



Build Your Personal Brand
Strategist's Dilemma 2:
Brand Building Begins from Within



Apply the same strategic rigor you bring to brand work to yourself. The most successful strategists treat their personal brand with the same discipline they apply to client work through confronting honest human truths, naming barriers, and actively shaping how they've perceived.

Complete all four sections to define where you stand, what drives you, and what may be holding you back. Once you're finished, you can summarize your thinking directly in the Your Personal Brand Strategy section, or use the optional AI step below to generate a first draft of your narrative before refining it.

SECTION 1: DEFINE THE CURRENT SITUATION

Before you can build a brand, you need an honest read of where you are right now. If a colleague had to describe you in three words right now, would you be happy with that answer?

1. Do you have a personal brand at work, whether you chose it or not? How would you describe it?

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2. How do you think others would describe you compared with your colleagues? What words do they reach for?

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SECTION 1: DEFINE THE CURRENT SITUATION (CONT'D)

3. Why does defining or rethinking your personal brand matter right now? What has changed?

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4. What are you trying to achieve through this work, personally and professionally?

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SECTION 2: UNCOVER AN ACTIONABLE HUMAN TRUTH ABOUT YOURSELF

What truly defines you at your most passionate and most authentic?

1. What are you most passionate about, work-related or not? What lights you up?

2. What creative, practical, or intellectual traits best define the way you think and work?

SECTION 2: UNCOVER AN ACTIONABLE HUMAN TRUTH ABOUT YOURSELF (CONT'D)

3. What are your natural professional strengths?
Where do you consistently struggle?

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4. A year from now, what do you want people to be
saying about you?

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SECTION 3: IDENTIFY THE BARRIER THAT STANDS IN YOUR WAY

Name your barriers honestly. The ones you can control are the ones you can change.

1. How does your organization currently see you and what specifically needs to change?

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2. What is it about how you see yourself that needs to change?

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SECTION 3: IDENTIFY THE BARRIER THAT STANDS IN YOUR WAY (CONT'D)

3. Is the biggest barrier mostly internal (e.g., mindset, habits, self-perception) or external (e.g., others' perceptions, org structure)?

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4. What is the single biggest barrier you can actually control? Name it in one sentence.

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SECTION 4: DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO OVERCOME IT

Turn your truth into action. Be specific about the who, where, and how.

1. How can you sharpen and communicate your passions and point of view most consistently?

2. How can you build experience and confidence in your weaker professional areas?

SECTION 4: DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO OVERCOME IT (CONT'D)

3. How can you sharpen and communicate your passions
When, where, and with whom do you need to shape
your reputation?

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4. Who in your network can serve as a trusted sounding
board? How will you engage them?

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OPTIONAL: USE AI TO BUILD YOUR NARRATIVE

If you'd like a starting point before filling in your summary, AI can help you synthesize your answers into a draft narrative. Follow the steps below, then use what you get back as a springboard to complete the final section.

1. Answer all four sections above

Complete every prompt before moving to AI. The more honest and specific your answers, the stronger your narrative will be.

2. Upload your answers collectively

Paste all four sections into a single AI prompt—not one at a time. The narrative lives in the relationship between your situation, truth, barrier, and strategy. “Here is my full personal brand thinking. Background: [paste Situation answers]. Human truth: [paste Human Truth answers]. Barrier: [paste Barrier answers]. Strategy: [paste Strategy answers]. Synthesize this into a concise personal brand narrative I can use in professional conversations and career planning. Flag anything that feels inconsistent or unconvincing.”

3. Pressurize what you get back

Don't accept the first draft. Ask AI to challenge your narrative, poke at the logic, and identify where the story might not hold up. Then run it by trusted advisors and be open to feedback.

4. Fill in your personal brand strategy below

Use the refined narrative to complete the summary section. These four statements become the foundation you'll carry forward.

YOUR PERSONAL BRAND STRATEGY

**Distill your thinking into four clear statements.
This is the foundation of the narrative you'll take
into the world.**

1. My situation:

Where I stand and why this moment matters

2. My human truth:

What drives me and the tension I'm navigating

YOUR PERSONAL BRAND STRATEGY (CONT'D)

3. My barrier:

The single most controllable thing holding me back

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4. My strategy:

How I'll sharpen my brand and shift perceptions

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A NOTE BEFORE YOU SHARE:

Make sure to create a functional brand for yourself.
Don't try to sell people on a story you can't bring to fruition.
Run your summary by trusted advisors and be open to
feedback. Your brand is personal, but it's designed to
exist in the real world with real people.