



FEBRUARY NEWS   

## Creating Your Personal Leadership Brand: Six Steps to Success

Your leadership brand—your particular strengths and capabilities—conveys your distinctiveness and communicates the value you offer. With a strong personal brand, your colleagues are more likely to give you opportunities to generate maximum value for your organization.

According to Forbes contributor, Glenn Llopis, "*Developing your personal brand is essential for the advancement of your career and development as a leader.*" Your personal brand is uniquely yours; defining it gives you an opportunity to clarify your values, identify your strengths and set a course to achieve your career goals. By acting in a way that's consistent with your vision and who you are, you strengthen your authentic leadership with colleagues and other leaders.

**Be proactive.** Your personal brand must be managed and protected. That means you should be engaged in determining your own development path. Being personally accountable for your own professional growth means developing new skills and taking on new roles.

**Be visible.** Take advantage of opportunities to add value at work or to network and take on responsibilities outside your company. As Sheryl Sandberg writes in *Lean In*, women need a seat at the table. You can use the discipline of branding to sharpen your external perspectives, share best practices and provide introductions and advice.

**Be passionate.** Taking the steps necessary to build a solid personal brand can involve embracing risk and accepting challenges. When you are passionate and engaged in what you do, those risky situations are much less scary.

**Be flexible.** Whether you're in the job of your dreams or looking to move, being prepared for change can be a key to remaining optimistic in the face of unexpected challenges or transitions.

**Be a team player.** If your skills at working with teams or distributed work groups need to be sharpened, add that to your overall development plan. Team building is a crucial element for organizational success. It builds trust, reduces conflict, encourages better communication and promotes collaboration. Add value to your brand by building your skills as a team player—it will be good for your company culture and your career.

**Be your own biggest fan.** It's important to keep others aware of your skills and contributions. And even more important to take the time to recognize the contributions of others. As Glenn Llopis put it:

*"If your teammates and/or colleagues don't know what your personal brand is, the fault is yours and not theirs. Having a personal brand is a leadership requirement. It*

*enables you to be a...more authentic leader that can create greater overall impact. In fact, those who have defined and live their personal brand will more naturally **demonstrate executive presence** and as such may find themselves advancing more quickly at work.*

***Personal branding is no longer an option; it's a powerful leadership enabler."***

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## DATA POINT

According to research done at Career-Builder, you need to develop your soft skills to set yourself apart.

More than three quarters of employers (over 75%) think that soft skills are just as important as hard skills in getting employed. Surprisingly, 16% of employers said that soft skills are **more** important.



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