Building Your Personal Brand

Brainstorm

Information Gathering

- How do you describe yourself?
- How do others describe you? (recommended: text a mentor, colleague or friend the question: “I’m working on a personal branding activity. You’re someone whose perspective I value and trust. How would you describe my personal/professional brand?”)
- What are you known for in your job or at your organization?
- Highlights in your End of Year review?
- Results from assessments such as CliftonStrengths, Myers Briggs, DISC, etc?

Emotional Appeal

- How does your personality affect the experience someone will have with you? (organized, decisive, inclusive)
- How do you make people feel? How do others benefit by working with you?
- Your core values?

Industry/Audience

- What field or industry am I in/aspire to be in?
- Who is your brand for? Target audience?
- How do you describe your work?

Function/Skills

- What do you do or will you do? (People Leader/Creator/Utility player/Educator/Financial Planner/Marketer)
- What service do you have to offer others?
- What makes you stand out from others?
- Notable skills and strengths? How does this strength make you uniquely powerful/influential/effective?

Draft

Create concise phrases

- I bring innovation and accountability to complex projects.
- I build strong relationships to meet big goals.
- I am a detail-oriented, strategic thinker who builds collaborative relationships to help organizations in the energy sector make an impact and drive results.

Incorporate Your Brand:

- Leverage the language as a vocabulary list and infuse it in Pitch, TMAY, Resume, LinkedIn Profile, Cover Letter.

Tell Me About Yourself (TMAY; 2 minutes)

Many times in an interview, the first question you encounter is one of the following:

- Tell me about yourself;
- Walk me through your resume;
- Describe your experience/ background; or
- Give me a brief summary of your experience

To tell your story, you can follow a framework using the steps below to structure your statement when any of these types of questions are posed. Add your notes below, in sentences, phrases or bullets.

Best practices

- Your answer is an overview of your experience and should last 2 to 2.5 minutes.
- Typically, start at an earlier point in your career and end at the present. But it doesn't have to go all the way back to undergrad if you have significant years of experience.
- Talk about decisions you made along the way. Your career progress should appear deliberate, planned and growth-oriented. An employer is interested in assessing your strategic decision-making and growth through your career moves.
- Highlight specific and measurable results, accomplishments, impact and contributions.
- Include your graduate program and the rationale for pursuing the degree.

Tips for Career Changers

- Include your transferable skills and experiences. Make your interviewer understand why you can be successful in a career transition.
- Discuss projects in your current position, at Carlson, and/or international programs that have added to your experience in the new functional area to which you want to transition.

TMAY Examples

- There are 2 TMAY video examples on the CBCC's webpage on Behavioral interviewing.

Building your Tell Me About Yourself statement

List keywords/themes that reflect your brand or unique value proposition:

1) **Start with your undergraduate course of study/degree or military experience:** (Include significant undergraduate experiences such as internships if you have less work experience or they are particularly pertinent to the companies or industries you are targeting) Why did you study what you studied?

2) **Outline your Professional History:**
   a) Add your first professional position. General scope of the role, specific skills honed, knowledge built, accomplishments, what intrigued you.

   b) Move to your next professional position(s). Explain the motivation, decision or reason for each transition (or promotion).

   c) Add your next professional position. General scope of the role, specific skills, experiences and accomplishments, what intrigued you.

3) **Insert your graduate program** at the appropriate time in your career progression. Include reasons why you decided to pursue it and your area of study. Note ways you are able to apply graduate coursework on the job, if particularly compelling; include course projects, international programs, etc.

4) **Briefly conclude with your goals or objectives and end on the company you are talking with.** Customize for individual situations. Relate it to the position and organization. Consider starting with the language as follows:
   - "I am interested in moving to the next level in (insert functional area)…"
   - "I am well-positioned for …"
   - "I am a good fit for this position with (insert company name) because…"
   - "I am interested in making a move to marketing. I have demonstrated my commitment to new product development from a design perspective and am pursuing positions where I will be able to contribute in the day-to-day marketing planning process..."
   - "This position in (insert functional area) would be a good fit and would build on my experience at (in)….."

Sample Tell Me About Yourself (TMAY)

You know that quote about how you don't really understand a complex subject until you can explain it in simple terms? I've created a successful career in marketing for myself based on my ability to do exactly that.

It all started in undergrad during my journalism training, where I learned how to quickly learn about diverse topics and translate them into understandable content. I also worked for a Chemical Engineering professor during that time, helping make his technical research more accessible to the public. So, I was really able to put my education and training to work while I was still in undergrad.

After graduation I joined a small boutique marketing firm where I was tasked with distilling complex Industrial Process Engineering information into accessible, engaging pieces for the Honeywell account. I had the best of both worlds in this role, working closely with a multinational corporation but wearing many hats as part of a small marketing firm. It was a great incubator for my career, but after 5 years, I craved more focus.

In 2021, I joined BrightBird, a growing IT Consulting firm in the ServiceNow ecosystem, to build their marketing function from scratch. Learning the niche business, I defined a holistic marketing strategy for demand generation, built relationship-based processes with the sales team, and scaled the marketing team across North America and Europe. The company eventually went through an M&A in 2023, rolling up into NiceNest, which is where I am today.

My time at NiceNest has been the most challenging and rewarding of my career so far. Promoted to the Executive Leadership team 3.5 years ago, I now serve as VP of Marketing, coaching my team to understand our complex business and customers, and crafting resonant messages. Working closely with executive leadership fueled my interest in business strategy and management, prompting me to pursue an MBA in 2024. As the head of marketing, I put MBA concepts into practice right away, refining strategies, improving processes, and coaching a multinational team as the company is rapidly growing to become a 50-million-dollar business.

With NiceNest preparing for another M&A, and my MBA nearing completion, I'm ready for my next challenge. I seek a growth-oriented company, ideally in the B2B Saas world, that values learning, coaching, mentorship, and professional development – a place where I can contribute and continue growing.

So that's what brought me to [TARGET COMPANY], I wanted to reach out and learn more about what you have going on, and your goals for the year.

Elevator Pitch (40 seconds)

Best practices:

- Have a hook or some zest to be memorable (this is where your brand comes in!)
- This is a concise, succinct (40 seconds max!) positive and conversational
- Highlight industries/functions (What you do!)
- Include your talents/differentiators/nerd factor
- End with goals and/or direct ask
- Samples throughout this video

Sample Pitch

I've built a successful marketing career by simplifying complex subjects. My journey began in journalism, where I learned to translate diverse topics into clear content such as making technical research accessible during my undergrad internship with a manufacturing company. Post-graduation, I distilled complex engineering info for Honeywell to support their growth in the home thermostat market at a boutique marketing firm. In 2021, I joined Mo|Mo to build their marketing from scratch, eventually leading to an M&A with DoggyCam. Now, as VP of Marketing, I coach my team to craft resonant messages and drive business growth. With my MBA nearing completion, I'm excited to bring my expertise to a growth-oriented B2B SaaS company like [TARGET COMPANY].

Building your 40 Second Pitch

- What is your name?

- Where/how have you invested your time and energy career-wise up to this point? (functions/industries)

- What do you do really well? What do you offer others? (e.g. top skills, competencies, what you are known for; executing projects, influencing others, relationship building, strategic thinking)

- What do you have passion for? What do you nerd out on?

- What are you striving to do next? A goal?

    - OR

- What do you want to know more about? (such as opportunities in a company or industry – this is your call to engage the listener)

Pull these key points/phrases together into a Pitch and practice it with a peer to make sure it's landing appropriately.