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# SELF MARKETING POWER 101

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Personal Branding Secrets You Can Implement Right Now

by Jeff Beals



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# Chapter 1 - Introduction

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*You are a brand. You are a business of one.*

Regardless of your career field, you have a personal brand, a reputation that must be carefully maintained and vigorously promoted. No matter how modest you are, sometimes you have to toot your own horn.

Professionals must promote their personal brands to be noticed in a competitive world. Whether you're striving to bag your biggest client ever, positioning yourself for a promotion or just trying to make a difference in your community, one thing is for sure: You have to stand out. There is no room for shrinking violets in today's world; successful people are bold.

We now work in a global economy in which people, jobs and capital move freely all over the world. In a split second, your job can be eliminated and your life turned upside down.

Furthermore, the products and services we provide have become commoditized. Your wares, even if they are intellectual in nature, are unfortunately seen as commodities by too many would-be buyers. No matter how good you are, there's probably some professional out there who can do your work even better. No matter how innovative your company is, there's a competitor out there that is doing things you and your colleagues have not yet developed.

People do business with people. That's why the art of self marketing (also known interchangeably as "personal branding") is so important.

If you're a self marketer, you have little to fear. Someone who has built a well-known name, a great reputation and community/industry goodwill can bounce back quickly when something goes wrong. As a good self marketer, people will want to meet with you. They will actually return your calls and go out of their way to recommend you to others.

You have sole ownership of your personal brand, but it comes with a burden. You bear the responsibility for building that brand, shaping it and promoting it to the general public. As a self marketer, you can recruit the services of others, but the responsibility to carry out a marketing strategy is ultimately yours.



Building a bigger and better image is not easy, but anyone with at least a moderate level of talent and intelligence can do it.

You can create the personal brand you really want. Be committed to it and don't let other people or any haunting feelings of self doubt stand in your way. Self marketers have to stick their necks out and take a little risk. Not only is it worth the risk, but establishing a well-known personal brand is essential in our competitive economy.

Today's marketplace is noisier than ever. It's hard to stand out. Successful people know how to promote their brands in this big, loud and sometimes intimidating world.

If you are ready to enjoy the increased opportunities and higher levels of success that come from self marketing, read on...



### Question for You to Ponder:

What is your motivation to learn more about self marketing or personal branding?



# Chapter Two

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## *A Celebrity in Your Own Sphere of Interest*

Have you ever attended a show at a stand-up comedy club? If you haven't perhaps you have watched a television show recorded at a live comedy club. Either way, you're probably familiar with how it works, because comedy clubs around the world tend to have the same structure.

On any given night, three or four comedians are booked in the club. The most famous of these comedians is called the "headliner" and he goes on stage last. But before the headliner begins his routine, two or three "warm-up acts," lesser known comedians, take the stage.

Every time I have attended a stand-up comedy show, without fail, at least one or more of the warm-up acts will actually be funnier than the headliner. It always happens!

But guess who gets the biggest applause, the uproarious laughter and the standing ovation? You guessed it – the headliner. Even if the headliner is the fourth funniest comedian out of four, he still gets all the glory.

Why is that?

It's because audiences want the famous comedian to be the funniest comedian. Even if he is not that funny at all, people subconsciously pretend he is because he is famous.

That is a perfect example of "the power of celebrity." People tend to respect, admire and give deference to well-known people even if those people have not necessarily earned that respect. It is human nature and it's something we can take advantage of in our daily work.

While you may have no plans to become a professional comedian, you can exploit human nature to suit your goals by becoming a celebrity in your own sphere of interest. Your sphere of interest is that group of people, who in any way, can help you reach your goals – clients, prospective clients, anyone who could refer a client, a potential employer, someone who could get you on a coveted



committee or board. In other words, there are thousands and thousands of people who could have an impact on your success and they compose your sphere of interest.

Among those people, you need to be a celebrity, a person with a widely recognized and highly respected personal brand.

When you become a celebrity in your own sphere of interest, people will be more interested in what you have to say. They will be pleased to be seen next to you. They will talk about you to other people. Perception is reality. Even if you are no more talented than the next person, you can get ahead of that person by having celebrity status in your own sphere of interest.

