


'Building and protecting your reputation is essential for today's leaders and ambitious business professionals. This book helps to demystify the art of managing your reputation, and gives many practical insights and strategies to help you stand out in a crowd.'

—Sir John Peace, Chairman, Standard Chartered

# **BUILD YOUR REPUTATION**

## **GROW YOUR PERSONAL BRAND FOR CAREER AND BUSINESS SUCCESS**



Bonus Content  
Available via  
*The Reputation  
Vault!*

**ROB BROWN**

**WILEY**

# BUILD YOUR REPUTATION

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CAREER AND BUSINESS SUCCESS

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This edition first published 2016

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John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, United Kingdom

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*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available.*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-119-27445-2 (hbk)

ISBN 978-1-119-27446-9 (ebk) ISBN 978-1-119-27444-5 (ebk)

Cover design: Wiley

Set in 10/14.5pt PalatinoLTStd by Aptara Inc., New Delhi, India

Printed in Great Britain by TJ International Ltd, Padstow, Cornwall, UK

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# INTRODUCTION

*'A brand for a company is like a reputation for a person. You earn reputation by trying to do hard things well.'*

– Jeff Bezos

## The new world of reputation

Not so long ago, your circle of influence went as far as you could see. Your reputation extended to people who could physically see you. Contact was frequent and guaranteed. If you did a good job at work, you could easily control what people thought about you.

This was your 'hallway' reputation. People stuck around. Job change was rare. People had a chance to get to know you over an extended period of time. You gained influence gradually and got promoted because you lasted the course.

Now you find yourself in a new world of new rules. The online space means you have to deal with social media, instant news and frightening transparency. Barriers have fallen between countries, cultures and boundaries. Globalization has levelled the playing field. Workforces are much more diverse – multicultural and multilingual.

We live in complex, uncertain, but exciting times. Mobile phones and digital technology give even average people the chance to build a brand around themselves. Anyone can own a business, write a blog and send an opinion round the world. Attention spans have fallen, marketing messages have exploded and noise has increased dramatically.

Jobs for life are rare. Who gets offered tenure these days? Who even wants it? People want passion, freedom, significance and choice. Of course, that's all still there, but there are millions of people looking for it. Which means predatory competition and a brutal, unstable job market. How will you compete?

This book maintains that the ability to market yourself, create career capital and build reputational stock are what will give you the edge that gets you chosen. Your 'in person' and your 'online' reputation are both at stake. If cultivated properly, together they could be your most valuable commercial asset.

### A quick definition of terms

Let's get clear on a few key terms before you press on. You'll see these throughout the book.

- **Your job.** What you do every day. It's your job title, your role, your position. What's on your business card. It's what brings the money in. It's what happens between your commutes.
- **Your work.** It's what you do in your job. It's your contribution or why people actually pay you. You swap your skills, expertise, time and labour for a wage. And if you're lucky, they throw in a few other benefits, like pension, flexible working or healthcare.
- **Your career.** Your path towards more meaningful work or a better job. It's your roadmap of increasingly better opportunities and positions. It's your route to more choice, autonomy and freedom in your working life.

- **Your reputation.** What people say about you behind your back. It's your good name. It's a blend of four things:
    1. your professional capabilities and 'on the job' performance
    2. your profile and visibility with the people that count
    3. your positioning and perceived authority in the minds of people that count and
    4. your PBA (Personal Board of Advisors) and the leverage, advocacy and support they bring to your efforts.
- Keep these in mind as you journey through the new world of work, leadership and career management.

## Your career playbook for a life of fulfilment

This playbook will propel you quickly to the top of your tree. Or at least more quickly along a meaningful and enjoyable career path. If you're already at the top, this is about keeping you there with more control, influence, recognition and engagement. If you're already in a role you love, it's about keeping you there too, with more security, more control and more flexibility. It's about freedom to choose.

This is your fast-track guide to boardroom opportunities, recognition of your brilliance, backing of your potential, investment in your ideas and engagement with your vision. It's a guide to intrapreneurship or how to think and act like an entrepreneur in order to thrive within the constraints of a big corporation or firm.

These things rarely happen by accident or good fortune. That's why this playbook is packed with a ton of practical ways for you to hit your career and leadership goals intentionally and faster. It's not a theoretical work and it's not grounded in a master's thesis or academic research. It's a

pragmatic guide that gives you a variety of ways to become the number one obvious choice for what you do.

