

## Company Intranet Blog

### Me, Inc. – Developing your personal brand in the workplace

Beyond your name, your alma mater and your job title, who you are in the workplace is often defined by others. The perceptions of your employer, business partners and coworkers form the basis of your “personal brand,” and these perceptions can have a significant impact on your career. Having a strong personal brand helps you

build your value as a mentor, company ambassador and influencer of corporate policy. Are you doing all you can to “own” your personal brand and shape how others see you?



#### Personal branding 101

The process of personal branding starts with defining what makes you special or unique and identifying how your abilities meet a need within your organization. A well-defined personal brand is authentic and highlights your assets. However, it must also align with the company mission. By considering corporate objectives as part of your personal brand, you’ll create a win-win situation, where you’ll be better positioned to grow with the company—and you’ll continue to bring more value to the organization as you do.

To develop your personal brand, you must first ask yourself questions like: Where do I see myself at Sentry in five years? What do I hope to achieve and learn in my role? What is unique about me? What are the things that I do that really make a difference in my work? Becoming more self-aware will help you to define your brand more clearly.

Next, identify your strengths and weaknesses. While it’s good to be aware of your weaknesses and work on improving them, you should play to your strengths. Focus on accomplishments that make you feel most proud, and emphasize actions that make you a unique contributor to Sentry. You want to be authentic and true to yourself. Recognizing and embracing your strengths will make you feel more confident.

The next step is to develop a personal brand statement—a summary of all the attributes and values you've chosen to define your work self. Your personal brand statement should clarify the space you want to occupy in the minds of your peers when they think about you. It should act as a guide when it comes to making decisions about your professional life.

Gathering feedback from people you work with, including your manager and colleagues, is a good way to help you craft your brand statement. By understanding how people currently perceive you, you can better understand how you need to evolve to match your vision.

### **Communicating your brand**

Now that you've figured out the foundation of your personal brand, it's time to think about how you will communicate your brand message to others.

Everything you do (or don't do!) contributes to your personal brand, communicates your brand message and establishes your value as an employee—from the way you handle phone conversations to the email messages you send to the way you conduct business in meetings.

Remember that the colleagues, customers, friends and clients you interact with every day are the most important marketing vehicles you have. What they have to say about you and your contributions is what will ultimately reflect the value of your personal brand.

### **7 tips for building a personal brand at work**

1. **Become more self-aware.** Which tasks do you feel most passionately about? Make those activities a part of your personal brand.
2. **Become a company ambassador.** One of the best ways to succeed in building your brand in the workplace is to be committed to your organization's goals over your own. Learn as much as you can about Sentry and its products — then find ways to share your knowledge internally and externally.
3. **Always seek out ways to improve the company.** Become an integral part of taking Sentry to the next level. Volunteer to work on new projects or take on new and different assignments. When you show that your interest lies far beyond yourself, your job, and your income, you will be setting yourself up for success.
4. **Stay informed.** Staying up-to-date on our products, competitive environment, industry news and legislative developments puts you in a better position to contribute a fresh approach or identify new opportunities in the marketplace.
5. **Relationships matter.** Find, nurture and develop a network of like-minded individuals who support each other in professional endeavors and are passionate about Sentry's mission. You will be able to learn of any issues or challenges and share ideas about how to move the organization forward.
6. **Connect with company leaders.** It's important to identify key professionals who can mentor you on an ongoing basis and help you build your brand. This could be your boss, your boss' boss, an HR manager or any other respected senior professional.
7. **Develop a measurable plan.** If you find you're missing some key skills critical to your personal brand, develop a plan and share it with your manager and mentors to let them know you are constantly working to improve yourself. Set clear, measurable outcomes to assess whether your strategies are working.