

4 Ways To Give Your Brand A Little Swagger

My students recently turned in their final job search documents, video interviews, and digital portfolios. Unfortunately, none of the documents stood out, grabbed my attention, or compelled me to read and learn more about each person. None had a ‘Wow!’ factor, or that something extra that makes a person special and unique. I couldn’t quite put my finger on the problem until I overheard my 14-year-old neighbor tell her dad how awesome she felt while riding her new bike. Her description was, “It gives me swagger!”

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If you are not familiar with the word “swagger,” it is most commonly referred to as a person’s attitude or level of confidence (even arrogance). It’s the way a person holds him/herself both inside and out. I consider swagger to be the spark, spirit, and energy that radiates from a person. And it’s necessary for your personal brand.

So, once again, a teenager has enlightened me. And, as my young neighbor radiates swagger while riding her bike, my students must find their swagger as well. If they don’t, their brand is going to suffer big time – an unacceptable ending to MY semester.

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So, how do you find your swagger and incorporate it into your brand? Here are some of my ideas:

1. Get Excited About Your Industry!

I’m amazed at the lack of enthusiasm in students’ voices when I ask why they chose a specific industry. And many times, they struggle to answer the question all together. Knowing your industry and beginning to think about how you fit in is huge! Once you can identify your fit and how you can contribute, sparks will ignite and your spirit and energy will boost.

2. Give A Hoot!

Maybe you do, maybe you don’t; most of the time it’s really difficult for me to tell. I continue to see passive students who wait for things to happen to them. Or, wait for someone else to make a move for them. In today’s job market, you cannot do this! You have to care about your industry, your fit, your potential, and your contributions! If you don’t step out of your comfort zone, take risks and try things that may be a little scary, you will never find out what you care about, what’s important to you, and where you see yourself making a different. You will lack empowerment, which is made up of confidence, spirit, and, well, swagger.

3. Own Your Ideas And Opinions!

Again, I reinforce the importance of knowing your industry. Knowledge is empowerment. Contributing educated opinions to blogs, tweets, and LinkedIn groups will help demonstrate your spirit and confidence. Sharing your ideas on how to improve your industry and make other people's jobs easier will help you form professional connections and collaborations. Once professionals start reading spirited and confident opinions from you, they will pick up on your swagger and your brand will shine.

4. Become A Regular!

Knowing your industry means knowing your target audience. And, knowing your target audience helps you locate the best blogs, tweets and LinkedIn groups to follow. Choose your top 2-3 "targets" and spend the majority of your on-line time on their blogs, tweets, and groups. Be a regular who adds his/her educated opinions and shares his/her ideas for making the industry better than it is now. Again, this will boost your brand's swagger and get your target audience's attention.

So, on that bicycle ride to finding your swagger, keep these ideas in mind. Your brand will thank you for it. Do you have ideas to spark swagger? How have you identified others' swagger? Share your thoughts and ideas here.