



BRAND NEW
YOU

**REGARDLESS OF AGE, REGARDLESS OF POSITION,
REGARDLESS OF THE BUSINESS WE HAPPEN TO
BE IN, ALL OF US NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE
IMPORTANCE OF BRANDING. WE ARE CEOs OF OUR
OWN COMPANIES: ME INC. TO BE IN BUSINESS
TODAY, OUR MOST IMPORTANT JOB IS TO BE
HEAD MARKETER FOR THE BRAND CALLED YOU.**

- TOM PETERS

**THIS IS MY LIFE... MY STORY... MY BOOK. I WILL NO
LONGER LET ANYONE ELSE WRITE IT NOR WILL
I APOLOGIZE FOR THE EDITS I MAKE.**

- STEVE MARABOLI

WELL!

In 2017 association **Room of Fulfilled Dreams** from Latvia hosted an international training course about personal branding called **Brand New You**. Main aim of this project gathering 30 youth workers, trainers and educators from 13 European countries was to facilitate professional growth of the participants using personal branding techniques, as well as to provide them competences needed to promote their work and their organizations. Participants developed their own personal brand and discovered how working with themselves as a brand can help to reinvent their work, life and self.

Personal branding can be defined as the ongoing process of establishing a prescribed image or impression in the mind of others about yourself. It's the association people have to your name. Every letter you send, every status update you make, every picture you share contributes to your personal brand. It is a sum of multiple daily actions, as well as your connection to other people and organisations.

Because of development of social media, personal branding is one of today's leading career strategy topics. Personal branding helps you attract new opportunities by communicating your strengths and expertise. Opportunities is one of the reasons why we found this topic appealing - our success as activists and professionals in the social or educational field depend also on our abilities to convince about our expertise and to attract support to our causes. Furthermore, as youth workers we compete for hearts of young people with big corporations and popular culture - that's quite a challenge, and we need to find more creative approaches how to become noticed in the public sphere without spending a fortune.

During this training course personal branding techniques were mixed with somatic learning methods, storytelling, group and pair work, reflective writing techniques, coaching and expert presentations, thus offering an innovative methodological approach. Team building activities and interactive evaluation exercises were used to establish and maintain safe and supportive working environment. Work with social and digital media was integrated in the program developing content creation skills of the participants and providing them support in producing materials that can be used for self-promotion right after the course.

Flow of the program was created according to the personal branding pyramid that we designed basing on the work of several authors - see it on the next page. For us it represents the stages of building a personal brand. In this booklet we're offering you short exercises, each one of them related to one of the levels of the pyramid. Browsing through these exercises will give you an insight in topics of the training course, and you might also gain new ideas for your own professional growth and self-presentation. Check out the list of online resources at the end for in-depth information and more exercises or contact us if you would be interested to host personal branding related workshops at your organisation. If you would like to know more about training course, you can check out also [photos](#) and [video](#).

We believe that personal branding in social, environmental and educational sector is as important as in business. As change makers we have to design and deliver messages as powerful as big corporations do. It requires a lot of skills and resources, but thanks to development of social media, now it is possible, and each of us has a potential to become an opinion leader in some field and influence processes in our communities and surroundings. Therefore try it out and see where this journey can take you!

BRAND

PERSONAL BRANDING PYRAMID

COMMUNICATION

VALUE PROPOSITION

TARGET GROUPS

VISION, MISSION AND GOALS

SELF AWARENESS

UNKNOWN

UNKNOWN

The idea of unknown here is based on Johari Window created by Luft and Ingham in 1955. Unknown contains information, repressed or subconscious feelings, latent talents, fears, or experiences, that are unknown to the person and unknown to others surrounding this person. In order to create a strong personal brand you have to know yourself very well, thus the starting step is reducing this unknown area about yourself. You may not know what your skills and capabilities are, and others may not have had any opportunity to witness any of these. Self-limiting beliefs that hold you back can prevent you from achieving excellence and giving your best contribution to the world.

Unknown can be uncovered through self-discovery or observation by others, or through collective or mutual discovery. Trying new experiences and testing your limits can help you learn more about yourself. Working closely and building relationships with others may help them identify certain traits that they can point out for you. That's also one of the benefits of learning in the group, as we did in the project.

EXERCISE

JOURNALING PROMPTS

A basic, but one of the most accessible and efficient tools to get to know ourselves better is regular journaling. If you don't know how to start, here are two writing prompts to explore in your journal:

- Write about one moment experienced through your body. Cooking breakfast, going to a date, having a fight, sitting at the school desk. Leave out thought and emotion, and let all information be conveyed through the body and senses. Seems weird? No worries - focusing on bodily experiences and changing bodily routines is a powerful source of knowledge, self-understanding and change.

