



Job-Hunt[®] 15 Minute Guide

FREE

How To Create A Personal Marketing Plan:



The 5 Powerful Steps To Bringing Your Brand To Life

By *Tim Tyrell-Smith, Founder, Tim's Strategy™*

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It's time to stop living quietly. And time to start communicating a brand that matters.

If you are working with a purpose during job search, you will spend a good amount of time getting to know yourself. Learning what differentiates you from everyone else. And establishing a **unique personal brand**.

Once you have a clear and powerful personal brand, you can build your personal marketing materials (e.g. your resume, LinkedIn profile, networking bio and elevator pitch).

But what else can you do to market yourself during job search and throughout your career? And how do you avoid over-saturating your audience with self-serving content?

Personal marketing is all about new, fresh ideas to help you take your personal brand and begin engaging with your local community, target companies, local recruiters and your larger social network.

In this e-book, you'll learn how to put your subject matter expertise to work for you. And begin to build serious social credibility as you spread the word about your highly marketable skills. You'll also learn how to balance your own marketing by supporting and sharing the ideas of other people.

And, yes, giving back is a form of personal marketing.



Tim

Tim Tyrell-Smith
Founder, Tim's Strategy™

Your Personal Marketing Plan: An Introduction



The world is changing in big ways. And the world of work and career is changing with it. The idea of relying on a corporation to cover your needs is on the way out.

On the way in is a very different idea. An idea that requires a lot more work on your part. But also offers significantly larger rewards.

I'm talking about personal marketing.

It is the work you do once you've created a personal brand. You know who you are and, importantly, know how you are different from others wanting to play the same role in the world.

What? Market myself? What will people think?

They'll think you are smart and progressive. If you do it right.

Interested?

In this e-book, I will help you create and execute a personal marketing plan.

But first, here's a universal truth: **marketing is hard**. To do it right, anyway.

You have to expose your brand and ideas to people in a way that gets them leaning in. Not turning away. So you have to be smart.

Now here's a second universal truth: **marketing takes time**. Only in rare cases will your brand become viral overnight (or even over a few months).

Most of us will build our brand one person at a time. A personal marketing plan works when it is part of a well-thought out branding strategy. Communicated in your authentic voice and delivered in channels where people are likely to listen to your message.

People who "rush in" are making mistakes. And those mistakes can be costly. Giving you a reputation that's hard to shake.

So why are we struggling?

- **Perspective** – We live in our own little silos and can't see the missteps.
- **Knowledge** – We don't know where to start. So we act impulsively.
- **Ideas** – Most of us aren't creative types. Marketing doesn't come easy.
- **Courage** – Not everyone is comfortable stepping into a new area.
- **Time** – You are busy. Marketing takes time. So you take shortcuts.
- **Money** – Even the smallest investment makes you pause. I get that.

So, how are you marketing yourself? Are you open to some new ideas?

If so, read on to learn the five-step process to create and execute a personal marketing plan.

Here are the five steps you'll be taking with me as your guide:

- 1. Build A Personal Marketing Hub**
- 2. Learn To Engage With People**
- 3. Start Building Social Credibility**
- 4. Inspire Sharing Of Your Ideas And Successes**
- 5. Take A Few Calculated Risks**

But, you might say, why should I do this extra work in life? Can't I just continue on "as is" and hope the next job is waiting when I need it?

No. It's about taking your career in your own two hands. And proactively moving toward a happy work life (<http://timsstrategy.com/how-to-be-truly-happy-at-work/>).

And what if I told you about some real rewards you can get by creating a plan. For you and your brand.

Because there are real rewards to creating one:

- **You create a community.** A network that appreciates you, will recommend you and share ideas with you. A powerful force.
- **You build insulation from competition.** Competition? Yes. Other people who want your next job or next promotion. Your message will be louder and clearer.
- **You establish trust. Social credibility** (<http://timsstrategy.com/how-to-build-social-credibility-during-job-search/>) is what you earn through consistent delivery of your authentic brand. And that equals, over time, a level of trust.
- **You get free word-of-mouth advertising.** Knowing where to find you and seeing you consistently sharing good, high quality ideas will make them want to share with others.
- **You generate enthusiasm.** People will start to enjoy the interactions with you. As you engage, people start to look forward to what you'll do and share next.

