# TRANSCRIPT
BREAKTHRU BRANDING™
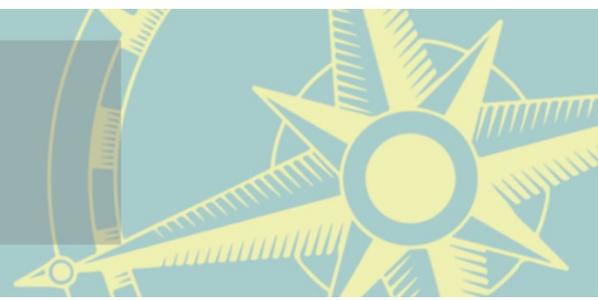
Module 2, Lesson 3 TRANSCRIPTION

Welcome back. Here we are starting Lesson 3, at the end of Module 2, where we are continuing this conversation about credibility and influence. This lesson covers what I now call "the relevance factor" where you will gain the knowledge about how to stay ahead of the curve.

In this particular lesson, you will begin to understand why relevance is so critical to your brand. You will discover the differences between what people say, and what is actually meant by they what they say. Two sides to the same coin. Then you will learn how to set yourself apart with your personal brand. It really is about the small stuff. From the beginning, when I talk to you about small actions having big impact -- you will see that theme continue as we go through this lesson.

Here is how a coaching engagement typically works. We start it off by doing a 360 degree feedback cycle. We survey direct and indirect reports, peers and colleagues and senior leaders, and we gather all of that information so that we have some insight into what is happening.

When I look back at the information that we've gathered over the years, I've found that when it comes to relevance, there are three key areas, which are appearance, adaptability, and communication.

When the issue of appearance comes up, people use a variety of phrases. People talk about someone being out of style, dated, out of touch. Surprisingly I hear about how they may wear the same suit or the same outfit all the time. One that might surprise you is how many times it comes up where people can not see them in a leadership position; there is something holding them back as far as the appearance issue -- disheveled, looks like an admin; doesn't look like an executive; there's no polish.

Then there's always this last sentence. The hesitation, the concern of -- I hate to mention this but... -- and that is when they will share with something, some personal kind of attribute that is detracting from the overall appearance.

With adaptability, I frequently hear these phrases as well -- phrases like "doesn't have the 'it' factor" -- you can see some of them here on the screen. But "resentment showing" is one of the most surprising phrases that came up. Whatever that core belief is in you, that you have deep down inside of you, the ones we discussed back in Lesson 2 -- this core belief that you have internalized
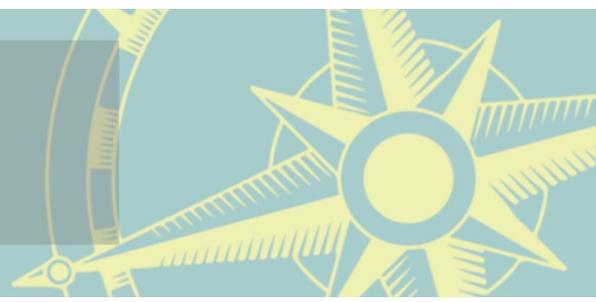
and hidden -- it tends to bubble up in our language.

Then finally, communication -- this is one of the most important factors when it comes to personal branding. Here, you see all sorts of things that we hear from people. Things like -- the dreaded conference call; the fact that a person doesn't inspire; doesn't sound like a leader. One of my favorite comments was -- they "digitally vomit on us" -- and here's a key issue for those virtual folks -- "out of sight, out of mind."

Here's the thing. I would hear all of these things, but I couldn't quite get it, and I had to dig deeper. When people were sharing some of these broad perspectives, I had to ask them what they really meant, and to share more with me, and I would have to dig and dig and dig. Over time, I kept hearing some words more frequently. I'm a wordsmith, and I have a big passion for words. A great deal of insight can come from listening to what people are really saying, and I kept hearing a variety of particular words.

So I would hear things like -- irrelevant, stagnant -- people would throw out these words that they wanted other people to have that didn't -- things that were "in the way."

I had to listen very closely and I kept wondering -- what is it? What is it that is standing in people's way?

And I kept hearing people say -- this is a factor in how we view them; this is a factor.

