

## Bonus Chapter

# A COMPANION TO SELL YOURSELF: HOW TO CREATE, LIVE AND SELL A POWERFUL PERSONAL BRAND

## PERSONAL BRANDING FOR MANAGERS

**I**f your awesome skills and performance at work have led to a promotion into a management position, don't assume you're going to knock it out of the park just because you know how to do the job better than everyone you're supervising. Instead, seek training, mentors and education that will help you grow into your new job as a manager or supervisor. Acquire the new skills you will need to effectively oversee and lead the people who are doing the work you did so well that it earned you a promotion.

**I**f you've been a manager for a while, do a status check. How are your managerial skills? How effective are you as a manager compared with how well you did as a member of the team? This bonus chapter is for you, too. The personal brand of a manager is a much different thing from the brand that got you into this position of authority.



*Dr. Cindy*

**P**etra B. is an outstanding salesperson. She is friendly and outgoing. She loves to talk to people, especially about the services her company offers. She's helpful by nature, and she considers sales a helping profession. She wants to put her clients together with products that they need and that will help them. She never oversells. She never undersells. She always follows up, whether the customer buys from her or not. And she regularly outsells everyone else on the team.

That Petra is great at her job doesn't go unnoticed. In fact, her sales manager was so impressed with her that when he got promoted into a vice president position, he highly recommended her to take over for him. Petra was honored. She accepted the job.

And she struggled.

As it turns out, superior sales skills are an excellent resource for any manager, especially a sales manager. But they're not the only skills a manager needs. Managers need management, leadership, supervisory, delegation and, most importantly, communication skills as well. You would think that Petra had all of these skills, given her success in sales, but in fact, managerial skills are much different from those she needed as a salesperson.

The same is true in any profession, really: The most talented teachers don't necessarily excel as principals; artists and writers don't always succeed as small business owners; highly skilled nurses aren't automatically the best floor managers.

But they can be. You can be.



### A MANAGER'S MANY HATS

*Communication is key to every manager's success every single day.*

Your role as a manager is more complex than your role as a member of the team.

For example, if you were a superstar on your company's production team, you know how to figure things out, work efficiently, get along with your team and come up with great ideas.

Once you're the production manager, you can tap those skills to recruit new employees, learn their strengths and weaknesses, coach them until they're up to speed, spot and nip trouble in the bud, and follow up to turn new employees into long-timers.

So whatever your old job was, you have transferable skills and you can bring your expertise and experience to your role as manager.

Then, add on. 





## TAKE A QUIZ

Managers have to know how to do so much more than the job of the employees they supervise. Let's see how much you already know. Take a little quiz. Rank yourself from 1-5 on the following skill sets. Do you know how to:

Manage your time? This is crucial for managers because much of the work that you do, like paperwork, will be self-guided. But you also need to schedule in management meetings, and make time for employee coaching, monitoring of your team's work, troubleshooting, one-on-one conversations, organizing, running staff meetings and so much more.

Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Choose assignments and schedule work for employees while taking into consideration their skill sets, availability, blind spots and compatibility with teammates?

Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Sell team members on doing their best work and sell superiors on new ideas and ways of doing the work? The art and skill of selling, of course, is one of the most useful and effective management tools.

Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Delegate work to team members or peers when it's not something you absolutely have to do yourself? Getting bogged down in unnecessary tasks leaves a manager with little time to pay attention to big-picture concerns like productivity and staffing.

Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Meet deadlines? If you expect your employees to be on time, be the role model for it. Culprits that cause missed deadlines: overcommitting, double-booking, not delegating, redoing the satisfactory work of others who did not do it the way you would have, poor time management.

Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Be clear? Communication is key to every success, every day. Can you clearly articulate instructions, expectations, deadlines and consequences? Do you speak clearly? Do you write clearly? Do you give your staff enough information to do the job the way you want? Are you open to answering questions? Do you know the answers to the questions? And be sure you are clear on the most important part of the message, which is the "why." Why are you asking your team to do this project or do it a certain way?

Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Follow through and hold others accountable? Conducting regular status checks, keeping track of the deadlines you have given and offering assistance along the way will assure a manager that the work is going according to plan. Simply handing out assignments and deadlines is not a guarantee that the work is progressing as it should between the two points. On the flip side, can you—and do you—hold yourself accountable for honoring the commitments you make?

Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Make quick decisions? Make good decisions? When you're the boss, the buck stops with you. Your employees will look to you to settle disputes, decide which way to proceed, choose a process or product, pause production, approve overtime and so much more. Indecisiveness kills credibility, lowers production and damages a manager's brand. Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Engage with employees? A manager must be present—but not just physically. A manager needs to have productive presence. Don't just show up. Add value. Have something meaningful to contribute. Don't be shallow. Offer insights. Listen and respond. Pay attention when people speak to you. Your employees are relying on you to be there for them, whether they're working on site or remotely. Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Make speeches? Not all managers are extroverts, nor do they need to be. But every manager, from time to time, will be required to speak to groups of employees, at client meetings, to the Board of Directors, to investors and to community groups. Public speaking—even for successful managers—can be a fearful endeavor. What can you do to overcome your fear of speaking, if you dread it? What can you do to improve your delivery and your message? Your score \_\_\_\_\_



*Plan to be the kind of manager you wish you could have on every job.*

Coach? Managers are teachers, trainers, monitors, sounding boards, brainstorming partners, counselors, disciplinarians, mentors and even friends. How comfortable are you filling those roles for your employees? Do you give meaningful feedback? Are you willing to take the time to help employees whose productivity suffers from a lack of know-how or a personal distraction? Are you good at recognizing when you need coaching yourself? Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Run a tight meeting? Nobody ever says, at the end of the day, "I wish I had spent more time in meetings." Do you hold meetings only when they're needed? Do you run them efficiently, with a set agenda and a firm stop time? Are your meetings productive and worth the time they take employees away from productive work? Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Deal with conflict? If you're the cause of the controversy, do you admit your mistake, apologize for it, learn from it and do better next time? If your employee creates a problem, do you deal with it promptly, work with the employee to avoid a repeat, and communicate with your staff about what happened and how they can prevent it from happening again? Or do you shy away from controversy and confrontation with the hope the crisis will resolve itself? Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Be responsive? Few things annoy employees more than a boss who ignores their concerns, doesn't answer their questions or brushes them off when they have a great idea. Do you promptly answer employee emails and questions? Do you invite employees to bring their concerns to you? Do you take action when they do? Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Manage a crisis? Or do you turn things into crises when they really aren't? A good manager knows the difference between an emergency, something that is urgent, and a problem or request that is time-sensitive. Not everything is an emergency.

Your score \_\_\_\_\_

Ask for help? No matter how high up in the corporate hierarchy you find yourself, you still can't do everything yourself. Nobody gets through this life without asking for help sometimes. Are you willing to ask for help? Are you willing to admit that you don't know everything and can't do everything? Do you know what you don't know, or are you a know-it-all?

Your score \_\_\_\_\_

## HOW DID YOU DO?

Add up your score and give yourself a "grade" on your quiz, like in school:

75 = Perfect score! You excel at management!

67.5 = A. You're far above average as a manager.

60 = B. You're well on your way to manager perfection!

52.5 = C. New managers often start here. Good start!

Lower = Time to meet with a coach or mentor to learn and polish the skills you'll need to succeed as a manager.

Every manager—every person for that matter—has blind spots. Do you recognize any of yours from this list? As you make a plan and create a personal brand for the kind of manager you hope to be, consider everything on this list and more. Plan to overcome your shortcomings and showcase your strengths, even if that means taking a course or hiring a coach.

Plan to be the kind of manager you wish you could have on every job.



## THE MANAGER 'BRAND'

Sometimes creating a successful personal brand as a manager means separating from the brand as a team member that made you so successful in the first place—or at least whittling out parts of it.

For example, if you're known as a "worker bee," that is, you're a high producer, ultra-focused on the aspects of your job that help you do it well and quickly, and eager to take on more and more tasks all the time, you'll have to leave that persona behind.

Managers should be focused and eager to do more, to be sure. But smart managers don't always have to spend time in the trenches, toiling alongside their former co-workers and picking up the slack when those colleagues can't or won't keep up. Managers assign, reassign, coach, instruct, monitor and set goals for those workers. Doing that, in most cases, makes it unnecessary for the manager to tuck into the nitty-gritty of the day-to-day. That frees the manager up to concentrate on the big picture and to help those who need it. In other words, managers need to fly the plane, not serve the peanuts.

## GOOD PLANNING MAKES GOOD MANAGERS

A good personal brand begins with a plan. In fact, planning is the first step toward success of any kind. And it's the first step in my five-step sales process, which many managers, both in sales and nowhere near sales careers, have used to get what they want and where they need to be.

Good managers, whether they manage sales teams, college faculties, newsrooms, surgical teams, art galleries, a hotel front desk or any kind of workforce, know how to sell themselves as leaders, how to sell their brands as authentic, how to sell their employees on doing good work and how to sell their bosses on letting them turn their vision into reality.

Good managers know how to get their direct reports to buy into the mission of the company, the goal of the team and the project at hand.

They're not born knowing how to do that, however. They know how to do it because they have thoughtfully crafted plans to make it happen.

