PERSONAL BRANDING

BRANDING FOR IMPACT AND SUCCESS!

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WHAT IS A PERSONAL BRAND & WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT:

Your **personal brand** is a vivid indication of the best you have to offer – the performance, contributions, and value your next employer or collaborator can expect from you.
The **brand** you communicate marks your career reputation and is in some respects a promise that you will produce the skills/product your brand represents!
Personal branding is **important in today's economy** because you are the most **important** selling point of your service or your product – Most companies and Investors look for trustworthy people they can proudly recommend and advocate for.
Branding makes a memorable first and lasting impression on consumers companies and your community, but it allows the world to know what to expect from **you** and/or your company.

It is the BEST way of distinguishing yourself from the competitors!

Branding is what clarifies what it is you offer that makes you the "better choice"

7 steps to build your own brand:

1) Research your target audience and your competitors
2) Pick your focus and personality
3) Choose your business name
4) Write your slogan
5) Choose the look of your brand (colors and font)
6) Design your logo
7) Apply your branding across your business and evolve it as you grow

Research your target audience and your competitors

Google your product or service category and analyze direct and indirect competitors that come up.
Check subreddits that relate to your customers and eavesdrop on their conversations and product recommendations.
Talk to people who are part of your target market and ask them what brands they buy from in your space.
Look at the relevant social media accounts or pages your target audience follows and are receptive to.
Go shopping online or offline and get a feel for how your customers would browse and buy products.

Pick your focus and personality

Your brand can't be everything to everyone, especially at the start.
It's important to find your focus and let that inform all the other parts of your brand as you build it.
What words would you associate with your brand?
One way to look at your brand is as if it was a person. What would he or she be like? What kind of personality would your customers be attracted to?
This will help create and inform your voice on social media and the tone of all your creative ideas, both visual and written.

Choose your business name and write your slogan! Decide on a mission statement or ask yourself:
"What's your positioning statement"?

A positioning statement is one or two lines that stake your claim in the market. This isn't necessarily something you put on your website or business card—it's just to help you answer the right questions about your brand.
A mission statement is a short statement of why an organization exists, what its overall goal is, identifying the goal of its operations: what kind of product or service it provides, its primary customers or market, and its geographical region of operation.

What's in a name? Depending on the kind of business you want to start, you can make the case that your name matters very little or it matters a lot. A brand is so more than a name. The personality, actions, and reputation of your brand are really what give the name meaning in the market.
But as a business owner, your company's name is probably one of the first big commitments you have to make. It'll impact your logo, your domain, your marketing, and trademark registration if you decide to go that route (it's harder to trademark generic brand names that literally describe what you sell).

Ideally, you want a business name that's hard to imitate and even harder to confuse with existing players in the market.

CHOOSE THE LOOK OF YOUR BRAND: COLORS & FONTS

It's important to consider how legible white and black text will be over your color palette, and how colored text might look over white and black backgrounds. Try using color wheel tools to brainstorm colors that work together, grab the hex codes to keep handy, and sift through different shades to find the ones you like:

Test your BRAND on this Super Fast Color Schemes Generator:

Try it here: **https://coolors.co/**

Write a slogan

A catchy slogan is a nice-to-have asset—something brief and descriptive that you can put in your Twitter bio, website headline, business card, social media or anywhere else where you've got very few words to make a big impact.

Keep in mind that you can always change your slogan as you find new angles for marketing—Pepsi has gone through over 30 slogans in the past few decades.

A good slogan is short, catchy, and makes a strong impression. Here are some ways to approach writing a slogan of your own:

Stake your claim: Death Wish Coffee—"The World's Strongest Coffee"

Make it a Metaphor: Redbull—**"Redbull gives you wings."**

Adopt your customers' attitude: Nike—"Just do it."

Leverage labels: Cards Against Humanity—"A party game for horrible people".

Write a rhyme: Folgers Coffee: "The best part of wakin' up is Folgers in your cup."

Describe it literally: Aritzia—"Women's fashion boutique"

Design your logo

A logo is probably one of the first things that come to mind when you think about building a brand. And for good reason. It's the face of your company after all and could potentially be everywhere that your brand exists.

Ideally, you'll want a logo that's unique, identifiable, and that's scalable to work at all sizes (which is often overlooked).