Then when I went to the vocabulary.com definition, I started to gain some clarity. So according to that, a "factor" is that it contributes to a result. A factor influences something.

I would be sitting there with my "coachee" and we were reviewing the feedback, which is not always an easy process. They would look at me and say -- why do all of these things matter? -- and that would be the start of our journey.

That is when I had a moment of insight -- that so much of what people were referring to was something called relevance. Relevance is about knowing why it matters. That is what I've come to call the "relevance factor."

It's like Morse code for your personal brand -- a whole range of dots and dashes.
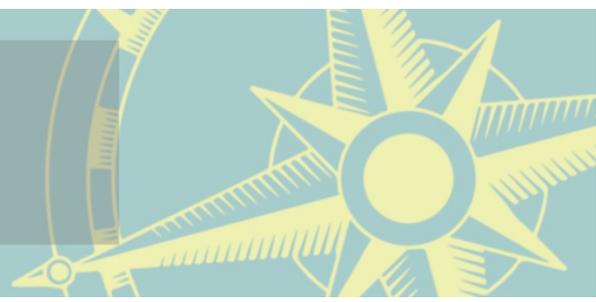
I want you to take a close look; take a look at the word "brand" I have up here. It is short, five letters, tight, compact. The image below it -- that is Morse Code for the same word. It encompasses a lot more than what we see at first glance. Morse Code is something that can be understood by someone who can translate it. That, my friend, is what we're doing here today.

I want to introduce you to your personal branding translator. I'm going to take each one of those issues that I had come up with relevance, and show you what they really mean -- appearance, adaptability, and communication.

But before I get into those details, I want you to see that the "give yourself a break" icon is back at this point of the lesson. As you begin to interpret these things in your world, the first thing I want you to do -- is breathe.

So close your eyes; breathe through your nose; let the air out through your throat; another time; and one more time.

Use these three deep breaths as a tool which you can use any time you begin to dive into something where you need to clear your head. That's what I would like us all to do at this moment.

So let's start with the whole issue of appearance.

Here's a concern -- dress is stale.

What are they really saying? Their perception is that you might be dated -- if you're not willing to invest time in yourself, then are you willing to invest time in me? -- so you are triggering the question whether you're not current in other things as well. That's what is not being said.

So what do you do about this? I have a few tips for you.

The first is to update regularly, even if you don't like to shop. I know that's what happens to a lot of people -- you either don't like to, or you don't have time.

Then others tell me -- well, Kim, I don't know what to wear.

Well then you join a blog or Pinterest to get some ideas. But here's one of the best tools that I've seen for both men and women. You can use these other online resources to keep your image updated -- StitchFix is now offering a whole segment for men; Bomfell and Trunkclub are applicable to both men and women.
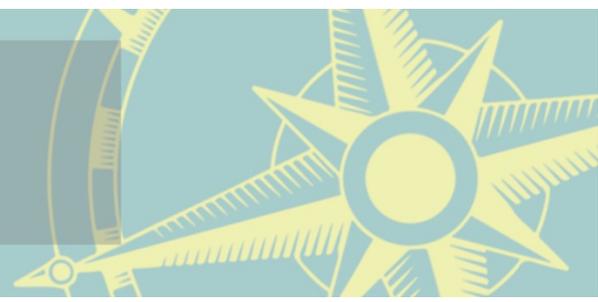
These are easy online resources. I've seen clients where it's absolutely changed their image.

Guys -- I have a few tips for you. I want to give you some permission to jazz it up. If you haven't noticed, there's a whole sock trend going on. Express yourself in the socks that you have; people get a kick out of it; it makes you more relatable, and you can have a little bit of fun with it.

Of all the things that I have to coach men on, it's to tailored fit. I would rather you spend less money on fancy clothes and more time on tailoring it to make sure that it fits.

For those of you that don't have a full length mirror, please get one and then use it. If you wear eyeglasses, update the style every five years. And as life continues, manage the changes that happen. Sometimes changes in life require a new hairstyle, different grooming techniques. People are watching so keep an eye on those things.

Ladies -- I have a few tips for you as well. The truth is that we need to update our makeup every three years. Our skin changes; our looks change and sometimes we get stuck in a rut.

When personal life makes it hard to adapt -- and I understand this happens -- we have to look for ways to manage it differently. Take a look at the online resources that I mention above.

