

Personal Branding guide

Brands are on shelves because they are popular, they bring benefit to people. People are searching for brands, follow them, talk about them. Same works for you — if you want people to talk about you — **you** have to earn your place. This is Personal Branding.

It starts with one simple question: Who am I? Self-awareness is an essential competency for leadership. To make it simple — if you know yourself, what are your competencies and what values can you bring and give to others — half of the job is done!

“Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom “ Aristotle

A Personal brand is the feeling or impression people have about you. How this feeling is generated, though, comes from your words and actions. So, how do you manage it? Do you just guess and go with the flow, or prepare a plan, or even a strategy? We suggest the latter.

Purpose: WHY your brand exists

Vision & Mission: WHAT you try to achieve & HOW you plan to do it

Values: WHAT you stand for and how you behave

Positioning: HOW you differentiate yourself from your competitors

These parts are the essential elements of any brand, they set a goal and give direction to move forward. Each part builds of the other. But if your vision, mission, and values are the building blocks of your brand, think of your brand purpose as the foundation.

Brand Purpose

Ask yourself following questions: What is the purpose of your brand? What's the WHY behind your brand ?

Finding your “North Star” is the core of your brand purpose. It should explain your reason being on the market. The purpose of a brand is the “why” behind your existence. With your values, it defines the soul of your personal brand, and engages your audience emotionally through a series of shared beliefs, solved problems, and inherent meaning.

A brand purpose connects with your audience on a more emotional level. Brand purpose is important because it shows your audience that you're not just your products or services, you bring value to the community and the industry. Having a unique brand purpose can differentiate your brand from competitors.

Tips to establish your brand purpose

- Be clear about who your brand is and why you do what you do
- Think long term

Vision & Mission

Vision is WHAT we try to achieve. The vision provides guidance and inspiration.

The aim of a vision is to bring clarity and focus. If it doesn't do that, then it is worse than useless. Think what you ACTUALLY trying to accomplish. The clearer you are about your vision, the more likely you are to achieve it. Your vision should be defined as narrowly as possible. A clear vision is as much about what you are NOT going to do as it is about what you ARE going to do.

Brand mission defines what you need to do to reach your goals. Your mission might outline specific tactics or initiatives you have in mind in order to achieve your Vision.

Values & Principles

Values describe what is important in a person's life. It is values that unconsciously help us to form our individual principles. Values are the foundation to a person character, attitude, perceptive and overall behavior. An individual always uses values to make decisions about right and wrong.

Each individual may have different values. A person's personal values can be influenced by a wide range of factors such as background, experiences, education, and religion. However, it is also possible for a person to change his values with the passage of time.

Principles are moral rules or beliefs that help you know what is right and wrong, and that influences your actions. Principles are what you stand for in life; they direct your life and act as a moral compass. In other words, they govern your behavior. Principles are **based on the personal values** we hold dear to us.

When you are building your Personal brand you should take into account what are your values and define your principles, this would become a foundation what do you stand for and how you behave.

Ask yourself

What are the universal, unchanging principles that you can clearly identify? What are the values that you now hold? Do your current habits reflect those values and, ultimately, do your habits and values reflect the principles that transcend current circumstances and can provide a purpose and mission for your life?

With a proper understanding of the differences between values and principles, you can address all of these questions and use the answers to guide you in all of your planning and actions.

Positioning

Brand positioning is the process of placing your brand, meaning YOU in the mind of your target audience. Its objective is to help you to tell them who you are and what you can give them. According to The Cult Branding Company, "A brand positioning is a one-or two-sentence statement that shows your brand's unique value to your customers in relation to your main competitors."

Brand positioning describes how are YOU different from others and where, or how, your brand sits in people's minds. An effective positioning strategy would help you maximise brand value. Think of it as the strategy used to set your Personal brand apart from others. Differentiation is critical and the key driver of positioning success.

To make it simple: A brand positioning statement would help you explain your Personal brand in only 7 seconds.

What is it?

Personal brand is the unique combination of skills and experiences that make you **YOU**. Effective personal branding will differentiate you from other professionals in your field & further your career

Example: you make best Negroni's in your neighbourhood – everyone knows that, you're an expert, that's what differentiates YOU from others.

A personal brand exists in 2 different mediums:

- Online
- Offline

The Key Elements to a Personal Brand are:

- A | Appearance
- B | Behaviour
- C | Competencies
- D | Differentiation

InsiderTip: It is crucial for a personal brand that both the online & offline persona are perceived to be the same or at least aligned. In the current social media era authenticity is key & there is a lot of 'fake' personas. As hospitality professionals you deal with people on a daily basis & as a result you should NEVER promote anything you can be called out for.

