



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Haworth College of Business



Build Your **BRAND**

A step-by-step guide supporting the creation of a personal brand. This thorough process highlights important transitions from establishing a **personal brand** to articulating your **professional brand** and ultimately resulting in the ongoing management of your professional reputation through **executive branding**.

Haworth College of Business
Student Professional Readiness Series
Zhang Career Center



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Branding Overview and SPuRS Credit

Think of your brand as your calling card - your unique promise of value. It's what you're known for and how people experience you (defined by PwC).

Your brand is your reputation. It's about bringing *who* you are to *what* you do and *how* you do it. It's about making your mark by being yourself - your best self.

This workbook is divided into three parts:

- Part 1: Introduce Your Personal Brand (Who you are and what you are known for)
- Part 2: Launch Your Professional Brand (What you do and how you do it)
- Part 3: Manage Your Executive Brand (What is your impact and purpose)

SPuRS Credit Reporting

To receive SPuRS credit for this experience students must incorporate all provided exercises to build, perfect, and articulate their personal and professional brand.

Completing **Part 1: Introduce Your Personal Brand** in its entirety, and submitting your materials through ExperienceWMU, satisfies one **foundational level** SPuRS-approved activity in the Personal and Interpersonal Knowledge pillar.

Thoroughly completing **Part 1: Introduce Your Personal Brand and Part 2: Launch Your Professional Brand**, and submitting your materials through ExperienceWMU, satisfies one **advanced level** SPuRS-approved activity in the Personal and Interpersonal Knowledge pillar.

ExperienceWMU Self-Report Process

1. Log in to ExperienceWMU.
2. Access your SPuRS path found in the Paths section on the homepage.
3. Select the appropriate level within the SPuRS path (foundational or advanced) and open the applicable Personal and Interpersonal Knowledge experience item.
4. Open the hyperlinked form and fill in the required fields to request credit for completing the Build Your Brand Workbook.

Note: Please remember to upload your completed digital workbook before you submit your request for SPuRS credit. Reminder, foundational level submissions will need to have part 1 thoroughly completed and advanced level submissions will need to have parts 1 and 2 thoroughly completed.

5. Select **Submit**.

Part 1

Introduce Your Personal Brand

Definition of Personal Branding

What is personal branding?

A personal brand is the unique combination of skills and experiences that make you, you.

The act of personal branding is intentional exploration and thoughtful reflection on how various aspects of life impact you; your passions, interests, strengths, skills, values, and culture. When you identify how each of these areas influence your life, you are able determine and find common themes in how you make decisions, take action, and ultimately shape how others perceive you.

Part one, “Introduce Your Personal Brand,” walks you through a series of self-paced activities to explore and reflect on different parts of life and how they impact your personal brand.

Activities include:

- **Career Genogram Activity** – to explore and identify career patterns and influences that have impact on your career mindset.
- **Passions Exploration** – to identify how your passions and interests drive your decisions and actions.
- **FOCUS2 Assessment and Reflection** – a career related online assessment to highlight work interests, values and academic areas of strength.
- **Strengths and Life Skills Exploration** – a guided reflection exercise to identify “go-to” life skills and strengths used to achieve success.
- **Personal Values Assessment** – provides a template to identify, rank, and define your top five personal values.
- **Culture Map** – to identify cultural dimensions in your life and in your home country.
- **Validation and Outreach** – an opportunity to hear from your family and friends regarding their perceptions of your personal brand.
- **Reflect and Compare** – discover how you are similar to and different from your peers.
- **Communicate Your Personal Brand** – create your personal brand and implement communication strategies to share your personal brand externally.

Career Genogram Activity

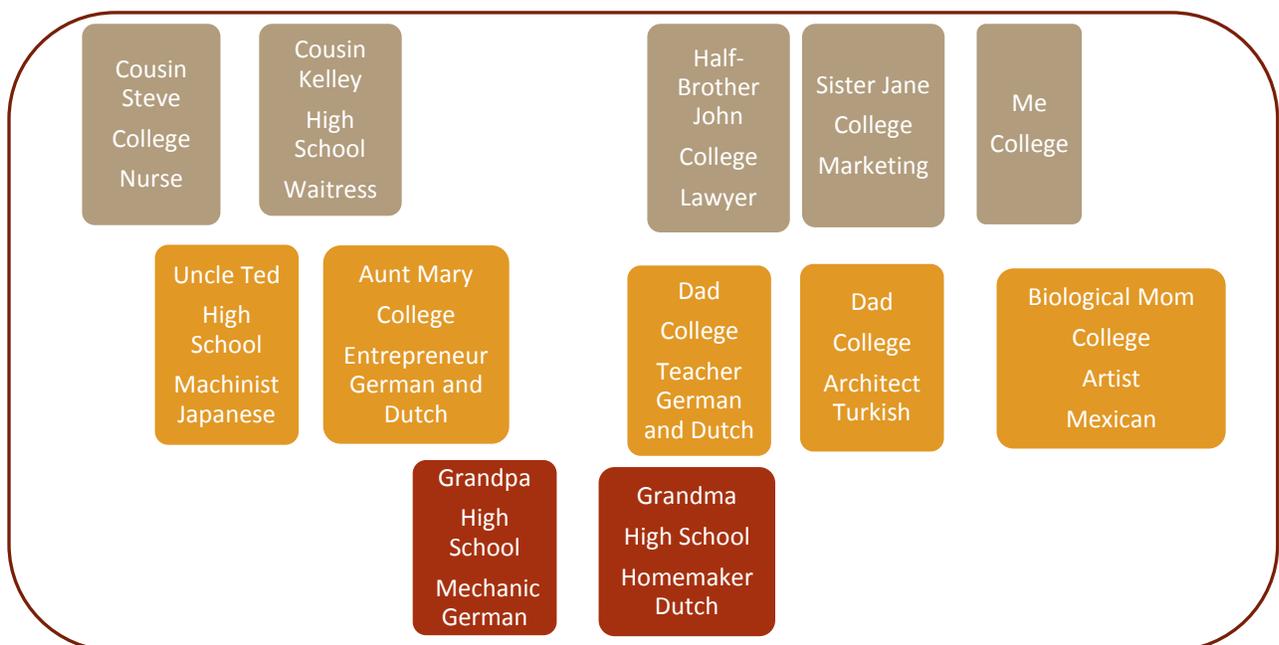
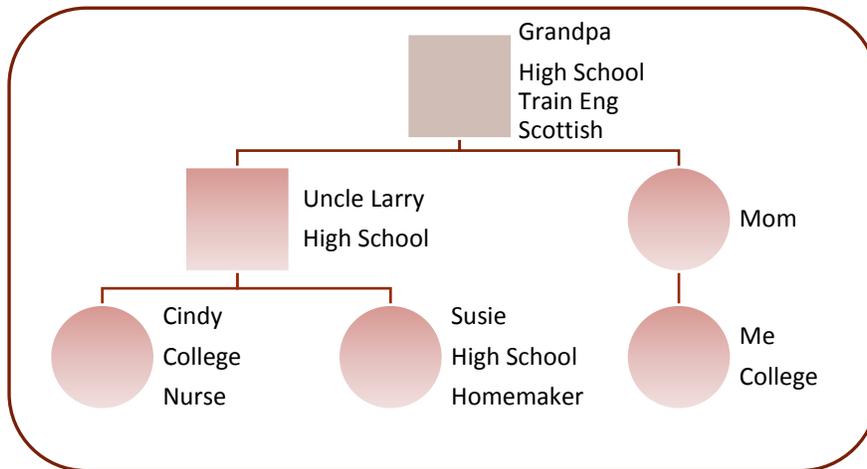
A career genogram is similar to a family tree, but the focus is on the history of occupations and educational background in those you identify as family. The purpose of creating a career genogram is to take a look at patterns within your family tree to explore how this heritage may influence your values and decisions, impacting your brand. This exercise allows you to explore what you have inherited culturally, what you have been exposed to, and to think about what you have been raised with and currently believe about education and career choices.

Draw your career genogram in the space provided on page 6 using the guidelines listed below.

Focus on three (3) generations of family:

- 3rd generation could include grandparents, great aunts and uncles whose careers you know about.
- 2nd generation could include parents, stepparents, uncles and aunts whose careers you know about.
- 1st generation could include yourself, siblings, and first cousins whose careers you know about.
 - **Identify each person's level of education, type of work, and cultural identity:**

Examples:



Use this space to create your career genogram:

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for creating a career genogram. The box is centered on the page and occupies most of the vertical space below the instruction.

Genogram Reflections

1. What patterns or themes have you discovered in your family history?
2. What messages did you hear about career (concerns, praises, etc.)?
3. Has a family member influenced your thinking about education and occupational choices in ways that you like or dislike? Explain.
4. Have your family members experienced working in different cultures or grown up in countries other than your home country? How has this impacted you?
5. What does career success mean to you?

Passions Exploration

Passions are strong feelings that cause a person to act or behave a particular way.

It is important to understand that your passions drive your decisions and actions. Your actions greatly impact your day and ultimately influence your overall engagement with the world around you. When you are able to connect your passions and interests with your career goals, you are able to intentionally bring enthusiasm, inspiration, motivation, and focus to your daily living.

In the space below, begin exploring your passions. Think about how you can integrate your passions into what you do and intentionally connect them with your goals.

1. What would you do with your summer if money was not an issue?
2. What is an activity that brings you joy?
3. What academic areas of study interest you and why?
4. If given the opportunity, what volunteer activities would you find compelling?
5. What are some qualities that draw you to others?

Bringing it together:

1. Based on your responses, did you identify common themes?
2. How can you connect your passions with your academic and career goals?

Strengths and Life Skills Exploration

Strengths and life skills are the good, beneficial qualities or attributes of a person; when utilized, they often result in positive outcomes.

Recognizing and identifying things that you do well and come naturally to you is an important part of the personal branding process. People who can identify and articulate their strengths are able to successfully build strong brands. With clear communication related to your skills and strengths, others will perceive you to be consistent, dependable, and credible.

Let's uncover your skills and strengths.

1. What strengths or skills have others acknowledged that you do well?
2. When faced with an overwhelming obstacle, what are your "go-to" skills to overcome it?
3. What was the most successful project you have tackled and what made you successful?
4. What was the most important team role you ever fulfilled and why?

Let's go a step further.

1. Based on your responses, are you able to see common themes or recurring strengths?
2. Which strengths do you get excited to use on a regular basis?
3. Which skills have you mastered, but don't want to use every day?
4. Think about your career goals. Which strengths or skills would be the most helpful in your chosen career?
5. What skills are missing? What skills would you like to further develop?

Based on your responses, take some time to identify your top five strengths or skills. Think about the common themes you've uncovered and make combinations when appropriate. For example, you might use words like "creative," "relationship-creator," or "make the complex simple." Then, you can start to validate your self-perception with feedback from others.

For each strength or skill, describe a time or a specific event when you relied on that ability to make a decision, move forward, overcome an obstacle, or achieve a goal.

Strength or Skill	Experience

Personal Values Assessment

Values are principles, standards or qualities that an individual or group of people hold in high regard.

Personal values guide the way we live our lives and the decisions we make. A personal value may be defined as something that we as individuals hold dear; those qualities which we consider to be of great worth.

Step 1: Identify your top five personal values

- Go through the list of values provided on the **page 13** and eliminate words that don't resonate with you.
- Go through the list again and place a check mark next to the values that are important to you. If you feel that a value is missing, please add that value to the list and indicate it with a checkmark.
- Go through the short list of values you checked and from that list, pick your top five values.
- Once you've identified your top five values, rank them in order from 1 to 5.

List your top five values here and rank them:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Step 2: Define your top five values

The words you selected are important because they mean something specific to you. It's important to be clear about exactly what these words mean to you, as sometimes people have different interpretations of the same word. For example, two people may have selected flexibility. To one, flexibility means to be nimble in work style on a day-to-day basis; to another, flexibility means the interest in adding value to different types of organizations or working on different types of projects.

Since the words you chose resonate with you, you likely have a strong association with a way of describing them that is both personal and powerful to you.

Write a sentence for each value describing what the value means to you:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Step 3: Compare your definitions

Compare your personal value definitions with definitions found here: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>

Did this comparison change your outlook on your own personal value(s) and the definition you gave it/them? If so, you may want to research more definitions of the values listed on the next page to find a more suitable description of how you would describe your own personal values. If not, great! Remember, this is about what these values mean to you.

