

OWN IT! TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR CAREER

*Develop Your
Personal Brand and
Succeed in a
Crowded Market
Through
Professional
Development,
Storytelling and
Networking*

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Table of Contents

OWN IT! was designed as a workbook—a practical *work* book for capturing your goals and creating a personal brand development plan. The workbook is organized to provide you with a brief overview of personal branding and then guide you through a process of reflection, discovery and goal setting.

page

3

What is Personal Branding?

page

7

Personal Branding Matters

page

11

Your Professional Development

page

15

Who are You?

page

24

Prepare to Tell Your Story

page

30

Your Personal Brand

page

34

Understand the Competition

page

38

Your Personal Brand Development Plan

page

42

Network to Strengthen Your Brand

page

46

Measure Your Progress and Celebrate Success

What is Personal Branding?

Career Management

Your Reputation

Yes, It's Personal

Your Story

Your Brand Identity

Social Media

Are You Managing Your Career?

Professionals too often rely on their employers to manage their careers.

Yes, feedback and professional development opportunities from the work environment are extremely valuable. They can align your efforts, leverage your strengths, and improve your weakness while helping you maintain or exceed performance expectations.

If you are not proactively managing your career don't be surprised when you're not promoted or considered for vacancies or other opportunities.

For the majority of jobs it's no longer realistic to believe that anyone will be in any one position for several years, let alone for the life of their career. Work environments and the way in which we work and think about work continue to change at an accelerated pace.

Owning your professional development means that you are responsible for the decisions made about your career.

Career management is changing.

+ LINK: [CAREER MANAGEMENT](#)

+ LINK: [TOOLKIT](#)

What is Personal Branding?

Personal branding can help you get noticed in a crowded job market or in your current work environment, improve communication and build relationships.

Every interaction others have with you and how they feel about you helps create your personal brand. All interactions are opportunities to build or detract from your brand.

Personal branding is about communicating how you can add value and how you are unique. For someone to hire you or recommend that someone else does people need to know you and like you, both of which are impacted by your ability to communicate how you can add value. They need to know you and like you to pay you.

For job seekers, personal branding can help you get noticed in a crowded market.

You communicate your personal brand by what you do, how you communicate and with the choices you make each day.

Personal branding at the most basic level involves your story, brand identity and social media.

Your personal brand is your reputation.

+ LINK: [PERSONAL BRANDING](#)

+ LINK: [TOOLKIT](#)

Your Story, Brand Identity and Social Media

*Your personal and professional history
should be leveraged to tell your story.*

Your Story

Your story is the foundation for developing your compelling value proposition that demonstrates how you are uniquely qualified for a position or opportunity.

Your story should tell how you:

- are different;
- add value;
- arrived at where you are today (creating an emotional connection); and
- where you are going (describing your goals in a broad sense).

Your Brand Identity

How you express yourself both verbally and visually combine to define your brand identity. How you communicate impacts your success connecting with others. The choices you make send messages to others about who you are and what you value.

Social Media

How you use social media, both personally and professionally, impact your personal brand. Every post, tweet, instant message, photograph and video that you add and comment on influences others' perceptions of you.

Personal Branding Matters

*NewTimes,
NewTechniques*

The Market Matters

Tap into Recruiters

New Times, New Techniques

The current employment era is transforming how individuals search for positions and how organizations select, retain and develop talent.

One new approach involves personal branding where professionals focus on developing their ability to communicate using advanced techniques, storytelling and social media to describe how they can add value to organizations and others.

The times in which we now work require new approaches for securing employment and developing careers.

The Market Matters

88% of job seekers have at least one social networking profile; 64% have two profiles and 44% have three*

1 in 6 job seekers credit social media for their current job*

While a targeted relationship-based approach to securing a position is ideal, it's not always possible. If you seek a new position, it may be beneficial for you to better understand the techniques that other job seekers are currently using. Many job search websites allow job seekers to post resumes that are viewable to the general public without password or other protection. As of this writing, Indeed.com[®] is one such job search engine.