- Write down seven questions you never asked to yourself, and nobody asked to you, but which you would find very interesting to answer. Set for yourself one week challenge of writing and write about one of them every day. And it doesn't matter if you don't know the answer - good question is often more valuable than a clear answer.

SELF AWARENESS

Being authentic is crucial element of personal branding. Furthermore, you should be able to provide accurate representation of who you are. Despite that just a small amount of people have a clear definition of their personal brand and even less are able to live it consistently. Good personal branding requires huge amount of self-awareness, action and accountability to present yourself to the world adequately. Therefore before we start to build and communicate our brand, we should be sure we know ourselves well.

Self-awareness includes understanding your needs and desires, knowing what your strengths and weaknesses are, and being able to accurately assess your emotions. People who are self-aware know who they are at their core. Developing a personal brand will give you better sense of self. And this is how personal branding can be used as a tool for personal growth. Better sense of self is also needed to understand and execute what makes you different and brilliant. Do you know what your core is? Have you tried to present it in one Tweet, LinkedIn introduction or Instagram post?

EXERCISE

WHICH BRAND ARE YOU?

Here's a playful self-awareness exercise that can lead to interesting and serious result. This exercise includes exploring corporate brands and can be done also in the group, gathering feedback from others. Pick various brands that describe you and explain your choice, for example:

If I was a car brand I would be _____ because _____. If I was a clothing brand I would be _____ because _____. If I was a mobile phone brand I would be _____ because _____. If I was a drink I would be _____ because _____. If I was a cosmetic's brand I would be _____ because _____. If I was a restaurant I would be _____ because _____.

After completing this task, you can also list brands you use most often. What do you find appealing in these brands? What do brands you use communicate about you and what is the image they might create about you? Does this image match the impression you would like to leave on others?

VISION, MISSION AND GOALS

Are you just surviving, or are you living on purpose and working to create the kind of life that you want? People without self-awareness usually fall into the first group, while self-aware people fall into the second. A great way to start living your life on purpose is to create a vision and a mission statement. It is also relevant for organisational management, leadership and personal branding.

“People don’t buy what you do; they buy why you do it,” **states** leadership expert Simon Sinek. By **WHY** he means purpose, cause or belief. Why do you do what you do? What motivates you to get out of bed in the morning? Why should people care about your work? Sinek argues that all of us - companies and individuals - need to start with **WHY**.

William Arruda explains that a personal mission statement is a critical piece of your brand because it helps you stay focused. For inspiration check out examples of **personal** mission statements and **world’s top non-profit** vision and mission statements!

EXERCISE

VISION BOARDING

There are a lot of templates for writing your personal vision and mission statement and formulate goals. But still it can be hard to find that core of yourself and work you do, so why not experiment with more creative approaches? We liked idea of vision boards. To make one, you will need a lot of images. You can cut them from old magazines or manage the vision board on Pinterest. Put together a collage of images, words, quotes, that would describe the future you want to create with work you do, the future you would like to live in. It can also include visualisation of yourself in this future. Once it is done, don't leave your vision board at a dark corner. Look at it often and update when needed - is is just normal that our focus changes thorough our life.

Before you move on with next steps in personal branding, it can be helpful to understand at least direction in which you want to go. You can still use personal branding techniques for self-exploration purposes, but clear goals will help you to make more strategic choices.

TARGET GROUPS

One of the fundamentals of branding is understanding your target audience. The good big brand marketers put needs of their target audience first. The same can be said for your personal brand. You too should have a target audience. When you interact with others, in essence, what you offer them is your brand. How they react either builds up that brand or detracts from it.

In thinking about yourself as a brand, think about who your target audience is - their wants and needs and how you can uniquely help fulfil them. Only when putting others' needs first, can your brand be successful, regardless of your professional goals. It doesn't mean trying to please all people all the time. No need for that. Surround yourself with others who support you and can help further your goals. Strong personal brands also face strong dislikes and counter reactions from certain groups - it even can be conscious element of their strategy, thus besides researching your target groups, you might also describe image of your 'enemies' - those with whom you don't want to be associated.

EXERCISE

STARTING FROM NEEDS OF OTHERS

One of your target groups probably will be the persons who determine if you can advance towards reaching your goals. Identify the person or one group, your success depend on. It might be a donor. It might be a client. It could be your boss...

- Create a complete description of the person or group. Include things like age, gender, interests, passions, their routines, communication channels, style and preferences, their needs, their drive and motivators. Go into extreme detail. If you know their goals, you can help to achieve them.

- Formulate ways to help them achieve their goals, thus helping yourself achieve your own goals. You can do this on your own, but another way to find opportunities is to go to your target audience and have a conversation with them.

- Create a plan - specific steps to be taken to reach them, be in interaction and help them achieve their goals.

VALUE PROPOSITION

Value proposition consists of those defining elements that give your personal brand a distinction. In its simplest form, value is the problem you solve, and the pain that you relieve for your target groups.