Acceptance	Development	Inspiring	Self-reliance
Accomplishment	Devotion	Integrity	Selfless
Accountability	Dignity	Intelligence	Sensitivity
Accuracy	Discipline	Intensity	Serenity
Achievement	Discovery	Intuitive	Service
Adaptability	Drive	Irreverent	Sharing
Alertness	Effectiveness	Joy	Significance
Altruism	Efficiency	Justice	Silence
Ambition	Empathy	Kindness	Simplicity
Amusement	Empower	Knowledge	Sincerity
Assertiveness	Endurance	Lawful	Skill
Attentive	Energy	Leadership	Skillfulness
Awareness	Enjoyment	Learning	Smart
Balance	Enthusiasm	Liberty	Solitude
Beauty	Equality	Logic	Spirit
Boldness	Ethical	Love	Spirituality
Bravery	Excellence	Loyalty	Spontaneous
Brilliance	Experience	Mastery	Stability
Calm	Exploration	Maturity	Status
Candor	Expressive	Meaning	Stewardship
Capable	Fairness	Moderation	Strength
Careful	Family	Motivation	Structure
Certainty	Famous	Openness	Success
Challenge	Fearless	Optimism	Support
Charity	Feelings	Order	Surprise
Cleanliness	Ferocious	Organization	Sustainability
Clear	Fidelity	Originality	Talent
Clever	Focus	Passion	Teamwork
Comfort	Foresight	Patience	Temperance
Commitment	Fortitude	Peace	Thankful
Common sense	Freedom	Performance	Thorough
Communication	Friendship	Persistence	Thoughtful
Community	Fun	Playfulness	Timeliness
Compassion	Generosity	Poise	Tolerance
Competence	Genius	Potential	Toughness
Concentration	Giving	Power	Traditional
Confidence	Goodness	Present	Tranquility
Connection	Grace	Productivity	Transparency
Consciousness	Gratitude	Professionalism	Trust
Consistency	Greatness	Prosperity	Trustworthy
Contentment	Growth	Purpose	Truth
Contribution	Happiness	Quality	Understanding
Control	Hard work	Realistic	Uniqueness
Conviction	Harmony	Reason	Unity
Cooperation	Health	Recognition	Valor
Courage	Honesty	Recreation	Victory
Courtesy	Honor	Reflective	Vigor
Creation	Hope	Respect	Vision
Creativity	Humility	Responsibility	Vitality
Credibility	Imagination	Restraint	Wealth
Curiosity	Improvement	Results-oriented	Welcoming
Decisive	Independence	Reverence	Winning
Decisiveness	Individuality	Rigor	Wisdom
Dedication	Innovation	Risk	Wonder
Dependability	Inquisitive	Satisfaction	
Determination	Insightful	Security	

Culture Map

National Culture Dimensions

Globalization is becoming increasingly relevant for people in all industries. Currently we live in a world where organizations have teams that span different offices, time zones and continents. Even for an organization that is only focused on the American market, the movement of labor across borders means that cultural diversity is becoming the new normal in universities and workplaces. Therefore, it is important for you to gain cultural awareness and understanding.

This exercise uses Hofstede’s Model of national culture. In total, the model consists of the six dimensions below; each dimension defines how a national culture operates and what the general perspective is. **In the appendix, you can find explanations about these dimensions on pages 65-66.**

- Power Distance Index (PDI)
- Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV)
- Masculinity or Competitiveness versus Femininity or Cooperativeness (MAS)
- Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)
- Long-Term Orientation versus Short-Term Normative Orientation (LTO)
- Indulgence versus Restraint (IND)

Step 1: Research and identify how your home country is scoring on the cultural dimensions. Following the link and entering your country will give you the results. Also read the country specific explanation of the scores below the figure on the website.

<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/>

Cultural Dimension	Home Country	World Average
Power Distance Index		55
Individualism versus Collectivism		43
Masculinity (Competitiveness) versus Femininity (Cooperativeness)		50
Uncertainty Avoidance Index		64
Long-Term Orientation versus Short-Term Normative Orientation		45
Indulgence versus Restraint		50

Now that you have created the culture map of your home country and read the explanations of those scores, it is time to answer the questions on the **page 15** regarding the impact of these cultural dimensions in your life. This exercise requires you to utilize critical thinking skills. Take time to think about your day-to-day life activities and people involved in your life when answering each question.

Step 2: Answer reflection questions

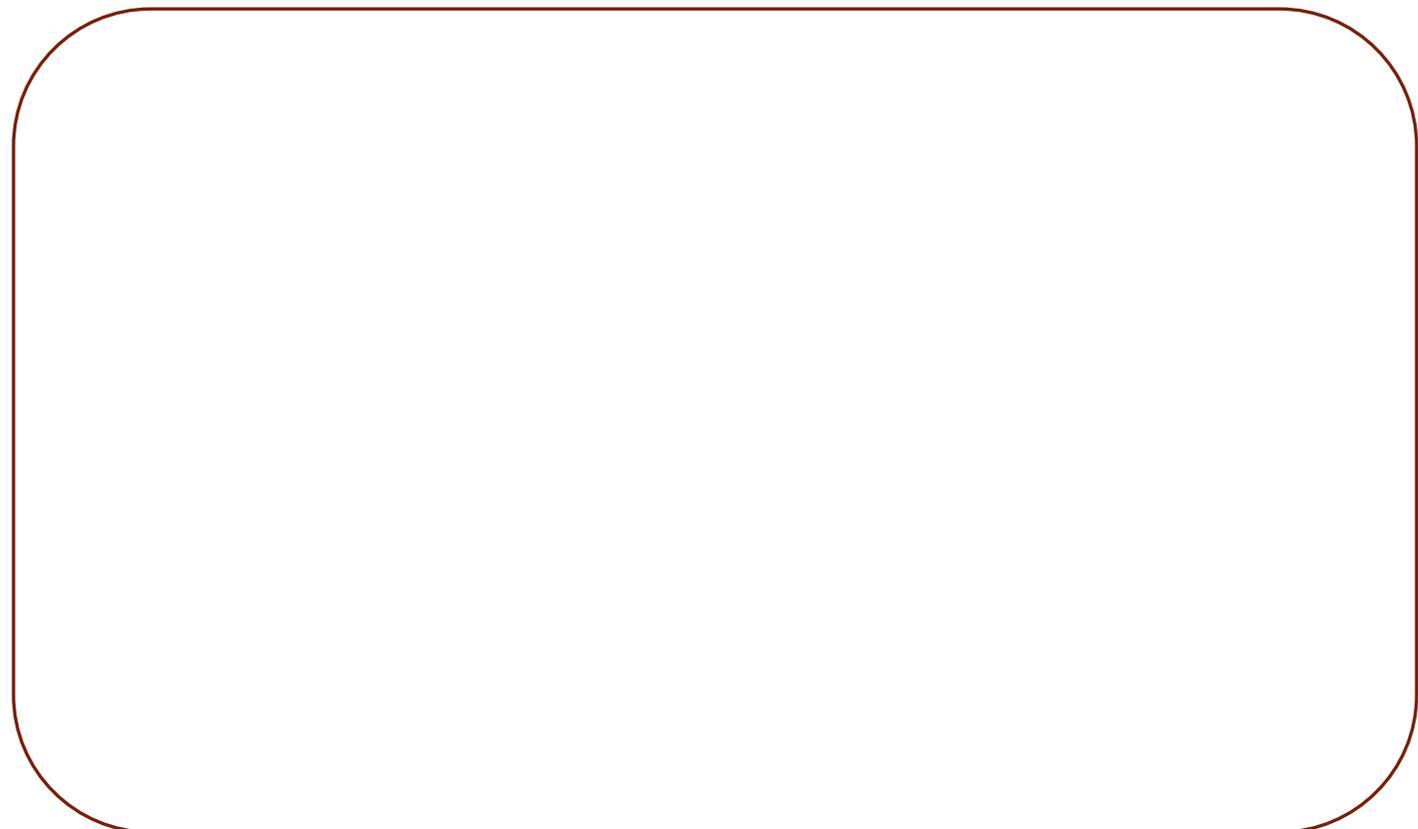
1. What does the score about power distance mean in your daily activities (think about interacting with professors, supervisors or managers)?
2. How does the individualism result reflect your experience working in teams or on projects?
3. How do you think the masculinity score influences your academic performance and your interactions you're your peers?
4. How are your life choices affected by the score on the uncertainty avoidance index?
5. Reflecting on the result of long term orientation, how do you think your mindset as a student is influenced by this? Are you focused on short-term success or long-term future planning?
6. What is the impact of the indulgence score on your ability to enjoy your social life?

Let's go a step further and process how your reflections impacted your thoughts on culture.

Based on the scores in the culture map and your answers to the previous questions, what are your thoughts on the culture in your home country?

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a dark red border, intended for the student to write their thoughts on the culture in their home country.

What would be something you would like to see or do differently in your daily activities and interactions with others based on your reflection responses? Why?

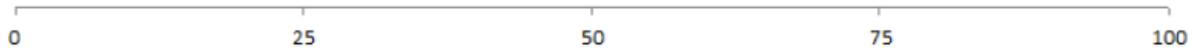
A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a dark red border, intended for the student to write about changes they would like to see in their daily activities and interactions.

Below, you can find an example of how each culture dimension is measured. As you can see a low/high score is not good or bad, but varies in meaning. Now it is time to score your personal preferences regarding the different dimensions. When scoring the dimensions, try to distance yourself from the identified scores of your home country; instead, look back at your personal values found on **page 12**, think about your preference on each dimension and score your desired result.

Power Distance

Low Power Distance
Emphasis on equality;
shared decision-making

High Power Distance
Emphasis on difference
in status; superiors
make decisions

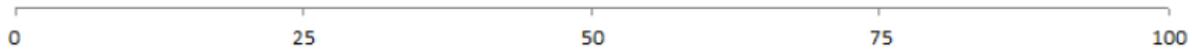


What is your score on Power Distance? _____

Individualism

Collectivism
Emphasis on group goals
and personal relationships

Individualism
Emphasis on individual
goals and rights



What is your score on Individualism? _____

Masculinity

Femininity
Emphasis on collaboration,
nurturing and family

Masculinity
Emphasis on competition,
assertiveness and
achievement

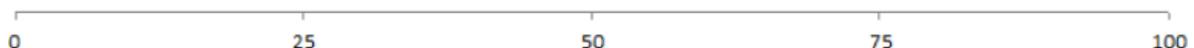


What is your score on Masculinity? _____

Uncertainty Avoidance Index

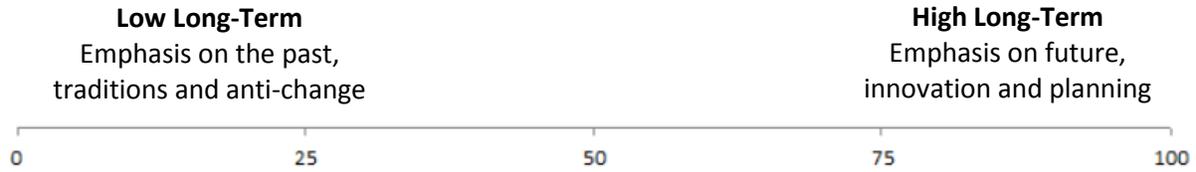
Low UAI
Emphasis on new ideas,
practice and openness

High UAI
Emphasis on control, rigid
rules on belief and stability



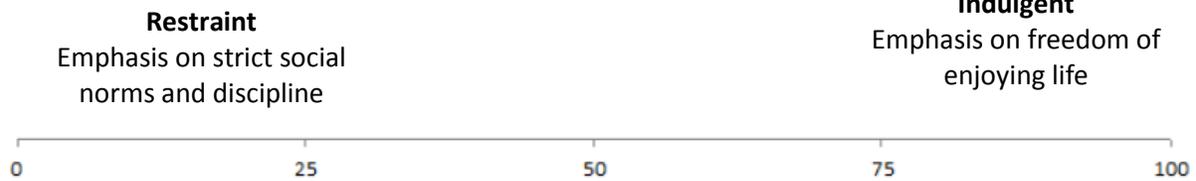
What is your score on the Uncertainty Avoidance Index? _____

Long-Term Orientation



What is your score on Long-Term Orientation? _____

Indulgence



What is your score on Indulgence? _____

Step 3: Record your preferred scores on each cultural dimension in the table provided below based on your values and feelings. Use the space provided to articulate how your personal values impact your cultural preferences.

Cultural Dimension	Preferred Scores
Power Distance Index	
Individualism versus Collectivism	
Masculinity (Competitiveness) versus Femininity (Cooperativeness)	
Uncertainty Avoidance Index	
Long-Term Orientation versus Short-Term Normative Orientation	
Indulgence versus Restraint	

A national culture unconsciously affects the behavior of the population. Your behavior is part of who you are and part of your personal brand. Being aware of your cultural preferences, your personal preferences and behavior increases opportunities to strengthen your personal brand.

Validation and Outreach

To this point you have been uncovering your own perceptions and building an awareness of yourself. Do you think others experience you the same way? Would they agree with your observations?

Branching out to gain the perspective of others can be unnerving at times. But gaining this insight is a critical part of the personal branding process. For example, if you find that your perceptions are not in alignment with the opinions of others, you will want to spend some time exploring those inconsistencies and identify ways to close those gaps.

