

Personal Branding

The real you

To make the most of your presence you need to decide who you are or want to be.

Begin by creating an accurate analysis of who you are. One way to do this is through a personal SWOT. This is like an organizational SWOT but just about you. See below for some helpful questions to stimulate thought.

SWOT Analysis

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| INTERNAL | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What am I good at? •What talents do I have? •What useful experience do I have? •What achievements have I had? • What communications/other skills do I have? | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What am I not good at? •What abilities do I lack that would be useful? •What have I not done that I should have? •What have I <i>not</i> achieved? • What communications/other skills do I lack? |
| EXTERNAL | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What potentially positive changes are coming up? •What development opportunities are there? •Are there any promotion opportunities? •Are there any interesting projects I could help on? • What other options do I have? | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What changes- funding, role, structure- might cause problems? •What might cause me unhappiness/ frustration? •What high risk activities am I involved in? •Are there any discriminations I need to challenge? •Is there anyone who doesn't value my interests? |

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Now from this analysis identify:

three most significant strengths you can build on

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three most challenging weaknesses you need to address

three most important opportunities to grasp

three significant threats to face up to and deal with

The ABC of Branding

When considering your personal brand you should also consider your **A,B,C.**

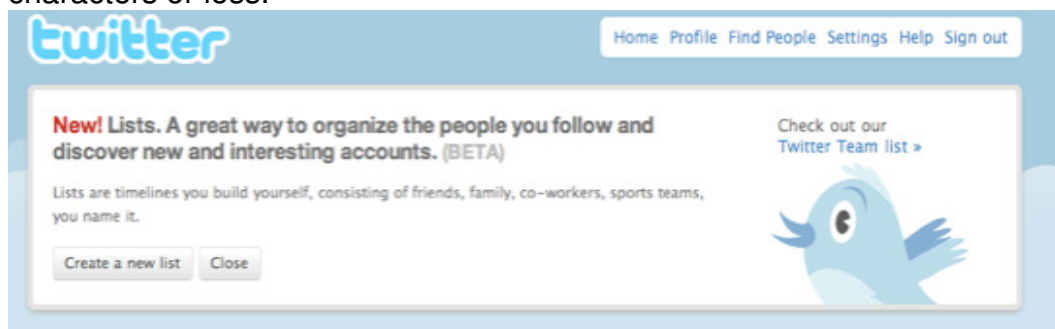
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| Ambition: what is your mission or ambition? What difference do you want to make in the world? How can you summarise your role | |
| Beliefs: what are your guiding beliefs or principles? What informs your action and approach? Why do you do | |

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| what you do? | |
| Competencies: what are you good at? What skills, abilities, and knowledge do you have- and what need in the future? | |

Twitter test

Now summarise yourself as someone worth knowing. Try the following

The Twitter Test involves you writing a description of yourself in 140 characters or less.



Write your answer below. Check out the impact with others. Remember to stick to the 140 characters!

Keep it real

We've talked a bit on the programme about the importance of being open and candid about your strengths and weaknesses.

There's quite a bit of scientific data which suggests that being candid about your weaknesses adds to credibility and therefore contributes to your personal brand

The classic study is from the 1970s and was run by psychologists Edward Jones and Eric Gordon from Duke University. The experiment involved a researcher being recorded talking about his life from a script. Two groups of listeners were asked to listen to different versions of the tape. In one version he admitted that he had been expelled from school for cheating but went on to explain that he had seen the error of his ways. And in another he simply reported his career without mentioning the expulsion.

Interestingly the results were consistent across several versions of the experiment. People tended to report the version where the researcher admitted to the expulsion made him more likeable. It seems we like people to be fallible. These results have been replicated elsewhere- for example where lawyers mention the weakness in their case and then deal with it rather than try and avoid it.

This 'confessional route to credibility' isn't a brand new insight or even one exclusive to the charity world. It has worked in the past for companies like Hertz who won fans when they admitted they had to 'try harder' since they were only number two in the world of car rental. It worked for Domestos to be No1 in bleach partly because they conceded it can only kill 99% of household germs.

We seem to like people and organisations to be honest with us. And that kind of honesty means coming out as being way less than perfect.

They call Me Naughty Lola

David Rose is the advertising director of the London Review of Books. He's written a great book titled **They Call Me Naughty Lola: Personal Ads from The London Review of Books**. The book tells the story of the extraordinary success of a particular kind of lonely heart/personal advert the Review has been running – brutally honest ads. (The book title comes from an actual ad, placed by a 46-year-old female physicist, seeking love and friendship).

What's different in the London Review personal ads is the aching honesty in them. Interestingly the most 'successful' ones in terms of the level of response – are fiercely self-deprecating. They reject the shameless self-promotion of most personal ads – 'charming', 'funny', 'GSOH' or 'great in bed' – and instead present themselves warts and all... So in these successful ads people talk about being 'desperate', 'odd-looking', 'obsessive', 'incontinent', 'neurotic', 'miserable', 'flatulent', 'older than 100', 'paranoid', 'menopausal', 'unfaithful', 'bald', and in one case 'amphetamine-fuelled'. (See below for examples.)

There's some eye-watering detail as the prospective partners tell you exactly what you'd be taking on. Ailments include liver disease, drug addiction, compulsive gambling, alcoholism and even reduced sperm counts.

But did the honesty work? According to David Rose's follow-up research on the advertisers it did. Moreover these ads appear to be hugely successful not just because of their novelty value, but because their honesty means putative partners feel they know what they're getting into. (They're credible *and* many are quite funny too.) Check out the examples below

Sample ads from London Review of Books by **men**

- Bald, fat, short, and ugly male, 53, seeks short-sighted woman with tremendous sexual appetite.*
- Mature gentleman, 62, aged well, noble grey looks, fit and active, sound mind and unfazed by the fickle demands of modern society ... Damn it, I have to pee again.*
- Unashamed triumphalist male for the past 46 years. Will I bore you? Probably. Do I care? Probably not*
- Bastard. Complete and utter. Whatever you do, don't reply – you'll only regret it*
- I like my women the way I like my kebab. Found by surprise after a drunken night out, and covered in too much tahini. Before long I'll have discarded you on the pavement of life, but until then you're the perfect complement to a perfect evening. Man, 32. Rarely produces winning metaphors.*

Sample ads from London Review of Books by **women**

- Blah blah, whatever. Indifferent woman. Go ahead and write. Box no. 3253. Like I care.*
- Your stars for today: A pretty Cancerian, 35, will cook you a lovely meal, caress your hair softly, then squeeze every damn penny from your adulterous bank account before slashing the tyres of your Beamer. Let that serve as a warning. Now then, risotto?*
- I'm just a girl who can't say 'no' (or 'anaesthetist'). Lipping Rodgers and Hammerstein fan, female lecturer in politics (37) WLTm man to 40 for some enchanted evenings, Love is strange – wait 'til you see my feet. F, 34, wide-fitting Scholls*

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