

How to Brand Yourself



»Dyana Williams

Dyana Williams is one of the entertainment industry's most in-demand life coaches. She is a veteran broadcaster, a commentator for TV One's highly acclaimed series "Unsung," and currently on the air at WRNB in Philadelphia. Get words of wisdom from one of the industry's best in The Frequency!

With a human population hovering around seven billion, how do you stand out in the crowd and get others to know about your outstanding professional pursuits? One of my all-time-favorite songs is by Sly & the Family Stone: "Everybody is a Star." In that tune, they note that we all are special; however, while some shine brighter than others, you too should glisten when it comes to your dynamic career achievements and positive personal activities. How then can you go about rising to the top and informing others? What should you do to elevate your brand?

The first decade of the twenty-first century has exploded with emerging technologies that have changed the way we communicate. From cell phone texting to Internet social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, most of us are using these emergent avenues to share our perspectives and accomplishments. How do some folks advance while others don't get noticed? Is it okay to toot your own horn? I suggest that with humility and purpose, it is quite alright to use various methods to advance your career, but make certain that you have something worth talking, writing, blogging, texting, posting, and tweeting about!

MoShay LaRen, APD/music director and on-air personality at my station, **107.9 WRNB-FM Philadelphia**, has launched the ***Love Yourself*** campaign to help abused women, men, and children escape their oppression. Recently, she called upon me and several friends to brainstorm about how we could use existing resources to get the word out about her program. As a result of a solid meeting and several follow-up calls and emails, MoShay was booked on a television show; she linked up with an established organization that shares the same mission; she spoke to battered women; and via her radio show, she has spread the word about escaping abuse to thousands. Additionally, MoShay linked up with major politicians to support her agenda and was recently honored by Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter and Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown as one of the top young women leaders in Philly at a special City Hall reception. There is great power when collective minds get together for a common good! If you want to expand your personal brand and let your colleagues, as well as others, know about your endeavors, do consider the following tips to promote yourself and to *netweave* better.

Branding Tips of the Trade

- ♦ Have a well written, brief bio as well as a great head shot (photograph).
- ♦ Put out press releases to local and national publications, such as *The Frequency*, when you have a newsworthy accomplishment to share. If you aren't a good writer, hire a pro, or if funds are tight, get a college journalism/PR major or recent graduate to do the job.
- ♦ Write op-ed articles for mainstream media.
- ♦ Explore your personal network of family, friends, and coworkers (like MoShay did) to see if they can help you promote your projects and ideas.
- ♦ **Exploit the Internet:** do a search and identify sites related to your lane.
- ♦ Post presentations you've given on a topic on your LinkedIn and Facebook profiles.
- ♦ Conduct free or reasonably priced webinars about up-and-coming topics.
- ♦ Leave insightful comments on related blogs.
- ♦ Have online chats or Q&A sessions about brand-related topics.
- ♦ Join professional national organizations, write the president or local chapter, serve on committees, and offer to be on panels.
- ♦ Make friendly with local reporters and photographers who cover industry or community events that you attend. They will want to include you in their newspapers, websites, or stories.
- ♦ Start a newsletter about your field of expertise.
- ♦ Record an audio book or write an ebook.
- ♦ Interview industry celebrities, trendsetters, and other people of interest. Be one of those people of interest and get interviewed on related topics.
- ♦ Approach local television stations to be on their public affairs or morning shows.
- ♦ Share your card or information when you first meet new people. Follow up with a note.