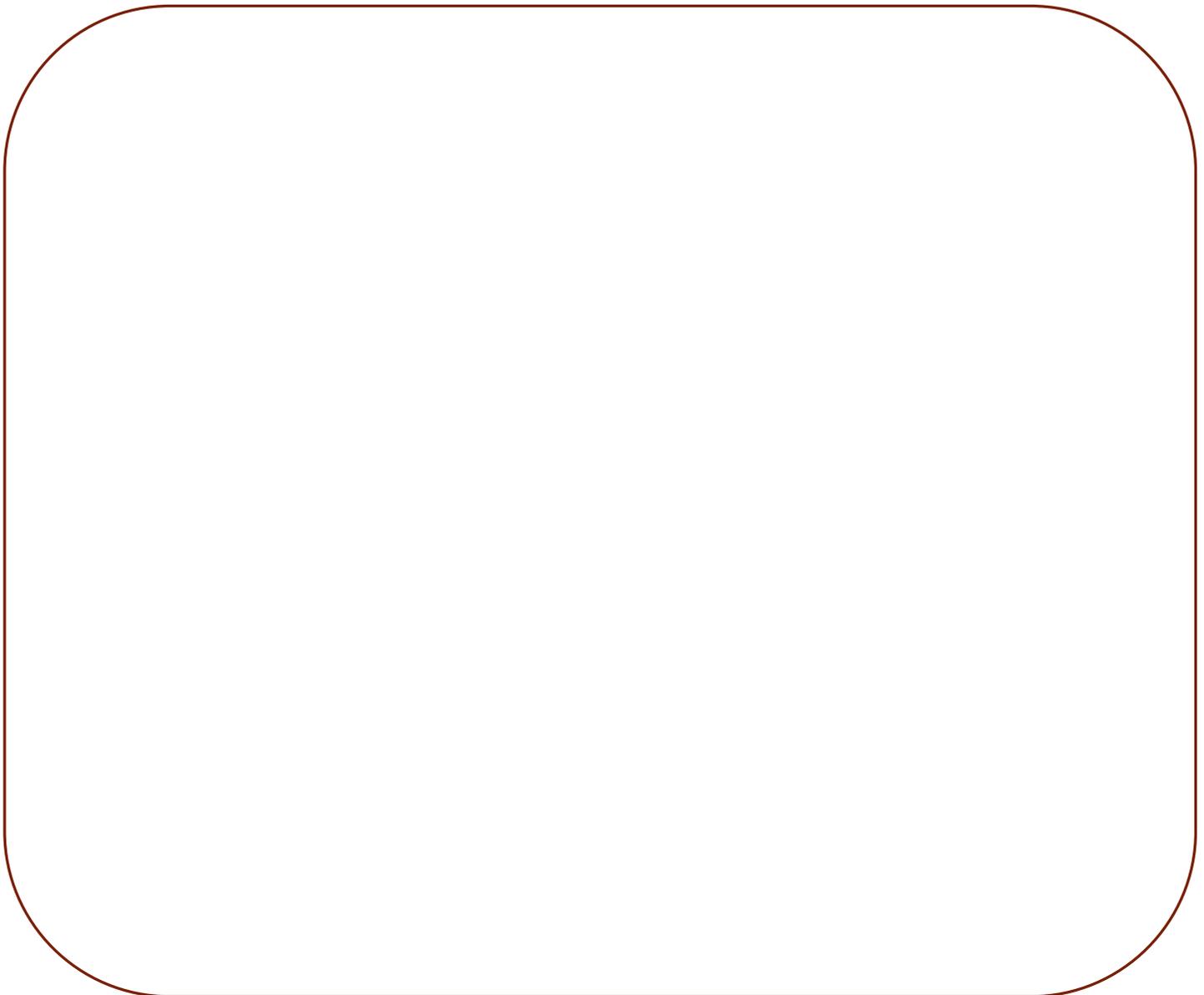
Alternatively, if you find similarities between your self-assessment and the feedback you gain in this validation process, then you can assume that your personal brand is already on the right track.

Post the following inquiry to your chosen social media site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)

“As part of a personal branding activity, I completed an exercise to help me unearth my strengths. I came up with ‘strength 1, strength 2, and strength 3.’ What do you think are my greatest strengths?”

Note: If you would prefer to collect this feedback verbally, please connect with three to five friends or family members and ask the same question.

Record your findings in the space below.



Reflect and Compare

Now that you have explored your perceptions related to your personal brand and collected external feedback, take a moment to draw comparisons identifying similar themes and contrasting messages between your perceptions of your personal brand and the observations shared with you from your family and friends.

Same	Different

Bringing it together.

1. What do you still need to work on related to your personal brand?

2. How do you plan to share your personal brand externally?

Communicate Your Personal Brand

An important aspect of building your personal brand is consistently sharing your brand with others. A personal commercial (also known as an elevator speech, personal introduction, or 30-second personal commercial) is a quick, effective way to make an impressive introduction and communicate who you are and what you are known for.

Social media has made it possible to share your personal brand with professionals around the world 24/7. With this in mind it is critical to ensure that your digital presence on various social media platforms is consistent, up-to-date, and relevant to your career goals. One strategy to support branding through digital media is to craft a summary that can be shared on LinkedIn and other professional platforms.

To craft your personal introduction and create your LinkedIn summary

1. Think about who you are.
Include your name, the school you are attending, what you are studying, and current employment.
2. What are your major accomplishments/passions/unique skills?
Refer to your skills, values, and interests identified in the previous exercises and tie meaningful connections with your contacts. What do you want them to remember about you?
3. What kind of opportunity or experience are you seeking?
This is the part that informs the other person if you are looking for a job, new opportunity, or networking only.

What is the point? A successful introduction is informative, builds confidence, reflects competence, summarizes, and makes professional connections.

30 Second Commercial Example:

"My name is Sejal Vashi and I am a freshman at Western Michigan University. Right now I have not selected a major and I am exploring many different options. I am confident I do not want to study accounting or finance, but I am open to many other areas. I am a really creative person, so I am drawn to marketing and advertising, but I also love working with people, so I want to explore human resource management. For me, the goal of being a part of the Business Externship Program is to explore these areas. This is why I am so excited to be at Haworth this week, because I will be exposed to many different areas of business and I hope to determine which area interests me the most."

LinkedIn Summary Example:

"I am a second year pre-business student at Western Michigan University with an interest in marketing, advertising and social media. Creativity has always been a strength for me and I am passionate about creating visual representations across many media to meet the vision of an organization. I truly believe in the power of positivity, honesty and a strong work ethic. With these interests, values and skills, I would like to pursue an internship opportunity where I can learn from those that can help me grow my talents in to the marketing professional I wish to become."

Use the space below to communicate your personal brand.

Personal Brand Recap

Congratulations!!! You have completed the “Introduce Your Personal Brand” portion of this workbook. Through these activities you have:

- Learned what personal branding is.
- Completed a Career Genogram to identify historical career patterns and career influencers within your family.
- Identified your passions and how they drive your decisions and actions.
- Taken the FOCUS2 Assessment and reflected upon your results.
- Pinpointed your strengths and life skills obtained through your experiences.
- Determined your top 5 personal values and defined them.
- Gained awareness of cultural dimensions and how these dimensions impact your life.
- Validated all of your information through communication with your friends and family.
- Compared and reflected on the similarities and differences of your personal perceptions and the perceptions of those close to you.
- Created your own personal brand and utilized communication strategies to get your brand out to those that need to hear it.

Now that you have created your “Personal Brand”, it is time to move on to the development of your “Professional Brand.” This process will take your personal brand to the next level and, if done right, open networking opportunities you never thought possible. Join us in the second-part of this three-part series to “Launch Your Professional Brand.”

Part 2

Launch Your Professional Brand

Definition of Professional Branding

What is professional branding?

A professional brand helps to communicate the essence of who you are in the workplace. Your professional brand reflects your professional reputation. When you think about your professional brand, think about what you would like to be known for related to your career and professional behavior.

Transitioning your personal brand to a professional brand is not something that can be achieved overnight. Professional branding requires a great deal of time and energy to ensure your messaging is consistent with your values, interests, and work life. When done right, your professional reputation should speak to your work ethic, credibility, and dependability. Your brand should be consistent across all messaging media and shared with various stakeholders.

Part two, “Launch Your Professional Brand,” walks you through a series of self-paced activities that help align your personal brand with your ideal career and professional goals.

Activities include:

- **Personal Brand Audit** – audit your social media to verify all internet information is accurate and appropriate for the work place.
- **Professional Purpose Reflection** – visualize your life and career purpose through a guided exercise of personal and professional reflection.
- **Target Audience Alignment** – ensure you communicate your professional brand to the right people, at the right time, using the right method(s).
- **Skills Alignment** – translate your top five life skills to work skills.
- **Values Alignment** – adapt your top five personal values to communicate your professional values.
- **Cultural Intelligence** – apply cultural knowledge and skills to compare cultural elements of your home country and a country of your choice.
- **Differentiate Activity** – identify what makes you a unique candidate for your professional goals compared to your peers.
- **Validate and Outreach** – hear from professional connections to confirm and validate your professional image.
- **Communicate Your Professional Brand** – utilize various communication strategies to share your professional brand externally.

Personal Brand Audit

The purpose of the personal brand social media audit is to verify that all social media information available to the public represents you in the most personable and professional way. Follow these steps to verify your social media presence is safe for the workplace.

Google Search Activities

Google search your name. In the space provided below, write what you found.

Google search your name + city/town you live in. In the space provided below, write what you found.

Google search your current and past e-mail addresses. In the space provided below, write what you found.

Check your social media usage on ALL social media outlets you have used. The “Facebook” Review provided below is just the beginning. Audit every social media site you have previously used for this process. Use the table provided below to conduct your audits for each social media site.

“Facebook” Review	Instructions	Fixed	Need to Fix
Pictures	Check pictures on all social media sites. If you find inappropriate pictures, delete them.		
Privacy settings	Check and set/reset privacy settings on all social media accounts you have EVER used.		
Comments made	Delete any negative comments previously made on all social media sites.		
Posts by me	Delete any inappropriate posts that might include foul language or hate messaging.		
Posts from others	Monitor posts where others have tagged you. Ensure these posts/pictures are appropriate.		
Uploaded videos	Delete any videos that may be deemed professionally inappropriate.		
Application or game posts	Delete or hide application or gaming posts that may automatically post on social media sites.		
Groups affiliations	If you are not actively participating in a group, leave it.		
Contacts or friends	Unfriend individuals who may say or do inappropriate things on social media.		

Purpose and Guided Visualization

Exploring your purpose as it relates to your professional life helps you align your internal vision with your professional goals.

Pinpointing clear values and creating intentional action plans to achieve your goals will support your professional brand and connect that brand with your vision for your future self.

Guided Visualization Description

It is important to think about the future that you want to create. What do you want to experience? What do you want to accomplish? Who do you want to impact? Spending time focusing on the possibilities of the future can help uncover paths and opportunities that will help you get there.

Guided visualization or imagery activities can feel a bit awkward at first, especially if you have never experienced one before. If you find that you feel uncomfortable in this exercise, please repeat the activity when you are able to approach it from an open mindset, devoid of cynicism and doubt.

Instructions

Use this activity to engage in self-guided discovery, exploring the possibilities of the future you. To get the most out of this experience and set yourself up for success, consider your environment. Choose a quiet space where you can be uninterrupted for the duration of the activity. The complete audio track is 4 minutes and 29 seconds.

Choose one of the following options to complete this activity:

Option 1:

Listen to the guided visualization audio clip provided in the tiny url link listed below.

*TIP 1: Consider using headphones to personalize the experience and connect with the audio. You are encouraged to take notes during the visualization to help you reflect later. Use the space on **page 27** to take these notes and be sure to write your thoughts in first person, "I will... I am... I have..."*

*TIP 2: We suggest that you listen to the visualization audio once through without responding to the prompts. Feel free to use the space on **page 27** to take notes if you are inclined to do so. When you listen to the audio a second time, follow the visualization prompts and record your responses on **pages 28-29**.*

To complete the exercise, consolidate your reflection on **page 30**. **Completing page 30 will finalize the activity.**

<https://tinyurl.com/yckkmqx7>

Option 2:

Read the guided purpose questions provided on **pages 28-29**, pause after each question to record your responses in the space provided.

Feel free to expound on your reflections using the space on **page 27** to take these notes and be sure to write your thoughts in first person, "I will.... I am... I have..."

After completing the visualization prompts, respond to the provided questions on **page 30** to fully reflect on your vision for your future. **Completing page 30 will finalize the activity.**

Notes:

Be sure to write your thoughts in first person, with an active voice, as though you were telling the story to another person right now. *"I am..." "I have..." "I will..."*

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thin brown border, intended for writing notes. The box is centered on the page and occupies most of the vertical space below the instructions.

Visualization Prompts

Pause after each question to record your responses.

Congratulations! You have graduated from college and are about to start your first day in your new job. What will you wear to work?

How long is your commute to this new job?

What will your mode of transportation be?

On your way to work, you see many things. What do you see on your commute?

What about the setting of this place you are headed to? Are we in the city? Maybe out in the country? Possibly a small town?

You've arrived. From the exterior, what does this place look like?

As you enter this place of work, what does it look like from the inside?

How many people work here? What are they wearing?

Where is your work station located? Maybe in an office or are you working with many people in a larger area?

As you arrive to your station, what is your first work task of the day?

