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Personal Branding

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What is Personal Branding?

- This is another name for creating an image.
- We tend to think that personal branding is just for celebrities or large companies. But in this age of digital marketing, the smallest company or one individual can have an extraordinary amount of visibility, accessibility, and impact in the worldwide arena.
- Digital marketing has leveled the playing field, giving the same advantages to the individual as to the major companies.

Why is it important?

- For the individual practitioner or the small consulting company, sending the **right message** to the **targeted customers** in the most **cost effective way** is the difference between success and failure.
- If you don't define your brand, someone else will.
- Therefore, take control of your image by defining who you are or who your company is.
- A well-defined image i.e. brand that is well executed, will give you a competitive edge on a crowded playing field.

How to create your personal brand?

- Start with developing your positioning statement. Take the time to define:
 - Who you are
 - What you do
 - And what image you want others to have of you.
- Be your best self. Avoid trying to be something you are not as that will backfire. Honesty and authenticity are honorable attributes and are part of your personal branding. Not everyone is the star athlete, a Mensa member, or the life of the party, but we all have something that is unique to us. So use that to build your branding.

- Create that ideal or brand through design and layout i.e. graphics, photographs, and style of font. All of these components work together to generate a specific impression. Know which design elements can create the image you want to convey or hire a professional to assist.
- Apply those brand elements in all mediums such as web site, blogs, videos, presentations, online profiles
- Create your behaviors to be consistent with your image you're your voice mail message, stationery, business cards, and advertisements.
- Your personal style of dress is a strong branding statement. The 27-year old founder of Facebook would appear out of touch with his customer base if he walked around in a three-piece suit instead of tee-shirts and athletic shoes. His dress personifies his brand.
- Keep the tone of written and verbal communications in the same tone as in all visual communications.
- Be consistent. Even if you buy an ad for your child's school fundraiser, keep the same image. Consistency builds strong brands.
- Give good customer service. Customer service is not just limited to the big guys. The individual practitioner can enhance his or brand by responding to emails and phone calls in a timely manner; doing what you say you will do; listening and responding to the customer; and handling complaints with poise and professionalism.

What is the payoff?

- Our brand image speaks volumes. We can say we are one thing but our image will define what we are to the public.
- Defining your brand and letting it speak for you is a powerful way to successfully market your practice and to set yourself apart in a crowded marketplace.