While many use this site to search for positions, these same job seekers may overlook the ability to use Indeed.com[®] to determine how many job seekers are located in the area in which they are interested and how these job seekers are presenting their qualifications. Try it for yourself. Go to Indeed.com[®] and click "find resumes". Enter a zip code or other parameters and links to job seeker resumes will appear. You can tailor search results by education, years of work experience, job titles, etc. Understanding how and where job seekers present themselves can be quite useful if you seek a new position.

Tap Into Recruiters

*93% of recruiters are likely to look at a candidate's social profile**

*The top social network for recruiting in 2013 was LinkedIn®**

*78% of recruiters surveyed have made a hire through social media**

Recruiters are using social media to locate and learn about both active and passive candidates. Understanding where recruiters are locating candidates can help you position yourself to be at the right place at the right time.

Professionals who are not actively seeking a new position should also be aware of recruiter activities. Circumstances change and the profiles you maintain will matter into the future.

Your online presence and personal brand can provide a glimpse into your interests, experience, knowledge, skills, abilities and accomplishments. It can help you stand out among other potential candidates who possess comparable credentials and interests.

Your credibility is a key component of your personal brand and requires that you actively communicate how you add value for others with examples that demonstrates what you've done and the results realized.

According to the 2013 Jobvite Social Recruiting Survey which polled 1,600 recruiting and human resources professionals, 93% of recruiters are likely to look at a candidate's social profile.

From this survey we discovered that the top social networks for recruiting in 2013 were LinkedIn® at 94%, Facebook® at 65% and Twitter® at 55%.

Proactively and professionally managing your online profiles and interactions is important to your current position and to your career and future given that 78% of recruiters surveyed have made a hire through social media and that 94% of recruiters use or plan to use social media in their recruitment efforts.

Your Professional Development

It is YOUR Career

*Times Have Changed,
Have You?*

Discovering What Works

OWN IT!

Take Charge of Your Career

Are you prepared to transition into a new position if your employer would inform you that they are letting you go?

Too often professionals rely on the advice of their management or human resources departments *in isolation* to guide their professional development. Their feedback and guidance is very important to your performance at your present place of employment. If you rely on it in isolation you may be doing your long term career a disservice.

Management and human resource professionals often provide guidance in the context exclusive to the work environment and use processes and tools that may not focus on leveraging your strengths, improving your weaknesses and guiding your development as an individual who will likely encounter additional career transitions. **You should “own it” and take charge of your career.** This includes preparing yourself for the transitions that you will likely experience throughout your career.

Consider the following:

- Can you communicate the value you offer to a variety of potential employers within various work environments?
- Have you participated in professional development activities independent of your work environment to the extent that you are prepared to transition into a new position within a different industry?
- Do you have a robust and engaged professional network?
- Do you maintain a professional presence on key social media sites? ([LinkedIn](#)[®], [Google+](#)[®], [Twitter](#)[®], etc.)
- Are your biography, resume, and online profiles current and branded consistently?
- Have you positioned yourself as a “thought leader”?

Times Have Changed. Have You?

Economic conditions and technology are reshaping professionals' career choices and work environments.

This reshaping has intensified pressures for many professionals who are striving for work/life balance. For some, the notion of work/life balance is not possible with work dominating most days even during personal time. This situation has resulted in new ways of managing how we live and work including how we pursue new opportunities.

To create a personal brand development plan that's in alignment with your goals begin by understanding how satisfied you are with your past performance.

Proactively assessing our personal and professional goals and performance periodically helps us learn how to achieve our goals and obtain fulfillment in both our personal and professional lives.

What Works for You

Consider the ways in which you can leverage your strengths once you've completed a self-assessment process (resources in the toolkit at tuesdaystrong.com).

We too often focus on improving to the extent that we overlook the ways in which we can use our strengths to achieve even more progress. We also tend to forget to celebrate our accomplishments.