(AUDIO WILL PAUSE FOR REFLECTION)

Fast forward 10 years... In your e-mail, you receive an invitation to your high school reunion. A lot has happened since you last saw your classmates. You stop to reflect on the many changes that have occurred over the past 10 years. You are mentally and emotionally preparing yourself for the conversations you will have with your classmates and friends. You are eager to share your achievements that gave you the great sense of accomplishment. You are eager to share what you are doing now and what you hope to do in the next five years.

You reflect back on that first full-time job you had after college. Were you ready?

Remember getting your own place and realizing all the freedom that you had and all the bills that were now yours to pay.

Perhaps you are in a committed relationship. Married? Family? Or maybe you are considering the possibilities. What are you looking forward to sharing about your life?

What have you learned from negotiating and navigating life, work and the world?

What is your job now? Has it changed over the last 10 years?

What impact are you having on those around you in this role and at home?

What is next for you that will create the impact you hope to have on your work, life and the world?

Reflect on your purpose.

Think of purpose as the “why” you do the things that you do. When you have purpose, you are intentional about your goals and actions. When you know your purpose, you are often more satisfied because you know what you are working toward. Now that you have done the guided visualization exercise, consider the following questions and write your responses in the corresponding boxes.

Start to discover your purpose by reflecting on the past. When was a time you felt truly invigorated by a school/work project, experience or role? Note: This does not have to be your proudest or most accomplished moment. It can be things that simply just made you feel good.

When have you felt best in your professional life?

How did you positively impact the lives of others? Keep in mind this can mean individual or groups of people.

What was your impact?

Why do you exist?

Thinking of the answers above, what is your purpose?

Target Audience Alignment

A target audience is a particular group of people, identified as the intended recipient of a specific message, service, product, or professional interaction.

Who is your target audience?

Shifting your personal brand to a professional brand requires a thorough evaluation to identify your target audience – the right people whom you want to professionally connect. This process helps to transition your communication efforts from family and friends to focus on consistent messaging aimed at employers, recruiters, professors, alumni, co-workers and future networking connections.

Professional branding is all about communicating your brand to the right people, at the right moment, in the right medium.

Identify your target audience.

1. What primary professional industry or career area interests you?
2. Where is your target audience located?
3. How can your professional brand help or support your target audience?
4. Who else is competing for your audience's loyalty or devotion?
5. Are you targeting business or consumer sectors?

Target audience description.

Think about and describe your target audience based on their demographics (age, gender, income level, family influencers, etc.). What have you done that makes you credible in the eyes of your target audience?

Find a job description on LinkedIn or Handshake that interests you and also incorporates your target audience. You will use this job description again in future activities throughout this workbook.

Skills Alignment (Life Skills to Work Skills)

While you use many skills in life, you won't always use all of your life skills at work. This exercise will help you to identify transferrable work related skills that you use with confidence. To begin, review the life skills you listed from the exercise in part one on **page 11**. List your top five life skills in the space below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Using the transferable skills listed below, circle the work skills listed below as they relate to your life skills.

Key Transferable Skills

Cultural intelligence
Instruct others
Manage money, budget
Manage people
Meet deadlines

Meet the public
Negotiate
Organize/manage projects
Public speaking
Written communication skills

Skills Working with Things

Assemble things
Build things
Construct/repair
Drive/operate vehicles
Good with hands

Observe/inspect
Operate tools/machines
Repair things
Use complex equipment

Skills Working with Data

Analyze data
Audit records
Budget
Calculate/compute
Check for accuracy
Classify things
Compare
Compile
Count
Detail-oriented
Digital technology

Evaluate
Investigate
Keep financial records
Locate information
Manage money
Observe/inspect
Record facts
Research
Synthesize
Take inventory

Creative Skills

Artistic
Athletic
Competitive
Dance, body movement
Drawing, art

Expressive
Perform
Present creative ideas
Team player

Skills Working with People

Administer
Advise
Care For
Coach
Confront others
Counsel people
Demonstrate
Help others
Instruct
Interview people
Fair
Listen
Negotiate

Outgoing with people
Patient
Perceptive
Persuade
Pleasant
Sensitive
Sociable
Supervise
Tactful
Tolerant
Tough
Trusting
Understanding

Skills Working with Words/Ideas

Articulate
Communicate verbally
Correspond with others
Create new ideas
Design
Edit
Ingenious

Inventive
Library/internet research
Logical
Public Speaking
Remember information
Write clearly

Leadership Skills

Arrange social functions
Competitive
Decisive
Direct others
Explain things to others
Influence others
Initiate new tasks
Make decisions
Manage or direct others

Mediate problems
Motivate people
Negotiate agreements
Plan events
Results-oriented
Risk-taker
Run meetings
Self-confident
Self-motivated
Solve Problems

List 5 skills that you consider to be your “best” transferable skills. Provide an example of a time you used this skill or include an opportunity to utilize this skill at work.

Work Skill	Experience

Values Alignment (Personal Values to Work Values)

Similarly, your personal values may not always be represented at work. However, you will have more career fulfillment and satisfaction if you can align your personal values to your work values as much as possible. Review the personal values you listed from the exercise in part one on **page 12**. List your top five values in the space below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Translate your personal values to identify your work values.

- Go through the list of work values provided below and eliminate words that don't relate to your personal values or resonate with you in the world of work.
- Go through the list again and place a check mark next to the work values that are important to you. If you feel that a value is missing, please add that value to the list and indicate it with a checkmark.
- Go through the short list of values you checked and from that list, compare the work values that are marked with a check with your top five personal values listed above and pick your top five work values.
- Once you've identified your top five work values, the values that you consider to be non-negotiable and necessary for you to be content at work, list them in the following table and define each value for what it means to you in your career.

Achievement	Economic Security	Personal Development
Advancement	Emotional Wellbeing	Physical Activity
Aesthetics	Flexible Work Schedule	Physical Prowess
Altruism	Gratification	Prestige
Artistic Expression	Harmony	Problem Solving
Authority	Helping Others	Recognition
Autonomy	Helping Society	Relationship
Benefits (insurance, retirement)	Honesty	Respect
Challenge	Independence	Risk
Collaboration	Influence	Social Interaction
Community	Innovation	Social Relations
Communication	Integrity	Support
Compensation	Job Security	Sustainability
Creativity	Justice	Utilizing Your Skills and Background
Cultural Identity	Leadership	Variety
Dignity	Leisure	Work Ethic
Diversity/Inclusion	Lifestyle	Working Conditions
Economic Rewards	Loyalty	

Work Value	Definition in Action (what does it look like at work)

Cultural Intelligence

What is Cultural Intelligence (CQ)?

The concept of Cultural Intelligence is the ability to interact effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds. Similar to other forms of intelligence (social, emotional), Cultural Intelligence contains many different facets. It allows you to recognize cultural differences through skills, knowledge, and mindfulness while ensuring the ability to act appropriately across cultures.

Cultural Elements

When working together in a multicultural environment, there are important elements to keep in mind to ensure an effective way of working together. These cultural elements are in addition to the national cultural dimensions used previously in the personal branding section of this workbook. **Please ensure that you read the explanations of the cultural elements in the appendix on pages 67-68 before continuing to the exercises.**

- Context Communication
- Time Management
- Behavioral Categories

Essential Cultural Skills

In addition to being mindful of the cultural elements, you should also focus on certain skills that are important to increase your CQ.

- Be non-judgmental of others' behavior
- Be open-minded to other ideas and perspectives
- Be resourceful in factual knowledge about culture
- Be actively listening to other's messages
- Be attentively observing others' body-language and responses
- Be patient in understanding others
- Be empathetic toward others' feelings and thoughts
- Be respectful toward others' culture

Cultural Comparison Scenario

In part 1 'Introduce your Personal Brand', you researched and identified your home country's score on the national cultural dimensions. In the next exercise, steps 1 and 2 will prompt you to make a comparison of your home country's scores to the scores of another culture to assist in building your Cultural Intelligence.

Step 1: Search the scores of a country of interest, where you have been on vacation, where you want to study abroad, want to work, live, etc. Fill in these scores next to your home country's score.

<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/>

Follow the link and enter your home country and your country of interest. Read the country specific explanations of each score and record your findings in the table below.

Take some time to discover what the differences in the scores really mean. This analysis could indicate possible cultural differences.

Cultural Dimension Name of Country	Home Country	Country of Choice
Power Distance Index		
Individualism versus Collectivism		
Masculinity (Competitiveness) versus Femininity (Cooperativeness)		
Uncertainty Avoidance Index		
Long-Term Orientation versus Short-Term Normative Orientation		
Indulgence versus Restraint		

Step 2: Answer scenario questions.

Imagine that you, with your own cultural values, need to work on a project in your home country with a person from the country of choice listed in the table above; keep their cultural values in mind as you answer each question.

1. What are the two countries in your scenario?

2. What are the notable differences in the scores on national culture?

3. How could these cultural differences impact your success in working together? Do you see any potential pitfalls?

4. List possible solutions for the potential pitfalls identified in question 3.

5. How do you think the listed cultural elements, defined in the appendix on **pages 67-68**, could impact your communication, time management, and reactions while working together?

Step 3: Create an intentional interaction with someone of a different culture.

In the previous two steps, you have acquired more knowledge to build your Cultural Intelligence. You created awareness and learned about cultural elements and skills. Now it is time to apply your cultural intelligence and use your cultural skills in a real life situation. Start an interaction with someone of a different background and culture.

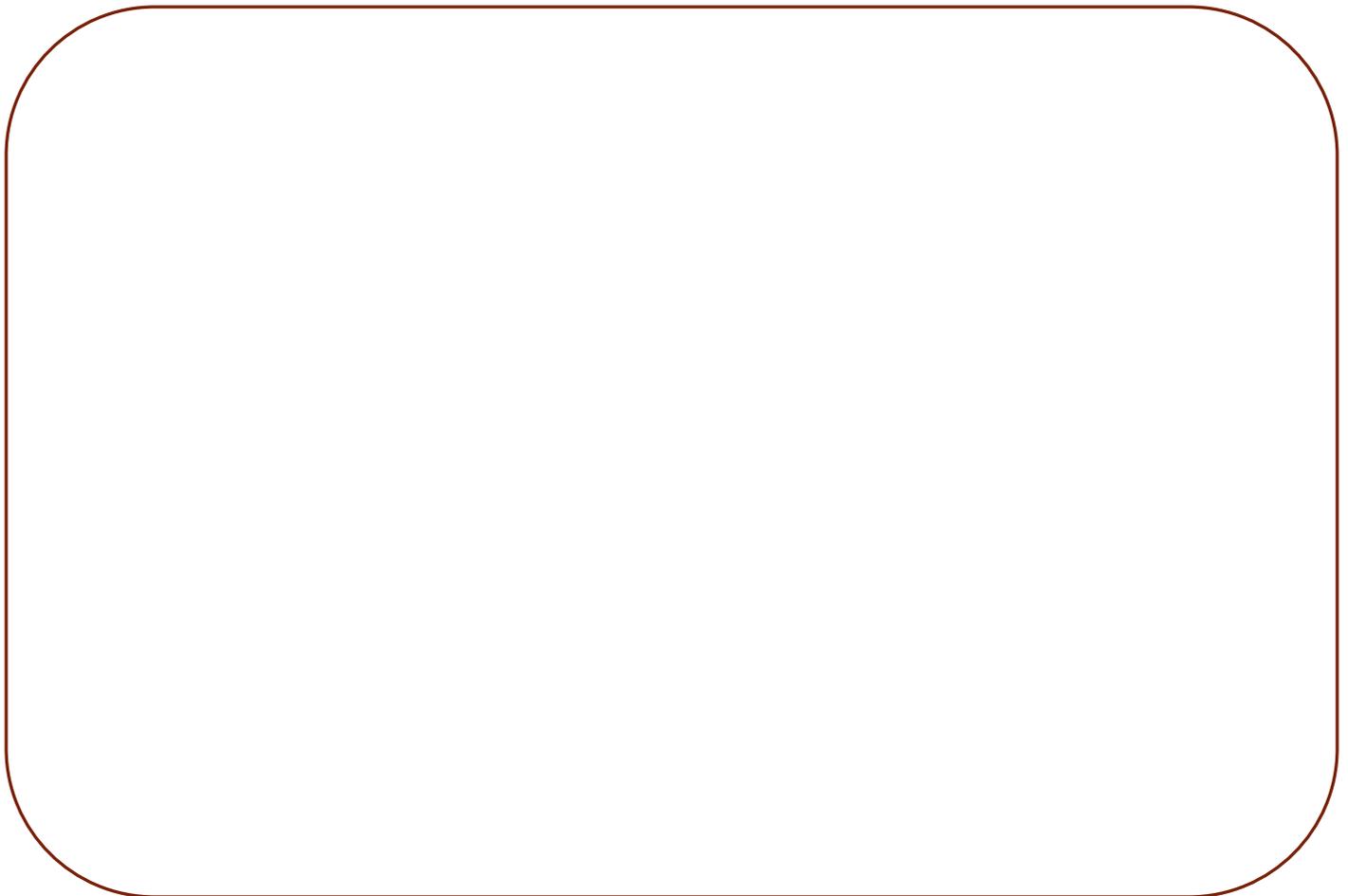
Experiences that support authentic multicultural interactions

- School events
- International student organizations
- Sports
- Religious gatherings
- Classmates/Coworkers
- Travel to different places

Before you start a conversation, please prepare, research general cultural dimensions, and think about the things that you will be saying or asking. Try to be mindful and, most importantly, have respect for others' culture. Being open-minded and listening actively are essential skills for this exercise. Also, be reflective on your behavior during and after the interaction.

