

Personal Branding Guide



Personal Branding

As a freelancer, you run a business where you are the face of your brand. Companies hire you for your skills, your expertise, and your knowledge. Your personal brand paints a picture of who you are and acts as the first impression for those looking to hire you, often before you even have a chance to interact with them yourself. In today's digital age, personal branding is more important than ever.

Whether you are just starting out or an established freelancer, your brand is an essential factor in the growth of your portfolio and trajectory of your career. The personal branding process allows you to reflect on your skills and create a strategic vision for your life. With clarity comes confidence in your abilities to make your dream career a reality and provide the best services possible.

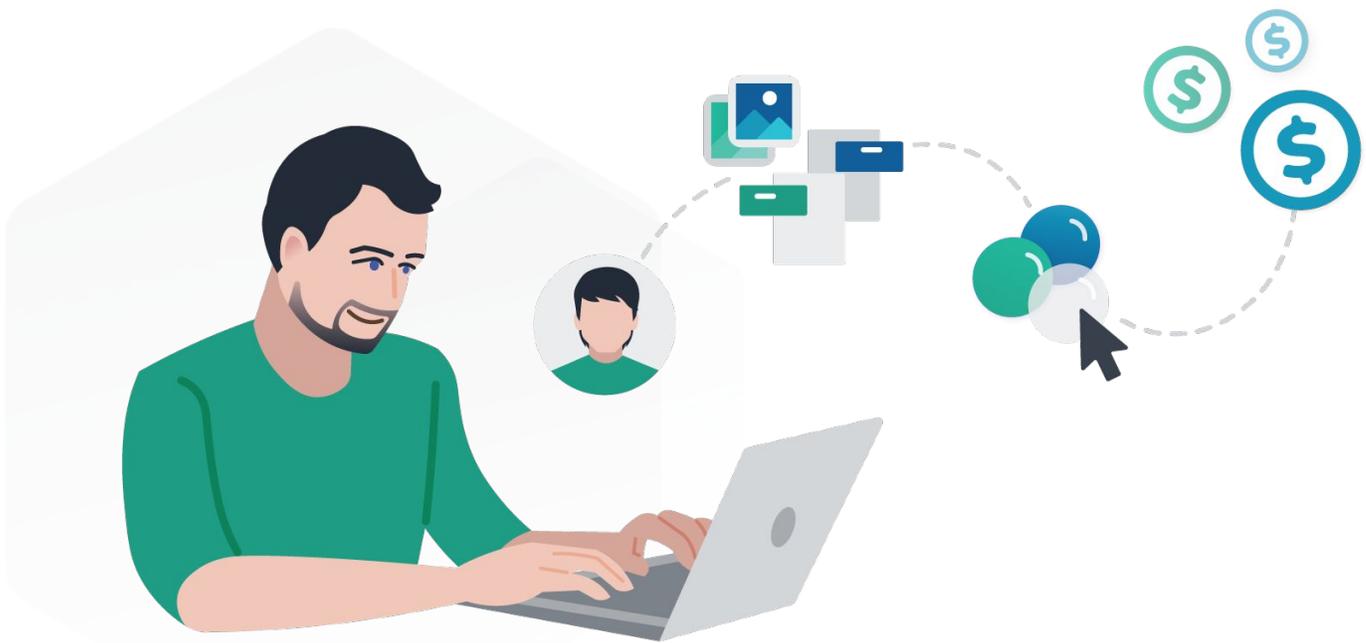


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Your Special Sauce

Your Story

Your story — your path to where you are now — and your credentials to offer your freelancing services make up a large portion of your personal brand.

By sharing this story through your bio, social media content and while pitching to clients, you are painting the picture of who you are as the leader of your brand. You provide a point of connection that allows someone to assess if you are the right fit for the freelancing role.



Your Personality

As the face of your brand, you constantly interact with people, letting clients get to know your personality and style well. Defining your brand personality allows you to remain consistent as you continually recreate your intended client experience.

Start identifying your brand personality by asking your loved ones to describe you and by asking for testimonials from previous clients. Then look for common themes. Your repeat behaviors and emotions can become the pillars of your brand.



