage is? Yes / No
4. Do your marketing materials/CV/portfolio reflect your personal brand and are they consistent? Yes / No
5. Are you proactive in developing and maintaining your professional network? Yes / No
6. Do you have a full set of communication tools for your personal brand, including personalised business cards, stationery, website, CV, etc? Yes / No

### Section D: Personal image

1. Does your personal image project your core values and is it appropriate for your industry, profession and target market? Yes / No
2. Does your working wardrobe allow you to dress appropriately for every business occasion? Yes / No
3. Does your personal image make you stand out from your colleagues or competitors? Yes / No
4. Are you spending in a year the equivalent of one month's net salary on your business image? Yes / No
5. Do you have a clear picture of the highest calibre version of you? Yes / No
6. Do you have a strategy or plan for your personal image and a time frame for making it happen? Yes / No

*Steve Preston – SMP Solutions*

If you would like more information on any of the points covered in this Guest Article, please contact **TCii** on **020 7099 2621**.