Value proposition helps to differentiate you from all the other people who might have similar education and professional experience as you do. Your value proposition clearly defines what your target groups can and should expect to receive when dealing with you.

To differentiate yourself, you might look at aspects of your life, passions and experiences that aren't even connected with your professional focus, but then find the connection and mix different disciplines together creating a unique offer or unique experience for those who interact with you.

EXERCISE

PERSONAL VALUE PROPOSITION

Here are a few steps to discovering and developing your personal value proposition:

- What is your primary experience? What type of solutions do you consistently deliver? What is unique about the way you think? What gives you distinction? What impact do others expect from your presence?

- Ask representatives of your target groups: what sets you apart.

- Review feedback received in the past. What were your qualities and performance that other people found great value in? Do you still possess and utilize these skills? If so, how can you expand on them... and if not... why?

- Select and write down your accomplishment stories to determine challenges you were presented with and how you overcame them. What problems are you great at solving?

COMMUNICATION

In order to build a strong brand you have to be accessible and visible. Non-verbal, verbal, online communication matters. Brand communication is important, and it sometimes offers its own value, such as, helping people feel informed and connected.

Planning the communication and promotion should be one of the last steps in the personal branding process, because before you go public, you should be clear about your message and offering. On the other hand, don't postpone active communication until the moment of reaching some self-imaged perfection or readiness - being in dialogue with your target groups can be also a great approach how to develop a product, service, idea or cause of true importance for others.

There are a lot of tactics you could use, starting from social media communication and ending with creating own events, performances, campaigns, social challenges, online courses, and so on. Choose what you are comfortable with and what matches your skills and style, character and value proposal of your brand.

EXERCISE

CREATING A COMMUNICATION PLAN

A brand communication plan helps to promote your value proposal and create the desired impression. Following these steps will help you to write a basic communication plan:

- Define the aim and target groups of your communication activities.
- In the center of your communication plan should be a core message you want to communicate to the people who need to know you.
- List the communication tools you will use. Focus on few.
- Set up a schedule: what in particular and how often will you do.
- Define criteria of success. It can be number of followers, of reactions, number of new clients. Understand, how will you monitor your communication efforts and celebrate success!

BRAND

Working through all the levels of pyramid brings you to the sum of elements that your brand is built from. With a personal brand, you shape and communicate your own story. However, what you have created is just part of your brand. The other part of it is what audience perceived and understood.

“Your brand is what other people say about you when you’re not in the room,” says Jeff Bezos. Most people don’t have a good handle on how they are perceived. However, understanding this is crucial to success. You may know what you want your brand to be, but do you know what your perceived brand is?

You want to be sure to be understood and perceived well. Therefore it is essential to perform a personal brand audit both, online and offline, and check out if something that is not consistent with your core message and value proposal would come up. Googling your name and doing a spring cleaning in your social media profiles is a good start. Then go on and gather more feedback on how you’re perceived.

EXERCISE

PERCEPTIONS OF YOURSELF

To ensure that people perceive you and your work as you planned it, feedback is one of the most important tools. Have no fear of assessments or video trainings that provide you a chance to see yourself. You could also pair up with a stranger and do an exercise participants of our course completed as a home task. Each of them had another participant assigned, and both were asked to do the following:

Use your investigation skills and research your partner using only information available on internet. Then prepare a written portrait of your partner. Describe who he or she is. What are his or her talents and skills? Political and religious views? What kind of image and impression this person creates? Would you like to cooperate with that person? Would you trust him or her? What could be the negative characteristics of your partner? Be honest about your impressions and help each other to do better in future!

These written portraits were shared when participants met in Latvia.

CANVA

ENHANCV

BUFFER

MENTION



DIGITAL TOOLS TO HELP BOOST YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

KLOUT

RITETAG

BLOG TOPIC GENERATOR

SQUARESPACE

PARTICIPATE IN NETWORKING GROUPS

CREATE QUALITY CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

SPEAK AT EVENTS

CREATE YOUR OWN EVENTS



WAYS HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

SEO TO RANK HIGH IN SEARCH ENGINES

WRITE ARTICLES

PITCH MEDIA

FIND PEOPLE WHO WILL HELP PROMOTE YOU

COMMENT ON BLOGS

BE AUTHENTIC

BE EXCELLENT IN WHAT YOU DO

HAVE A CLEAR FOCUS AND PRIORITIES

BE HIGHLY DISTINCTIVE

BE COMPELLING

SHORT TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

BUILD YOUR NETWORK

DEVELOP YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

BE CONSISTENT

UNDERSTAND YOUR FIELD INSIDE AND OUT

BECOME A TRUSTED SOURCE OF INFORMATION

ABOUT ERASMUS+

Non-formal learning project **Brand New You** was implemented under KEY ACTION 1 of The Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme: Mobility of Individuals.