Look back in the appendix on page 69 to find tips for navigating cultural conversations, including: introductions, potential topics, and questions to guide cultural conversations.

Step 4: Shortly describe the interaction. How did you use your CQ and skills? What did you learn or notice about their culture? Also explain which skills you need to improve to better prepare you for your next multicultural interaction.



Future Development of Cultural Intelligence

Developing Cultural Intelligence is a continuous learning cycle. You need to invest a great deal of time and effort to ensure that you are consistently mindful, nonjudgmental, and open minded to allow yourself to improve your CQ. In general, there are three methods to continue cultural learning:

Factual or formal training: reading books, online articles, assessments, lectures, and training regarding cultures.

Reflective analysis: films, cultural simulations (like the scenario on **page 38**), multicultural experiences, and situations.

Experiential learning: study abroad, internships, intern or work abroad, traveling, make international friends, and work on multicultural teams.

Step 5: Create a development plan utilizing these and other methods to increase your Cultural Intelligence.

Actions to Enhance Your Cultural Intelligence

The more time you put into your cultural intelligence, the better you will be able to effectively interact with people from different backgrounds. Interacting with people from other cultures supports your communication skills and strengthens your professional brand by fostering a global perspective.

Differentiate

How are you the same? How are you different?

Professional branding is a valuable way to identify and highlight what sets you apart from those who have the same or similar goals as you.

Take some time to explore your professional network to identify your peers and competitors. What do you have in common with one another? What makes you unique?

Use the space below to list the commonalities and differences between you and your peers.

Same	Different

Keeping your purpose and target audience in mind, how do your work skills and work values make you a unique candidate, differentiating you from the competition?

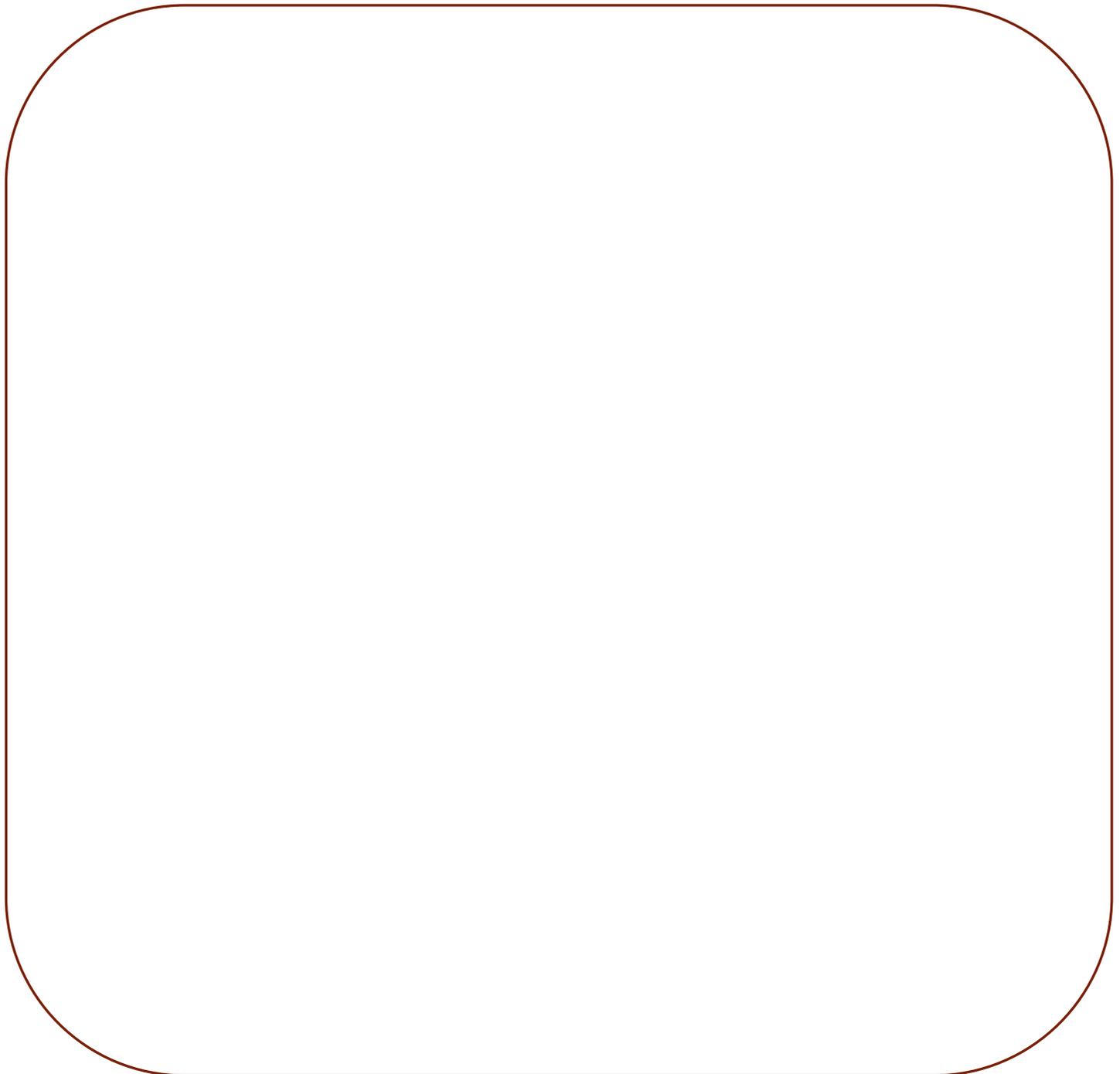
Validation and Outreach

Now that you have taken some time to explore your professional goals, identify your target audience, translate your skills into transferable work skills, and thought about your unique promise of value, reach out to your professors, employers, co-workers, and others in your professional branding community to inquire about their thoughts related to what differentiates you from others.

You can do this in person, via email, or through social media. We encourage you to approach this validation process in whichever way you think you will get the most honest responses.

Ask

“I am translating my personal brand to best reflect my professional image and effectively communicate who I am in the world of work. What do you think sets me apart uniquely from my professional peers?”



Reflect and Compare

Now that you have explored perceptions related to your professional brand, and you have collected external feedback, take a moment to draw comparisons identifying similar themes and contrasting messages between your perceptions of your professional brand and the observations shared with you from your professional connections.

Same	Different

Bringing it together.

1. What do you still need to work on related to your professional brand?
2. Where do you plan to share your professional brand externally?
3. Reflect on your responses through part two of this workbook, how will this information support your efforts in navigating the job search process?

Communicate Your Professional Brand

What do you want to be known for in the world of work?

Your professional brand is the authentic representation of who you are as a person and how others perceive you when they interact with you. It highlights your strengths, passions, values, interests, and connects these qualities to the work that you do. Your professional brand communicates what others can expect as a result of knowing and working with you professionally. Follow the steps below to turn your personal brand into a professional brand.

Re-write your personal brand found on page 21 in the space provided below.

Incorporate what you learned about your professional brand through the activities provided in part two of this workbook. Use examples to back up what you say make you exceptional. Remember, you are telling a story—one that will captivate its readers.

Example:

"I am a senior at Western Michigan University majoring in Human Resource Management in the Haworth College of Business. I have had the extraordinary opportunity of interning at Bronson Hospital in the compensation and benefits department and at Stryker Medical with the training and development team. Both experiences have helped to galvanize my interest in helping others reach their career potential from a human resource perspective. I have strong communication skills and excel at classroom instruction, public speaking and interviewing tactics. Collaboration, autonomy and building a sense of community at work are values that appeal to me. I am looking to leverage my internship and classroom experiences into a full time human resource position where I can improve my talents and fulfill my passion for helping others achieve their career goals."

Write your professional brand in the space provided below.

Validate

Take a look at your professional brand and make sure it is:

Relevant
Memorable

Easy to understand
Differentiated

Compelling
Authentic

Once you have refined your professional brand, test it out with friends, peers, professors, mentors, etc. to get their opinions and make any further edits. Now, with your final version, you can:

- Post it to social networking sites to increase your online brand—this will help increase volume and relevance of your online content.
- Use it when applying for internships, volunteer roles, and jobs.
- Post it in a place where you can read it regularly as a reminder of who you are and what makes you exceptional.
- Remember to update your professional brand each time you complete something new and relevant.

Professional Brand Recap

Congratulations!!! You have completed the “Professional Branding” portion of this workbook. Through the completion of this section you have:

- Learned what professional branding is.
- Conducted a social media audit to verify all internet information is accurate and safe for the work place.
- Reflected on your life and career purpose.
- Participated in a guided visualization to explore your vision of what your future may hold in terms of career.
- Identified your target audience.
- Aligned your life skills with your work skills to find your top 5 transferable skills.
- Adapted your personal values with work in mind to find your top 5 work values.
- Built cultural intelligence by comparing cultural elements of your home country and a country of your choice.
- Established differentiation from your peers by comparing what you have learned about yourself with what you know about your peers.
- Communicated with coworkers and peers to validate your professional image.
- Created your own professional brand and utilized communication strategies to get your brand out to those that need to hear it.

Are you ready for more?

If you are currently completing your undergraduate degree and still seeking professional experience aligned with your career interests and goals, we encourage you to use the checklist provided below as helpful reminders in navigating the job search process:

- Review your personal and professional goals and responses to the activities in parts 1 and 2 of this workbook.
- Create and update your professional summary on all social media accounts, especially on LinkedIn, to communicate your career goals with those in your industry and professional network.
- Construct and update a professional resume and have it reviewed by professional staff, faculty, and peers within your industry.
- More thoroughly research your field of interest. Use your responses in this workbook to identify an industry, a group of companies, or a niche area that would be a good fit for your experience to help fill a gap in your work experience. We strongly encourage you to utilize Handshake and O*Net in this process.
- Join a professional association to network with like-minded professionals in your industry.
- Practice your interviewing skills utilizing Big Interview (tap in to interview questions specific to your industry, a competency area, or your level of experience).
- Participate in on- and off-campus networking and recruiting opportunities.
- Request informational interviews with professionals.
- Start applying to employers of interest. Make sure your professional documents are up-to-date and specific for each application you submit.
- Keep a positive and healthy perspective. Remember that your coursework, activities, and other areas of life are just as important as your job search. You will find your opportunity.

If you are currently a graduate student or a student who has significant (3-5 years) of professional experience, we invite you to go one step further! Part three will transform your personal and professional brand into an executive approach, completing your branding series, articulating your executive brand.

Part 3

Articulate Your Executive Brand

Definition of Executive Branding

What is executive branding?

Executive branding is the process of aligning your professional brand with an organizational brand through reputation management - the influence and management of an individual or group reputation. This process guides individual professional brand alignment with an organizational brand to support and communicate mutually beneficial messaging.

Activities include:

- **Professional Brand Audit** – verify that all social media information available to the public represents you in the most personable and professional way.
- **Career Timeline** – define a theme (common linkages) of strengths, and interests to show past career choices and any patterns that may exist.
- **360° Review and Feedback** – explore what other “professionals” think of you at work.
- **Validate and Differentiate** – distinguish the commonalities and differences between how you perceive yourself and how others perceive you.
- **Get Involved** – identify philanthropic options that will be most meaningful to you, and commit to giving back.
- **Company Overview** – identify key aspects of your organizations (or target organizations) current branding initiatives, mission, values, vision and strengths.
- **Cross-Cultural Management** – compare and reflect on the similarities and differences of your personal perceptions and the perceptions of those close to you.
- **Target Audience Alignment Revisited** – ensure you communicate your executive brand (your professional brand combined with an organizational brand) to the right people, at the right time, using the right methods.
- **Communicate Your Executive Brand** – utilize various communication strategies to share your executive brand internally and externally.

Professional Brand Audit

The purpose of the professional brand social media audit is to verify that all social media information available to the public represents you in the most personable and professional way. Follow these steps to verify your social media presence is safe for the workplace. This is a repeat of the personal brand audit you have already completed. It is important to re-verify these points. Your original personal branding messages may have changed as a result of your personal brand audit.

Google Search Activities

Google search your name. In the space provided below, write what you found.

Google search your name + city/town you live in. In the space provided below, write what you found.

Google search your current and past e-mail addresses. In the space provided below, write what you found.