Every successful sale begins with a plan. Every successful brand is based on a plan. Every successful manager is a voracious planner.

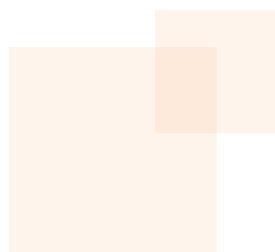
Successful managers plan their brands. They plan for how they will live their brands, even when it's difficult to do that. They plan how to pitch each project to employees and higher-ups. They make a plan before they appoint a team, before they introduce a new process, before they approach a client about a partnership. They plan a path toward acquiring the management skills they might need or hiring the expertise they might lack.

Good managers are planners.

What's your plan for turning your success as a worker bee into success as a manager?

It can be hard to let go of the work you love and excel at. It can be painful for a musician to stop playing the violin and start conducting the orchestra. It might be difficult for a sales rep to stop selling and start managing the sales team. It could border on torture for a homebuilder to hang up his tool belt and devote all of his time to checking the work of the people who are doing the hands-on labor he loved doing for so long.

At least at first.



Whether you've moved into management because you wanted and deserved a promotion, or you needed to earn more money, or you're no longer able to keep up with the physical demands of the job, it's time to rebrand yourself as a leader.

In order to do that successfully, you need to do three things:

*Create. Live. Sell.*

Whether or not you have ever consciously created a brand for yourself, you have one.

And the one you have is likely a successful one—or you wouldn't be getting promoted into management.

Now it's time to rebrand. Do it on purpose this time.

If you've never taken the time to create a deliberate brand for yourself, now is the time to do it. Without a thoughtful brand to guide what you say, how you behave and the way you react as a manager, it's not a given that you will consistently present yourself in the precise light that you know will make you successful. And without a good personal brand to guide your actions, you really leave it to others to decide what your brand is.

Chances are good that's not what you want to do, right?

Personal branding has three important steps, and you can't skip any of them. The first step is to thoughtfully create a brand that you believe will help you accomplish your goals. The second step is to faithfully live that brand, day in and day out, without ever reverting to your old brand, no matter how tempting that might be. The final step involves using that brand to sell yourself—and to sell others on accepting that your brand is really you, even if they knew you when you had a “worker bee” or other kind of brand.

### *Step 1: Create.*

A brand is much more than a list of adjectives that you would like others to use when they describe you, but creating that list is a good first step. What is a personal brand, after all, but the impression you make on others?

What impression do you want to make on others?

As an exercise, scroll back up to the list in the section called “Take a Quiz.” Which of those important managerial roles do you believe others would say you're good at? Which would they say don't describe you at all?

What would you say about how well you fill those roles?

To create a brand that leaves others with the impression that you are, indeed, a manager skilled in those categories, you need to make a plan to get yourself skilled in those categories.

Some of them might come naturally, of course, and that's great. For example, if you have spent years perfecting your role as a sales rep, chances are good that you excel at articulating your message and following up with clients. But have you really ever had to delegate work to co-workers? Make quick decisions that could affect the whole team or even the company's success? Deal with scandals or spats between employees? Monitor the progress of others?

Take heart. Just because you haven't done it before doesn't mean you can't become a superstar manager. You can learn—if you plan for it.

In fact, core to successful personal branding and rebranding is planning. Take some time to answer these questions, which will help you create a branding plan.

- What kind of manager do you want to be?
- Which skills from your old job—the one that got you promoted—can you put to work for yourself in your manager role?
- How will you get up to speed on any managerial and supervisory skills that you didn't have to use in your old job?

- Envision yourself in the job as the manager. What does that look like for you? What do you have to learn/practice/eliminate in order to make that vision a reality?

Now, write it down. Write down as many adjectives as you can—including all of the ones on the list in “Take a Quiz.” Add in some personal characteristics and behaviors that you believe will help you become a good manager, like “fair,” “insightful,” “critical thinker” and “kind.”

Then, you’ll have the foundation of a successful personal brand as a manager. This is important because as soon as you walk into a manager’s job, your team and your colleagues are going to make assumptions about what kind of manager you will be. Creating your manager brand will give you control over those assumptions.

### *Step 2: Live.*

Remember that your brand is not a list. It’s a blueprint for how you will live your life. It’s a guide for how you will behave, speak and react as a manager.

It’s not enough to write an impressive personal brand plan. Now, you have to act on it. You do that by living your brand. You do it by living up to your brand. You do it by showing up consistently exactly as your brand advertises—every single day.

If you have branded yourself as a manager who listens to your employees, then really listen to your employees. If you have branded yourself as someone who meets deadlines and doesn’t overcommit or double-book, then be a role model for your employees by living up to that brand.

