My Professional Brand

Communicating your value and establishing a professional presence

You bring experience with you to campus—through classes, interests, past jobs, and life roles—and you'll continue growing through class projects, campus activities, and conversations. Your professional brand helps you explore the professional you are becoming as you grow (e.g., your career interests, values, strengths, and goals). It's not a one-time statement, but a reflection tool for self-awareness and growth. Revise it each semester as you gain new experiences and refine your direction. Use this living document to track your development, guide your career planning, and communicate your value to others, whether in introductions, resumes, or networking conversations.

My Interests

What's your major (write in the left box)? Make a personal connection to the topics you experienced in your classes— name 1 or 2 topics/areas that got your attention, you were curious about pursuing, and/or you feel you have some expertise in.

Major:	Interests:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

My Contribution

Who can you help in this field? (Narrow it down. E.g., What kind of company? What kind of customer/client?)

Click or tap here to enter text.

What can you help them with? Help them do what? (Be as specific as possible. You can include several ways.)

Click or tap here to enter text.

My Uniqueness

What are your skills and strengths, career-wise? (Use the Career Readiness Skills listed on the third page for ideas.)

Click or tap here to enter text.

My Professional Development

What do you need to strengthen your professional development? What do you need to achieve your career goals?

Click or tap here to enter text.

What could you ask others to help you achieve your professional goals? (Use the Career Conversation Questions listed on the fourth page for ideas.)

Click or tap here to enter text.

My Professional Brand in Summary

Using the attached worksheet with examples of professional brand summaries, craft a summary of your professional brand that you can use in your professional introduction. Consider what you developed in the questions above and summarize it in 4-5 sentences with a closing question. You should customize the samples to your own style, voice, and goals.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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Networking with My Professional Brand

Now that you know more about your professional brand, you can introduce yourself to professional contacts and start a profile on an online professional networking website like LinkedIn.

Professional Introduction Samples

When we meet new people, at a career fair, for example, we generally introduce ourselves. The Elevator Pitch is that 30-60 second moment when you talk about who you are and what your goals are.

Nice to meet you, I'm Alex Biondo. I'm currently a senior studying Computer and Information Science. I hope to become a computer programmer when I graduate. I've had a couple of internships where I worked on several program applications with a project team. I enjoy developing computer applications for simple business solutions. The position you have listed on Handshake seems like it would be a perfect fit for someone with my skills. I'd like to hear more about the type of project teams in your organization.

Hi, my name is Samantha Atchison, and I am a graduate student studying Environmental Sciences. I'm looking for a position that will allow me to use my research and analysis skills. Over the past few years, I've been strengthening these skills through my work with a local watershed council on conservation strategies to support water quality and habitats. Eventually, I'd like to develop education programs on water conservation awareness. I read that your organization is involved in water quality projects. Can you tell me how someone with my experience may fit into your organization?

Samples from the University of Oregon Career Center

Online Profile Summary (e.g., LinkedIn) Sample

Social networks online typically have an About or Summary section and a headline on the profile page. Use this section to talk about who you are professionally. Be sure that you are posting content that confirms who you say you are and what you say you do – keep it professional in tone and topic. (Why be professional on your social media? A lot of jobs are filled by referrals. Building a network and allowing others to find you because you have skills they seek can help you get into that referral pool.)

I have been interested in all things communication-related since the first time I touched a copy of the Columbia Tribune. As a recent graduate of the University of Missouri, I hope to immerse myself in the world of Public Relations, joining a company that specializes in crisis communication through traditional and social media.

My experiences have resulted in a diverse working background that includes knowledge of:
- copy editing - social media
- creative writing - web content development
- web design - social media marketing

My assertiveness, attention to detail, and a passion for print and digital media have led to the publication of several of my articles and infographics on multiple print/blog platforms (see linked projects).

Currently, I am seeking employment opportunities. I would love to connect!

Sample from http://www.linkedin.com/in/mizzoustudent

Online Profile Headline (e.g., LinkedIn) Sample

3D Animator | Environment Artist | Digital Artist – Seeking Entry-Level Opportunity!

Seeking Summer Internship for Sales Management and Marketing roles | Graduate Student at Cal State LA

Software Development Student | Seeking Full-Time Software Engineer Job | Java, PHP, JavaScript, C++ | 2024 Graduation

Samples sourced from "12 Impactful LinkedIn Headline Examples from Real People", James Hu, Jobscan, August 18, 2021

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Career Readiness Skills

To help you, here's a list of the eight career readiness skill areas with examples of how you can describe each area. Circle those that you feel you are good at. You can also ask your colleagues. Think of situations in which you have used them effectively and tell your partner. (Choose 1-2 examples.)

Career & Self-Development: aware of own strengths and areas for development, pursue and apply feedback on areas for continual growth, have career plans and goals, professionally advocate for oneself and others, seek and embrace development opportunities, assume duties and positions that help one progress professionally, voluntarily participate in further training

Communication: writes clearly and concisely, speaks effectively, listens attentively, openly expresses ideas, negotiates/resolves differences, leads group discussions, provides feedback, persuades others, influences others, frames communication with respect to diversity, asks appropriate questions for specific information, promptly informs relevant others when needing guidance

Critical Thinking: makes decisions and solves problems using inclusive reasoning and judgment, gathers and analyzes information from diverse sources to fully understand a problem, proactively anticipates needs and prioritizes action steps, accurately summarizes and interprets data with an awareness of personal biases, effectively communicate actions and rationale recognizing diverse perspectives and lived experience of stakeholder, multi-tasks well in a fast-paced environment

Equity and Inclusion: solicits and uses feedback from multiple cultural perspectives to make inclusive and equity-minded decisions, actively contributes to inclusive and equitable practices that influence change, advocates for justice and empowerment for historically marginalized communities, seeks global cross-cultural interactions and experiences to enhance understanding of others, keeps an open mind to diverse ideas and new ways of thinking, identifies resources and eliminates barriers from racism, inequities, and biases

Leadership: inspires, persuades, and motivates self and others under a shared vision, seeks out and leverages diverse resources and feedback to inform direction, uses innovative thinking to go beyond traditional methods, approaches tasks with confidence and a positive attitude, motivates and inspires others by encouraging them and building mutual trust, plan, initiate, manage, complete, and evaluate projects

Professionalism: acts equitably with integrity and accountability to self, others, and the organization, maintains a positive personal brand in alignment with the organization and personal career values, is present and prepared, demonstrates dependability, prioritizes and completes tasks to accomplish organizational goals, consistently meets or exceeds goals and expectations, attentive to detail resulting in few errors in work, shows high level of dedication toward doing a good job

Teamwork: listens carefully to others, takes time to understand and ask appropriate questions, effectively manages conflict, interacts with respect to diverse personalities, meets ambiguity with resilience, is accountable for individual and team responsibilities and deliverables, employs personal strengths and knowledge to complement those of others, able to compromise and be agile, collaborates with others to achieve common goal, builds strong and positive working relationships with supervisor and team members

Technology: navigates change, is open to learning new technologies, uses technology to improve the efficiency and productivity of their own work, identifies appropriate technology for completing specific tasks, manages technology to integrate information to support relevant, effective, and timely decision-making, quickly adapts to new or unfamiliar technologies, manipulates information, construct ideas, and use technology to achieve strategic goals

National Association of Colleges and Employers, Career Readiness Defined

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Career Conversation Questions

You can gain a better understanding of an occupation or an industry by talking to people who are currently working in the field. The following are some suggested questions. (Choose 1-3 questions)

The Nature of the Job

1. What kind of person (in terms of talent and personality) would be best suited for this type of job?
2. What changes do you see occurring in this field? Has technology affected this industry or this job?

Career Path

1. What types of experiences would help someone advance in this field?
2. In this field, are there any specific prerequisites for advancement, such as examinations, higher degrees, advanced certifications, etc.?

Preparation

1. Are there any specific courses I might take that would be of help to me in this field?
2. Are there any extracurricular activities (paid work, volunteering, interning, campus organizations) that would enhance my chances of being hired in this field?
3. What special advice would you give to a person considering this field?

Hiring

1. What types of companies, organizations, or agencies might employ people in this field?
2. Do you have any advice on how I could qualify for an entry-level position in this field?