Creating a Personal Brand that Reflects What Really Matters

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Abstract

Cultivating your personal brand is an effective way to differentiate yourself and help propel your technical career. While it is important to understand how others perceive you, ultimately your personal brand is your reputation. Your reputation should stand for something that truly matters and reflect your values and vision. Join me to learn more about how to articulate your personal values and embody them through your work. You’ll walk away with a technique on how to develop a personal vision statement for your career. I’ll share stories of my own successes (and failures) in cultivating a brand that reflects my personal values and vision. We’ll also talk about how to keep yours authentic and current as you evolve and change.
I’m tired
Tired of playing the game
Ain’t it a crying shame
I’m so tired

-Madeline Kahn, Blazing Saddles
What is brand?
What makes a great brand?

- Simple
- Consistent
- Instantly recognizable
- Resonates
Health

Storytelling

Human spirit

Live your best life
Your brand
If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.

-Mark Twain
If you don’t watch out for your reputation, no one else will.

-Mama
Character is like a tree and reputation like a shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing.

-Abraham Lincoln
My Values

Self realization
Love
Freedom
Elegance
Perseverance
What is your career path?

Are you interested in management?

Where do you see your career in five years?
It is a terrible thing to see and have no vision.

-Helen Keller
Great personal vision statement =
  career aspiration + impact +
  desired experience + your needs

1. List out your strengths, passions, desires, needs
2. Imagine if you had all of it*
3. Describe *that*

*Some of you (like me) may need to give yourselves a context
Mine circa 2007

To play a leadership role in creating productivity tools for the IT Pro. To see those UXs delivered into customers’ hands. To empower a team to define and deliver on a compelling vision for IT Pro UX. To make UX a core discipline for shipping IT Pro solutions. To be recognized as a thought leader in IT Pro solutions and be part of the decision making process to define the strategy for IT Pro solutions. To grow a community within Microsoft of people committed to delivering great experiences for the IT Pro. To help my team grow their careers and realize their potential. To work in a stable, collaborative team that supports my goals, values my contributions, and invests in my growth. To have a position and be part of a group that is conducive to a healthy work/life balance where I can accomplish all of the above and still be a great wife and mother.
A ship in port is safe, but that's not what ships are built for.

-Grace Hopper
Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning.

-Benjamin Franklin
The most effective way to do it, is to do it.

-Amelia Earhart
Thank you