



**Dear Friends and Clients,**

As a young attorney in a law firm, I learned to think of myself as a one-person business, not an employee. There was no job security in that competitive world. The secret to long-term success was seizing opportunities to create research, documents and other products, and understanding how to sell them – and myself -- to senior partners and clients.

Later, when I entered corporate life, that awareness of myself as an independent business was a key to success. Initially, some company leaders weren't comfortable with the idea of working with women executives, so I spent a lot of time learning to really understand their business needs and working on my own brand.

These days when people talk about “personal branding” they may be referring to ways that you can use social media to present yourself to the world. That can be important for your business or job search, but I think that individual branding is more fundamental than that.

Your brand reflects not only your value system, but also the way that you conduct your life to reflect those values. And managing your brand requires self-knowledge as well as a sense of the gap between the person who you want to be and the way that others see you. And that is what I will discuss in this issue.

**Warm wishes, Bev**

## **Know Your Brand & Know How to Manage It.**

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Everybody understands that the Web can play a critical role in shaping your career. And social networking tools can allow you to present your individual brand to potential employers and clients, and even friends and colleagues.

But before you start spreading the word on sites like Facebook or LinkedIn, the first step in “personal branding” should be to develop a deep understanding of what you want your brand to be.

In commerce, a “brand” identifies a product or service in a way that captures its purpose, intent and strengths. Sometimes a brand statement can be summed up with a great slogan, like “Don’t leave home without it” or “Plop, plop, fizz fizz, oh what a relief it is.”

You might think of your personal brand as a short statement of who you are and the strengths that you bring to each encounter. To state your brand, consider your values, your history, and the characteristics that make you unique. A good way to do this can be to write a longer portrait of yourself, then distill it to its essence.

Create a brand statement that not only captures what you want to communicate to others, but also establishes standards that you want to meet. As you work to define your brand, consider these questions and strategies:

- **Be positive.** Focus on your strengths and visualize the person you can be when you are at your very best. Your own sense of self worth can have a tremendous impact on the way others evaluate your capabilities and potential.
- **Get real.** Good brand statements are authentic. Just as product brand statements fall flat when they are full of lies, individual statements work only when they are honest. It doesn’t mean that you must invariably live up to your brand, so much as that you are committed to working in that direction.
- **Recall great moments.** Think about a time or a project when you delivered the goods – when you knew that you were successful, and so did others. Ask yourself what you did well, and what you were like at that time.
- **Find models.** Think of people you respect, identify the characteristics that set them apart, and ask yourself how you can be like them.
- **Plan for your dream job.** Think about the position that you would like to hold in five or ten years. Ask what kind of person you will need to be in order to succeed in a job like that.
- **Talk behind your back.** Imagine that a potential employer or client is asking people to evaluate your suitability for a fantastic opportunity. What do you hope that your friends and clients are saying about you?
- **Ask your friends.** Sometimes it is easier for other people to recognize your strengths and see what makes you special. Ask people you trust to share their perception of your brand.

**Let's Talk!** In addition to providing executive coaching and consulting, Bev and her colleagues are available to create workshops and speak about a broad range of issues related to your work life. Visit her website at **[www.ClearWaysConsulting.com](http://www.ClearWaysConsulting.com)** or email to **Bev** directly. Bev is associated with **Executive Coaching & Consulting Associates.**