Can you do it? Yes, you can.

STEP 1: Build A Personal Marketing Hub

In the introduction, I shared a vision for what a personal marketing plan will do for you and your career.

So what is a personal marketing hub?

“A personal marketing hub is a single location online where you can send everyone you know and meet. A place where you can largely control the message. And create a gathering point for content and people you care about.”

It is not a temporary online resume during job search. Although it can play that role when you need it to.

Rather, it is a portal into your life and career that allows others to enter, meet you and perhaps employ you in some fashion.

An ideal hub is a website or blog. Allowing you to control the functions and features that make sense.

But if you never see yourself doing that (even though you should), you could use your LinkedIn profile, a page on Facebook or your Twitter account as your hub. Everything you do and the main link on your marketing materials (resume, business card, bio) goes to your hub.

So what are the characteristics of a good hub?



Good
Content
is Sticky

Sticky

In online terms, a hub or site is sticky if people “stick around” for a bit. Why do people stick around? Well good content helps. If you can write, include a blog or free downloadable white papers that share your bigger view of the industry you know or role that you play. It also helps if the content is original. You wrote it, drew it or said in some way. What’s on your hub to keep people there for a few minutes?

Modern Design

If you create a hub via a blog platform like Wordpress, Tumblr or TypePad, you can easily create a site that looks professional. There are easy-to-implement templates. Some are free and some are available to purchase at a reasonable price. But if you really want to grab someone’s attention and get instant visual credibility, spend a few dollars and get your site designed with your personal brand in mind. It will deliver that great first impression. The rest is up to you!

Clear And Friendly Messaging

Don’t try to impress people with your authoritative, graduate-level writing style. Instead, have a little bit of fun, and don’t take yourself too seriously. Don’t be silly but find a way to get your brand communicated your way. People prefer to read at a 6th grade level anyway. So write in your voice. Not in the one you think people might expect (resume-speak). Use fewer words and lots of great formatting so that people can quickly scan your hub and find what they need without too much pain.

Consistently Updated

Your hub and personal brand are only as good as your most recent update. And active updating is an important **social media strategy** (<http://tims-strategy.com/updating-a-social-media-strategy-for-job-search/>). Why? Well, if I come to your hub once and get good information, I might come back. But if I do come back and nothing has changed, I might not see any value in visiting your hub in the future. So while you may not be able to blog every week or create a new monthly download, there are other things you can do. Like adding your Twitter feed to your hub or other content that changes automatically.

Focused

So here’s a mistake that is commonly made: you don’t pick a focus for your hub. You’re not familiar enough with your own brand so you write, create or share in a very general way. When people come to your hub they don’t get what you are about. So they leave. Another trap is the “too personal” trap. An example is writing about your family trip to the Grand Canyon. You share photos of your kids and fail to bring any context to your content. You’ll lose me there too.

Linked To Social Media

So your hub is the place you’d like people to start. It is your home base. But it isn’t the end of the road. From your hub, you want to send people to other places around the web where they can find you and interact with you. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, You Tube and StumbleUpon are all great satellites to create around your hub. While you don’t want to divert people away from the hub, you also have to realize that your audience is already

networking in these satellite locations. And once established there, you can use the satellites to drive traffic to your hub. Closing the loop.

I hope that helps you think about your own hub and how to build one successfully.

STEP 2: Learn To Engage With People

So if you followed the advice in step 1, you now have a place online where people can find you.

Now that you have a place of your own, how will you interact with people? What ways will they meet you online and offline? And what reaction will they have to meeting you?

Here's what you need to know:

“Your ability to engage with people will dictate their interest in caring about you and your goals in life.”

- **You need to be consistent.** Paying attention to who has followed you, liked your content, shared a post you wrote or re-tweeted a thought you had. And then responding to them (saying thanks, starting a conversation).
- **You need to be authentic.** If you are not genuinely interested in meeting people – sharing with them and learning from them – you will struggle to create strong engagement.

So here are some thoughts about engaging successfully:

Get out of the house

Engaging online is great and should be encouraged. But if you live your life and build your relationships 100% online, you will miss out on the larger value of social networking. So get out of the house. Attend networking events or industry group meetings in your community. Leave your city and attend the big conference in your industry. Doing so adds a whole new dynamic to an online friendship.