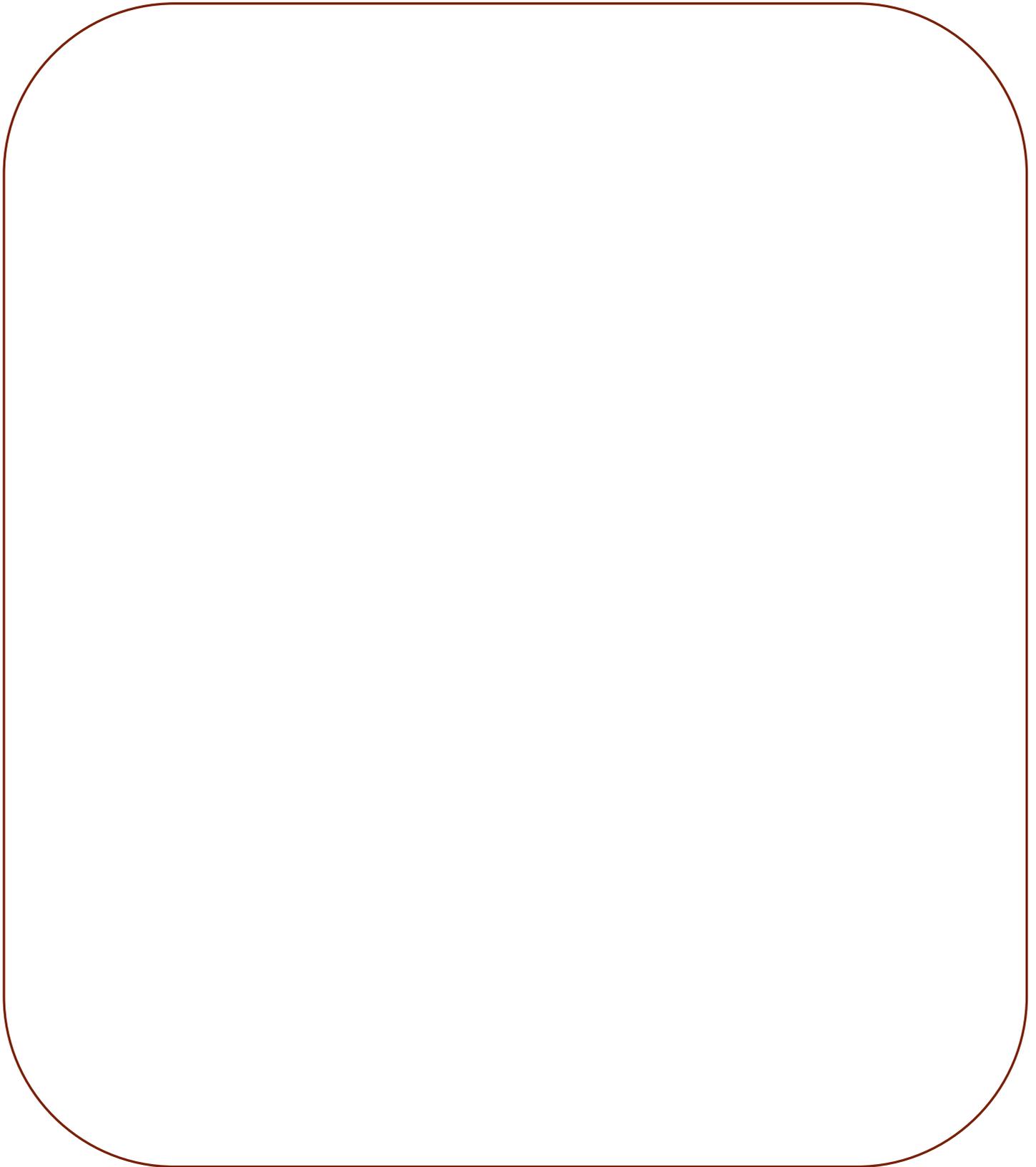
Check your social media usage on ALL social media outlets you have used. The “Facebook” Review provided below is just the beginning. Audit every social media site you have previously used for this process. Use the table provided below to conduct your audits for each social media site.

“Facebook” Review	Instructions	Fixed	Need to Fix
Pictures	Check pictures on all social media sites. If you find inappropriate pictures, delete them.		
Privacy settings	Check and set/reset privacy settings on all social media accounts you have EVER used.		
Comments made	Delete any negative comments previously made on all social media sites.		
Posts by me	Delete any inappropriate posts that might include foul language or hate messaging.		
Posts from others	Monitor posts where others have tagged you. Ensure these posts/pictures are appropriate.		
Uploaded videos	Delete any videos that may be deemed professionally inappropriate.		
Application or game posts	Delete or hide application or gaming posts that may automatically post on social media sites.		
Groups affiliations	If you are not actively participating in a group, leave it.		
Contacts or friends	Unfriend individuals who may say or do inappropriate things on social media.		

Career Timeline

Document your work and volunteer timeline starting with your very first job through present day. Leave nothing out. Look for common themes, linkages, work experiences, strengths, and interests.

What does this career timeline tell you about your work history and any patterns that may exist?

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a dark red border, intended for the user to write their career timeline. The box is centered on the page and occupies most of the lower half of the document.

360° Review and Feedback

The 360° review and feedback activity is an opportunity to reach out, formally, to others whose opinions matter to you to get feedback about you at work.

360° Reach Instructions

You will need at least 10 points of contact to finish the 360° assessment. You will also have a 15 day timeframe after you launch your survey to receive feedback from the 10 points of contact you have provided in order to incur no cost. Please ensure your contacts are aware of this timeframe. You can let your contacts know it will take them no longer than 15 minutes to fill out your survey.

Choosing your Contacts

Remember, this is executive branding. Your purpose in completing this portion of your executive brand is to find out what other “professionals” think of you at work. It is important to choose current and previous co-workers, bosses and peers that have shared in your career journey in order for you to receive the most helpful feedback. It never hurts to let those you select know that they will be receiving your request.

360° Reach Signup/In Instructions

- Go to <https://www.reachcc.com/360° reach>.
- Click on 360° Reach Basic.
- Click on “Get your free 15 day password NOW!”
- Enter your e-mail address in the space provided.
- Create your own password and sign in.
- At the top of the page you will see a “Do this first” drop down menu. In that menu select “Customize your survey.” Fill this page out entirely.
- Under the heading “Complete Self Survey” at the top of the page, select “Perform your Self Survey.” Fill this page out entirely and hit save.
- Under the heading “Request Feedback” at the top of the page, select “Add Respondents to your Survey.” Upload no less than 10 e-mail addresses. You may also use LinkedIn or Facebook to obtain 10 or more contacts.
- Once you have uploaded at least 10 contacts, select “Send the survey to your respondents” found under the “Request Feedback” tab at the top of the page.
- The responses you receive will be anonymous. You can view these responses by selecting the “See a Summary of Responses” option under the “Manage Feedback” tab.

Use the space provided below to capture your findings from the 360° summary of responses and feedback you receive.



Validate and Differentiate

How are you perceived by others? If done correctly, the 360° review process can be very eye opening and extraordinarily valuable. Are the perceptions others have of you the same as your own, or are they different?

In the space below, list the commonalities and differences between how you perceive yourself and how others perceive you.

Same	Different

Executive branding is a valuable way to identify and highlight what sets you apart from those who have the same or similar goals as you. **Think about your peers or competitors. What do they have in common with one another? What do they have in common with you? What makes you unique?**

Tell me a little about yourself?

Get Involved

Build Your Brand and Make an Impact

Giving back is an outward expression of your values and purpose. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate your superior skills. Giving back is good for society, it's empowering and inspiring for you and those you will influence and it is an important part of successful branding! In this exercise, you'll identify philanthropic opportunities to give back that will be most meaningful to you.

Document

Clarifying your unique strengths, values, passions, and purpose gives you great direction and criteria for what to say "yes" to and what to say "no" to when faced with the many opportunities and requests you will encounter over a lifetime. Let the work you have done to this point in your branding journey be your guide to choosing how you will use your time. Use this giving back opportunity to:

- Showcase a strength
- Develop a new skill
- Align with your values
- Employ your passions
- Fulfill your purpose

Refine

Use the questions below to help you begin to find a cause that's right for you.

Passions: Think about your passions. Think about what type of cause might connect with those passions. What organizations may align with those causes?

Skills and Strengths: Which of the superior skills you have identified would you like to showcase? Which skill was missing that you'd like to build?

Values: Look at your values. Which cause(s) might connect with those values?

Goals: What is your goal for your next step in your career timeline? A promotion? A new job? A career change?

Purpose: What experiences, life events, and opportunities might move you toward your internal vision?

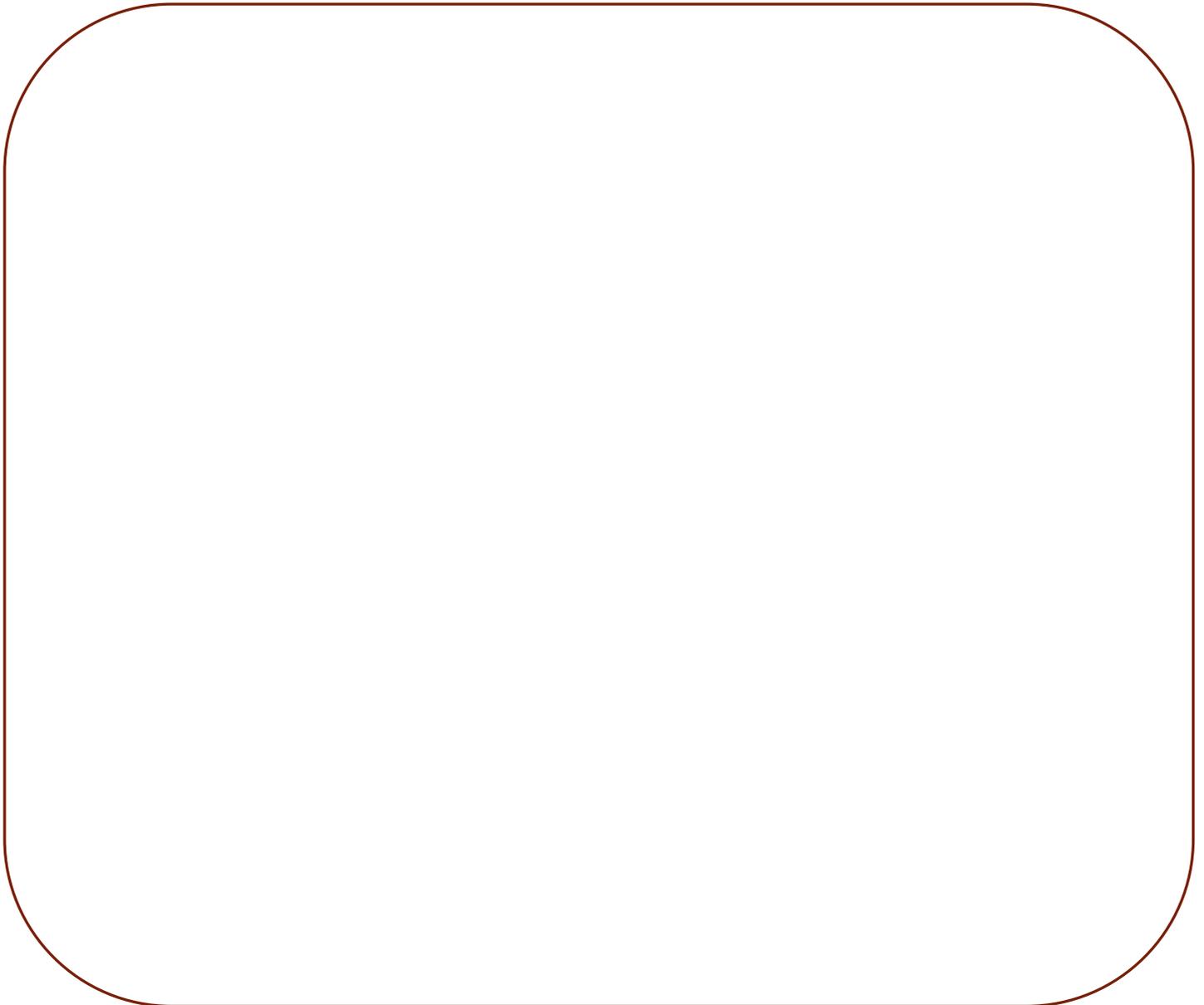
Note: examples of *Build Your Brand* can be seen in the resource section of this workbook on page 73.

Validate

Now it's time to act. Commit to at least one action below to get you started on your road to giving back.

- Check websites and phone or tablet applications for opportunities based on interests, causes, needs, skills, and locations that are in alignment with your values, purpose, passions, potential roles, and goals outlined in the previous exercises.
- Call or visit the organizations that sound like the best fit.
- Volunteer for a day, a project, or a week to gift your service and test the fit with the volunteer opportunity. Even if it turns out not to be the best fit for you, both you and those receiving your service will have benefitted and it will get you one step closer to clarifying what you want to do.
- Check your state and city website for additional opportunities in your area. Many large employers have volunteer programs that can also link you to opportunities that will be a fit for your interests. Do some homework on an employer you'd like to work for and see if they have volunteer opportunities that you can join.

Reflect on the document, refine, and validate process you have just completed. What did you learn?



Company Overview

Write your current or previous employer's mission statement, company values and vision for the future in the space provided below. Circle or highlight the values, goals and other adjectives that you share with this company. Put an "X" through the words you have written that are not shared values, goals and adjectives.

