

i-define – personal branding tips for interviews

by Dawn Winder

We all know that during interviews we are judged on the first impressions we give. You only have a short time to get across to the interviewer the fact that you are somebody they need to know. With over 80% of someone's first impression of you being formed within seconds, it is essential you understand how to manage others perceptions of you by developing a strong personal brand.

Employers want people who exude confidence and express themselves well, so you must communicate your values and skills, abilities and characteristics as quickly as possible.

Personal Branding allows you to be yourself, and gives you the ability to communicate to everyone you meet. You become perceived as someone worth talking to, with confidence and self-esteem, someone likeable, with intelligence and credibility.

By taking steps to understand who you are, what you do and what makes you unique, you will be able to reveal to your potential employers that you are more than your last job title, or more than the information that can be found your CV. With a strong and dynamic Personal Brand you will be able to stand out, be seen for your reputation and expertise, successfully gaining you employment within the company that is right for you and that sees the value you offer.

4 Key strategies for using your personal brand in interviews

You can start by considering how you might answer common interview questions. This will help you understand the importance of the following:

1. Know your skills, experiences and interests understand them inside out. Remember stories and situations and, in particular, key achievements and responsibilities you have had.

This will help you with such questions as:

"What particular aspects of your work experience have prepared you for this position?"

"Can you describe one or two of your most important achievements?"

2. Be aware of your key attributes, characteristics and personality traits, as these can easily become hidden when you are under pressure. Ask yourself which attributes are helpful to you.

This will help you overcome questions such as:

"How do you usually make your decisions? Do you consider yourself to be thoughtful, analytical or decisive?"

"How would you describe yourself as a person?"

3. Get a clear understanding of your personal vision and what you feel your purpose is in life. Knowing the answers will help you make sure the job is right job for you.

They will also help with challenging questions such as:

"What is your professional goal?"

"Where do you see yourself in five years time?"

"What things give you the greatest satisfaction at work?"

4. Know your personal values. Your values act as your compass and they are what you 'must have' and honour in your life to feel fulfilled. Spend time understanding what you value most in life.

This will help to lead you to make the right decisions and answer interview questions such as:

"What things frustrate you the most? How do you usually cope with them?"

"What things give you the greatest satisfaction at work?"

"What is important to you in a company?"