

## Developing Your Brand for Career Success

Do you ever wonder what people think of you when you leave a room? Developing your brand for internship success.

### IMAGINE!

- You find yourself interviewing for an internship that you really want. You've worked hard to get here.
  - You are answering questions posed by the interviewers.
- You think you are doing well one minute but are not so sure about that after answering the next question.
  - It seems like the interview is going on forever.
  - Finally, they ask you if you have any questions. (Whew! Its coming to an end!.)
    - You shake hands with the interviewers and thank them for their time.
      - You are out the door! Its finally over!
        - But is it really?
    - Its time to ask your self the most important question in getting that internship.  
**What do your interviewers think about you after you leave the room?**

And if they do, why?  
Do they remember you in a positive way, neutral  
or not so positive way?  
How do they size you up?  
What are the things about you that remain  
with them once you are out of their sight?

### DO you even know enough about yourself to answer these questions?

Whether it's the classroom, a team meeting at your job, a club meeting, the dugout or the company boardroom  
When you leave that room, what do people think of you?

LinkedIn defines this as your "personal brand" or "personal identity unique to you"

In short

It is knowing yourself and knowing who you really are!  
You have probably studied something about company brands  
mission, purpose, power, history, values  
A company brand is really "their story"

You have one too!  
Your **personal brand** is really  
"your story"

We are focusing on developing and using your personal brand to help you in your internship search process

Do you know your story?

Do you know how to develop your story?

And, more importantly, do you know how to tell your story in both  
**word** and **action**

What do we mean by **word**?

That's your resume, cover letter, thank you notes, and even includes applications you fill out online or in person!

What do we mean by **action**?

That means behavioral interviewing, pre/post interview negotiations including emails, HR involvement, salary negotiation, etc.) Before we go on, let's take a minute to understand **WHY** this is increasingly important for you as you enter a highly competitive internship market – made more so by COVID now and in the future

According to Forbes

**83%** of recruiters and hiring managers report that students who "know themselves" and are able to communicate their story through cover letters, resumes, thank you notes, interviewing and post interview follow up advance to the next step in the hiring process.

Both LinkedIn and Indeed report

**77%** of hiring managers evaluate "hirability" on how well students realistically know their strengths and challenges and can speak about them (**that is tell their story**) rather than pure academic and even other internship or job experience in their field

Example:

Recruiters tend to find a potential hire more attractive if they are able to speak about their strengths and their challenges –

"This is what I do well, and this is what I am continuing to improve upon through my resilience, risk taking, willingness to learn and professionalism"

Rather than

Writing a resume that is loaded with phrases cut and pasted from JobHero and other online career resources or a cookie cutter bland cover letter and an impersonal thank you note. And interviewing by being over rehearsed in speaking about skills and abilities that you have never even thought about as having!

This is what recruiters and hiring managers are saying to us very time they visit us at CSI.

There is a shift towards students knowing themselves better and being able to talk about that  
This is NOT a shift away from having the skills and abilities that make you a competitive candidate, but it is a shift towards students being honest and authentic and knowing and owning skills and competencies.

Students who pack their resumes with cut and paste  
"qualification summaries" or "parrot" phrases in an over rehearsed interview are not getting noticed!

### HOW DO YOU GET THERE?

Getting to know yourself is not easy...

it's a lifelong process that changes as you grow and learn

If you want to develop your brand, your "story"

It takes honesty, introspection, time and commitment and, many times, the help of someone else to act as a "listener"

If you take the time to answer the following questions, you will be on your way to developing your own brand and can start telling your story through your resume, cover letter, thank you notes, and be ready to handle behavioral interview in a way that gets you noticed by recruiters!

Here are the questions!

#### What is your purpose?

What do you want to contribute to the world – even beyond your career goals. What is your biggest hopes and dreams?

#### What are your passions?

What really energizes you? What is meaningful to you?

### What makes you different ?

What makes you stand out from others? What sets you apart from your peers?

If you see yourself as doing what everyone else does, you are just another cog in the wheel? But if you can think about why you stand out and are different, you are irreplaceable!

### What are your superpowers?

What do you do better than everyone else?

We often don't even realize these things and then go unnoticed even to ourselves!

And if you don't know what you do better than anyone else, how are you going to be able to talk about that and demonstrate that in your job search process – in your resume, your cover letter, your interview?

This is the CORE of who you are!

### What are your values?

What are the guiding principles by which you live your life and how do they impact how you feel, how you behave and how you react?

### What are the skills and competencies that you can bring to the position and the corporation or company?

What can you contribute to make the corporation stand out and shine?

These are not easily answered questions – if you really take time to answer these questions, you will be building your brand, your identity, and you will be telling your story.

Remember any brand – personal or corporate must have the following:

Authentic

Honest

Accurate

Personal (what I like to call

“professionally personal”)

A great place to start with developing your brand or telling your story is through your

## Cover Letter.

Cover Letters have become increasingly more important in the hiring process – sometimes rivaling or even surpassing resumes.

Actually 67 % of students report they moved to the next step in the hiring process because of their cover letter Why?

Gives you the opportunity to do something a resume cannot

“tell your story” in a more “professionally personal way”

Resumes are “static” – list skills and actionable achievements but there is no room to really “personalize your resume”

Letters have always been a way to share experiences, tell stories, and get to know someone in an authentic way. Letters are a way to be remembered!

Being authentic makes you stand out –

It is your first chance to “sell yourself”

Through a well written authentic Cover Letter, you come up on the scene and you get to make an impression that stays in the mind of the recruiter.

And when that happens, the recruiter looks beyond the cover letter and sees your resume in a whole new light!

You are truly selling yourself, your skills and not your resume!

Some issues about cover letters

- Not a rehash of your resume
  - Not boring or generic
- Not too long (succinct, relevant, memorable)
  - Talk about technical and soft skills
- Show you have a real connection to the company
  - Correct grammar, spelling and no typos
  - **End with a call to action**

This can be a gamechanger for your internship search and even for you personally.

Here is the thing about internship searches

Two things recruiters and hiring managers are looking for

- Connection to you
- How well you know yourself.

One can bring you the other!

And when you know yourself better you can use that knowledge in an interview so that you feel more relaxed, more confident, and more connected to the interviewers.

Who knows how to tell **your story** better than you!

And, when you leave that interview, there will be a better than average chance that you will be called back for the next step in the hiring process.

Let's bring him back. He really knows what he wants and who he is!"

"Let's get her back here to learn more about her"

And **that** is what you want recruiters really think of you after you leave the room!