

DR. LOIS FRANKEL

Get and keep the job you want.

Uniquely branding yourself in an organization is as critical for success as building a brand for a product. The only difference is *you* are the product. Here are some coaching tips from Dr. Bruce Heller, Corporate Coaching International's expert on creating career strategies, to help you build a brand within your organization

1. **Be acutely aware that your organization is a marketplace.** As such, ideas, resources, time, and money are bought and sold all the time. The laws of sales and marketing are as effective within an organization as in the open marketplace. Branding is needed to get you, the product, "bought" on a consistent basis.
2. **Identify what makes you unique.** Spend quiet time with a pad and pencil brainstorming all the characteristics that make you unique. They may include unique skills or background, a unique passion, your unique interpersonal style, or your unique body of knowledge. Once these are identified, you can begin to build your brand.
3. **Write your "story" behind the brand.** Craft a modest story about something you've done well that you can tell over and over so people within the organization will quickly identify your unique brand.
4. **Analyze your customers and what they want.** This can be done through internal networking, "customer" satisfaction surveys, or short focus sessions. Take colleagues out to lunch and ask them to *tell* you about their goals and wants. Keep a folder of what you learn.
5. **Find ways to continually use your brand to meet the needs of people around you.** Let's say your unique skill is orchestrating a project team. If someone in the organization is having trouble building a team, ask them if they would like your help. Another strategy might be to volunteer to lead a team or task force. This way your unique brand will be noticed.
6. **Think about the brands with which you are familiar.** Starbucks is a brand that is very prominent and successful. Why? Because the Starbucks brand stands for consistent quality, service, strong coffee, and a place to hang out. Their brand was built by being consistent over time. You too need to be consistent about building your brand over time.
7. **Find a visual or symbol that represents your brand.** One executive used sports analogies related to winning to communicate his brand. Like the Nike Swoosh, you too can find a creative symbol for your brand.
8. **Conduct "market research" about your brand.** Don't be afraid to ask people inside and external to your organization for feedback on how you are perceived. Use a 360-degree multi-rater feedback process to accurately learn about your brand.

9. **Read the book *Positioning: The Battle For Your Mind* by Al Ries and Jack Trout.** The premise of the book is that people are bombarded with information, making it difficult to get people's attention. This is especially true in organizations. The steady barrage of voicemails, e-mails, meetings, and memos make it a challenge to be remembered. Using branding strategies increases the likelihood you of being noticed.
10. **Build a brand around "getting along with people."** This will help you brand yourself as "customer focused." The customer is your boss or your boss' boss. To be considered a strong brand it is *imperative* to be viewed as having impeccable customer service. Nordstrom built its entire brand around one thing: customer service. Build your brand around being customer-focused.

Until next month, stay well.

Lois P. Frankel, Ph.D.