It's a career playbook for a life of fulfilment. Sounds a bit grand, but your work probably defines you. If your work is good, you're probably a happy bunny. When people ask you who you are or what you do, you'll probably lead with your job title or the industry you're in. So it's a 'how to' manual for controlling your career and securing work you love on your terms.

This is also aimed at leaders, whether thought leaders or business leaders. I'm calling you a leader since you're probably already in the top 5% of brains and talent in the world right now. After all, you're reading this book! And with this kind of power, you're an influencer and a change agent. That means you're already some kind of leader.

Finally, this book is a time machine. Sure, you'll make it to where you want to be in your career. This will just get you there faster. It's a fast-track mechanism for career progression. The vehicle that will propel you there is called 'career capital' and the key to the car is called reputation.

Although intangible, reputation has a value. And if it has a value, then it also has a cost. *Reward and risk*. Your reputation will take you a long time to build and a moment to ruin. But you can accelerate the building process by intentionally and purposefully doing good things that enhance your good name. After that, it's a case of marketing yourself well enough that good people talk about it. You're a brand, and all brands make good promises and need good promotion.

### **Problems this book may solve for you**

Listen, if you've ever ...

- wondered how to move quickly up the ladder in a big firm, large organization or competitive industry
- watched others get the credit for your ideas



- been overlooked for a project, promotion or opportunity
- struggled for job satisfaction, meaning and fulfilment
- found it hard to convert your talent and potential into tangible career progression
- been frustrated that people don't quite get you, or don't see your brilliance
- failed to make an impact at a key moment
- felt restricted by the control others have over your working conditions
- worked really hard for little or no recognition
- thought people above you are not as good as you
- feared for your job in tough economic times
- been paralysed by too many career choices or job options

... then it's almost certain that this book will help you hugely. It's your playbook to quickly and strategically navigate through the career gears to a higher and higher calling. It will show you how to play the Career Game that most people don't even know they're in. It will show you how to create the necessary personal reputation that will cut through the crap and open the doors to the best jobs and opportunities. Creating a good name and a powerful reputation as a 'go-to' guy or girl is going to further your cause.

You're about to get the low down on how to connect at high levels for valuable advocacy, influence and sponsorship. You're going to learn the dimensions of executive presence – that boardroom gravitas that shows you're a peer of the senior players. And you're going to create a game plan of powerful reputation-building strategies that play to your unique strengths, personality and objectives.

## **This book in a nutshell**

You may not have seen your reputation as a career weapon or leadership platform before now. But you're holding this career playbook and you feel

there's something in it. It makes sense then for you to know exactly what your reputation is and how it works for or against you.

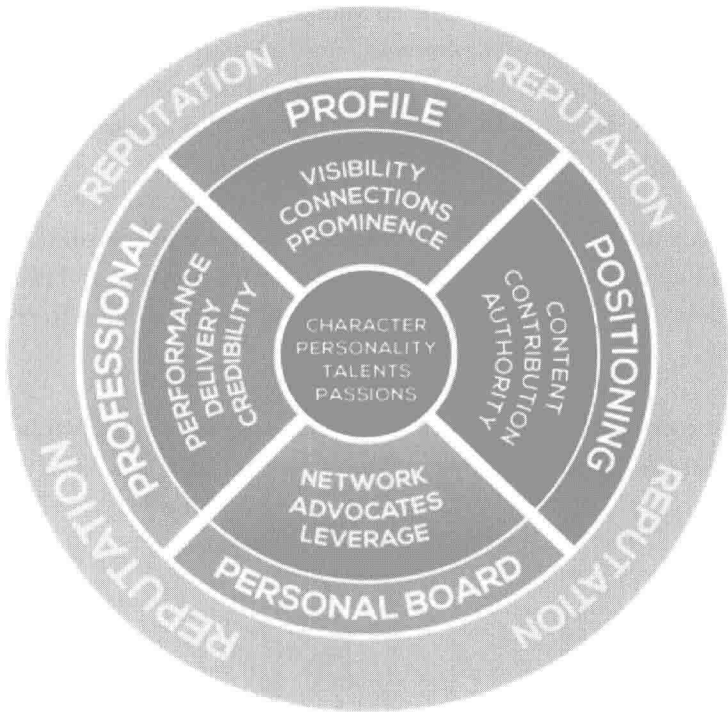
So, in the first part of the book, we'll define reputation properly and make the strongest case for its relevance to your career and business success. You'll get clarity over the difference between your personal brand and your reputation, and even what role your character plays in all that. Then you'll discover how the *unholy trinity* of online, mobile and digital have changed the way your reputation is built and broken.