Why it is important?

Personal brand can be very powerful. It can sell you, make you unique and set you apart from others. It's not about being famous, it is to be visible and to be relevant to your target audience (awareness and reputation). Your brand isn't just your logo, your product, your website or instagram. It's the combined aspects of your personal and product identity that make it so recognisable.

A bartender's career develops into the following **4 major categories**:

- Operations (F&B Director, catering, bar ownership etc.)
- Corporate (Brand ambassador, events, brand ownership etc)
- Consultant (Brand strategy, hospitality training, cocktail menu development etc)
- Independent Bartender (Online content creation, offline activation management etc)

Example: Rum is your favourite category & you want to develop into a brand ambassador. So you go to every Rum show, training or tasting around. Buy books on Rum & visit distilleries.

There are many more specialist jobs that exist in between all of the above & some people end up doing a combination of those things. What is key in all of the above is the importance of the Personal Brand. The key to career growth is the growth of your Personal Brand within the field you have chosen to expand into.

InsiderTip: Self-Analysis is key & it starts with asking yourself the relevant questions. The process always yields the answers. It is also perfectly normal to switch directions & change perspective as you're human & not a robot. That's why a Personal Brand is...well...**personal!**

How to do it? Where to start?

You always start with breaking down the key elements & see how they apply to your personal situation. The first step is to identify what kind of bartender are you. Most bartender archetypes are directly linked to the type of concept or venue you work in:

MAIN OBJECTIVE

1. Hotel Bartender | 5 Star service, always dressed to impress etc.
2. Tiki/Escapism Bartender | Floral shirts, cinnamon, excessive amounts of Rum or similar mono spirit direction etc.
3. Old School Classic | Bar is open 20+ years with a retro menu & ain't changing anytime soon
4. Neo Classic | White shirt, black vest, tie, suspenders. Classic Speakeasy attire & drinks.
5. Modernist | Rotavaps, centrifuges, no garnishes, acids, sustainability, natural wine & abstract ideas.
6. Dive Bar Trash Chic | Tattoos & faux rockstar attitude. Rings & pop culture prevalent. Simple tasty drinks but no direction.

InsiderTip: Nowadays there is a lot of blending of styles. These are completely generalised basic classifications based on existing stereotypes. This doesn't mean someone can't dress in particular way or have no interest in things outside their category. You must be aware of the type of place you work in because stereotypes apply to you whether you like them or not.

SUB CATEGORY

1. Wine
2. Coffee
3. Beer
4. Tea
5. Sustainability

InsiderTip: This list is not limited & many bartenders have additional interests outside of their specific style/concept or direction. It is important to focus on your interests as it makes you real.

Example: You work in a Speakeasy Bar & know all your classics inside & out. Outside of your work you love to visit speciality coffee shops & make your own sourdough.

Once you have correctly identified your personal situation & concept you move on to the development phase of your Personal Brand using the 4 Gates of Personal Branding process. The key is to create a personal playbook/guidebook for yourself based on your objectives/strengths. This allows you to make professional decisions with a strategy as opposed to just doing everyone that comes your way.

This can always be adjusted in time to fit changing conditions & needs!

4 Gates of Personal branding

Think of it as A-B-C-D

A - Appearance

How you look physically is directly linked to the goals and image you're trying to portray. Your appearance is directly linked to first impressions. First impressions can be made in multiple ways - physically in person, in photos on social media platforms, magazines, videos, articles and blogs. It is about how you present yourself to others — both online and offline.

Your appearance has to be consistent everywhere and match the image you're selling as part of your personal brand.

YOU NEVER GET A SECOND CHANCE TO MAKE A GREAT FIRST IMPRESSION

OFFLINE

- Be the best version of you that you can be
- Be authentic and be accurate
- Keep in mind — clothes count for first impressions. Dress code matters, be always ready for the red carpet or at least to represent the venue you work for.
- Create a mood board for yourself — collect inspirational photos and pictures of who you want to be and how you want to be presented to others — it would help you with planning your future looks.

InsiderTip: Trends come & go but incorporate them accurately to your own personal brand. There's a reason why every Tequila rep has a wide brimmed hat & is made fun out of.

ONLINE

- Have a selection of high resolution pictures available in the cloud to send for promo materials
- Be consistent across all your social media, both personal and professional. It's all about consistency. The look at to be the same online & offline.
- Humanity is key. The 3 major looks are: Work, Home, Out. All 3 need to be communicated.