Developing a level of celebrity is simply one of the single most important things you can do to further your career or grow your business. I'm not saying you need to develop a name as widely recognized as a movie star's, a senator's or a best-selling author's, but within your field of expertise, you need to become a mini rock star. If you're in business, you should strive to be a celebrity in your marketplace or your industry. Name recognition is power.

So how do you become a celebrity in your own sphere of interest? For starters, be excellent in your work. Never stop preparing and planning. Be disciplined and work hard.

Unfortunately, however, excellence is far from enough. In this competitive world, your talent and hard work are simply expected. Performance is merely foundational. Assume your competition is working just as hard as you and is even more talented than you. In such an environment, your celebrity status/ personal brand is one of the few things that sets you apart.

Assuming you are working hard and producing client-valued work, there are a couple other things you need to do: change the way you see yourself; and follow a few simple rules. More on that is coming up...





## Questions for You to Ponder:

- How well known are you in your sphere of interest right now?
- How much more celebrity status in your sphere of interest would you like to attain?
- To put it in marketing terms, you can think of your “sphere of interest” as your “personal target audience,” that population of society to which you will tailor your personal brand message. Given that, who and what types of people are in your sphere of interest?



# Chapter Three

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## *The 3 Key Philosophies*

In our hyperactive, warp-speed world, it's growing more and more difficult to catch the attention of influential decision-makers, prospective employers and would-be clients. It's hard to cut through the clutter and get people to notice you. That's why you need to establish a widely recognized and highly respected personal brand. Your business life gets easier when you're slightly famous, a celebrity in your own sphere of interest.

When someone needs the talents you have or the products you sell, you want your name and face to pop into that person's head. That's what personal branding is all about—being recognized as the go-to source, the safe option, the obvious choice.

In order to become a celebrity in your own sphere of interest, you must adopt three philosophies or special ways of thinking: 1. See yourself as a brand; 2. Think like a politician; 3. Live actively while focusing externally.

### ***You as an Entity***

See yourself as an entity, not just as a human being. You are a man or a woman, but you are also a brand, a business, a business of one, a business unto yourself. Every business worth its salt jealously guards the integrity of its brand while zealously promoting it. So must you. You need to approach your personal brand promotion with the same intensity as your company promotes its brand.

### ***The Mini Politician***

Next, think like a politician. That's not to say you should adopt the nefarious and tawdry behavior of too many politicians, rather it means you understand you are in a lifelong series of "campaigns" seeking to be "elected" to whatever it is that matters to you. A politician works hard to build a core group of people who would "run through a brick wall" for him or her. That core is built and strengthened by networking—going out and deliberately meeting and building relationships with as many people as possible.



Unfortunately, politicians never meet most of the voters in their spheres of interest. For everyone outside the core, politicians at least want people to recognize their names and have a positive feeling associated with them. To reach these people, politicians use mass media, social media and word of mouth.

All sorts of analogies exist between political campaigning and the personal branding game. Like a politician, you need to build your core relentlessly and never stop building it no matter how big and strong it becomes. You can then use social media and word of mouth to project your personal brand to your “voters,” the people in your sphere of interest.

### ***An Active Life & External Focus***

“Celebrities in their spheres of interest” deliberately lead active lives and focus externally. They are involved, energetic and engaged in their communities. At the same time, they are focused on meeting new people and building relationships. Great salespersons are never satisfied with their current number of personal contacts. They’re never satisfied with the current status of relationships. They realize that if those things don’t continually grow, they might actually be declining.



“ Be active and involved outside your home or office. Nearly 75% of all jobs are never advertised and a similar percentage of big clients only come from relationship-building. Make it a goal to attend a certain number of events per month! ”

We need to get out of the office and show up at networking events. We need to reach out and engage the world around us. Strike up conversations with people around you. Reach out to people and get to know those who might refer an opportunity to you some day. The majority of jobs are never advertised, because they are part of the vast, hidden job market. Being connected gives you access. The majority of prestigious, big-time clients in the typical industry can only be reached through relationships. They do not commonly walk into your office asking to be your customer. They aren’t amenable to cold calls, and they won’t respond to your direct mail piece no matter how pretty it is. “Big elephant”



clients know they are important, and they expect to be wined and dined, so to speak. They are big deals and expect to be treated like a big deal.