You'll quickly see that as a leader and influencer (which you are, no matter what you might think) your reputation is an intangible yet critical career asset. In fact, the higher up you go, the more your personal reputation can make or break the people and company you represent. Then we get to the 'meat' of the book ...

## **The four reputational toolboxes**

The second half of this book is the real 'how to' stuff. The nuts and bolts. The specific strategies you can deploy in building your own great name and store of career capital. The way you do it will be different to the way everybody else does it. That's why there are so many strategies to choose from.

Your mission as you read this book is to apply yourself to making it work for you and you alone. What works for you won't necessarily work for your colleague. You've got to play the game with your strengths, your weapons, your game plan. Everyone is different, but the general principles of 'be remarkable, market yourself well and trade smartly' apply to all.



### The reputation vault

Everything you need is in this book. Probably. But who knows? You could be one of those hungry people who really get it and want more. You could be a fascinated student of the topic in need of supplementary materials. You could have bigger plans for your reputation than I thought.

That's why you've got the Reputation Vault. It's a hidden resource just for people who have bought the book. You get a bunch of useful worksheets, manifestos and interviews that wouldn't fit into the book. Not because they weren't worthy or instructive. But because there was not enough room.

For instance, the Executive Presence Manifesto does a deep dive into that subtle blend of gravitas, temperament, inner strength, credibility, charisma and skills that gets you viewed as a player and a peer of the top people. Resources like this supplement the book and ground you in the methodology.

You've got unrestricted access to the Vault with our compliments. Go to [www.Rep.NetworkingCoachingAcademy.com/repvault](http://www.Rep.NetworkingCoachingAcademy.com/repvault) and put in the access details supplied in the Additional Resources section at the back of the book.

For now, focus on what you have right here. Forget about the Vault for the moment. Let's just ensure you get the very most out of this book ...

# Part One

## Laying the Foundations

*'More than a great database, a killer product or service, a set of skills, or a particular talent – your reputation is the single biggest factor in whether or not you will be a success on this planet.'*

– Rob Brown



## Chapter 1

# Why Build Your Reputation?

*'Life is for one generation. A good name is forever.'*

– Japanese proverb

## One of the lucky ones

Some people are lucky when it comes to career progression. They seem to fall on their feet and into the 'plum' jobs with huge salaries and massive influence. People say good things about them. They attract the endorsement of influential people. They lead committed, enthusiastic followers. They seem to know and are known by all the right people for all the right reasons.

These people get offered the best positions on the best terms. If they want international travel and an exotic life abroad, they get that. If they want a flexible schedule, an ideal job based in their home town so they can enjoy a great family life, that kind of autonomy seems to be available to them. If they want to lead a team, community or project, they quickly find themselves in charge.

They shoot up the career ladder and end up quickly in key leadership positions. More annoyingly, they somehow end up doing the really enjoyable, fun and interesting stuff. They love their job and they love their life. And you hate them.

How did all this happen? Obviously these people prospered because they were in the right place at the right time, right? They just got lucky. They're



not better than you. They might even be a whole lot worse. They just got the breaks. Or did they?

Success like this is rarely an accident. These are Career Pros. They've always known something you don't. They've networked their way to the top. They've developed a substantial reputation and huge social capital to get them where they are.

The good news is that if they did it, so can you. With very few exceptions, the career approach or success system of the high flyers and influential, respected leaders is duplicable.

Your stagnation or frustration has been because you've never known quite how to replicate that. Until now, that is. Because now you've got the play-book for career acceleration and job fulfilment. And it's all wrapped up in your good name, your personal brand and your reputation.

## **What exactly is a reputation?**

Your reputation is simply the impression that others have of you. You should value it, protect it, shape it and grow it. Done right, it could give you a significant competitive advantage in your career. Your career counts, because it gives you the platform, autonomy and influence to change the world.

Your current reputation may be good, bad or indifferent. But you've got one. If you look up reputation in any good dictionary, you'll find things like this:

1. The general estimation in which a person is held by the public.
2. The state or situation of being held in high esteem.
3. The general opinion of the public towards a person, a group of people or an organization.