Professional development plans can help align your efforts and resources with your goals. They don't need to be complicated or take considerable amounts of your time. You will need to update yours periodically to ensure alignment with your goals and resources.

Discover what works for you – what's important is having goals that you're actively working toward.

Goal setting and realization can be addictive especially if you are a self-motivated individual who appreciates making progress. You may discover that as you complete goals that you are inspired to "raise the bar" and set even more challenging goals than what you just completed.

Goals can be realized with the right amount of hard work, determination and support.

Who are You?

What Do You Value?

Discover Your Passions

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Overcome Constraints

Know Yourself

Many of us go through various exercises throughout our careers to “discover” what we’re drawn to and what we’re good at.

The process of knowing yourself begins with understanding what positions you to be the most content and productive.

What would you write if you could write your own job description?

What Do You Value?

You'll need to understand who you really are and the conditions in which you prefer to work to develop a personal brand that truly represents you. Reflect upon the following as you go through a process of reflection and discovery (resources available in the [toolkit](#)).

Our values are principles that motivate our decisions. When we are in positions that align with our values we are typically more content, productive and fulfilled. When this happens it can be a win-win for both employees and organizations.

It's important that you're aware of your values in relation to your ideal job or career. Understanding your values will help you focus on career objectives that you will find fulfilling.

We are typically more content, productive and fulfilled when we are in positions that align with our values.

Key definitions to remember:

- **Values** define what is valid and important to us in life;
- **Passions** excite and fulfill us;
- **Knowledge** is a body of information that is acquired over time;
- **Skills** are what we can do;
- **Abilities** are special talents or personal qualities that impact our performance; and
- **Constraints** are factors that limit us.

For example, you may lack the knowledge, skills or abilities to work in a particular field and you may need additional training or experience to remove this type of constraint. For others, constraints could involve traveling within limited distances or working certain hours due to other obligations.

Discover Your Passions

Our passions are what excite and fulfill us—they are what light our fires.

It's important to understand your passions and discover if you can incorporate your passions into your work. If you're passionate about what you do you may find that your work is easier and more satisfying.

Discovering your passions isn't always easy but there are several steps you can take to begin the process. First, think about what kind of life will make you happy. It's easier if you begin with this in mind and then work to build that life tapping into your passions as much as possible. Begin to discover your passions using the exercises in the [toolkit](#).

You may want to think about the elements of your current position that you most dislike. This may help you recognize what parts of your work you enjoy. You may also want to ask your family and close friends their opinions regarding your passions.

Consider your achievements over the past few years and identify the areas in which you are particularly pleased about your accomplishments or involvement. What were your five main accomplishments during the past three years? Which of these excited you the most?

What makes you happy?

Passions can be cultivated so try new things and you'll quickly discover more about your likes and dislikes.

Your Knowledge, Skills and Abilities



Your knowledge, skills and abilities are critical to your employability and longevity in the workforce.

Most positions have minimum requirements for the knowledge, skills and abilities that applicants must meet in order to make it through an initial screening process prior to being selected for interviews.

By maintaining an awareness of your knowledge, skills and abilities you can proactively manage your development and have a greater influence over your performance and success in the work force. A brief review of your knowledge, skills and abilities can help you better understand your strengths and weaknesses.

Common definitions:

- **knowledge** is what you have learned over time through education or experience;
- **skills** are what you can do and can often be measured by tests; and
- **abilities** are the special talents or personal qualities that enable you to perform observable tasks or activities.

Your Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Your goal should involve positioning yourself to be an obvious choice for opportunities.

Once you understand your knowledge, skills and abilities you can use this information to develop your story, social media profiles and talking points.

You can also leverage this information when connecting with others who can be bridges to employers or other opportunities.

You should be able to communicate confidently about your strengths and weaknesses and demonstrate how they have contributed to your prior successes and how you are currently developing as a professional.

A thorough understanding of your knowledge, skills and abilities will be beneficial to your professional success.