What's in a Brand?

Common Misconception: A Brand Is a Logo.



Think of the brand Starbucks. What comes to mind first? Sure, you might think of the green mermaid logo, but I'm also willing to bet you will think of the products they serve, maybe your morning commute, or a traveling staple. You might even think of their rewards program or how you feel when sipping on a cup of their coffee.

A brand is much more than logo design. In its entirety, a brand begins with perceptions. It's more of a concept that is created based on the experiences people have while interacting with the business.

You can think of a brand as the human side of a business. It connects with us on a deeper level, to the extent that brands can help us form our own identities.

Did you ever beg your parents to buy you a specific brand of shoes to fit in when you were younger?

Brands may be made-up, but the emotions and connections they evoke are real and powerful.

Your Personal Brand

Now, you might be wondering how this has anything to do with your personal brand.

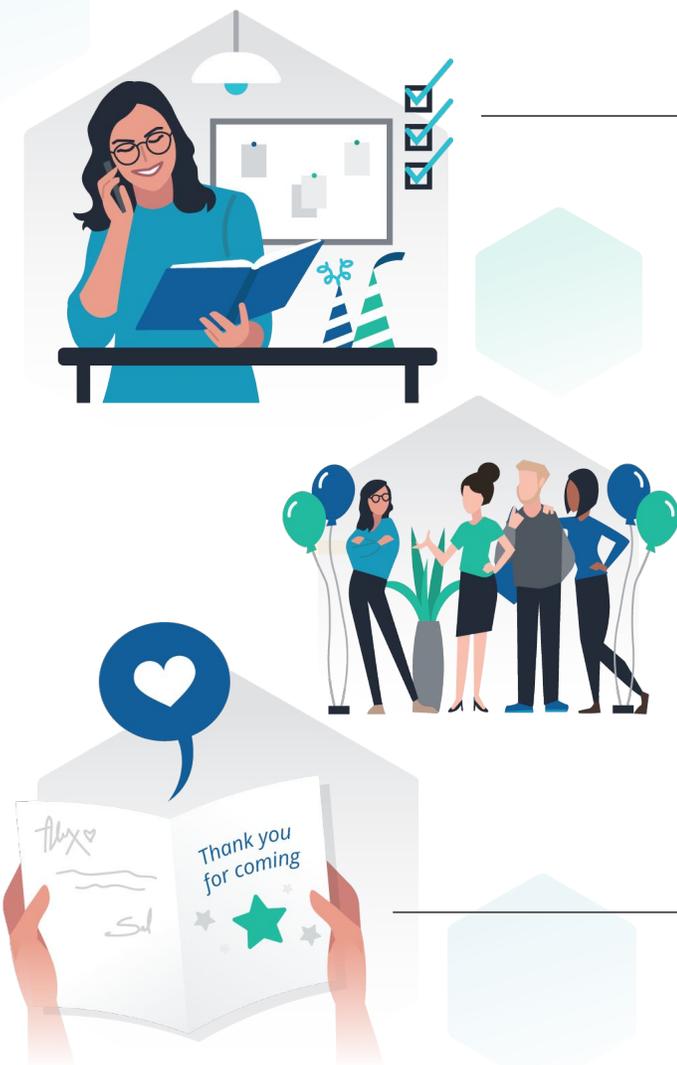
As a freelancer, you might not need a logo. If you connect with companies through a platform like ClearVoice, you might not even need a website. But, you certainly still have a brand.

You have the power to choose the type of brand you want to create for yourself, and it all boils down to how you want to make people feel. One of the easiest ways to develop your brand strategy is to pretend you are planning a party.

First, you'll need to determine what the party is for — a birthday party, anniversary party, etc. In other words, what do you offer in terms of your freelancing services?

Second, you'll want to think through the experience your guests will have at this party. Will there be games or drinks? Will it be inside or outside? How do you want your clients to feel while working with you? How will you ensure you provide this experience to them? Where will you interact with them and offer your services?

Third, you'll probably want to assess if your party is successful. Your guests will leave happy because they had fun. How did you help make that happen? What value did you provide to your clients?



