

**Personal Branding and Marketing Yourself:
The "Three Ps" Marketing Technique as a Guide to Career Empowerment**

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Marketing ourselves allows us to establish our niche, our differentiators, our value-add, and the worth that we have to offer. Defining and creating our "personal brand," articulating it and then enhancing it is part of the marketing process. Marketing ourselves is a core competency that can become so effortless and second-nature that we do not even realize we are doing it while being our authentic self. Empower yourself by knowing what you have to offer, what you want and how to ask for it. Our ability to market our talents, accomplishments and value inside our organization and within our profession, industry and community are a key part of enhancing our brand.

Let's begin with a vision exercise to illustrate the importance of developing the core competency of marketing ourselves.

Vision Exercise

Fast forward: it is 10 years into the future. You have been invited to speak at an industry event because of your accomplishments and contributions throughout your career.

What does that vision look like for you?

What do you want to be known for?

Visualize what you want your "personal brand" to be in 10 years.

Give this some thought and then answer the following questions:

- Was that difficult or easy?
- Do you know your worth?
- Can you define your personal brand?
- How easily can you articulate that brand?
- Do you actively work on enhancing your brand?

If you are like most people, you may have found this exercise a little daunting or overwhelming. Many people do not think that far in advance and try to deal with the current day, the here and now. However, the best way to equip ourselves for the career opportunities and challenges we will inevitably face is to recognize our contributions and continuously work on enhancing and marketing our brand within our chosen fields. We all need to have a mission for our career and specific goals we want to accomplish. Without a plan, we do not have direction or any criteria for accountability. Creating this vision for ourselves is the beginning of creating a plan.

Now let's rewind back to the current day and take a moment to reflect on all the demands we face: demands we have no control over such as the economy, competition, specialization vs. generalization, changing demographics, generational and cultural differences, leadership expectations and capabilities, as well as the globalization of our marketplace. Within the landscape of all these growing demands and challenges, have you positioned yourself for success? How ready are you to put your best foot forward if faced with a promotional opportunity, board consideration, networking event, professional association membership, project leadership, job interview, or other growth potential?

In our global marketplace there is and always will be demand for accomplished, results-driven professionals with a proven track record who can add value. Only you can manage your career. Having a solid plan for yourself with specific goals and objectives is the best way to start the process, which involves defining, identifying, creating, building, articulating and enhancing your personal brand!

The 3 P's Marketing Technique to create your personal brand and effectively market yourself:

1. **Preparation** – conducting your due diligence; *define and identify your brand*
2. **Packaging** – creating your portfolio; *create and build your brand*
3. **Presentation** – delivering your message; *articulate and enhance your brand*

Preparation

- Know your value/self assessment – skills, competencies, accomplishments, strengths, limitations, interests, values and aspirations, input and feedback from others
- Differentiating factors - unique characteristics, traits and/or experiences you have to offer that set you apart
- Network – build, maintain and nurture long lasting relationships
- Content expertise – establish specific niches, functional and/or technical expertise
- Goals – create mission for career, set goals (short and long term), have a plan
- Craft and articulate a clear and concise message
- Positive attitude - positivity and sense of humor are most important in setting a strong foundation

Packaging

- Maintain resume, bio, CV and/or portfolio regularly
- Keep copies of performance reviews, awards, articles, presentations
- Create history of track record - “scrapbook” of talents & accomplishments
- Obtain references, quotes, testimonials and other relevant credentials
- Serve on committees and boards – professionally and personally
- Expand your network and enhance your visibility
- Be well read and stay current in your field, continued learning
- Create key alliances and partnerships – align with people you admire/respect

Presentation

- Strong communication, active listening and interpersonal skills
- Be concise and assertive - clearly articulate your desires, value add, “brand”
- Practice your delivery again and again and again.....and again
- Maintain give and take approach – practice professional etiquette
- Be pro-active and strategic with your efforts to be visible - think big picture
- Be your own advocate & know when to reach out to key contacts for support
- Never burn any bridges – always leave positive impressions!
- Deliver it with the UTMOST CONFIDENCE - CONFIDENCE is how it all comes together – your preparation, your packaging and presentation!!

Practicing these “3 Ps” are effective techniques for establishing your personal brand and marketing yourself resulting in a more fulfilling and focused career. Remember, the best person to manage your career is youand the best person to market your talents, accomplishments and value is you! Last, but not least, when practicing the “3 Ps”, do not limit your efforts internally within your organization.

Understand the overlap between your personal brand and your company brand as well as distinguishing the differences between the two. Be sure to incorporate external initiatives – reach your efforts outside of your organization with equal importance. The venues you should take into account include your team, function, organization, business, industry, profession, media, community, academics, professional associations, virtual presence, family, friends, and other social groups.

Once you create an effective branding and marketing outlook, you will find it to be a natural process that you do not even realize you have engaged. Once you change your mindset and embrace this concept as a powerful way of achieving self-actualization – knowing your value, setting goals that allow you to do what brings you the most passion and achieving a higher sense of accomplishment, then you have mastered the art of personal branding and marketing yourself!

Now begin your journey...

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