Overcome Constraints

Understanding market conditions is critical to the longevity of any career.

Certain conditions can limit or prevent you from achieving your personal branding goals. Depending upon your circumstances some constraints may be foreseeable and preventable. Identifying and planning to avoid, reduce or eliminate the impact of preventable constraints should be included in your personal brand development plans.

For example, you may develop personal branding goals that include having professionally created brand identity materials, e.g., website, brochure, logo, business cards, etc., that are currently not feasible financially.

You could opt to add professionally branded materials into your plans at a later date when you have budgeted and saved for them or you could determine how you will increase your income, e.g. obtain a part-time job or second source of income, to support your goals within your original time period.

Time, support and lack of awareness or understanding can also be constraints that you may want to offset their impact. Timing can be a challenge for most of us. It's easy to assume more responsibilities than we have time to realistically manage, let alone devote time on a consistent basis to our professional development and personal branding plans.

Devoting time, money and energy to your professional development and personal brand can be worth the investment in both the short and long term. Planning is important to help guide you but it's important to remember and even anticipate that circumstances may necessitate that you abruptly change your plans.

A lack of awareness or understanding of market conditions, norms or trends can impact your personal branding goals. Understanding market conditions is critical to the longevity of any career.

Overcome Constraints

Identify the cause of your stress and decide if you can offset its' effects.

You may be someone who is challenged by change or you may be experiencing stress that is impacting your progress. Perhaps you are already aware of the source of your stress and have decided that you will work to manage it .

Draft your personal brand development plan and select a few of the goals to work on in the short term if uneasiness with change or stress are challenges for you. Then review your progress and update your goals and plans. You may find it easier (and less stressful) to work on a few goals compared with goals from each category. The key is to determine your goals and work toward them while reflecting upon your progress from time to time and updating your plans as necessary.

Another constraint that some professionals experience involves their digital footprint. You may be able to delete information from online profiles that's no longer relevant but depending upon your circumstances you may need assistance from professionals with expertise in reputation management.

Other constraints that impede or limit progress can involve distance, time and funding. If you are unemployed or underemployed you may find that funding is the greatest challenge for you.

Remember that personal branding does not need to involve a great deal of money—you can actually begin without investing any money by focusing on free resources or by enhancing your current activities and access.

Your level of commitment will impact your level of success.

Overcome Constraints

Your health could also be a constraint to realizing your personal branding goals. You are actually limiting or preventing your professional success if you fail to manage your health and be an active participant in your wellness.

Health and wellness are critically important to our careers because without them we function at lower levels if at all.

You must proactively manage your health if you want a successful career.

Prepare to Tell Your Story

*Uniqueness Attracts
Opportunities*

*Your History, Current
Situation and Future
Aspirations*

Writing Your Story

The Value of Your Story

You want others to hear your name or see your photo and instantly associate words and meaning with you.

Your story should help others understand what makes you unique. Your uniqueness can attract attention—attention that leads to opportunities. The events in your life, the jobs you have held and the impact you have had on the lives of others have been integral in your development. They do not describe who you are but instead connect to create a journey that is your life that has resulted in the person you have become.

Your uniqueness resides in the person you are now. Sharing your story with others helps them understand how you view the world and how you developed your views. Your story can also help others understand how you can add value to their lives.

Your goal for sharing your story is to establish and strengthen relationships. This can happen if you share your history, current situation and your aspirations. Sharing in this way can help others understand how you arrived at who you are today as well as offer a glimpse into how you may act in the future.

Your story should be told with a positive tone using emotion selectively. If possible, include a pivotal moment in your life and how this event influenced you.

Once you have captured your story you can edit it for both in person and online situations. The creation of your story enables you to develop themes, key words and talking points that you can use consistently over time to help reinforce your brand identity and build brand equity.

Your Story

History



Your history, current situation and future aspirations should be the main elements in your story.

