

# GET THE JOB

## Updating Your Personal Brand

Reassessing your personal brand is no different than making a final check in the mirror before leaving for work.

You're making sure you look your best, but this has nothing to do with selecting a different accessory or straightening a tie. Instead, it's about showcasing your professional value, areas of expertise, unique attributes and special skills during a job search.

### **CHECK YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA**

First impressions these days often arrive via social media, and nowhere is that more true than with a prospective employer. So, the first step in updating your personal brand is to make sure you have a presence on professional sites like LinkedIn, but also on Facebook, Twitter and sometimes even Instagram. Creating original content, sharing published material, and regularly discussing your profession indicates that you're an engaged and forward-thinking employee with a bright future ahead.

Consider launching a personal website or blog, so you can better feature your work



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and accomplishments. Beyond investing in your own professional capital, it's also smart to scrub anything that might hinder your job search. That may include negative posts, old photos or shared memes that may be offensive. Shape your LinkedIn bio toward the field you're interested in, removing things like your minimum-wage first job.

### **GOOGLE YOUR OWN NAME**

Brand reassessment allows you to take stock in how far you've come, while also creating a clearer vision for where you'd like to go. But it's not all internal. Consider Googling yourself. Hiring managers are going to do it, so you might as well do a comprehensive web search to see what's out there. These are the details of your

work and personal lives that they'll be familiar with before you ever sit down for an interview. Unlike your personal resume, you can't control what appears first on web searches, but you can be prepared to discuss it.

### **EXPAND YOUR NETWORK**

Try reaching out to one person per day, whether through social media, a phone call or

text. Ask about their work life, what projects they're involved with, and how things are going. Talk about your own professional goals — and offer to do what you can to help them along the way. Importantly, you shouldn't immediately ask for anything in return. The larger point is to make or deepen connections that may be valuable in the future.

### **DEVELOP A MISSION STATEMENT**

If you're looking for a new challenge, put that into words. Creating this mission statement puts your goals into perspective — first for you, and then for a prospective employer. Once you've sketched this out personally, it will be much easier to organize your thoughts during an interview. Include both near-term and long-term benchmarks. That will help you craft more manageable goals.

A mission statement will also act as a kind of personal-brand guideline, shaping the way you post, blog or discuss your future. Every one likes a story, but not one that rambles on forever. Consider creating a minute-long response that organizes your thoughts in a succinct and persuasive manner. Short, to-the-point answers invite responses, and suddenly a dialogue is underway.