I have seen a fresh hairstyle do a lot for the perception of a brand, moving someone from a mid-career to a high level executive.

Continuing the conversation around appearance -- you've got to look the part. We have all heard the old phrase -- dress for the job you want, not for the job you have.

Why is that? A couple of things. You want to be aware of the people who are in the position that you aspire to -- What are they dressed like? Keep an eye on that.

Here's the biggest one that I see. Please keep in mind that the peers you have today might someday be reporting to you. I have seen repeatedly where people try to advance in their career and then they get stuck. People who are peers and
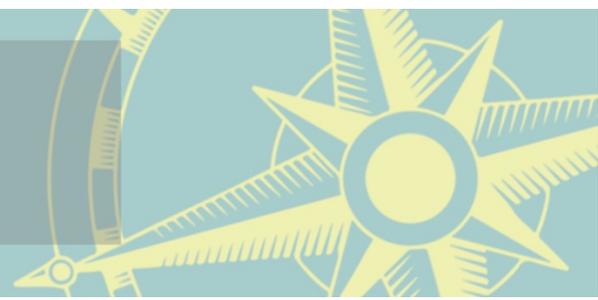
colleagues just can't see them as a senior leader or an executive because they've been working with them side by side. I hear the phrase "they don't look like an executive" more often than you would think.

I'm not talking about alienating yourself from your peers. But if you do want to move up, then maybe once a week you do something extra like wear a jacket, or you step it up a notch. Keep in mind, whether you're a man or a woman, that you want to make sure and dress for that job you want, not the job you have.

I want to offer a reminder about profile pictures both inside the company and outside the company. Please understand that if your profile picture is outdated, if it does not look like you, if you don't look happy, if you don't look professional -- this is a reinforcing message so it's not just when they see you face to face. They're seeing it online, on the internal network or an external network and it's constantly reminding them of something about your brand. Is it an enhancer or is it a detractor? As yourself -- does it communicate the brand you're building. Again, I have seen repeatedly where changing a profile pic can be just what you need to move you in the right direction.

Let's talk about adaptability.

Small actions have big impact. When I hear vague language around adaptability, I dig a little deeper. What I find is that it takes some small actions to create influence here.

The first tip I have for you is to be extra conscious of the digital divide. I realize that not everyone likes social media; I find people in all ranges of the spectrum. But why say it out loud if you're one of those that don't want to use social media? When the issue comes up, it's a great opportunity to get quiet and to listen more than you talk. You'll probably walk away with some new knowledge that you can use later.

I actually had an executive that was clueless about social media, who became masterful at listening to what the other employees in the organization were saying about it. Then all he had to do was mention a nugget or two at a different meeting later on, and people were like -- wow, I can't believe he actually knew that.

Better yet, if you are one of those professionals that don't like social media or perhaps don't understand social media, I've seen mentorships work very, very well when you offer the younger generation your insight in exchange for having
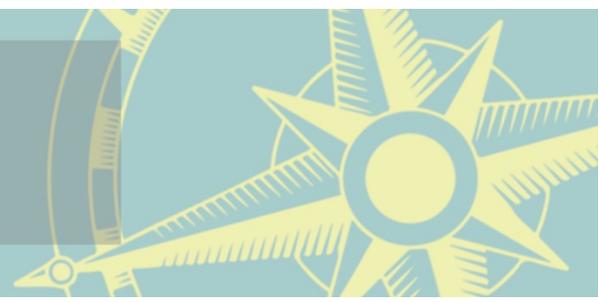
them offer you insight on social media.

The other tip I have for you is that LinkedIn is no longer optional. You would think that everybody in the world is on LinkedIn, right? Surprisingly, I still have to have this conversation on a routine basis -- "are you on there?" -- because if you're not on LinkedIn, people start to get suspicious. The second conversation I have is about their profile updates. They are on LinkedIn, but they have not updated their picture. Keep it fresh. Use it as a tool to build the brand that you want. Use LinkedIn as an enhancer rather than a detractor for your brand by keeping it current.

The last point I have for you is that generational savvy is important. We are living in an unprecedented time in our history. There are as many as five different generations in the workplace. Regardless of which generation that you identify with, study how to influence the other generations. This issue is so important that I have included a document in the bonus and extra section to help you navigate the generations.