Telling your story begins with understanding your history and identifying elements that describe your accomplishments, potential and aspirations. The way in which you describe important events can impact the extent to which others relate with your story.

Current Situation



How others perceive and welcome the information you share depends in large part on how you describe the pivotal moments in your life.

Everything you share should be described in a positive tone. Your story should use clear and concise language and help others understand what you stand for, who you are and what you're capable of.

Future Aspirations



Your story should contain an opening, a foundation, your current situation and vision or future aspirations.

Strive to create your story in 2,000 characters or less. This is the current character limit for a LinkedIn® profile. Check their website to confirm current character limits or other requirements if you plan to use a version of your story on your profile.

Your Story

THE OPENING

Strive to create a single phrase with a vivid image. An example: *For me, success involves using technology to improve and save lives. I believe in the power of hard work combined with a focus on relationships and lifelong learning* From this example we can envision someone who takes action and is comfortable with change.

What do you want others to take away from your opening line?

Do you want to be known as a big picture thinker who motivates others? If so, you could develop a version of: *I believe in the power of teams. My experience has taught me that there's nothing stronger or more productive as a diverse group of individuals who unite together to achieve a shared goal that benefits society.* This type of statement can intrigue readers and make them want to learn more about you.

Your opening line should be a hook that grabs the attention of others and makes them instantly want to keep reading to learn more about you.

Your Story

THE FOUNDATION

The foundation of your story involves your values, passions, challenges and accomplishments.

An example that includes history, values, passions, challenges and accomplishments: *My experiences impressed upon me the power and importance of technology. Completing my graduate studies while working full-time, I developed the work ethic and ability to focus on value added activities to fulfill aggressive goals. My career path in the medical devices industry has been reinforced by family illness and I've committed my life's work to serving others.*

Your history serves as the foundation for your story.

Your Story

CURRENT SITUATION AND FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

Your current situation involves your knowledge, skills and abilities, talents and aspirations. Answer a few questions to help distill these elements.

- Who are you now? Examples include: an experienced professional; a student; a parent; a graduate student who is also employed; a grandparent; a service member; a leader or manager; or a business owner.
- What do you value?
- Have you increased your knowledge, skills or abilities? If so, in what ways?
- How do you add value to others in your personal life?
- How do you add value to others in your professional role?
- What talents do you have? Have you developed your talents in the past few years? Do you use your talents to benefit others?
- What do you want to do in the future?

Your Personal Brand

*Understand Your Personal
Brand*

Career Phase

Personal Brand Life Cycle

Understand Your Personal Brand

Your brand equity grows when your efforts and messages are aligned. Others will understand you more easily if your brand equity is strong. The stronger your brand equity the better positioned you are within the market.

Your efforts should strive to reinforce your core values and position you to maximize the value you add and fulfillment you receive in exchange for employment or participation.

You want others to remember who you are, what you can do and how it relates to their needs.

Personal Brand Life Cycle Strategies

Consider where you are within your personal brand life cycle to determine which strategy will position you for success.

The career phase you are experiencing impacts the actions you will take to develop your personal brand.

Identify where you are within the Personal Brand Life Cycle Strategies™ (next slide) and which Career Phase you are experiencing:

Reflect upon the:

- amount of time and funding you are willing to invest in developing, reinforcing, repositioning or adapting your personal brand; and the
- potential benefits and opportunity costs of investing your time and money in developing, reinforcing, repositioning or adapting your personal brand.

