

COACHING GUIDE MODULE 4

LESSON 3: BRAND POSITIONING

This entire Create and Lead with Your Authentic Brand Module will help you create and then manage the professional image you want to project and bring your authentic professional brand to life. In this Lesson, on Brand Positioning, we will be focused on how to strategically position yourself and your brand.

Positioning ourselves successfully means defining the audience and people we want to impact and influence or sell to. This Lesson will help you identify the right relationships and then make our brand more visible to them.

Even if you're experienced in your field of work, you may not have done a good job defining your unique brand or you may want to change how you are perceived. When you're at the beginning of the process, your key stakeholders or your defined audience are not aware of who you are or what you can do so you have to educate them. You may work at a high level but at the early stage of brand positioning, others do not yet know to look to you for your ideas. In essence, you are more of an unknown.

As you build a strong brand, you will begin to develop a reputation of knowledge and expertise and others will begin seeking you out. To be sought out more and asked to participate, speak, lead or write, you will need to be viewed as a thought leader. This Lesson will help you do that. The end game for brand positioning is that the people that matter to you start to value your ideas and your expertise regularly and they reach out to ask you for help and advice, often.

I have a client, who has been consistently and conscientiously focused on building his reputation and brand for years and years. His hard work has paid off as he is well known throughout the United States as one of the top 3 experts in his field. He worked endlessly to develop his reputation and brand in his specialized area. This could be you too, where others become wildly raving advocates of you and your brand as they spread the word to their networks that you are a thought leader who they should be eager to engage or work with.

Ensuring others are able to recognize your value quickly is related to how effectively you position yourself. This Lesson will help you do this more successfully for yourself.

Use a notebook or journal to complete the exercises below and keep them all together in one place so you can refer to them throughout the lessons and the entire series.

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EXERCISE 1: BRAND YOURSELF

Take a few minutes and journal the answers to the questions below in your journal. Be as specific as possible.

Journal Questions:

- > Do you think you have a brand? If yes, can you articulate it in writing here in a sentence or two? If no, go back to Lesson #2 in this Module and create your brand.
- > Do you think others, that you deem important in your life and work, value you for what you have identified as your brand?
- > How would you describe how you, as your brand are currently positioned in your organization, your industry or your profession?

Take a few minutes and journal the answers to the questions above in your journal. Be as specific as possible.

STOP: It is important to do this exercise before going on to the next exercise.

EXERCISE 2: POSITION YOURSELF

Take a few minutes and journal the answers to the questions below in your journal. Be as specific as possible. Remember what you believe about yourself will create the results you create in your life.

Journal Questions:

- > Thinking about your brand from the first question in Exercise 1, what do you think of yourself as a thought leader or a potential thought leader in this area? Do you feel solid and strong or unsure and less confident than you'd like?
- > How would you describe your attitude and the way you come across to others?
- > Do you think the way you dress and your physical appearance is aligned with your brand? What changes might you make?
- > What actions might you need to take to personally position yourself better?

STOP: It is important to do this exercise before going further.

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EXERCISE 3: BUILD THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Thought leadership is an excellent way to get your brand out there in the world. When done consistently and effectively, the payoff for building your personal brand is enormous. You need a plan to promote your brand of “you” because your brand remains in the minds of others. So how can you clearly demonstrate your expertise? You can, write articles, share your ideas openly with those you want to influence, write a newsletter, start a blog, start a group of like-minded people, synthesize market trends, write content and share it on a social media platform of choice.

What is one thing you could start now to clearly communicate your expertise? Of course, you can do more than one, but focusing on one to start and getting solid engagement is better than spreading yourself too thin.

STOP: It is important to do this exercise before going further.

EXERCISE 4: IDENTIFY THE RIGHT KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Use your current network if they have the ability and power to influence others or create opportunities for you themselves. Identify new relationships that might support your growth, learning, and you, as your brand of expertise and capabilities.

Make a list of those in your current network who could help you expand, grow, and influence future opportunities based on the brand that you identified? Especially think about those with strong influence. Ideas might include manager, senior leader, direct report, subject matter expert.

Brainstorm 5-10 people who could help you expand, grow, and influence future opportunities based on the brand that you identified? Think big. You don't have to know them or even know how you might get to know them. Think big...you can always edit down your list later.

Look back at your 3 situations you selected earlier in this Module in Lesson 2 on Brand Creation. As a reminder, the question you were asked was to identify 3 situations in which you want your brand to shine more brightly and intentionally or you want to influence more powerfully. Carefully select situations that are critical for you either at this moment in time or very soon. Looking back at these 3 situations, who do you need to reach out to or connect with more deeply? Take a few minutes and journal your answer.

STOP: It is important to do this exercise before going further.

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JOURNAL AND REFLECTIONS

These exercises are meant to begin to create a picture of how to position yourself as your brand.

Journal your answers to the questions below. Journaling is more about writing stream of consciousness versus getting it right or making it sound pretty. Journaling is a process that unearths curiosity and wonder within us. After completing all the exercises above...

What top 3 observations do you have?

What patterns, if any, do you notice?

What specific things resonated most or seem right on target for you? And why?

What resonated least or seems less relevant for you? And why?

What are your biggest ahas or take-aways?

What did you learn about yourself that delighted you most?

What are 1-2 next steps you will take with this information you now have?

FOLLOW UP

Want more help understanding what this all means and how it relates to where you are or where you're going, reach out to me at Wendy Capland, wcapland@visionquestconsulting.com to schedule a one hour 1:1 Coaching Session. Investment-\$500.