The current socio-economic challenges in Europe have had a multiple effect in the younger generations. High rates of youth unemployment, uncompleted education and marginalisation of a number of young people is an acute problem. The Erasmus+: Youth in Action addresses these challenges through non-formal learning activities, such as **Youth Exchanges, EVS, and Youth Workers' Training and Networking**, which aim at enhancing the active citizenship and empowerment of the youth, supporting the development of competences of young people and youth workers, and strengthening the organisational capacity and professionalization of the structures in the field of youth.

If you would like to find out more how to create a project with support of this programme or how to participate in similar international learning activities, the newest information will be available on the **website** of your National Agency.

**PERSONAL BRANDING IS ABOUT BUILDING
AUTHORITY THAT GETS PEOPLE TO PAY ATTENTION
TO YOUR MESSAGE AND WANT TO SHARE IT AND
RECOMMEND IT TO OTHERS.**

– MARK TRAPHAGEN

FEEDBACK FROM THE COURSE'S PARTICIPANTS

“This course would be great for young graduates, NEETs, women taking care of children at home returning to the job market, young adults leaving foster home - everyone who wants to open to new professional possibilities and feel more confident about his or her competences.

I increased confidence about my skills, talents and passions, about the professional road I want to follow, and my role inside of the organisation. I also made new friends personally and professionally-wise, which opens new possibilities for me as a freelancer.

After I managed to establish clearly my vision and mission, I was very motivated to give the same opportunity to my co-workers in the organisation. I believe the organisation will benefit from that when we all know which are our fields of interest and competence, and what we could outsource or just give up.”

- Marta, Poland

"Important course outcomes for me was understanding my goals, my values, who am I, thinking about my personality and how it affects the experience someone will have with me."

- Maja, Slovenia

"We were working outside and inside. We had socialisation, joy, possibility to have our own workshops, possibility to made choices. This experience helped me to become more decisive. I learnt how to appreciate and value myself. I gained friends. Everything was perfect.

- Simona, Macedonia

"I gained concrete business ideas to pursue. I increased awareness of areas to improve and developed concrete ideas how to improve. I'm now able to have a more objective view on myself and my projects, imagining how other people could perceive them."

- Arturs, Latvia

"I know how to communicate my price confidently. I know how to be more authentic and not be discouraged when my professional opinion is not mainstream. It is my opinion, my brand. Those

people who feel in harmony with that will seek my services. I don't need to be someone else and use methods I do not agree with, because authenticity is the way forward. That is the most important thing I learned in the course and practice in my day-by-day life."

- Anita, Hungary

"I discovered how creative I can get when surrounded by creative people and a calming environment. I think now there is a bit more trust in my authenticity. I feel I can be more myself when presenting my activities to anybody."

- Robert, Lithuania

"I gained new knowledge about personal branding and inspiration from good examples, different methods and new attitudes - the attitude of pro-activity and just doing things and not being scared. The most important gain was, however, how simple it is sometimes to just do what you want to do. I'm also continuing the habit of journalling that we started in the morning sessions. In my work and in my thinking I'm more conscious of importance of being clear and visible with the messages I carry and it's something I learnt during the project."

- Terje, Estonia

USEFUL ONLINE RESOURCES

An A to Z Guide to Personal Branding. Short and fun visual overview of personal branding and tips to succeed.

Business Model You. Inspiring book and personal business model canvas useful for freelancers.

Introduction to Personal Branding. You can learn about personal branding also on Coursera and receive a certificate confirming your knowledge.

Open Colleges' Complete Guide to Personal Branding. Indeed comprehensive guide with questions and info you need to create your brand.

Personal Branding: How To Design Your Personal Brand Image In 10 Steps. Shorter article focused on visual aspects of personal branding.

The Brand Called You. Classical article by Tom Peters introducing personal branding and its importance.

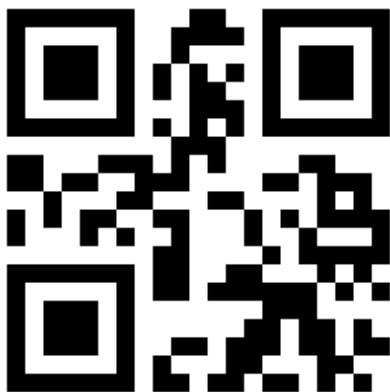
The Complete Guide to Building Your Personal Brand. Loads of information and exercises to guide you through the process of personal branding.

**DON'T WORRY ABOUT TRYING TO IMPRESS PEOPLE.
JUST FOCUS ON HOW YOU CAN ADD VALUE
TO THEIR LIVES.**

- HAL ELROD

**PEOPLE ARE MISTAKEN WHEN THEY THINK CHASING
YOUR DREAM IS A SELFISH THING TO DO**

- JON ACUFF



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