Personal Brand Life Cycle Strategies™

Strategy	Developing Your Brand	Reinforcing Your Brand	Repositioning Your Brand	Adapting Your Brand
Objectives	Establish self within the market	Grow reputation within the market	Expand reach into additional market segments	Prepare to transition to new market segments
You as a Brand	Develop skills and abilities	Improve weaknesses and leverage strengths	Update brand messaging using innovative strategies	Leverage relationship based tactics to offset weaknesses
Promotion	Build awareness	Provide consistent information	Identify new or updated leverage points, e.g., new accomplishments, certifications, etc.	Update knowledge, skills, and abilities as necessary
Methods	Build network	Expand network	Use multichannel tactics and technology for broad communications	Partner to maximize impact
Investment	Ensure investment is comparable with market norms	Increase investment to exceed competition	Increase or maintain investment, leverage relationships and technology to expand reach and multiply impact	Maintain investments in relationships and technology
Career Phase	Entry into the Job Market	Growth	Mature	Late Career/ Pre-retirement

Understand the Competition

*Conducting a Competitive
Analysis*

Social Norms

*Meeting Needs vs. Self
Promotion*

Conducting a Competitive Analysis

A competitive analysis can give you a better understanding of current communication techniques used in professional social environments.

Your communication plans will be more effective if you have a thorough understanding of how you will position yourself in the market compared to your peers. Prior to developing your plans you should understand how others currently perceive you and how you prefer to be perceived. Then focus your efforts on communicating the attributes you want to be known for while highlighting the ways in which you can add value.

Next, decide if you will develop your personal brand to emphasize how you add value in your current position or if you want to develop your personal brand for a job or career transition.

You may want to position yourself for advancement from your current position or you may be preparing to transition into the marketplace from an educational or training program with limited professional experience.

Your plans may involve transitioning from your current position to a new position with a different organization. If you seek to change jobs, do your research and understand the industry you want to work in, its' history, market drivers and anticipated growth and changes in addition to understanding the level at which you want to work.

A competitive analysis can give you a better understanding of current in person and online communication techniques used in professional social environments.

The value of "netiquette" and the use of technology and social norms should not underestimated—they are expected and powerful. If you are not up to date with current practices you may not be offered opportunities to participate or even be employed.

Conducting a Competitive Analysis

Completing a competitive analysis will help you think in terms of how you can meet the needs of the market instead of simply attempting to promote what you have to offer.

The "market" involves who you want to reach.

Conducting a Competitive Analysis

Understand how your competitors or peers are presenting themselves in the marketplace.

A competitive analysis can also give you an idea of what employers and recruiters experience when they interact with others.

Conduct a competitive analysis prior to finalizing the positioning for your personal brand. Discovering how others position themselves can help you better understand how your story and compelling value proposition can be used to differentiate you within the marketplace.

To conduct a competitive analysis: 1) *identify* your competitors or peers; 2) *describe* your competitors or peers; and 3) *understand* how your competitors or peers are presenting themselves in the marketplace.

Next, acknowledge who you intend to reach with your messaging and engagement: 4) *identify* your target audience; 5) *describe* your target audience; 6) *understand* your target audiences' needs; 7) *summarize* how you can meet those needs; and 8) *identify* any gaps between your target audience needs and what you have to offer.

Conduct a competitive analysis prior to finalizing the positioning for your personal brand.

Your Personal Brand Development Plan

Your Story is an Asset

*Distinguish Yourself from
Your Peers*

*SMARTER™ Goal Setting
Method*

Your Personal Brand Development Plan

Your personal brand development plan involves envisioning your future and assessing your current situation, assets and challenges and creating a practical plan to achieve your vision.

You already own one of the most important elements critical to your success—it's your story. Up to this point you may not have considered it an asset or thought about how it can connect you with others.

Your story can evoke emotion in others and help them appreciate you in a variety of ways.

Your brand identity already exists as well. You may simply decide to refine it to reflect your envisioned future instead of maintaining it to reflect your past accomplishments and current state.

Individuals who share information or connect others become known for adding value. Social media enables this instantaneously and those who are connected in real time have a tendency to stay relevant and engaged.

Social media can help distinguish you from your peers.

Goal Setting for Competitive Advantage

Goal setting can help prevent the unnecessary loss of time and money by encouraging you to decide what resources you will need to accomplish your goals. Goals are accomplishments to be achieved. They provide direction and can be quite motivational.

The SMART Goal Setting Method is a classic goal setting method. It represents goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound. Today I am introducing you to the SMARTER™ Goal Setting Method.

