

Personal Brand

Coaching Questions

“Do you have a personal brand?”

Topic Introduction

How do you stand out from the crowd? Not only does your business need to brand itself, but within your own business you should be branded or known for something. This is important psychologically, as the human brain can’t remember or recall information that can’t be linked to another thought or idea. This thought or idea is what you need to be known for to be remembered.

Discussion Questions

1. What is your personal brand? Name a few adjectives that describe yourself.
2. Does your personal brand fit well with your business brand?

Key Learning

Your brand is the only way that people remember you. You need to be well known in this to be remembered, but more importantly recalled when your product or service is needed.

“Is your personal brand strong?”

Topic Introduction

A personal brand is only strong through consistency and reinforcement. You need to make sure that you are communicating the right way.

Discussion Questions

1. Is your personal brand strong? Would you like to make it stronger?
2. How do you plan on doing this?
3. Is what you think to be your personal brand the same as what others perceive?
4. Are you communicating this brand effectively? How might miscommunication be occurring?

Key Learning

If you are inconsistent in your personal brand, it is less strong.

“Do you need to change your personal brand?”

Topic Introduction

It is more difficult to change a brand than to create one from scratch. You will find that as you rebrand yourself as an entrepreneur, people who knew you before starting your business will have a harder time in understanding this new you. People who meet you for the first time as an entrepreneur, don’t have to rebrand you.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever thought of changing your personal brand?
2. How hard would this be to do?
3. How many behaviours would have to change?
4. Would it be believable?
5. How long would it take?

Key Learning

Be conscious of your brand from the beginning. You need to work twice as hard when you change your brand.

Examples

Real Life Example: Corporate Vs Personal Brand Clash

“The transportation industry is known to be blue collar and there are many things that can happen under the radar. Based on my own values, I didn’t feel comfortable working in that type of an environment as it didn’t mesh well with my own personal brand.”

Real Life Example: Personal Branding Within A Business

An associate at a medium-sized law firm was challenged to grow his book of business. He originally took this as growing his customer base. But where he ended up realizing that he could grow even more business was by positioning himself with his own law firm and with his lawyer friends at other firms, as an authority in a very niche type of law. This got him referrals and huge growth through existing customers and through a handful of referral sources.

Real Life Example: New Entrepreneur Re-Branding Process

At first it was tough for me to start my own business as I had to rebrand myself TO myself. Once I had finally realized that I was going to start my own coaching business, I didn’t know how to tell my friends and family. They had always thought of me as someone who works for large corporations, not the president of my own company. The first time I told my friends that I had found the perfect new job for me, my teacher friend asked me, “what is it?”. I responded, “A self-employment job!”. My business friends in the room laughed, while my teacher friend had a puzzled look. It took a long time for most of my colleagues to believe that I was really going to do it. And it took 3 years for me really to get referrals from my old colleagues as they just didn’t understand the massive shift that I was taking.

Mini Case Study

Joan is in a job interview where she is in a customer service role and is applying for a sales role.

JOAN: “Good morning. Thank you for arranging this time to speak and considering me for this opportunity.”

INTERVIEWER: “Well I appreciate your interest in the role. Although I was quite shocked that you had applied.”

JOAN: “Really? The job seemed like a perfect fit for me and it seemed like an exciting opportunity.”

INTERVIEWER: “It is! But you don’t have any sales experience. I really didn’t think that going after customers was your thing.”

JOAN: “My experience in customer service has definitely taught me a lot about how customers think. Plus as a customer service representative, a large part of my role was customer retention and upselling. I was responsible for incremental sales of 52% with my retained customer base. I’m looking forward to using these relationship building tactics with new prospects. I think it will be a very effective approach.”

INTERVIEWER: “I never really thought about customer service in that way before. Those are very impressive numbers. But you still haven’t had cold calling experience.”

JOAN: “No. I’ve had worse! Customer follow up when something has gone wrong. Most people would prefer to send an email, but I always made it my mandate to pick up the phone when there was bad news. I didn’t always get the best response from people as they often shoot the messenger. I just felt that it was the right thing to do. So I keep picking up the phone during those tough times. I’ll never be afraid of picking up a phone.”

INTERVIEWER: “Wow. I really like your take on this. We’ll see if management agrees, but I really think that your perspective is great and that you’d be a wonderful sales person. You just sold me!”

The previous personal brand that Joan had, but up a lot of barriers in this interview. Joan focused on the skills themselves and herself as a hardworking individual. Even after selling her personal attributes, she was still not given the job on the spot. This rebranding can take time and needs to be reinforced regularly.