Get out there and meet everyone you can. Ask questions. Be like a detective turning over every stone, looking for any shred of evidence that can help you make the sale.

Good personal branders are seemingly “everywhere.” They live their lives so actively that other people feel as if they see them everywhere. If someone ever says to you, “I see you everywhere,” you know you’re doing something right.



### Action Step:

List three ways that you, your colleagues or your employees could become more active in your industry or your local marketplace.



### Question for You to Ponder:

What is one way you could market yourself that none of your friends or colleagues are doing?



# Chapter Four

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## *Critical Rules for Self Marketing Success*

Nobody likes to hear about rules, but these rules will help you build that widely recognized and highly respected personal brand you need to make your work easier and your goals more attainable.



### **RULE #1**

#### ***Focus on the Fascinating: Your Area of Self Marketing Expertise***

What's your area of self marketing expertise?

Not sure what that means? Well, you have one, but it's possible you haven't isolated and cultivated it yet.

Before defining "area of self marketing expertise," allow me share how I unwittingly stumbled into one years ago at a cocktail party.

"You're in real estate; you'll know," my friend said with an inquisitive look on his face. "What company is moving into that big office building under construction along the freeway?"

This was a problematic question for me, because I hadn't even noticed the office building under construction along the freeway.

It was way back in 2001, and I had just left a position in college administration for a brand-new career in commercial real estate. After two weeks on the job, I went to a party where three separate people asked me questions about office buildings, retailers and condominium construction. I must have sounded pretty stupid, because I had trouble answering all of them.

I had spent my first two weeks on the job diligently learning about the legal, technical and even mathematical aspects of real estate. But at the party, nobody wanted to know the boring stuff. They wanted to talk about the sexy, glamorous side of the industry.





It's not enough to be technically proficient...You must be known for something related to your work that is fascinating to people outside the profession!



Something suddenly became quite clear: It wasn't enough to become technically proficient in my new trade. I had to become an expert on those things related to commercial real estate that were most fascinating to people outside the profession.

I made a commitment to become an expert on the most interesting aspects. I studied the local marketplace. I read every magazine, newspaper and website I could find that related to construction, real estate, business expansion and economic development. I became the “Cliff Clavin” of growth and development in my town.

Armed with a collection of eyebrow-raising stats and trivia, I had something to talk about at social gatherings. Better yet, I had material to pitch to the local media, allowing me to become a go-to source. Community groups booked me as a luncheon speaker, and I even started an economic development radio talk show. All of this public exposure was good for business.

I didn't realize it at the time, but I accidentally discovered an “area of self marketing expertise.” Everyone is hopefully an expert in his or her profession, but an area of self marketing expertise is quite different. It consists of the most fascinating aspects of your job, company or industry.

So, what's your area of self marketing expertise?

If you're not sure, sit down with a few friends and explain what you do. Ask them what they find most interesting. Take notes.

Once you have decided on your area of self marketing expertise, think about how you will communicate it in an intriguing way. When that's mastered, it's time to put your area of self marketing expertise to work for you. Use it at networking events, in newsletter articles, in public speaking, when dealing with the press and in your social media postings.



Professionals who have well defined and carefully crafted areas of self marketing expertise will ultimately be more successful, because they never run out of interesting things to talk about. An area of self marketing expertise becomes a magnet, attracting people to you.

When people are dazzled by what you have to say, they'll be more than happy to hire you when they need help with the more technical and "boring" aspects of your profession.



### Action Step:

Describe your area of self marketing expertise.



## RULE #2

### *Remember that Everyone Counts*

Back in the 19th Century, the Scottish philosopher Thomas Carlyle told us, "A great man shows his greatness by the way he treats little men."

In our modern age, great men and women show their greatness in the way they treat people who on the face of things can do nothing for them.

Aside from simply being the right thing to do, following Carlyle's advice serves your best interest.

“A great man shows his greatness by the way he treats little men.”

– Thomas Carlyle, 19th Century

To get ahead in business and in life, you certainly must build relationships with the "right" people, but you have to be careful. If you become too obsessed with impressing the rich and powerful, you might miss out on the many other people who have wonderful things to offer you. After all, those who are tiny in their professions today can grow to become monsters in the future.



So, as Carlyle recommended, if you want be truly great, start by taking time for all the people around you even those who seemingly can do nothing for you.