Identify any marketing and advertising outlets your organization uses to communicate and share its' mission statement, company values, and vision for the future.

What did this exercise tell you?

Are you a positive influencer on your company's executive brand? If so, how? If not, why?

Cross-Cultural Management

What defines a cross-cultural manager/executive?

Due to globalization in the work environment, there can be a lot of cultural diversity in the work force. As a person, manager, or executive you need to be able to work with everyone regardless of their background, perhaps manage a multicultural team or lead a bigger group of employees. This requires you to combine your knowledge, skills and cultural intelligence.

Professional Cultural Factors

Listed below are important topics that provide valuable insight when managing people from different cultures. Prioritization of these factors differ per situation and team formation. **Please ensure that you read the explanations of the professional cultural factors and related questions per factor in the appendix on pages 70-71 before continuing to the exercises.**

- Individualistic/Collectivistic
- Equality
- Time Perception
- Communication
- Expressiveness
- Religion

Bringing It All Together

The purpose of this exercise is to bring all exercises and content about culture together in a potential real life working scenario. Here is the scenario:

You are working in a multicultural department and managing a culturally diverse team. Create a team with you and three people from three different countries and cultures.

Step 1: Search and compare Hofstede’s Model for all individuals on your team. List the countries of choice and corresponding scores in the table below.

Following the link and entering your countries will give you the results. Read the country specific explanations of the scores below the figure on the website.

<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/>

Cultural Dimension	You	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3
Name of country:				
Power Distance Index				
Individualism versus Collectivism				
Masculinity (Competitiveness) versus Femininity (Cooperativeness)				
Uncertainty Avoidance Index				
Long-Term Orientation versus Short-Term Normative Orientation				
Indulgence versus Restraint				

Note the differences in dimensions between your team members that stand out.

Step 2: How does your team score on cultural elements? List the results in the table below.

To refresh your memory, the cultural elements exercise can be found on **page 37** of this workbook and the explanations and country alignment can be found in the appendix on **pages 67-68**. Using the home countries for each of your team members, find the scores for each cultural element per member and record your findings in the table below.

Cultural Elements Name of country:	You	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3
Communication Style High or Low context				
Time Management Monochronic or Polychronic				
Behavioral Categories Linear-Active, Multi-Active or Reactive				

Note the stand out differences in cultural elements within your team.

Step 3: In your opinion, what are the most important cultural factors that may affect your team?

Explain why certain cultural factors are important in your team dynamics. The purpose is to identify why these factors are important in your team dynamics. There are no right/wrong answers and you will have to make assumptions. **The cultural factors explanations, and related questions per factor, are listed in the appendix on pages 70-71.**

List the cultural factors and explanations in the space below.

Step 4: List opposing cultural norms.

What are the opposing cultural norms that can result from the differences identified in Step 1? What could be potential conflicts based on the differences identified in Step 2? What possible problems could arise from the differences in cultural factors in Step 3?



Step 5: Think about possible solutions that can improve your team dynamics and strengthen morale. What actions can you take to support these dynamics? Think about your cultural intelligence and skills.



Step 6: Create a corporate culture map.

Use the table below to fill in the corporate culture map. List the main focus points to keep in mind while working with your multicultural team. Focus points represent a short list to be mindful of and reference when interacting with your team.

Corporate Culture Map	Focus Points
<p>National dimensions How can you use the differences in national dimensions in your corporate communication?</p>	
<p>Cultural elements How can the other cultural elements influence the way you interact with your team?</p>	
<p>Cultural factors What cultural factors are important to keep in mind while collaborating with the different cultures in your team?</p>	
<p>Potential culture differences or conflicts What answers in Step 4 are important to be mindful of while managing your team?</p>	
<p>Possible solutions How can you use your cultural intelligence and cultural skills to manage these differences?</p>	

Step 7: Create an effective communication action plan.

A communication action plan is a strategic tool that can help you to overcome cultural diversity issues in terms of effectively interacting with one another. It is important to address how you are going to deal with cultural differences among your team members.

Based on the focus points in Step 6, create a communication action plan specific to your team keeping your newly identified cultural awareness in mind. A communication action plan should include your target audience, the specific message to be delivered, timeline for communication, and delivery method.

Communication Action Plan

Target Audience Revisited

Who is your target audience?

Shifting your professional brand to an executive brand requires a thorough evaluation to identify your target audience – the right people whom you want to serve.

Professional branding is all about communicating your brand to the right people, at the right moment, in the right medium usually with the intent of growing your network and securing employment. Executive branding showcases your expertise within the organization with a purpose to illustrate what the company stands for. Let's attempt to identify your target audience by answering the following questions.

Identify your target audience.

1. With whom do you most enjoy working?
2. Describe a time that you have had success working with your target audience.
3. Do you share values and passions with your target audience?
4. Do they have a common problem for which you have a solution?
5. Describe your target audience using one or more of these: demographics, psychographics, common obstacles, values and goals.
6. Relative to your target audience, what is your point of view? How does your point of view support your target audience?
7. What have you done that makes you credible in the eyes of your target audience?
8. What is your value proposition?

Communicate Your Executive Brand

What do you want to be known for in the world of work?

Your professional brand is the authentic representation of who you are as a person and how others perceive you when they interact with you. It highlights your strengths, passions, values, interests, and connects these qualities to the work that you do. Your executive brand communicates how your professional brand aligns with the organizational brand to push positive organizational messaging forward. Follow the steps below to transform your professional brand into an executive brand.

Re-write your professional brand found on **page 44** in the space provided below.

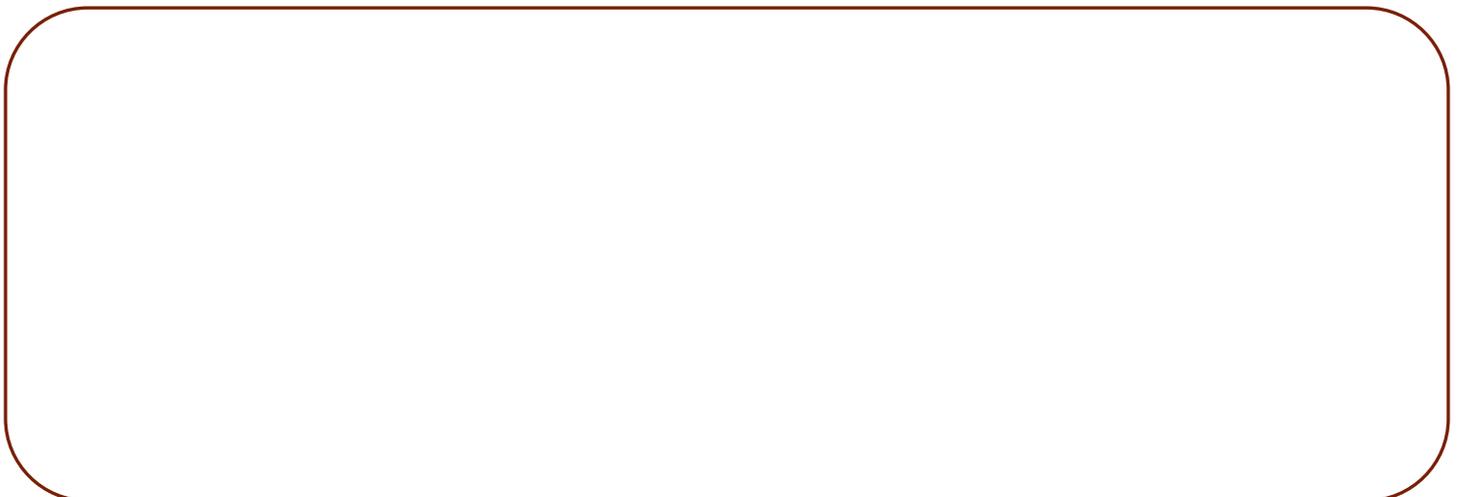


Write elements of the company mission, vision, values, goals and strengths of the organization you have identified on **page 54**. If your organization already has brand messaging, include that messaging here.



Combine elements of your professional brand with elements of your organization's brand you found above to create your unique executive branding statement below.

Write your executive brand below.



Validate

Take a look at your executive brand and make sure it is:

organizationally focused
memorable

clear and concise
differentiated

compelling
relevant

Once you have refined your executive brand, test it out with your supervisor and peers within the organization to get their opinions and make any further edits. Now, with your final version, you can:

- Use your executive brand to create social media posts and increase the brand recognition of you and your organization.
- Use your executive brand when networking with professionals in areas of interest.

Post your executive brand in a place where you can read it regularly as a reminder of who you are and what makes you exceptional.

Executive Brand Recap

Congratulations!!! You have created your executive brand and completed the branding workbook. Through these activities you have:

- Learned what executive branding and reputation management are.
- Conducted a professional brand audit to verify that all social media information available to the public represents you in the most personable and professional way.
- Found patterns and common linkages of interests and strengths which have led to past career decisions.
- Completed a 360° feedback assessment to find out what other professionals think of you at work.
- Compared and reflected on the similarities and differences of your personal perceptions and the perceptions of those who work with you.
- Discovered how you can make an impact on your community by identifying the philanthropic options that will be most meaningful to you.
- Performed a company overview to create an awareness of organizational mission, goals, values and vision.
- Identified the complexities of cross-cultural management, focusing on team dynamics and the influence of cultural differences in a team setting.
- Developed a cross-cultural map and communication plan to strengthen team morale and increase team efficiency.
- Aligned your professional brand with organizational branding to showcase your expertise within the organization with a purpose of illustrating the company brand.
- Utilized various communication strategies to support and share your executive brand.

Pulling It All Together

Branding is a never-ending process

If you have finished this book in its entirety, you have completed quite a journey. You are not done yet. Over time, you will continue to grow in experience. Your strengths, passions, values, skills and cultural awareness will change. You may develop new networks, work in different industries and face unique challenges. Embrace these new opportunities with the awareness you developed through this process. Revisit this guide when needed to update your professional and executive brands, adapting your brand to the changes you will undoubtedly face.

We sincerely hope you have discovered your unique value, and learned how to articulate that value to current and future employers. Remember, leveraging yourself against competitors requires confidence in your own self-valuation. Clients, employers, and upper level management are seeking your exclusive value.

All you have to do is own it.

Appendix

Dimensions of National Culture

The Hofstede model of national culture consists of six dimensions. The cultural dimensions represent independent preferences for one state of affairs over another that distinguish countries (rather than individuals) from each other.

The country scores on the dimensions are relative, in that we are all human and simultaneously we are all unique. In other words, culture can only be used meaningfully by comparison. The model consists of the following dimensions:

Power Distance Index (PDI)

This dimension expresses the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. The fundamental issue here is how a society handles inequalities among people.

People in societies exhibiting a large degree of Power Distance Index accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place and which needs no further justification. In societies with low Power Distance, people strive to equalize the distribution of power and demand justification for inequalities of power.

Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV)

The high side of this dimension, called Individualism, can be defined as a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves and their immediate families.

Its opposite, Collectivism, represents a preference for a tightly-knit framework in society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular in group to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. A society's position on this dimension is reflected in whether people's self-image is defined in terms of "I" or "we."

Masculinity or Competitiveness versus Femininity or Cooperativeness (MAS)

The Masculinity side of this dimension represents a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material rewards for success. Society at large is more competitive. Its opposite, Femininity, stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life. Society at large is more consensus-oriented.

In the business context Masculinity versus Femininity is sometimes also related to as "tough versus tender" cultures.

Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)

The Uncertainty Avoidance dimension expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity. The fundamental issue here is how a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known: should we try to control the future or just let it happen?

Countries exhibiting strong UAI maintain rigid codes of belief and behavior, and are intolerant of unorthodox behavior and ideas. Weak UAI societies maintain a more relaxed attitude in which practice counts more than principles.

Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Normative Orientation (LTO)

Every society has to maintain some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and the future. Societies prioritize these two existential goals differently.

Societies who score low on this dimension, for example, prefer to maintain time-honored traditions and norms while viewing societal change with suspicion.

Those with a culture which scores high, on the other hand, take a more pragmatic approach: they encourage thrift and efforts in modern education as a way to prepare for the future.

In the business context, this dimension is referred to as "(short-term) normative versus (long-term) pragmatic" (PRA).

Indulgence versus Restraint (IND)

Indulgence stands for a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human drives related to enjoying life and having fun. Restraint stands for a society that suppresses gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms.

Cultural Elements

In the list of cultural elements, there is different content and theory used. The first two elements are based on the theory from Edward T. Hall. The last cultural element was developed by Richard Lewis.

Context Communication

Low Context / Direct

Low context refers to societies where people tend to have many connections but of shorter duration or for some specific reason. In these societies, cultural behavior and beliefs may need to be spelled out explicitly so that those coming into the cultural environment know how to behave. Emphasis is on explicit/direct communication.

Examples: Western cultures; United Kingdom, United States of America, Australia, Northern Europe, Germany, the Netherlands, or Belgium.

High Context / Indirect

High context refers to societies or groups where people have close connections over a long period of time. Many aspects of cultural behavior are not made explicit because most members know what to do and what to think from years of interaction with each other. Emphasis on indirect communication.

