Developing your Personal Brand as a Librarian

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Presentation and Workshop Goals

- Understanding branding as a concept
- Providing real examples of branding
- Experience with drafting a personal branding summary (personal elevator pitch) and then getting some feedback
What is Branding?

- Marketing and business term
  - Instead of a product or service
  - Promoting the company
  - Create a sense of positive association
    - Meaning and identity
    - Quick engenderment
What is Branding?
What is Personal Branding?

● Establishing and promoting:
  ○ your value as a professional
  ○ what you stand for

● Ask yourself:
  ○ What sets you apart?
  ○ What unique values do you provide?
Personal Branding Concepts

“Self-presentation consistently and continually re-enforces the essence of what makes you stand out on a day-to-day basis.”

“Exploring your personal brand is an opportunity to learn more about yourself and identify your unique skills, strengths, and talents.”
Everyone has a brand
(even if you don’t want one)

- Do you actively try to define your brand?
- Is your brand working in your favor?
- Ask your colleagues or patrons what your brand is.
As library staff, we often have to communicate our value to different audiences. Those audiences usually have preconceived notions of what libraries are for and what librarians do. Librarians have a strong service attitude that can become a servant attitude. And we have tended to emphasize our teams, departments, and libraries over the individual librarian (often for good reasons).
Personal Branding & Librarians

- What makes you unique/special?
- What is your expertise?
- What do you have a reputation for?
- What do you know that others in the profession don’t?
- What content can you create to demonstrate your expertise?
Branding Online Identity: 3 Keys

Build

Optimize

Monitor

LinkedIn

Google Alerts
Branding Visuals

**Areas of Opportunity**
Collaboration with Students, Faculty, and Staff

**Instruction**
- Instruction Sessions
- Creating Research Assignments
- Assessment of Student Needs

**Research**
- Databases and Journal Articles
- Course Specific Research Guides
- Research Organization

**Integrated**
- Canvas Integration
- Visibility at Center City
- Flexibility in meeting (online, etc)

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Branding Visuals
Challenge the Narrative
Public library example

- A field of predominantly women with moderate compensation and definite pay inequity
- The immediate easily takes precedence over career considerations
- Context in which “soft” skills are undervalued
Defining your Value

- Reach past the stereotype of “selfless”
- Own your skills
- Articulate your value and that of the profession
Reclaim and Refine

- **Distill** your “strategic” skills from the jumble
- **Reclaim**: Get back to what makes it spark for you
- **Refine**: Practice to become fluent
Branding for Public Library Staff

- Concerns of safety, privacy, sanity
- Choose branding strategies that are manageable
- The elevator pitch is essential!
Workshop time!

Elevator Speech Development
**Scenario:** You are meeting a new internal or external group and need to communicate your value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Write 2-3 sentences</th>
<th>Share with your group</th>
<th>Revise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Explain what you do.</td>
<td>Listen to the elevator pitches</td>
<td>Edit as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What makes you valuable? Why do they NEED you?</td>
<td>Provide encouragement</td>
<td>Consider changes you would make for a different audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How have you supported others with similar needs?</td>
<td>Provide feedback</td>
<td>Are you willing to share your pitch with all of us?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Final Discussion and Q&A
Thank you

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