

BUILDING YOUR BRAND



A Prospective
College Student's
Go-To Guide on
How to Create a
Winning Story for
Your Applications

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**“YOUR BRAND IS
WHAT PEOPLE
SAY ABOUT YOU
WHEN YOU’RE NOT
IN THE ROOM.”**

- Jeff Bezos



WHY IS PERSONAL BRANDING IMPORTANT?

The Reality: Your grades are not enough to stand out. There are millions of inspiring students – you have to work hard to stand out and get attention

HOW? THROUGH PERSONAL BRANDING

Step 1: Get To Know Yourself

What makes you unique? What are your superpowers? What are your values? What makes you happy? What legacy do you want to leave behind?

Step 2: Develop Your Brand

Create your identity. Pay attention to your interests, the interactions you're having with others, the introspective aspects of who you are to become who you truly want to be.

Step 3: Stay Consistent

Be true to yourself. Remember: our core values remain but our experiences evolve. Our values are our foundation but we all evolve over time.

Step 4: Maintain Balance

Be mindful of the 3 Ps: Personal, Professional and Passion. Work on building your identity in each of these categories to maintain balance in your life.

Step 5: Build Your Tribe

Network face-to-face, attend events (conferences, camps, etc) and build alliances and mentorships

Step 6: Find Your Platform

Social Media (clean it up and make sure it reflects your values), public speaking, video, writing



**“A PERSONAL
BRAND IS A
NEVER-ENDING
JOURNEY OF SELF-
DISCOVERY.”**

- Peter Gasca



REMEMBER

SOCIAL MEDIA IS THE DRIVER OF PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION OF YOU

68%

of Admissions officers say it's "Fair Game" to review Social Media Accounts of Applicants

70%

of Employers review the Social Media accounts of prospective employees



HOW TO CREATE THE FOUNDATIONS OF YOUR STORY

Admissions Committees want to see someone who is **well-rounded with both a strong IQ and EQ**

Be Proactive

Don't just stand by waiting for life to happen - **MAKE** life experiences

Embrace Challenge

Stand by your core beliefs but learn from others by being open-minded

Socialize With Others

Build deep bonds with friends, family, classmates, employers, coaches, etc as this will help you grow and learn from others

Take on Leadership and Teamwork

Don't be afraid to lead or proactively be part of a team, and see what learn about yourself

Set Goals

Set key goals and accomplish them - start small then aim higher

Be Creative

Develop hobbies and talent, especially ones that tap your creativity to activate different parts of the brain

Take Risk

Take calculated risks that allow you to succeed or learn from failure

Seek Mentorship

Find someone you admire to give your guidance and guide others

HOW TO GET STARTED



HELPFUL TIP:

Always write down all of your experiences (risks, challenges, activities) in a dynamic document or resume – you'll be using these to tell the stories you need to tell in interviews, scholarship applications, college applications, etc.

WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN SELECTING ACTIVITIES:

Passion: Choose activities you enjoy or are passionate about otherwise it will become a chore

Leadership: Make sure you have the opportunity to develop leadership skills in that selected activity

Unique: If possible, select an activity that shows your uniqueness through a talent or hobby

Community: Demonstrate your commitment to the community and show real results

Long-game: Don't collect activities. Select 2-3 to focus on and show long-term results of your work



CREATING YOUR STORY

It's time to apply your brand to your experiences and create your unique story

SOME EXAMPLES OF EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES:

Extracurriculars: Sports, student government. Academics Clubs (ex. Debate), Art Clubs (ex. Drama, Band), Advocacy clubs (ex. Anti-bullying)

Volunteer Activities: Passion directed projects

Like sports? Try coaching

Like music? Try entertaining at a senior home

Like medicine? Try volunteering at a hospital

Like traveling? Try humanitarian projects abroad

Internship/Part-times: Select internships in your field of interest. If you need income, then take on part-time jobs but try to showcase how you are developing as a person through the experience

Academics: Take advanced courses and career focus courses

Life (Diversity) Experiences: Challenged faced, hardships overcome, local/international travels, medical issues, supporting family/friends, personal growth, cultural/religious experiences, "aha" moments

Summer Activities: Classes/summer school, volunteer, work, summer camp, self-directed project, travel with purpose





APPLYING YOUR STORY TO YOUR APPLICATION

SOME POPULAR ADMISSION ESSAY TOPICS

- If you gave a TED talk, what would it be about? (Belief/Passion)
- If you were to teach a class, what would your class be on? (Passion)
- What is an extracurricular activity that has been meaningful to you? (Action/Passion)
- Write about a problem that you have or want to solve? (Belief/Passion)
- Tell us a topic that you have changed your mind on in the past three years? (Belief)
- Tell us about a time where you had to take a risk. What did you do? (Action/Belief)
- Talk about a personal accomplishment (non-academic) that means a lot to you. (Belief)
- Write about your life goals. (Goals)