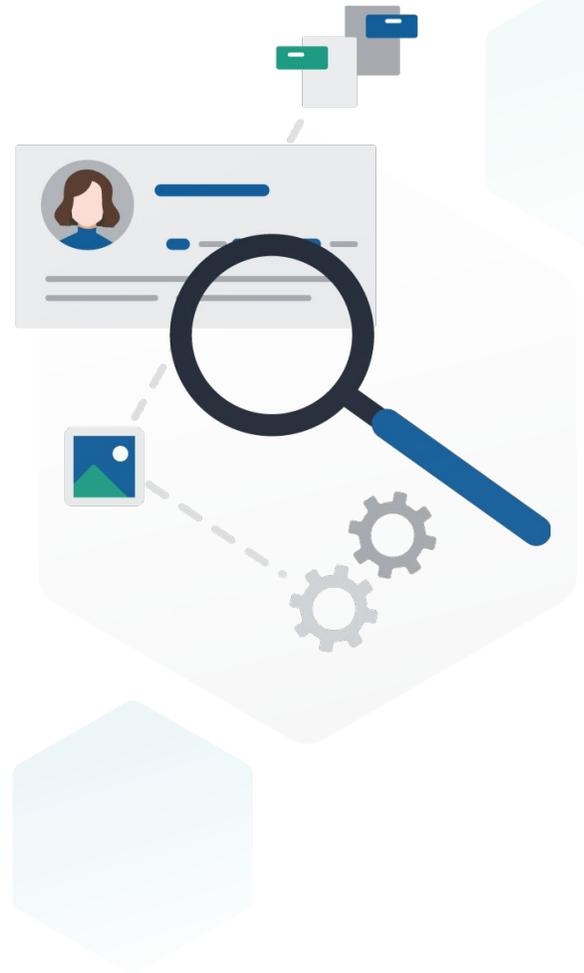
Your Positioning

Effective positioning should clearly communicate the value you can provide to someone looking to hire you. Your positioning includes your title — writer, for example — and your specialty.

Your positioning can become part of your bio, and it can also be the answer to the dreaded question, “So, what do you do?” Needless to say, putting thought into your positioning can be incredibly beneficial.

By positioning yourself, you are also giving yourself a platform to build an audience, if you wish. When people understand what you do and who you are, they can relate to you and form connections.

Creating and cultivating an online community can lead to new career opportunities down the line. Your messaging and content can relate to what you offer through your work, and you can establish yourself as an expert in your field.



Take Action... 3, 2, 1 Brand!



Reflect and Project

Allow your mind to wander and think back on the journey that led you to this freelancing career. See if there are any recurring themes or trends that brought you to start this endeavor.

Next, think ahead five or ten years, and describe your dream life. What are you doing in your career? Who are you working with? Where are you living?

Freelancing can be a long-term career or a stepping stone for something else down the line. By having a clear idea of where you intend to go, you can position yourself in the present to set you up for future success. With a vision, you can also determine the next step to take toward achieving your goals.



Walk a Mile

Step into the shoes of the companies and its individuals you are working with on a day-to-day basis. Why did they hire you? How are you making their lives easier? What value are you providing to them?

By understanding who it is you serve on a deeper level, you can feel the impact of the work you provide and the experience you are delivering.

Through every email, phone conversation, and face-to-face interaction, you are solidifying your personal brand. Decide how you want people to describe you and your work, then brainstorm ways you can deliver. As you move forward, remain consistent in your tone of voice and quality of content.



Position Yourself

Based on your long-term vision, your credentials and the value you can provide, write a positioning statement for your personal brand. The statement should include your title, your services, who you help, or your specialty. When combined with your bio, you can also add some fun facts to showcase your personality.

For example, Jenna Kutcher positions herself as a small-town Minnesota mama, photographer, podcaster, and educator with big dreams who imperfectly leads women through all seasons of life.

Jenna started as a photographer but continues to position herself in a way that allows her to broaden her scope to include online courses and to help her audience with business-related and personal goals. We also get to know something personal about her when she mentions being a small-town mama from Minnesota.