The seemingly non-powerful people in your life may have significant influence over powerful decision makers.

Keep in mind that clients can come from anywhere and anyone. The relationships you currently take for granted could become very valuable.



### **RULE #3**

#### ***Believe in the Positive Sum Game***

Self-marketing is a positive-sum game, not a zero-sum game. Everyone can win. Just because one person becomes a rock star in an industry or community, doesn't mean that someone else cannot. Too many people have a difficult time understanding this.

No doubt you have come across someone who can't stand hearing praise about someone else. You say something nice about someone else and that person feels compelled to refute it, bring up a negative thing about the person or at least minimize it with a quick barb or roll of the eyes.



Never tear down others while promoting yourself!

Anyone who behaves like this is telling the rest of the world that he or she has low self-esteem or a compromised sense of self-worth.

One of the most important rules of the self-marketing game is to never tear down others while promoting yourself. In fact, we should actually go out of our way to build others up as we promote ourselves. Nothing looks so bad as to come across as jealous, envious or spiteful.



## **RULE #4** ***Listen Two-Thirds of the Time***

“Seek first to understand, then to be understood,” wrote Stephen R. Covey, author of *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. Too often we get that order mixed up. We focus on being understood as opposed to understanding those with whom we live and work.



Whether your role is executive, managerial, sales, customer service or anything else, it is critically important to your success that you listen.

Super executive Lee Iacocca, former CEO of Chrysler, once said, “I only wish I could find an institute that teaches people how to listen. Business people need to listen at least as much as they need to talk. Too many people fail to realize that real communication goes in both directions.”

Iacocca’s statement reminds me of the old saying, “God gave you one mouth and two ears; use them proportionately.”

In other words, we should listen twice as much as we talk. I call it the “Rule of Thirds.”

Two-thirds of the time you spend talking with a colleague, client or a prospect should be focused on the other person. One-third of the time is focused on yourself.

“No man ever listened himself out of a job,” said former U.S. president Calvin Coolidge. Simply put, listening is one of the top skills required for professional success.”

Why is focusing on the other person so important? The answer is simple: most people are rather self-absorbed. They are their favorite subjects.

If you show earnest, sincere interest in a person’s “favorite subject,” he or she can’t help but like you. They will feel a connection with you. Showing sincere interest by truly listening disarms colleagues and clients and paves the way for your success.



You might be wondering to whom you should listen. Who is worthy of your attention? Who deserves your best listening skills? That's easy: everyone. You never know who has the right information for you or knows just the right person you need to meet.

Sam Walton, the late founder of Wal-Mart, once said, "The key to success is to get out into the store and listen to what the associates have to say. It's terribly important for everyone to get involved. Our best ideas come from clerks and stock boys."

When it comes to listening, remember to do it and do it sincerely.



### Questions for You to Ponder:

- Be honest...How attentive are you as a listener?
- What do you need to do to improve?



#### **RULE #5**

#### ***Develop a No-Gobbledygook Elevator Speech***

In the 1980s, millions of professionals heard about a new concept: the "elevator speech" or sometimes referred to as the "elevator pitch."

As you move in and out of office buildings, you sometimes bump into someone who could possibly become a client or hire you for a new job. You need to be prepared to say what you do quickly, in the time it takes the elevator to go from the lobby to the office upstairs. During this time, you want to sound impressive while conveying something that the listener would find intriguing.

Back in the 80s, people would spend a lot of time developing and rehearsing these 20-to-30-second speeches. Many people do the same thing today although many elevator speeches have evolved into value propositions – a short, descriptive statement that expresses the value you bring to your clients.

Over the years, the elevator speech unfortunately has become bastardized as people try to cram too much wordiness into it. Elevator speeches have also been



ruined by people trying to sound artificially impressive by littering their pitches with junk language, meaningless-but-fancy words.

The increasing reliance on junk language keeps popping up all over the place.

Upon arriving at the office one morning, I opened my email account and read this message:

“Hello Jeff. I am writing to find out who at your company would be responsible for evaluating suite-of-services solutions that expand your competitive advantage across the enterprise.”

“Suite-of-services solutions?” “Competitive advantage across the enterprise?”

Those are English words but certainly not plain English.