Consider *all* the places where your brand's logo needs to exist, from your website to your Facebook Page's profile picture to even the little "favicons" you see in your current browser tab.

If you have a text logo as your Instagram avatar, for example, it'll be almost impossible to read. To make your life easier, get a square version of your logo that has an icon element that remains recognizable even at smaller sizes.

ABSTRACT   MASCOT   EMBLEM   LETTERMARK   ICON   WORDMARK   COMBINATION

Abstract: Google Chrome: An abstract logo has no explicit meaning. It's just a shape and colors that you can't easily tie back to anything in the real world.
The benefit of an abstract logo is that it has no innate meaning—you can make this up yourself and bring it to life in your customers' minds.

Mascot: Wendy's: Mascot logos are often represented by the face of a character. They may humanize your brand but be aware that they are an antiquated style now and only recommended in certain contexts (e.g. you're deliberately going for a retro look).

Emblem: Starbucks: Emblem logos are often circular and combine text with an emblem for a bold and regal look. If the design is too complicated, however, they can lose their impact when you shrink them down. But done right, they can make for a memorable style of logo.

Lettermark: IBM: Lettermark logos turn the initials of your full business name into a logo. If you chose a business name with 3 or more words, this might be a style you'd want to consider, especially if the initialism is catchy.

Icon: Twitter: An icon logo is your brand represented as a visual metaphor. Unlike an abstract logo, an icon logo suggests something about the product (Twitter's bird is suggestive of the frequent short "tweets" on the platform).
As an unestablished brand, you should stay away from using an icon logo by itself. However, if you're not sure about the kind of logo you want, pairing an icon logo with a wordmark is usually a safe bet.

Wordmark: Facebook: Wordmark logos turn your brand name, colors, and font into a visual identity. The problem with wordmarks is that they're often hard to create in a scalable square design and easily lose their legibility when shrunk.

Combination: McDonald's: As a new business, and you don't need to choose an icon over a wordmark when you can get the best of both. This makes it easier to satisfy the condition of creating a scalable logo while still putting your brand name front and center. McDonalds, for example, can use their iconic golden arches wherever the full wordmark doesn't fit.
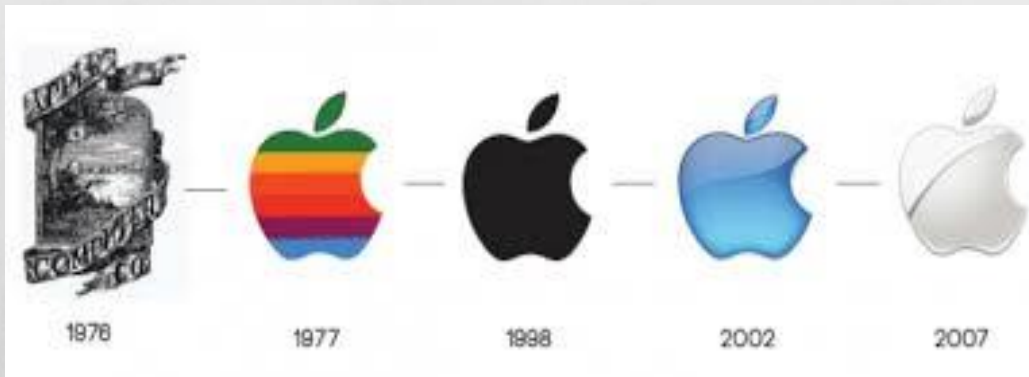
Apply, extend, and evolve your brand as you grow!

Building a brand doesn't stop with creating a logo or slogan. Your brand needs to exist and remain consistent wherever your customers interact with you, from the theme you might chose for your website to the marketing you do to customer service to the way you package and ship your products.

You'll continue to shape and evolve your brand as you expose more customers to it and learn more about who they are and how to speak to them.

It's important to appreciate that you will never have 100% control over how people perceive your brand.

You can tug customers in the right direction, make a great first impression, and manage your reputation, but you can't control the individual perceptions that exists in each person's mind (say, if they had a bad customer service experience). Put your best foot forward at every turn and try to resonate with your core audience.

Links to references for starting your BRAND:

https://brandfolder.com/blog/11-branding-resources-to-boost-your-brilliance

https://www.hubspot.com/resources/branding

https://vandermedia.com/free-branding-resources/

4 minuet Branding Video & Discussion:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKIAOZZritk