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Personal Branding, Power & Influence

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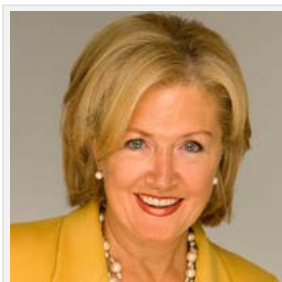
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A personal brand is the unique promise of a person's value. It is also the process of uncovering, creating, building and promoting your brand to your target audience. Just like products, people can brand themselves to stand apart from the competition. How can you make it happen for yourself if no one knows who you really are?

"Be yourself. Everyone else is already taken." – Oscar Wilde



Sara Canuso, President, A Suitable Solution

I came across an article about Madonna's secrets on personal branding and thought it made it very simple and clear. Regardless of your feelings about Madonna, you must admit she knows how to brand. So I am sharing her six powerful secrets on personal branding.

I've discovered that you CANNOT expect money or a certain lifestyle and actually get it if your inner brand, your subconscious thoughts, feelings and beliefs dictate something different. If you want to create a bigger brand for both you and your company to once and for all brand both your inner and outer image, you are just steps away.

As a business leader, you are at the helm and steering your company and employees toward the future. Here are a few steps to help you think about YOUR brand along the way.

1. Clarity: Being clear on what you desire is the starting point of all achievement. Sadly, we typically spend more time planning a vacation than we spend planning our future. Do you have a clear view of where you would like the company to be one year from now? It is critical to write down your thoughts, plans and actions because this is going to act as a blueprint for building your success. Take the time to ask partners and staff about their ideas, thoughts and also concerns. When drawing up the blueprint, be sure to include your personal life as well as your business life so you may enjoy a balanced feeling within yourself.

2. Confidence: Self-confidence is the inner feeling of certainty, a feeling that you are worthwhile and valuable. It makes life so much easier and much more fun. It gives us the energy to create our dreams and is essential for empowering our thoughts and actions. If you are lacking confidence, then make the choice to get out of your way and live the life you were meant to live.

3. Focus: This is a major cornerstone for building a foundation for your future, and yet it's very simple to understand. I use the analogy of a famous tightrope walker who never fell off the wire. When asked how he accomplished this, he said, "I never look back, down or sideways. I just keep my head held high and keep looking straight ahead." When going into the company each day, focus on your action steps for that day and week. Also, a Master Mind group of two or four people who help with ideas and concerns is a great way of adding extra

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thoughts into your plan. This can be something that is held once a month over lunch.

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4. Action: Your actions are where you will feel the connection to your plans and feel a sense of accomplishment. Make a weekly list of the actions needed to take you to your destination. Since I have gotten into the habit of making lists, I've been amazed at how much I accomplish in just one week. Check off your list and then form another list weekly. Actions cause reactions, which act as a stimulator for further planning.

5. Persistence: Lack of persistence is one of the major causes of failure. This is where clarity and desire will help with your persistence and keep you focused. I always suggest placing a few pictures around to see the end result and what persistence will bring in the end. This key is the one that will open more possibilities than you could have ever imagined and give you and your company visibility, credibility and growth.

6. Clothing: There is nothing casual about your future or the future of your company. A polished professional image exudes trust and confidence and also projects a powerful first impression. I have nothing against business casual if it does not turn into a business casualty. If you e-mail me at info@asuitable.com, I will forward you my e-book, 3 Steps to Personal Branding, Power & Influence.

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This is your future as much as it is the future of your company, so to stay aligned, it is critical that you are playing ball in the same field. It is your responsibility to wake up each day and have the clarity to see the abundance and opportunities that are there waiting for you and your company.

*Sara Canuso is a Personal Branding and Image Specialist and President of **A Suitable Solution**. She helps professionals claim confidence and power through her insightful keynote presentations, business seminars and one-on-one coaching on the **Impact of Image**, which deliver new ideas and practical tools in the areas of creating powerful first impressions, developing a positive self-image, dressing for success, and inspiring confidence. Sara contributes columns to the Philadelphia Maven, Legal Intelligencer and the Burlington County Straight Work. She is a sought-after speaker who has presented to the New Jersey and Pennsylvania Governor's Conferences for Women as well as the American Bar Association. Learn more at www.asuitable.com.*

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