If this salesperson’s goal was to promptly get his email deleted, he succeeded. I can’t think of any reason on Earth why a prospect would bother responding to such a message. Not only is it a red warning flag that a salesman is stalking you, the message is full of annoying junk language. It’s not providing the reader anything he or she would value.

Sadly, junk language is not limited to email sales pitches. It’s extremely common in networking settings.

I’m amazed at the drivel that comes from the mouths of professionals at networking events. Go to any cocktail party mixer, ask someone what they do, and you might get an answer that sounds something like this:

“I engage progressive, forward-thinking Fortune 500 companies that are seeking to shift their paradigm and adopt more of a global platform. I work with them to facilitate the development of strategic, integrated, highly actionable management solutions, which will boost their bottom line.”

That’s an elevator speech, but it’s not a very good one.

When people talk like this, they’re trying to sound impressive. Unfortunately, when we use twenty-five-dollar words, industry jargon and the latest, in-style buzzwords, we end up sounding anything but impressive. Convoluted double-



speak is often used to cover up the fact that the speaker really doesn't know what he or she is talking about.

Plain English, carefully crafted and skillfully delivered, is far more impressive and makes for better elevator speeches than the gobbledygook that too many people believe sounds "intellectual." Focus on what makes you unique as a professional while making sure your listener truly understands what you are saying.



### Action Step:

Write a draft of your new elevator speech that is compelling but not overloaded with jargon.



# Chapter Five

## Conclusion

Obtaining celebrity status in your own sphere of interest is not a one-and-done sort of thing. It's a career-long commitment. You must be focused on marketing yourself all the time, refreshing your personal brand each year.

In a typical self marketing journey, an ambitious professional tries to go from a little-known entry level worker to a rock star in his or her industry or community. Self marketers strive to become superstars in their own spheres of interest.

Along the way, they encounter challenges, setbacks and, worst of all, self doubt. Creeping self doubt has paralyzed many would-be successful people. There are tons of people in the world with outstanding talent who never accomplish greatness because of self doubt.



If you think you have a good idea, fight through the self doubt!

I have been hosting a radio show on a Fox News affiliate since 2004. I will never forget the very first episode. As the intro music was playing, I got a feeling of self doubt. With a sick feeling in the pit of my stomach, I turned to my co-host and said, "What the hell are we doing? We have no business being here." He just gave me a nervous smile and a shrug of the shoulder. At that point, the music stopped, and I just started talking.

Now, years later, we have tens of thousands of loyal listeners. People tell me it's a brilliant show, something they look forward to each week. It's amazing to think that I almost killed the show several times before it first aired because I was worried how well it would be received. Thankfully, my colleague and I stayed with our vision and fought off the doubt.

If you strive to do something unique and different as part of your self marketing efforts, be prepared to face self doubt. It's hard not to get a little nervous when



you are taking a risk. Self marketing is one of those activities that potentially can bring high rewards but also significant risk. The more you try to market yourself, the more you expose yourself to potential disappointment, failure and embarrassment.

Don't worry about failure. You are better off trying something and failing than not doing it at all. With each disappointment, you learn something that will help you do better next time.

Just remember, you are operating in a high-stakes environment.

You are competing with talented people from around the globe. All the competition makes today's marketplace very crowded and noisy. In order to get ahead, you must stand out, be noticed and impress the people around you.

As a professional, you are a business unto yourself. You have a personal brand, which must be perpetually and actively promoted to your personal target audience. Never forget that, like the politician running for office, you are in a life-long campaign for excellence. A big part of your success or failure will be determined by your ability and willingness to toot your own horn.

With a positive attitude, a strong work ethic and the understanding of critical success skills, you have all it takes to achieve greatness. You just need to be willing to tell the world about your accomplishments. Untold opportunities are waiting for you.



### Action Steps:

- Write your self-marketing goals for the next year.
- Write down the two most important things you never want to forget after reading this ebook.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_



# Let's Continue the Discussion



**Jeff Beals** is a professional speaker and international award-winning author, who helps companies increase their profits and associations achieve their missions through effective sales, marketing and personal branding techniques. He brings complicated subject material to life through entertaining keynote speeches, workshops and seminars. Jeff has the unique ability to connect personally with audiences. Attendees commonly refer to his lessons and quote his stories several months and even years after the presentation has ended.

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