

Editor's Note

October is here all ready! how did that happen!? We had a whole month in September at New York, Vancouver, London and Paris Fashion Week shows; which MilliOnAir was there every catwalk step of the way creating trend reports from our MOA representatives across the globe. The Award-winning fashion designer, John Herrera returned to Fashion Scout to present his spring/summer 2018 Collection, Armada.

This month exclusive cover interview; Also MilliOnAir's new best friend and international multi-award winning Interior Designer, Business Consultant and Founder of the Society of British and International Design...Vanessa Brady OBE...read on to find out more.

Our Editor at Large Laurie Stone got to chat to LESLEY EVERETT who is one of the world's leading Branding experts. And of course we have so much more to look at read and watch...

Now please go and enjoy October MilliOnAir Global Magazine.

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LESLEY EVERETT is one of the world's leading Branding experts

Exclusive Interview
By LAURIE STONE
Editor-at-large

LESLEY EVERETT is one of the world's leading Branding experts, She is the creator and CEO of Walking TALL, an international speaker, executive brand coach and author of three books.

Why Personal Branding is becoming a focus area for businesses

YOUR brand and reputation as a company today is created and conveyed more powerfully by people and their behaviours than advertising campaigns, marketing collateral or premises. The way leaders and employees interact with all stakeholders, not just clients and customers, and how they make them feel, will result in an experience that will be remembered and quite likely talked about, whether positively or negatively.

Quite simply, what your customers say about your brand to their contacts, is your brand, and this will always come from the experience they have had with you. So how do you know if your brand is being projected in alignment with your brand messages and values consistently and that it's not being diluted on a daily basis for your competitors to exploit?

The gap is increasing

The environment we live in and do business in is ever-changing – as consumers and clients, and as suppliers, we perhaps sub-consciously put much more value on being treated well and receiving a great experience that we can talk about and that makes us feel good, than in the traditional standards and out-dated levels of customer service. Today, we expect more, but in reality that quality of experience is often lacking. Yet it should be so very simple to achieve.

We are constantly presented with advertisements that give us an insight into the experience we can expect to have when we visit the furniture store, the supermarket or the theme park and the experience bar is set high.

With our work at Walking TALL being focussed in the corporate brand reputation area, we have found that standards are lapsing rather than rising and that the height to fall from is sadly everincreasing.



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The personal branding solution

So how do we make sure that the people in our company consistently project and reinforce the company values? One great way - create an environment, both emotional and physical, that makes them feel valued, that they play a solid role in the business success and that they can progress and develop their careers with the support they need.

We have found that by providing a personal branding methodology to support individuals being their authentic selves, being clear about their value and what they bring, to identify their strengths and motivators, then we can go a long way to achieving a great company culture with mind-set and behaviours that provide any business with the back-bone to a solid brand personality.



Core Personal Branding Principles

I am going to share here the SEVEN core principles for creating and building your personal brand, whatever your business or career goals and whatever role you currently have or seek:

1. Who you really are

This is the starting point. A strong personal brand has to be authentic so that it can be more easily maintained and sustained, and most importantly be consistent. Carve some time out in your calendar to think about your personality traits, your skills and strengths, and your values and drivers. Ask yourself:

What do I really want to be 'famous' for?

What really motivates me?

What core strengths and skills do I have that support those?

Next step is to get some candid feedback on how others see you, what they think you stand for, what you're great at etc.

Now ascertain where the gaps are and create an action plan.

2. Right from the outset

It only takes a few seconds to make a first impression, yet many interactions for it to be changed. When we first meet people we take in non-verbal communications (appearance, body language). We scan it in. Then we take sub-conscious note of the voice quality and clarity, then finally what is actually said. All three together create a first impression in seconds and we need to ensure we get it right, that people really get us in an instance. Get some feedback on your first impression – you might be surprised!

3. Visual brand counts

So whether we like it or not, our non-verbal communication gives clues away as to our personality in the eyes of the beholder. Your wardrobe choices should be in alignment with your brand and how you want to be perceived given the environment, job role, company you are in. Don't let your image get in the way of your true qualities and abilities – make conscious choices.

4. Be memorable and visible

Think of your career more like an entrepreneur – you need to manage your own visibility and profile, rather than leave it to chance. Create a visibility plan to consciously manage your exposure within your target market.

Who needs to know who you are and what you're great at, in order for you to reach your goals? Are you visible on social media? Your digital brand is quite possibly going to be the first impression some may have of you. Keep your posts in alignment with the brand you want to project. LinkedIn is the most important platform for you to regularly maintain in your professional role. Review it regularly and keep it up-to-date.

Look at ways in which you can get extra exposure – networking events, speaking at conferences, being on panels, being interviewed for your story, internal presentations. Do something new to raise your visibility every week.

Oscar Wilde said in A Picture of Dorian Gray: "There's only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that's not being talked about." Today, we need to be talked about but we need to take control over what those messages might be! Take control of your personal brand today!

5. Presentational brand matters

Becoming great at presenting an authentic message is a crucial element of your brand and being visible. Learn how to create stories and use them to engage an audience, whether in a team meeting or formal conference setting.

6. Statement 'brand me'

Your Brand Statement is formed of the few short sentences that describe you clearly and positively. Create a draft from the work you've done above on your authentic brand and the feedback and get others to review it. You can use it for your LinkedIn summary statement so use this as the basis.

7. Each time, all the time

Consistency is the key to success with any brand, particularly a personal brand. Without this we only create confusing messages. Make it easy for others to recommend and 'sell' you by being who you are, consistently.

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Lesley Everett is personally delivering a Personal Branding Masterclass on Friday, November 3, 2017 in London. Click <u>here</u> for more details

You can read more about company brand reputation in Lesley's book – <u>Corporate Brand Personality</u> – Re-focus your organization's culture to build trust, respect & authenticity (Kogan Page, Feb 2016).

www.walkingtall.org

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