Examples: Middle-East, Asia, or Africa.

***Note,** all other countries or places are possible hybrids, meaning to have medium context communication.

Examples: South-America, Southern Europe, Spain, Italy, Greece, Eastern Europe, Poland, Romania, or Bulgaria.

Time Management

Monochronic

Monochronic cultures prefer to do just one thing at a time. They value a certain orderliness and sense of there being an appropriate time and place for everything. They do not value interruptions. They like to concentrate on the job at hand and take time commitments very seriously.

Examples: Western cultures, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Northern Europe, Germany, the Netherlands, or Belgium.

Polychronic

Polychronic cultures prefer to do multiple things at the same time. Though they can be easily distracted, they also tend to manage interruptions well with a willingness to change plans often and easily. People are their main concern and they have a tendency to build lifetime relationships.

Examples: Middle-East, South-America, Southern Europe, Spain, Italy, Greece, or Africa

***Note,** all other countries or places are possible hybrids, meaning that they prefer a combination of these elements.

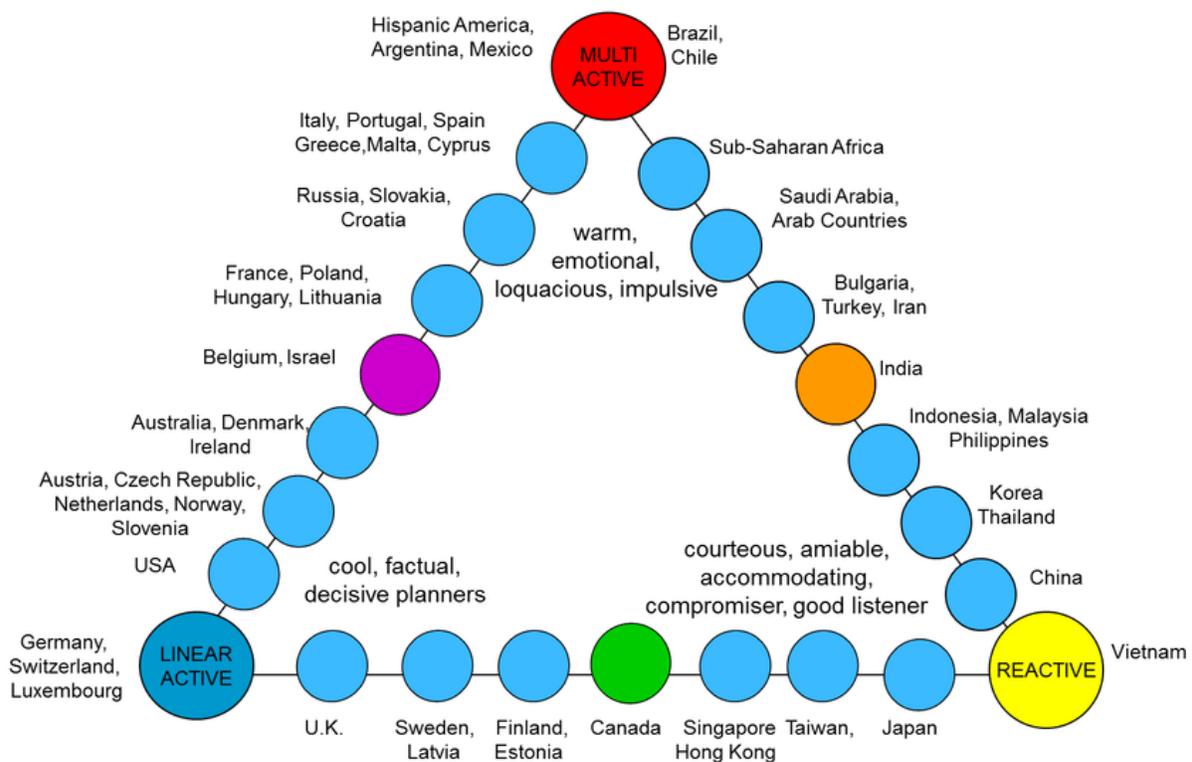
Examples: Asia, Eastern Europe, Poland, Romania, or Bulgaria.

Behavioral Categories

In this cultural element there are three cultural categories based on behavior of people. The three are Linear-Active, Multi-Active and Reactive. While the three categories are distinctive, every person possesses elements of all categories. The main question is which category is dominant. The characteristics of all categories and examples of countries per behavior category is displayed in the figures on **page 68**.

Behavioral Categories (continued)

Linear-Active	Multi-Active	Reactive
<p>Talks half the time Does one things at a time Plans ahead step-by-step Polite but direct Partly conceals feelings Confronts with logic Dislikes losing face Rarely interrupts Job-oriented Sticks to facts Truth before diplomacy Sometimes impatient Limited body language Respects officialdom Separates the social and professional</p>	<p>Talks most of the time Does several things at once Plans grand outline only Emotional Displays feelings Confronts emotionally Has good excuses Often interrupts People-oriented Feelings before facts Flexible truth Impatient Unlimited body language Seeks out key person Mixes the social and professional</p>	<p>Listens most of the time Reacts to partner's action Looks at general principles Polite, indirect Conceals feels Never confronts Must not lose face Doesn't interrupt Very people-oriented Statements are promises Diplomacy over truth Patient Subtle body language Uses connections Connects the social and professional</p>



Tips for Cultural Conversations

Below there are different topics and questions listed that are examples you could use when interacting with people from different countries and cultures. It is important to give a short introduction about your purpose of the interaction to not bother someone for your benefits, to show your genuine interest and to respect their time.

Introduction

Hi [name], my name is [your full name]. Currently I am working on different exercises regarding self-development and cultural awareness. My goal is to become educated about different cultures and people. Can I ask you which culture you identify with? Would you be open to have a conversation about culture with me and would this be the right time to do so? (Respect their answer when they are not open for this conversation.)

Topics

- Family
- Culture
- Religion
- Traditions
- Food
- Traveling
- Languages
- Stay in the host country
- Study/work
- Future

Questions

Where are you from?

What languages do you speak?

Do you practice any religion?

What are typical traditions of your home country?

What are special dishes in your home country?

What do you like the most about your home country?

How long have you been in this 'host' country?

What are you studying or what kind of work do you do?

What are cultural differences you have experienced and how do you deal with it?

Have you traveled to different countries?

Professional Cultural Factors

Consider how cultural factors impact the workplace. It would be even better to do research on these cultural factors so you gain more cultural intelligence. In real life these are example questions you could ask your team members to gain these insights.

Individualistic/Collectivistic

Investigating and understanding the preference of your team is highly valuable information related to Effectiveness. Not only should leadership styles be adjusted to the group formation, but motivation and incentives also strongly depend on employees' loyalty.

- How important are emotional relationships for employees?
- Do employees prefer to work in teams or alone?
- Are employees more efficient in teams or alone?
- How are decisions made (by individuals or in group discussions)?

Equality

Another aspect in which cultures can differ very greatly from each other is their attitude toward men and women. Therefore, it is highly important to be aware of variances of societal value in equality.

- Do multicultural women and men have the same career opportunities?
- How do my female/male coworkers react to management and communication styles based on the host country's culture?
- Which behavior may women or men in the workplace find offensive or hostile compared to their culture?
- How can I support local multicultural talent of any gender within the firm?
- Does the workplace discuss gender dynamics?

Time Perception

In a work environment, differences in time perception can lead to serious cross-cultural misunderstandings because the perception might differ among employees.

- What is the difference in time perception within my team?
- How do they organize their time, are they Monochronic or Polychronic?
- How is punctuality valued in my team? Would it be normal to show up early or late? How flexible do they consider deadlines or meeting times?
- Do employees plan tasks beforehand and how long do they take to complete the task?

Communication

Communication can differ in its directness. Contents of conversations also differ. Politeness and adapting one's speech to the receiver of a message would be an advisable thing to do in multicultural teams.

- Does a team member prefer a low or high context communication style?
- Would it be normal to openly criticize or question someone's ideas/decisions?
- What are topics you should be mindful of when talking to your coworkers in terms of culturally sensitive subjects?

Expressiveness

Expressiveness is a factor that includes different topics. Starting with if people express their feelings and desires. Another part is how people are expressing themselves towards coworkers or individuals outside the organization.

- Do people express their feelings and desires in different situations?
- How assertive are employees to openly share their ideas with superiors?
- How should I address colleagues, employees, and clients?
- Is it appropriate to talk about successes of the firm or my own achievements?

Religion

Religious feelings play an important role as a manager of multicultural teams. Where it is obvious that religious feelings of any nature must be respected, the question is how religion influences professional behavior and managerial practices. This differs all around the world and that is the reason why it is important to receive insight from your team.

- Which religion is dominant in the host country?
- Which religions are represented among my staff?
- Does religion play an important role in business life in the host country? If yes, which aspects need to be considered (e.g., religious holidays and practices, adjustment to religious diet requirements, etc.)?
- How important are religious rituals in business and business processes?

Resource Guide

Build Your Brand Examples

Example 1

Passions
Animals

Skills and Strengths
Relationship-building, collaboration

Values
Respect, excellence, discipline, caring for others, generosity

Goals
Ideal first job out of school: working with a healthcare organization, working on developing therapies that help people

Purpose
To lead a national initiative that influences the provision of alternative healthcare services to underserved and disadvantaged people

Potential Organizations
Local non-profit veterinary clinic, dog rescue organization, non-profit clinic for the homeless

Potential Roles
Welcome reception, greeting clients, working as part of a team to make animal issues visible, working across organizations getting them to collaborate

Example 2

Passions
Sports, entrepreneurship

Skills and Strengths
Managing people, teaching, coaching

Values
Teamwork, winning, competition, optimism, growth

Goals
First internship: working for a consulting firm that has high tech start-ups as clients, or working for a start-up

Purpose
To launch a successful business that employs my love of sports and leverages my technical expertise for online delivery and engagement; To deliver team and leadership training services based on sports theory

Potential Organizations
School extracurricular sports programs, local small business associations, etc.

Potential Roles
Starting a sports organization at school, teaching and coaching students on different projects, managing a small project for an entrepreneurial organization

Hierarchy of Career Needs

Consider your workplace needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	Hierarchy of Career Needs
Physiological: Food, shelter, sleep, water, oxygen, sex, freedom of movement, and a moderate temperature	Career physiological needs: A paycheck, breaks to eat or rest, and work hours that provide time to go home and rest
Safety: Security, stability, safety of body and family, freedom from violence, and rituals and routines	Career safety: Job security and no threat of layoffs; workplace safety including a workplace free of violence, psychological abuse, and hazardous toxic exposure; property safety; and regular and predictable work hours
Belonging and love: Friendships, family, sexual intimacy, and community	Career belonging: Having positive relationships with coworkers, boss, and customers; cultural fit; and an affinity to the mission of the organization
Self-esteem: Self-confidence, mutual respect of and for others, achievement, and recognition	Career esteem: Kudos such as "Wow, you did a great job!", promotions, titles, new levels of responsibility, pay raises, respect for fellow employees, a feeling of being respected, and alignment of work with sense of self
Self-actualization: Knowledge, understanding, peace, self-fulfillment, life mission, pursuit of inner talents, creativity, and beauty	Career mastery: Fully using your talents in your work, contributing to the greater good, knowing your purpose in life, finding meaning in your work, and having a sense of mastery

*adapted from Personal Branding for Dummies, 2nd Edition

Networking Do's and Don'ts

Networking Do's

Before the event, focus on getting up to speed on the individuals and their industry or group. Find out who is going and come up with some conversation starters.

Speak your name clearly (first and last).

Maintain good posture and eye contact and smile when introducing yourself. Use a firm handshake.

Make personal connections about hobbies, interests, etc.

Approach people who you don't know and engage (especially those who are by themselves). Be the one who initiates.

Be ready with your elevator pitch or value proposition. Short, crisp, authentic, and conversational answers to questions like, "What do you do?" should roll off your tongue easily and should be memorable.

Seek out good opportunities for networking, both planned and spontaneous.

Networking Don'ts

Go to a networking event without any preparation.

Mumble or just introduce yourself by first or nickname only.

Make eye contact with just one person in a group or continue looking all over the place for the next group to jump to.

Use jargon, slang or venture into inappropriate topics, gossip, or similar.

Be a wallflower and wait for people to come to you.

Ramble or give a condensed version of your resume.

Forget about networking since you're busy. Strengthen your professionalism by polishing your online social identity.

*adapted from PwC Personal Brand workbook.

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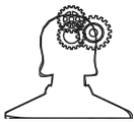
Employers want to hire college graduates that are **“Career Ready”**.

What does that mean?

“Career Readiness” is the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace.

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

Competencies



Critical Thinking/Problem Solving: Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.



Oral/Written Communications: Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.



Teamwork/Collaboration: Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict.



Digital Technology: Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.



Leadership: Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize and delegate work.



Professionalism/Work Ethic: Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes.



Career Management: Identify and articulate one’s skills, strengths, knowledge, and experience relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.



Global/Intercultural Fluency: Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals’ differences.