You can surpass the impact typically realized from using the traditional SMART Goal Setting Method when you use the SMARTER™ Goal Setting Method. This is due to an emphasis on multiplying the effort expended with a focus on relationships—no longer is simply going from point A to point B the key—how you go about getting to point B can be the difference in impact and in time and money saved.

Goals are accomplishments to be achieved.

SMARTER™ Goal Setting Example

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	TACTICS	EFFORT EXPENDED	FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS
Accomplishment to be achieved.	Specific steps that are measurable and have a completion date.	The “thinking” aspect involved in achieving your objectives.	The “doing” aspect involved in achieving a strategy.	Amount and quality of effort put forth.	Frequency and richness of engagement.
EXAMPLE					
Be selected for senior level career path.	Express an interest in being selected for advancement to Assoc. VP by April 1.	Identify a minimum of three examples from the past three years that evidence my abilities and willingness to work at a higher level.	Document the money made or saved from three examples from the past three years and include the impact on the organization.	Work on documentation before and after normal work day.	Seek recommendations from peers and upper level management regarding my performance.

Network to Strengthen Your Brand

*Identify organizations,
targets and direct
connections.*

*Bridges and Alternate
Bridges or Connections*

Insight and Objectives

Network to Strengthen Your Brand

*It's not just who you know—it's
who knows you and what
you're capable of.*

Do you have a network of professionals who know you for your ability to use your skills in a variety of roles across industries? Would they avoid letting you go if cutbacks were to occur at your company? Are you someone who does a “good” job but isn't well known?

Network to Strengthen Your Brand

*Can you really afford not to position yourself for being known for the work you've done **and** for the work you're capable of?*

Do you have a network of professionals who know you for your ability to use your skills in a variety of roles across industries? Remember it's not just who you know—it's who knows you and what you're capable of.

Passive networking, e.g., linking up online via a social network or exchanging business cards with someone and seldom talking with them, will most likely not lead to opportunities or a successful job search. More importantly, such methods should not be relied upon to produce the results you want.

It's critical that you develop a variety of networks. You must also give in order to receive and be willing to connect others and offer support if possible. You never know when someone you have helped may be in a position to help you.

Network to Strengthen Your Brand

Stay engaged with your network and not focused on increasing how many contacts you have – it's quality, not quantity that matters.

Step One: Identify Organizations

The first step in effectively networking for a new opportunity or career is to acknowledge where you want to work and why. Several options exist to help you identify organizations where you may prefer to work, including a list of employers by state and a list of public and private companies worldwide.

Step Two: Identify Targets

Once you have identified an organization in which you may want to work, write down who you want to connect with within the organization.

Step Three: Identify Direct Connections

Next, write down who you know within the organization and reflect upon how well you know them. Consider these individuals direct connections in your network—they can directly connect you to your preferred place of employment.

Step Four: Identify Bridges

Perhaps you lack any direct connections to your preferred place of employment. Identify who in your network is connected to anyone at your preferred place of employment and plan to engage with them. Try professional and personal connections and online professional networking tools such as LinkedIn® if you lack direct knowledge of who may be a bridge.

Step Five: Identify Alternate Bridges or Connections

Lastly, if you lack direct connections or bridges, focus on who you need to connect with at the organization. This may be a hiring manager, vice president or divisional director, manager or supervisor.

An advanced Google® search may prove useful to you in this instance, or you may be able to obtain this information via the organization's website, from a professional association or via a local chamber of commerce.

Measure Progress and Celebrate Success

Getting to the Goal

Celebrating What Matters

Measure and Celebrate

Remember to celebrate and give yourself credit for what you have achieved.

Let's assume you have completed the self-assessments; identified your knowledge, skills, abilities and passions; written your story; completed a competitive analysis; and drafted networking, brand identity, social media and networking plans. You then used these to create your personal brand development plan that includes goals with deadlines. Fantastic!