If you don’t follow your brand consistently, others won’t trust that your brand is authentic. They won’t have confidence in you as a manager.

Still, your brand will have multiple facets, and it can be a challenge to live up to all of those facets all of the time. Don’t panic; you don’t have to.

Managers pull the tools they need from their brands to deal with whatever situation they face at any given time. For example, you might brand yourself as a good delegator, which will help you live up to the part of your brand that guarantees you will not overcommit. A brand as “good coach” and “even-tempered” coincide when an employee angers you. Instead of lashing out, you will stay on brand, addressing the problem and helping the worker find a solution. Problem solved.

### *Step 3: Sell.*

If you successfully complete Steps 1 and 2, Step 3 will be easy for you. To sell your brand, you have to convince people that you have thoughtfully identified and authentically embraced all of the qualities of a good manager. Your employees, clients and superiors will “buy” that you are who your brand says you are if you live that brand consistently.

That is how you use your personal brand to sell yourself. It might be a challenge at first, especially as you learn and practice the critical skills of a good manager. You might have to “fake it till you make it” for a minute until the qualities you have embraced become second nature.

You’ll get there. And you’ll get credit for trying from employees who will respect that you have thoughtfully prepared and committed to a brand that will make you easy to work with and concerned about the welfare and success of your team.



## 5 STEPS TO SUPERIOR MANAGEMENT

**The first step, of course, is planning** (see box, Page 6). The others are:

- Look for opportunities.
- Establish trust.
- Ask for what you want.
- Follow up with gratitude.

**Look for opportunities.** Once you have your plan, be on the lookout for ways to set it in motion.

Whether your plan is for a personal rebranding, or an effective transition into management, or success on a project, opportunities to follow through on your plan are everywhere.

Remember Petra? When she realized her promotion to sales manager left her in over her head, she made a plan to turn it around. At the top of her to-do list was a quest to learn what she needed to know to be a good leader and supervisor.

Then, she looked for opportunities to learn. She opened herself up to offers of help. She discovered company resources for manager training. She took advantage of tuition reimbursement and got herself into a weekends-only MBA program. She heard it loud and clear when her old boss offered to be the mentor who would show her the ropes.

**Establish trust.** Second only to planning is the skill of listening. If you really pay attention to what others tell you, your responses will be relevant and effective. If you take the time to notice the behavior, struggles and successes of the people around you, your responses will be on target and well-guided. If your goal is to help others get what they want and need—and to succeed—your reward will be your own success.

Employees are more likely to trust, respect and follow a manager who shows them trust and respect as well. They're more likely to share their ideas and give 100% effort to a manager they believe cares enough to listen and consider their viewpoints and concepts. Listen more than you talk. Pay attention. Find out what your employees need and want. Then, you can start talking. Then, you can make your pitch. Then, you can ask for buy-in and get the answers and action you want.

**Ask for what you want.** You're far more likely to get what you want and need from employees and from your own managers if you ask for it than if you wish for it.

Plus, it's a mistake to believe your employees can read your mind, no matter how well they know you. If you want them to do a task exactly as you would do it, you need ask them for that—clearly and specifically.

Before you ask for what you want, however, you have to know what you want. You need a level of self-awareness that gives you the confidence that you're on the right path and that your team, with your leadership, can succeed.

Self-awareness and confidence are the direct result of a good plan.

That plan will help you solidify your goals. It will help you figure out who can help with each part of a project. It will show you the strengths and weaknesses of your idea and of your team members. It will guide you as you share instructions, both written and spoken. It will make you clear to yourself and to those who will do the work. It will make you a good communicator.

**Follow up with gratitude.** Few words inspire employees more than “thank you.” Yet so many managers never say it. And so many employees, in turn, feel unappreciated.

Managers who don’t show their appreciation—for whatever reason—very often struggle with high turnover on their teams. When employees feel unappreciated, they show it by walking out the door.

So when somebody does what you ask, thank that person. Use your words. Write a note. Spring for a cup of coffee. Call the person out at a staff meeting. Heap on the praise.

Then, ask for something else.

Feeling and showing gratitude creates loyal employees who are eager to please and happy to work hard. It does something for you, too: It showcases the part of your brand that recognizes that nobody succeeds in a vacuum; it’s your team that will elevate your reputation and ensure your success.

Success as a manager doesn’t happen automatically, and it doesn’t happen by accident. Make it happen for you by creating a powerful personal brand.

Now, you’re ready. Go to work and be the manager you wish you had. And congratulations on your success!



**Create** an authentic personal brand.  
**Live** that brand every day.  
**Sell** that brand to everyone you meet.



A handwritten signature in orange cursive that reads "Dr. Cindy".

 DrCindy

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 Dr Cindy

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