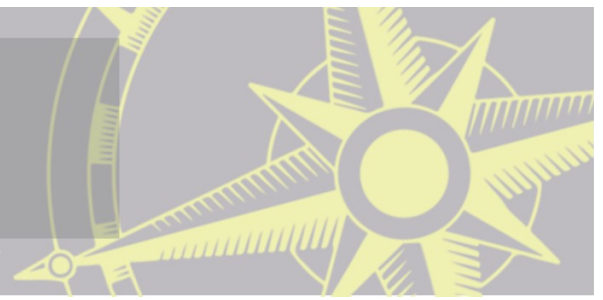


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Module 3, Lesson 3 TRANSCRIPTION

Welcome to the third lesson of Module 3, basically Day 13 of this course. All of Module 3 has been about discovering your brand. This lesson is about a very important step. This is when you will actually choose your core.

In this lesson I will show you that powerful words lead to a strong brand and how that works. Here, we will find out what gets in the way of finding your three core brand words; it's important to learn what brand words might resonate with you, and then how to integrate your core brand into your world.

Three things stand in the way when I'm working with people. One is that they connect their personal brand with their job; two, they don't invest enough time thinking about their brand words; and three, rather than having it to come from who they really are, they are allowing their personal brand to just happen to them.

So let's start with the very first one.

Frequently, when people will share their brand words with me they will have something to do with their current job. But remember, you are more than just your job title.

You are more than your job title. Maybe you have one of those jobs where people groan whenever they hear from you because you are in one of those positions that means they either have to be accountable or that there's a problem. Well, it's especially important for you to make sure you have strong brand words that go far beyond what your job is. So ask yourself -- am I tying my brand to my job?

The second thing is this issue around the dreaded Neutral Zone. I showed you the four stages of the brand in an earlier lesson. People can take action through each one of those stages, and they're not necessarily doing anything bad that will ding their brand so they're not moving backwards; they're not doing anything exceptional that's making them stand out, so they're not moving forward; they are just living in that space, the same place, day to day, year to year, and it becomes the dreaded Neutral Zone. Then down the road they ask themselves -- why can't I move forward?

Well, that is because there has been too many decisions made that keep you in the dreaded Neutral Zone. This particular philosophy will be one that I discuss as we continue with these lessons.

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The third thing that stands in the way is when people feel like their brand has been done "to" them instead of taking ownership and having it emanate "from" them. The reality is that our brand is happening -- we talked about that earlier. We can control it, or we can let others control it. So if we're standing there saying -- well, why do people think this about me and why do they say that about me? -- that's putting us in that victim mentality and we don't want to be there; we already agreed on that earlier.

Take a look at the personal branding compass -- from Establish, Shape & Build, Work to Expand, and Now What's Next.

Let's think about it. If you are already in stage three, Work to Expand, you've already had to go through the Establish phase; you've already gone through the Shape & Build phase; and if you have made choices to remain in that Neutral Zone, then what happens? It's a missed opportunity. Keep in mind when we talk about this whole thing with the brand map, the continuum of credibility and influence, the gap is always about people who get stuck in that Neutral Zone. You want to think farther ahead. That's what I want you to think about with this career, and that's part of why I believe that the branding compass is so important to us.

Take a look at this domino illustration. By the time we push the dominoes, it takes a long time for the dominoes to fall. The basic premise is that cause and effect is far removed in space and time. So in a perfect world, especially if you are in an early stage of your career, then you have a little bit more time.

"But wait" you're asking, "so what do I do, Kim?" The power lies in thinking ahead, but I don't want you to worry. Because if you were there in the middle of your career, and you say -- Kim, I have had a number of intersections, lots of different directions in my career; are you telling me the only way to get ahead is to make sure and start from the very beginning?

The answer is "no." There is always hope, and I'm going to help you connect the dots. It's never too late to connect the dots, so please know that. With focus and intention, you can change your direction -- I've seen it happen repeatedly -- and having strong brand words are a key step in the right direction.

At the last lesson, we talked about this issue of Current Reality. Your belief about yourself plus the perception of others equals the current reality. I want you to pull out those words that you wrote about yourself. What did you believe that your

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brand words were?