Open up and smile

So many see networking as a chore. They see it as a business function to be avoided if possible. If that's you, then you are going to the wrong events or going for the wrong reasons. While there is a business function to many events, there is also a significant relationship function. Creating trust and comfort before you need it. So when you step into a room or log in to your favorite social network, do so with a good attitude. It will invite people to you and your profile.

Reach out

It's OK to ask for help from your network and it's OK to ask how you can help them. In fact, that is what this networking business is all about: helping, sharing, and supporting your network. It may not seem like it in a world that is often full of spam and self-promoting content. But if you follow the right people and treat them well, you will create a well-formed network.

Ask questions

One of the complaints I often hear as to why people don't network is: "I don't know what to say to strangers". And, yes, introducing yourself to new people can be a challenge if you are new to networking. But here's the

trick: ask questions. Focus the first part of your conversation on the other person. Get them talking, be a great listener and learn a few things you can use to keep a conversation going. People love to talk about themselves. And, after you've relaxed in the moment, you'll have a chance to tell your story.

Talk to people

This one sounds deceptively simple. Perhaps it even sounds repetitive. But it is a common problem online. In our rush to connect with, follow, link to and like people and brands, we sometimes forget to talk to them. **Using Twitter** (<http://timsstrategy.com/dont-follow-me-on-twitter-talk-to-me/>) correctly means that you are interacting with others. Sharing their content, yes, but also getting to know them through questions and fun banter. This is social media after all.

If you do these things you will start actively engaging people. And making friends for the future.

STEP 3: Start Building Social Credibility

So while step 2 was about engagement, step 3 is about ways to engage that help you to create credibility or trust with your target audience (hiring companies, recruiters, fellow job seekers).

When you engage people with confidence, authenticity and purpose, you are certainly on the road to building social credibility. It makes it easier for people to connect with you. Because you seem to be a good person, right?

And that matters to most of us.

But what also matters is your ability to show relevance (skills, experience) and to create a level of subject matter expertise. So in this step, I'll share six ideas to help you build social credibility during job search or any time you need to achieve something important.

Here are six ways to start building social credibility:

Write

There's something magical about writing. It allows us to share great detail about something that matters to us. And, as a reader of your content, I can't help but see you as at least a little bit smart on the topic. Assuming you can get your ideas across well.



Get your comments published into a blog (yours or someone else's) and your ideas are now floating down a big river (the Internet) where others fishing for answers to their questions are waiting. If I read an article, white paper, tweet, status update or any other communication from you – and like it – I'm now much more open to meeting you. Or accepting a connection request from you.

Speak

Writing is cool. But there's an awful lot of content out there. Billions of web pages, right? But, if you have an interest and a personality (helps), you should consider the opportunity to be a speaker, trainer, workshop leader or webinar presenter. Are you nervous about standing up in front of a big group? Then offer to organize and lead an accountability group. When you are the speaker (the lead voice), you are given instant credibility. And then

as long as you continue to earn it, your social credibility increases every time you do it well. So find a topic you love and create something you can share with others.

Connect

When you connect with others (via LinkedIn, for example), you establish social proof. People will think: "If Mike connected with Susan, she must be worth my time". Assuming, of course, Mike isn't connecting with everyone with a heartbeat. When you connect with other people and actively maintain those relationships, you gain credibility through the credibility of others. Make sense?



Start Something

Starting something takes a purpose, a plan and a bit of courage. That's why we place extra value on those people who do it. And value is a component of credibility. So what could you start? And what additional value can you add to the world around you? It could be a LinkedIn group for an un-served segment of your industry, a local networking group for your church or a **job search accountability group** (<http://timsstrategy.com/how-to-start-and-facilitate-an-accountability-group/>). Leaders get noticed and are more likely to be recommended for jobs. Would that help you right now?

Help Others

Who out there needs your help right now? Can you do a resume review, a mock interview, share your favorite local networking events or help someone write a better LinkedIn profile? If yes, look for people needing help and offer it. When you help others, you can have a profound impact on their lives. And they'll usually tell a few people about who helped them. Being a

helper makes you a safe person to help and to network with in a world full of many choices.