InsiderTip: Your appearance online cannot be controlled. Pictures & videos are shared constantly so you need to make sure you have a strong & clear image. The ultimate Personal Brand is when the target audience can identify a personality based on style alone.

B - Behaviour

Your behaviour is directly linked to your appearance. How you look cannot contradict your behaviour. Your behaviour has to match your appearance, what you are portraying or who you want to be. It is important: you have to establish certain reputation, depending your goal — your internal character, values and principles have to match also your destination point — who you want to be. Your behaviour is important 24/7, everywhere at all times. A status on Facebook, a comment on Instagram, a live stream, story or quote, passing answer during a bar show — all have to be filtered through your personal brand. The higher you climb, the more you are watched, the more important your behaviour becomes.

InsiderTip: Your personal brand is not meant to change who you are inherently as a person so just because you've set a specific goal in mind who suddenly have to completely change your attitude, way of speaking or dress. Change is gradual & not immediate.

We cannot teach you how to behave. But we can give you the tools to help to understand yourself and others better. How you choose to behave after that is always up to you.

Each of the point has a clickable direct link with an external informational source (clink on the name)

- [Basic etiquette rules](#)
- [Cultural differences](#)
- [Personality test](#)
- [Interpersonal skills self-assessment](#)

InsiderTip: All of the above tests of links to knowledge are there to give you the power to better assess yourself & your surroundings. Prepare you for what's to come so you're able to better react.

C - Competencies

Now that you have figured out your image & the associated behaviour. The next step is figuring out your **strengths** in all aspects of you character. Using your strong points is always more effective than developing weaknesses. And it definitely will help you succeed faster in your goals than trying to develop yourself in every direction at once. Creating a list of strengths and a plan to make them even stronger is the third gate.

This can range from social skills, personal talents or industry specific knowledge or interests. What is it in the bar industry that you research in your spare time or are you interested in directly? What is it in our industry you're you've always enjoyed doing? Developing flavours, teaching masterclasses, creating garnishes etc.

Explore your public identity — make a research about yourself. Start asking people from your personal and professional environment how they see you. Family, friends, colleagues — all of them can give you valuable information and insights, maybe you didn't even thought of. Explore yourself and be honest!

D - Differentiation

The last key step is understanding that there will ALWAYS be somebody faster, stronger, smarter or in a better position. That every niche you might ever want to occupy is definitely already also taken by somebody somewhere. The key thing is to remember the things that separate you from others & the things that make you...YOU!

Your culture, your gender, your race & your experience are all essential aspects of who you are differentiate you from others & help you stand out in a crowded market. It is also important to remember separate business from personal life BUT also understand that often your hobbies, interests & personal activities can be used as an advantage as well. Do you have a specific interest in photography? Sport? Building chairs? All of these things can be used to make you one of a kind.

There is no shame in being proud of who you are or where you're from or the things you're into. Personally I've been a gamer my whole life. I believe my childhood of PC gaming has helped nurture my creative side, give me an eye for design, storytelling & hand/eye coordination skills that help my bartending skills.

You have to be careful though - Your 'secondary' skill or 'differentiating' element cannot takeover your primary focus - the niche you're occupying. Otherwise the question will come up to pick one. For example if I were to constantly talk about video games people would start to ask - Are you a bartender or a gamer?

Invest in yourself

Track your main achievements in life so far and question yourself why they are the most important ones. What skills did you use and gained to accomplish those goals? How do you see your strengths? What do you want to improve? Investing is usually linked to money but more importantly it is important to understand time. No one is going to come & make you the next global brand ambassador of your favourite brand. No one is going to appear & immediately start inviting you to have guest shifts all over the world.

Now if you have a specific set of skills that others can find useful then this opens doors to new opportunities!

D - Differentiation

You look good, act good, you know where your strengths lie. But there are another five people in your city, country, region, in the world who are on the same level and, also, are your competitors in the same category or field. What makes you **different**? Is it your knowledge, is it your cultural specifics, historical background or approach to your job? If everybody goes left, you go right. Find your unique selling point. That will make me remember **you** and choose **you** over anyone else.

Start writing down the list what you like to do, where you think you have a great knowledge, your passions, interests, what motivates you.

- What makes me different and unique?
- What makes me relevant to my target?
- Why am I a best seller?
- What are my strongest attributes, what do I rock at?

Think of your hobbies, activities, specifics of cultural and historical background, it could be anything! Maybe you're into specific spirit or have a great collection of antique glassware. Turn it into your unique selling point! Use every opportunity and write down every idea you have, it could sound crazy, but who knows, maybe tomorrow would be perfect time to show it to the world?