I want to show you what other people often say. I've done this with thousands of people, so I've collected a number of brand words over the years, and this is a sampling of what it looks like. So take a look. You'll see a number of these words over here. You might find some of your brand words on this list. I will add another list to the right. Take a look all the way through these various words. You will have more time to a look at this, but I want to point out a few things to you.

First, I like the "resilient, energetic and outgoing." That one was a pretty good grouping. I especially liked the one that said "agile, truth-teller and strategic." That particular individual was very clear about what direction they were going. "Poised, articulate, energizing." That sounds like a complete package as well. There are a number of good words throughout these two lists. "Courageous" was another one that I find especially impactful.

But I want to point some words that concern me. First, "friendly." Friendly -- if you were in an assistant position, maybe friendly is what you need to be. But if you were aspiring to be in a leadership position, then I'm not sure "friendly" is your word. "Dedicated; trusted; dependable; and results-oriented." Those are words that are inherent to your job. These are not words that set you apart from everybody else. "Loyal." Loyal is OK on its own, but when this particular individual shared with me their brand words, they were "loyal, conscientious and dedicated." The first thing that came to mind to me was a Golden Retriever. Loyal, always there beside me. Dedicated, following me every step of the way. Is that the message you want your brand to communicate? Here's that word again -- "responsible, hard worker."

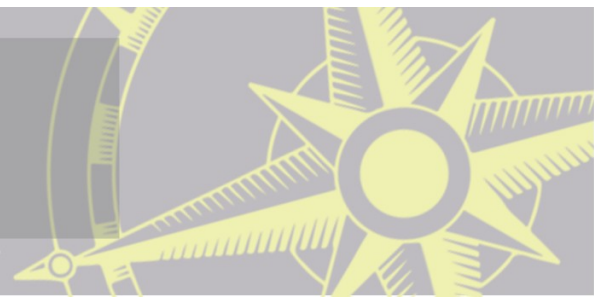
The thing I want you to take away here, is that your core brand should not be words that are inherent to the job. You have to be hard-working and trustworthy and results-driven, or you would not have that job. That is the reality.

But what if I showed you that there is more to each of us? What if you could find a core, a set of core words or phrases that excited you, that ignited your passion, that propelled you even further? What if you found a core that actually articulated what makes you different? And what if your core inspired you to unleash your best self? Because actually, throughout all the years that I've been doing this, there are so many people who just don't see how much they have to offer -- how much they have to bring to the table.

Now I want to show you these words. How much of an impact do you feel these

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words have? You might consider one that resonates with you. "Bold; agile; persuasive; purposeful; visionary; renewal." How about these? "Innovative; bridge-builder; compassionate; trail-blazer; fearless." Those are all strong words. "Integrity; tenacious."

There is a worksheet included with this particular lesson. In it you will find all of these possible impactful words, including some of these phrases. What about "unbridled potential; gifted communicator; game changer; unwavering dedication; comfortable with ambiguity" or one of my favorites, "dangerously creative."

What I want you to think about is that you probably can find words that are bigger, more impactful and more powerful than you possibly wrote down to start with. If you have any trouble, then simply find yourself a thesaurus, because it can be a wonderful tool for this exercise.

So by this point, you've thought about your belief about yourself; you have gathered the information about the perception of others; you've now done your feedback sessions and you know what people are saying; you know what the current reality is; you've just seen a number of those other powerful words...

Now you're facing a crossroads; you can take what you know about today -- your current reality -- and you can make a choice. What do I want my brand to be? When you find those three words or those three phrases that move you, that will turn into future success. See, the power lies within. You know, I've been talking about personal branding this whole time, and that it's about the mindset behind it.

I want you to know that your brand is a choice. Once I choose -- how do I use it?

That's the next question I always receive, saying -- OK, Kim, I get it; I've spent my time; I've selected my three words. Now, how do I begin to integrate it into my real world?

I want to show you three examples. I went through all of the people that I've coached and I've picked three to show you here today.

