

## ★ Personal Branding for career specialists

We career practitioners promote personal branding to our clients and stakeholders. How about our own brand? Tom O'Neil holds up the mirror and invites us to take a look at the way we promote ourselves professionally. Tom O'Neil gave an interactive keynote presentation at the CDANZ National Symposium 2016.



### **Personal Branding Me?**

Your personal brand is linked very strongly to your success. As career experts, it is important we take the lead in promoting ourselves professionally, allowing us to both generate more business, as well as advocate for positive change in our industry. Also as career specialists, we have to be aware that personal branding is equally important for our clients in their own industry and sphere of influence.

While many kiwis find this concept of personal branding an uncomfortable prospect, it becomes more and more important the more successful you become in your careers practice.

### **Bright plumage**

The old saying 'the early bird catches the worm' reminds us to get in to the office early, work hard, and maximise our time efficiently. By doing this you will be noticed by those around you and be rewarded for your efforts...

Sadly however, this is not always the case in today's business environment. Compare a dull brown sparrow with a bright multi-coloured budgie... The budgie stands out by just having bright plumage. Therefore, think about the things that make you stand out, then get out there and make sure your clients know about your unique selling points and achievements.

### **Making it work for you**

The benefits are many. Within your own practice, a strong personal brand will help you to:

- Create new business opportunities  
Having a strong personal brand develops a high level of client and industry trust, leading to new business and networking opportunities.
- Improve sales conversion rates and increase profit  
People want to deal only with you, as you are seen to be a key leader in your niche. This allows you the opportunity to improve conversion rates and increase profit margins.
- Assist in the recruitment of talented staff  
Talent people are drawn to you and your business, as they want to be mentored by an industry leader.
- Advocate for positive change  
With a strong brand, you can speak on behalf of our industry, ultimately driving positive industry change at a national and political level.

## Getting started

The first thing to do in the development of your personal brand is to find out what others are saying about you right now. If you have never done this before, Google yourself and see what appears.

## Your achievements

After you get some insight about how you are perceived online, an excellent way to determine the value of your personal brand and your level of influence, is to highlight some of your key career and personal achievements.

Too often we sell ourselves by saying things like “I have been a career specialist for 20 years”, however this approach does not set you apart from other specialists very well. Rather specifically highlight some of your career achievements during those 20 years. For example:

- Are you (or have you been) a member of any CDANZ committees? This demonstrates your commitment to our exciting field, as well as showing you as a respected leader in your industry.
- Have you developed or improved any systems, programmes or processes? This shows your ability to develop and create best practise solutions for your clients, business and industry.
- What success stories can you share about how you have helped some of your clients? Think about sharing specific positive outcomes and how you were active in creating genuine positive change in their lives.
- Have you organised any events / conferences? If so, for who and to what value?
- What large commercial, public and NFP clients have you consulted to in the past? Are there any who are long term / ongoing clients? Here you can leverage their well-known brands, to highlight the value of your brand.
- Have you received any business awards or commendations from your clients or industry?
- Have you had any articles, papers or features published in any magazines, journals or books? (A great publication to highlight your industry insight with would be with our own CDANZ Ezine of course!) If so, what publications and when?
- Have you presented any topics at any conferences or completed any public speaking? Again what events and when?

## Your value

By highlighting and sharing some of your key achievements to prospective clients, you very quickly set a benchmark in terms of your expertise and personal brand value. This then determines your level of influence you have in your industry, and opens the door for exciting new business opportunities.



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Get a copy of Tom O'Neil's 'Personal Branding Continuum' by emailing him direct at [tom@tomoneil.com](mailto:tom@tomoneil.com). Tom is 'The Brandologist' - an award-winning business speaker and best-selling international author. He is also Managing Director of National Outplacement Services ([www.Outplacement.co.nz](http://www.Outplacement.co.nz)) and CV.CO.NZ ([www.CV.co.nz](http://www.CV.co.nz)). Visit [www.TomONeil.com](http://www.TomONeil.com).