Once you have solidified your positioning statement, adapt and use this across all platforms, including Instagram, LinkedIn, and your CV Portfolio, to paint a cohesive picture of your personal brand.



Plan Your Party

Your brand is a recurring party. One that you plan, host, then plan again with each new project.

Use the brand planning framework to define your brand and refer back to this guide to uphold your brand moving forward.



At the start of every project, or before a pitch, be sure to ask yourself the core question of **how you will deliver an experience that aligns with the personal brand you are hoping to create.**

When you intentionally establish your brand and continuously work to uphold your values, your work becomes more fulfilling. By defining your brand, you can begin to see the pieces fall into place as you accomplish your goals and realize your vision for the future.



Best Practices for Personal Brands on Instagram

Feed Posts

- Post three to four times per week.
- Show your face at least three times a week in the photos. People want to see you!
- Incorporate your story, talking about what you do as a freelancer at least once a week.
- Share educational or inspirational content related to what you do at least two times per week.

Stories

- Post to your Story five to seven times per week.
- Show your face at least five times per week.
- Tailor your story content to relate to your Feed content and practice mirroring.
 - Mirroring: talk about a topic on your feed one day, then talk about that same topic on your Stories the next day.
- Promote engagement by incorporating polls and asking questions.

Consistency

- Choose at least one platform to host weekly content that you will share every week (podcast, blog, IGTV, IG Live, YouTube).
- Deliver content on this platform on the same day every week to build a following and gain trust.
- Share about the same two or three topics throughout your content to become known for something specific. These topics should somewhat relate to one another (writing, entrepreneurship, nomad lifestyle).

Personal Brand Framework Reflection

As you claim your CV Portfolio, consider the ways in which you can communicate your personal freelancer brand.

Step 1: Fill in the framework below to write your positioning statement.

Step 2: Identify your personal brand.

Step 3: Choose where and how your brand will show up (social media platforms, podcast, video show, blog, etc.).

Step 4 (optional): Come up with two or three key messages or content topics you will share about frequently — these topics will become part of your personal brand.

Step 5: Uphold your brand and continue to deliver your intended experience.

Your Brand		
WHO	WHY	HOW
<p>Who is it that you serve?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who does your content reach?• Who does your content help?• Who do you influence?	<p>Why do you do what you do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What was your journey to now?• Why do people need your help?• What do you enjoy about your work?	<p>How do you deliver your value?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What services do you offer?• Where do you show up in the world?• Where can people interact with your personal brand?



Step 1

Write your positioning statement.

Positioning Statement:

I am a title helping who do/create/etc through how.

Example: I am a brand strategist helping new entrepreneurs develop their personal brands through online course education and private consulting.

Experience*:

I provide a description experience through tactics.

Example: I provide a supportive, clarity-giving experience through weekly check-ins, daily messaging, and an optimistic can-do attitude toward any obstacle.

*These statements do not need to be public or presented to anyone, and you might find that they evolve. These are the foundation of your personal brand and your way of making sure you successfully deliver on your intended experience.



Step 2

Identify your personal brand.

What do you enjoy most about the work you do?

Thinking ahead five or ten years, describe your dream life. What are you doing in your career? Who are you working with? Where are you living?

What do you offer in terms of your freelancing services?

What value do you provide to your clients?



How do you want your clients to feel while working with you?

How will you ensure you provide this experience to them?

Where will you interact with clients and provide your services?



Step 3

Choose where your brand will communicate.

Through which forms of content (social media platforms, podcast, video show, blog, etc.) will you communicate with clients?

Which of these forms are you already using?

Which of these forms do you need to create?



Step 4

Establish two or three key messages or content topics to frequently share.

These topics will become part of your personal brand (writing, entrepreneurship, nomad lifestyle).

Message 1:

Message 2:

Message 3:



Step 5

Uphold your brand and continue to deliver your intended experience.

How will you check in with your personal brand and vision?

How often will you check in with your personal brand and vision?

Now, set a reminder on your calendar to check in with your personal brand at your desired frequency — weekly, monthly, annually, etc.