Own A Niche

Especially in a tough job market, you need to focus on being a specialist, not a generalist. Why should you get hired instead of everyone else who can do it all? You are more likely to get the interview and the job if you can do something really well. And then once you get hired, you can show them your breadth. So find something that you do better than others and with a passion that will come across during an interview or networking event.

Building social credibility is the key to opening doors during job search. It reduces the risk for someone to meet you or take your call. And, even better, it draws people to you.

And that makes networking so much easier!

STEP 4: Inspire Sharing Of Your Ideas And Successes

So what does it mean to inspire sharing? And why should I care about that?

Well, we all know about "word of mouth". And that's a powerful thing. But with social media platforms, it is now "word of 1,000 mouths". Or a million mouths.

So your ability to inspire people to share your ideas or successes can potentially drive a huge amount of exposure. And, done well, can attract a whole new crowd to you and your **personal brand** (<http://www.job-hunt.org/personal-branding/personal-branding.shtml>).

Sound good?

So here are six ways you can inspire sharing of your content. And it doesn't require you to have a website or blog (although you should) to get started!

Have Unique Ideas

Everyone likes being exposed to ideas. We get stimulated by them or provoked in a new direction. But we really like unique ones. Because if we think it's different and compelling, we'll share it with others. We won't waste our network's time with old ideas. We'll just leave those on the cutting room floor. So what's your new take on a problem in your industry? Or what's a new way you could explain how to create value for your organization?

Use Relevant Analogies

We also like it when content comes to us in a way we can understand. So work to relate your ideas back to something people already understand. Use this structure: (problem) is like (related problem). So, for example, I recently wrote a blog post called "**Job Seeker: Your House Is Haunted. Get Out!** (<http://timsstrategy.com/job-seeker-your-house-is-haunted-get-out/>)". Since we've all experienced a haunted house during Halloween or seen a scary movie, the idea can quickly resonate. I helped people understand the importance of in-person networking by relating it to something they already knew. Make sense?

Have Fun

It is easy to sense energy and fun in a blog post, Facebook update or tweet. And if not easy, usually people will help us with emoticons or other indicators of tone or personality. If you appear to be having fun (assuming your content is not about



a sensitive or sad topic), people are more likely to share your content with others. We want our friends to also have fun along the way, right?

Find Pain Points

Who are you writing for and sharing with these days? If you know what is happening in their lives, you can imagine their struggles, desires and dreams. And then you can create content to help them through or around it. Job seekers have a number of pain points. They include financial, psychological, cultural issues. If you know what your audience is going through, you can offer them the medicine for what ails them or the distraction they need to forget it for a while.

Tell Stories

Stories today are not what they used to be. Especially online, the stories need to be shorter, picture friendly, or delivered via video. We are now a nation of scanners. We scan for content that helps us. And we avoid reading what doesn't help or fit our search parameters. So you have to tell short stories. But we still want an intro and we want to know a little bit about the person or situation. So take the time to engage us with some human interest.

Ask

Yes, sometimes you just need to ask. Believe it or not, we all just get too busy to read everything you write, comment on and send along. So if you have a strong network full of people who know you and believe in you, there's no reason why they won't click a like or share button so others can enjoy your photos, links, posts or other content. So add: "will you please share?" to your next tweet, Facebook update or blog post and see what happens.

So use these six tips above to bring more interest and engagement to your content. And see if people start sharing more of what you share. With people that follow them.

STEP 5: Take A Few Calculated Risks

In this final step, the focus is on stepping out of your comfort zone. Why is this important? Well, we do some of our best, most creative work when under a light bit of pressure. We also stretch ourselves in a healthy way. That's good for your brand and, as a result, has a positive impact on your ongoing marketing plan.

We don't want our skills or personality to get stale, right?

So here are five ways you can take a few calculated risks. Are you open to that?

Do something uncomfortable

What's uncomfortable mean to you? For many, it is something you do with a conscious aversion. You know you need to do it. You do it. But you are constantly worried about how well you are doing it. Networking is like that for many people. Networking has become such a critical aspect of personal marketing. No amount of social media success can take the place of your stepping into a room. Presenting your brand in person and exposing your face to others must be a part of your plan. Social credibility requires a level of hand-to-hand time. We need to meet you and experience your smile from just a few feet away.