Remember to periodically review your progress and celebrate your success. Many professionals find this helps motivate them to continue working on their goals.

Take time to review your circumstances if at any point you become discouraged or even overwhelmed by the amount of activities you're attempting to pursue in addition to your regular work load and personal obligations.

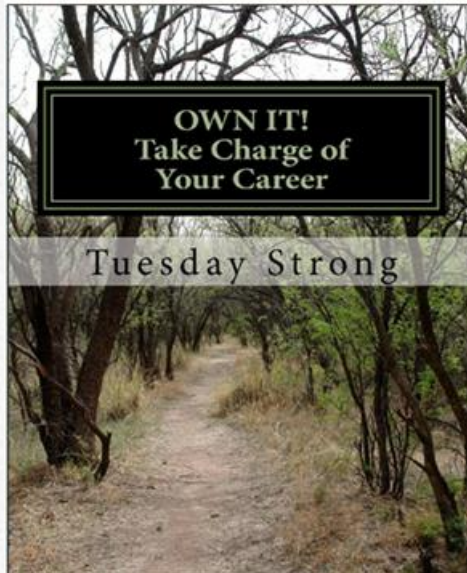
On occasion you may discover that the best action for you involves not taking any action. Deciding not to pursue a goal can be best for you depending upon your circumstances.

Each of us has a limited amount of time and resources and we have to decide what we will pursue given a variety of factors including opportunity costs. Factor in opportunity costs and keep in mind if you choose to pursue Goal A instead of Goal B you are losing the value you would have received if you would have pursued Goal B. The process does not need to be overly complicated, but be sure you consider the elements appropriate for your situation.

Celebrating success should come naturally for us but it can be overlooked quickly and completely. Just as you define what success means, you should also decide how you will celebrate or at the very least decide that you will celebrate. You may find you want to celebrate with friends, family and supporters at different times and in different ways. This is important, because you don't want to burn yourself out or tire or frustrate yourself from constantly striving to realize your goals.

BENEFITS OF OWNING IT!

- ***Save time and money*** by creating professional development and personal branding goals that reinforce one another when possible.
- ***Establish and enrich meaningful relationships*** that position you for career success.
- ***Improve communication and potential opportunities*** by focusing on meeting the needs of others while achieving your goals.
- ***Enhance your ability to compete in the job market.***
- ***Increase your confidence and satisfaction with your career*** by owning your professional development and career plans.



+ [LINK: OWN IT! Take Charge of Your Career](#)

*Military Professionals and Veterans
[Contact me](#) for a free e-copy.*

OWN IT! Take Charge of Your Career shows professionals how to develop their personal brands and succeed in a crowded market using professional development, storytelling and networking.

Professionals are challenged with the need to remain relevant in today's competitive world. This book helps professionals understand how they can build rock solid professional reputations and be prepared for the life of their careers.

OWN IT! offers examples and templates that guide individuals through the process of goal setting and creating a personal brand development plan. The information is immediately actionable.

Five reasons why you should read OWN IT! Take Charge of Your Career

- You are responsible for your career, not your employer.
- You need a rock solid professional reputation to stay employed.
- Savvy professionals use goal setting, networking and marketing for career success.
- You can increase your competitiveness with a minimal investment of time and money.
- OWN IT! is filled with practical examples, templates and actionable advice.

Thank You

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About the author:

Tuesday Strong writes on career management using proactive professional development and personal branding techniques leveraged by technology.

Tuesday offers integrated solutions in career planning, goal setting, personal marketing plans and social networking strategies. With over 20 years of management, human resources and marketing experience, Tuesday offers guidance based upon a combination of her experience, education, and unique life. She challenges others to leverage their strengths and resources to prepare for success.

Tuesday holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Resource Management from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a Master of Science Degree in Human Resource Development from Indiana State University, a Master of Science Degree in Strategic Management, and a Master of Business Administration Degree from the Indiana University Kelley School of Business.

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