So take a look. Here is Jamie. Jamie was moving up from an individual contributor to a leadership role. She was a bundle of energy, incredibly talented, but the feedback that she had receive is that sometimes she can overwhelm senior leaders, she doesn't seem quite as polished and together, and part of it

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was just completely her unbridled passion and energy for one of those that she did. We went through this process that you are going through here with Breakthru Branding, and she thought very carefully about -- what are my three words? -- because we talked about how those words can serve as a foundation to guide her and drive her, and she chose these three.

She wanted to be "Clear-thinking" to make sure she could hone in on what the decisions that she had to make; she wanted to learn how to be concise. So once she selected that word, "Concise," as her brand word, it was amazing how her communication became more and more concise. Then she did not want to lose what she was really about, and that was "Creative." She had incredible talent to come up with creative deals in her industry that no one else could see. These three words have been her guiding force. So for her, it harnessed her energy and it focused her talent.

Let me share with you about Nikki. Nikki was a mid-level executive that I worked with. She very much wanted to move on to that next level, but there were a few things holding her back. One was a lack of confidence; one was that she was subscribing to some mindsets that no longer served her. Again, once we worked through all of that, she decided what she wanted her three brand words to be.

This is the same kind of conversation for a number of women that I've coached.

For this particular person -- Nikki -- she decided she wanted to be "Bold," "Purposeful" in everything she did, and that word "Executive" was important to her because she had to find a way to see herself as an executive. Let me tell you, for her, she grew into the leader that she knew she could be. She absolutely embraced these three words; the ramification throughout all of her stages from that point on were huge, and she just informed me not too long ago that she was recruited to be a high level executive at another company.

Talk about powerful.

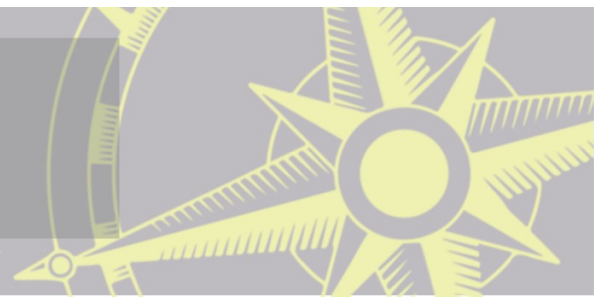
She shared with me that understanding and embracing what she wanted that foundation to be, was absolutely critical in her career change.

Then there was Jason. Jason was one who had the potential; I could see that inside. But there was a disconnect between how he communicated, and what he said he wanted to be.

Well, once we figured out that he was busy data-dumping and he was busy

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showing a hundred PowerPoint slides, and that he was so focused on showing everyone how much he knew -- once we had this conversation about "what do you want your core brand to be?" he finally figured out that he wanted to be a "Pioneer;" he wanted to make sure he was "Relevant," which was especially critical in his industry, and then the last word was what was most important -- "Inspiring."

Every time he stood up to present in any forum, he asked himself -- am I living up to my core brand word of "Inspiring?" -- it took him a while to start figuring out how to say "yes" to that. So for him, the brand words were a constant reminder of the kind of communicator he wanted to be.

Making the choice made the difference. What I want you to see is that for each one of these people, the choice was the defining difference. It was about flipping the switch and moving from one mindset to another. That is what the potential is here for you. I want you to understand that embracing strong, powerful words will bring something out of you; it will serve as a guide; it will serve as a foundation, and that confidence will be unmistakable as you move forward.

So here's your action step. I would encourage you to keep your brand words somewhere where you can refer to them easily. I've seen some as a screen shot of their phone, a note by their desk, whatever it is that makes you comfortable; you want to see those words on a regular basis. Share what you've decided for your core brand words or phrases, and share that on the Facebook group. Inspire each other, encourage each other, and maybe provide each other with additional insight.

Then I would like for you to watch this video. You can go on YouTube and search under "the power of words blind man" and you will find a very impactful video. You see for yourself the number of views that it has here. This is one of my favorite videos that talks about the power of words. I have never forgotten it since the first day I saw it many years ago.

As we continue this journey to do the work and make it real, I want you to know that as we go into Module 4 I will share more and more about how to integrate your core brand words throughout all of the stages in your career so that you see that you have a comprehensive path on this journey called your personal brand.

I look forward to seeing you in Module 4.