Face a fear

We all have a few fears that, once conquered, would help to market our brand in a much bigger way. For you it might be public speaking. You avoid it like the plague because it makes you physically ill to think about standing up in front of others. Whatever your big fear, look for a way to conquer it in small pieces. For public speaking, start at your local church or school with a small group – maybe just an audience of two. And the first time perhaps you don't even stand up. Also look to join a group like **Toastmasters** (<http://www.Toastmasters.org>). Where your fear is likely shared by other people. And where you will receive a ton of support and advice to step in front of a larger crowd.



Network beyond your station

If you are comfortable with networking, your challenge might be to spend some time away from those who are just like you. Or at your same station (level) in life. The best networkers are just as comfortable networking with a CEO as they are shooting the breeze with an administrative assistant. And whether you need to create a personal marketing plan for an upcoming job search or a new business venture, the leads can come from anywhere. So you need to network comfortably with a wide variety of people. Remember that we are all the same in more ways than you might think. Ask great questions to find those similarities. Once you have them, you'll have the foundation for a great and productive conversation.

Try a new medium

Perhaps you've been using email as a way to communicate with your network, clients or friends. Consider writing a blog or kicking off a newsletter. Delivering your ideas or brand via a new communication method can be uplifting. Even the decision to do so can be newsworthy. And you'll be amazed at the way people react to your content served in a new way. A new medium can also be a new event. Perhaps it's one you create (a new LinkedIn group or local meet-up group) or a new industry group where you can expose your ideas to a few fresh faces.

Introduce a new service

What's an example of a new service? If you are a consultant, lawyer, career coach or real estate agent, you can refresh your brand with something new. Perhaps it is a service that expands your scope. A lawyer could offer a business strategy service. A real estate agent could offer an interior design service. If you are working for someone else, your service could be offering informational interviews after landing your job to those still looking. It is anything that reinforces your value – targeted to those you want to impact with your everyday brand.

So use these suggestions to keep things fresh. To stay on a learning curve. And to challenge yourself at key points in your career.

Summary

I hope this e-book helps you think more productively and proactively about creating and communicating your personal brand.

Whether you have a stellar, uninterrupted career or one that causes you to pause and re-think your brand from time to time, creating a personal marketing plan is a smart thing to do.

Deliver it consistently, and you will create a powerful and living brand for when you need it most.

Good luck!

About the Author: Tim Tyrell-Smith



Tim Tyrell-Smith is the creator of **Tim's Strategy™**, a strategic and smart approach to the job search process. As a blogger, Tim has been a regular contributor to U.S. News and World Report, was featured in USA Today and is the author of two career books ("30 Ideas" and "HeadStrong"). Tim's blog "Tim's Strategy™ – Ideas for Job Search, Career and Life" has more than 4,000 subscribers and is read in 126 countries. Tim's Strategy began in September 2008 as a way to give back to the community that supported Tim during his 2007 job search. You can learn more at <http://timsstrategy.com> and follow him on Twitter ([@TimsStrategy](https://twitter.com/TimsStrategy)). Prior to starting Tim's Strategy, Tim was a marketing executive in the consumer packaged goods industry where he built brands for companies like Nestle. He now runs **Fix, Build And Drive™**, a consulting company focusing on marketing, branding and business strategy for emerging and established organizations. Learn more about Tim as a marketer at <http://fixbuildanddrive.com> and follow him on Twitter ([@FixBuildnDrive](https://twitter.com/FixBuildnDrive)). He lives with his wife and three kids in Mission Viejo, California.

Contact info:

[Facebook Page](#) [LinkedIn Group](#) [Twitter](#) [YouTube](#) [StumbleUpon](#) email: tim@timsstrategy.com

About Job-Hunt.org

Helping job seekers since 1995, Job-Hunt has won much recognition for the quality of the content, and our goal is to continue to deserve that recognition. Job-Hunt.org is a free "employment portal" Website which links to over 14,000 employers and other job search resources, like craigslist. Advice from various job search experts helps job seekers with topics ranging from protecting their privacy to using craigslist, LinkedIn, and Twitter in your job search.

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