

Personal Branding Myth #3: “Creating a Personal Brand Is Being ‘Fake.’”

This myth is one of the most unfortunate ones flying around about personal branding. It comes from the belief that a personal brand is about conveying a “façade.” You may remember in our first e-newsletter that we talked about the myth that “Personal Branding is all about the way you “Look.” Just as your personal brand is not just about the suit you wear, it is also not about pretending to be someone other than who you really are.

But you may be asking: Doesn't personal branding have to do with what your *Audience* thinks about you? Yes, it does! As our personal branding system points out, your personal brand exists in the *mind* of your Audience so the perceptions of your Audience are paramount to the success of your personal brand. But that doesn't mean that you should try to meet the needs of your Audience by pretending to be someone you're not. Quite the contrary!

Our Personal Branding System is about helping people to become *more* satisfied at work. How can you do that if you're projecting a false image that has nothing to do with who you are and what you enjoy doing? No one could possibly be happy in that kind of situation.

Here's the truth: *You must be authentic to be true to your personal brand.* Yes, you must offer something of value to your Audience that meets their Need. That's primary. But what you offer is based on *who you are as an individual* – not some character that you've created because you believe it's what your Audience wants. What a rotten life that would be! If the only way you can be happy in your job is to project a fake personal brand that has nothing to do with your personality, you definitely need to rethink your job and/or your career.

The system outlined in *How YOU™ Are Like Shampoo* is about finding ways to be *more authentically you* in your career than ever before. We designed it that way because we believe it's so important. And being true to you leads to greater satisfaction and happiness on the job. Think what a different world it would be if everyone felt fulfilled in their careers? There are far too many people unhappy in their jobs, but it simply doesn't have to be that way.

The framework in our Personal Branding Systems helps you to learn about your true, hidden strengths and talents and how to use them in your work life. It guides you to think about your Character and how you can incorporate your best personality traits – traits that are natural to you – into your desired personal brand.

So, once again, remember: *You must be authentic to be true to your personal brand.* A fake personal brand is not “personal” at all. That would be someone else's brand and someone else's life. Make sure you are being true to YOU™!

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With an MBA from Harvard Business School, Brenda’s career has spanned more than two decades and has included developing mega brands for Procter & Gamble and Bristol-Myers Squibb across four continents and 50 countries. Now, as President of Brand Development Associates (BDA) International, she travels the world speaking, training, and coaching individuals and companies to greater success through creative, yet practical, corporate and personal brand development.

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