



CAREER ONE - Career Resources

Personal branding 1

I had a question from Jessica about the term "personal branding" and whether it was more than an American buzzword.

For an answer, I asked Bill Lang, a career development consultant and MBA graduate of Harvard. Personal branding is also one of the key skills included in the *8 Skills for Career Success* program offered by Bill Lang International.

Bill said that while personal branding originated in the US, it was an effective career tool anyone could use.

"It makes sense to think about your own personal branding – or how people see you – and whether that image is working for you or against you," Bill said.

"If you are someone who constantly complains and always has problems with other staff then that becomes your personal branding," he said. "When projects come up, it should come as no surprise that your name is not put forward."

"Being someone who is great to work with and who comes up with solutions instead of problems is obviously a much better personal brand.

"Personal branding is about developing an image of yourself that you want to project in everything you do. It's not about being fake or superficial. If you are not authentic in what you do, that will come across. This must be about your true values, beliefs, and the service you provide to others," said Bill.

Landing a job, a promotion, a new project or a pay rise depends on good word of mouth about you so it might be time to work on your personal branding.

Personal branding 2

Last week career development consultant Bill Lang explained "personal branding" and how it could benefit you. This week he offers some tips on assessing and developing your personal brand.

"Your personal brand is your reputation, character and personality and how you strategically manage that combination to help you succeed," explained Bill.

"First you need to understand how your current brand is positioned amongst your work colleagues," said Bill. "In plain words, what do people know about you and what do they think of you and how you get the job done?"

Are you seen as a 'doer', someone who follows through and is reliable? Or are you seen as someone who is self-serving, or a whinger?

"To move from your current positioning, first you need to identify the attitudes you need to change and then the behaviour needed to make that change," Bill said.

An example could be having a 'can do attitude' and the behaviour could be putting forward ideas or volunteering to take on a project before your manager asks you to.

"It's actively thinking about using your personal qualities to do your job better rather than saying 'I'm just the way I am and people can take me or leave me'. That might be fine in your personal life but it's not effective at work."

Once you have identified what needs to change, develop a simple action plan and keep it in mind when carrying out tasks and dealing with colleagues. Your re-positioning then starts to take off. It really is all in the mind – your mind. Change it and you will change.