People are so busy communicating from where they are that they completely miss where their audience is. I've seen this time and time again. This is a disconnect that can quickly become a detractor for your brand. You don't want to be there. Stay relevant. Understand the other generations.

Then we get to communication. Communication is a big topic. I want you to know that there could be an entire course based on communication. I will talk more about communication in Module 3, so I have just a few tips here.

Try to think about communication and relevance like weaving a tapestry. Look for ways to tie relevance into your communication. Deliver a message, whatever it is, with something that's going on in the world. If the Olympics are going on, for example, then maybe you could tie the message of your business goals into what some of the goals are for the Olympics.

Be aware of things that are trending. If you don't know what Pokemon Go is, or what Chewbacca Mom is, then I'd suggest you take a quick Google search to find out. As I record this video, these are popular and trending. You may be able to find something new. Keep up with the current trends.

Anything that is currently happening in the world -- whether it's in science or in math or in history -- it doesn't matter what subject it is, but it shows that you're current and you're relevant, and that you understand how to weave together
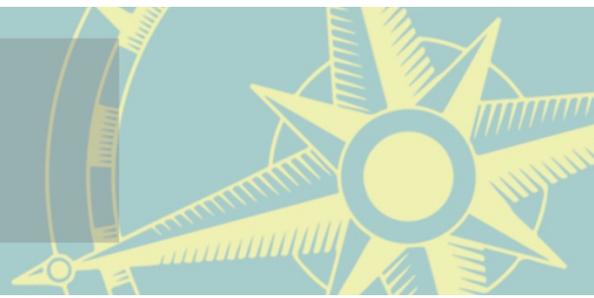
something that's happening in the real world, and something that's happening today.

Make a commitment to yourself to try something new each quarter. Download a new app. Even if you delete it a week later, download it and test it out. Then you can say -- sure, I tried it, but it wasn't for me -- but still, it keeps you engaged in the conversation.

Slideshare. This is actually a neat tool for you to have in your branding toolkit. Slideshare is great to give you ideas for PowerPoint, for presentations, but more importantly, it covers a whole range of topics, again, giving you ideas about how to stay relevant.

I've seen people use apps to send video messages when they have a large virtual workforce -- and that comes to my next point.

Please understand when it comes to communication, that virtual relationships require a different skill set. We have to communicate more; we have to communicate differently; we can not do the same thing in person as we do virtually.

What all of these things add up to when it comes to relevance is -- we want to help you stand out in a good way. Be aware that relevance matters.

I had a coaching client once, when we had this conversation, say to me -- I remember what went through my mind the last time I was asked for a check versus a credit card, when I was given a hand-written receipt instead of a print-out, or I even heard someone using CDs instead of an online streaming service. There really are examples of relevance all around us.

So that is our parting thought.

I want you to look for relevance in your world, and ask yourself -- what signals am I sending out? -- because it is much broader than what we think at first glance.

So here's the action for this lesson. Check out what Morse code sounds like. Let it be a reminder of the signals that you're sending out. I've given you a YouTube link here.

My last tip for you here in this lesson is to use this course as a way to stay
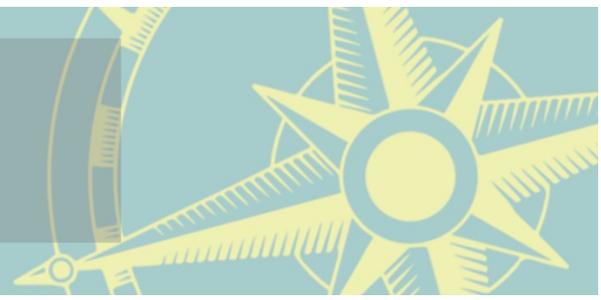
relevant by talking about it. I've seen this happen again and again. When people are actually engaged in some kind of coaching -- like this course -- they use it as a conversation starter with someone to share what they're learning about personal branding. The fact that you are taking this course -- it sends out a signal that you're invested in your own success. This is just one small way to weave relevance into your world.

I look forward to hearing your ideas of what you are doing to stay relevant in your world as we continue the conversation.

That wraps it up for Module 2. I look forward to seeing you in the next module.