



# LEVEL UP

Breakthrough Self-  
Assessment for Career  
Branding & Empowerment

LinkedIn-MAKEOVER.COM



## **Level Up!**

# **Breakthrough Self-Assessment for Career Branding & Empowerment**

### **PART 1:**

*Ideally, you dig your professional well before you get thirsty.*

Real life isn't always like that, of course. Work and family responsibilities get prioritized ahead of this upkeep and, before you know it, information that's been provided on resumes and online profiles has become outdated. Information today ages rapidly. In the busyness of the 21st-century, memories get lost, including those of important achievements. Ideally, each of us will regularly set aside time to record our professional accomplishments, because this allows us to keep track of the impact we've made and are currently making in our industries of choice. So, we've decided to share a series of three posts to help empower you to become someone who fully leverages his or her own talents, skills, and accomplishments.

When you make recording a conscious practice, if and when you decide to look for a new career opportunity, you won't need to scramble to update your resume, LinkedIn profile, and so forth. In fact, even if you're highly satisfied with your current position, this is still an important practice to maintain. Why? If, for example, it's time for your annual performance review, and you've been challenged to quantify your progress in your KPIs, you can remain calm, collected, and well prepared. How you respond may very well pave the way to a raise or promotion.

### **STEP 1:**

Look at your resume, LinkedIn profile, and other professional documents and profiles. Re-read work-related reviews, browse through your business planner/calendar, and otherwise check relevant sources to see what accomplishments you've already forgotten.

It can also help to do a Google search on your own name to see what shows up! What memories about your own professional achievements does that query trigger? If it causes you to discover or remember that someone had praised your accomplishments, double-check to see if you're connected on LinkedIn. If you are, have you written reciprocal recommendations?

## **Determining Your Work Accomplishments:**

What are your accomplishments? To help guide you through this process, we've come up with a list of questions for you to consider. It's possible that not every question applies to your professional career. If so, that's okay. Focus on the relevant ones that resonate.

*Bonus tip for resumes:* A successful resume is brimming with quantifiable accomplishments, not just job descriptions. Sure, it's easy to describe your day to day tasks, but it's important to think about what you did that went above and beyond your role and responsibilities.

- *Were you hired to meet a particular challenge for the company?*
- *Did you suggest, design, or implement any processes or procedures? What were the results?*
- *Did you help increase sales? How and by what percentages or \$ amount?*
- *Did you participate in developing any specific projects, techniques, processes, operations, or applications that were instrumental in increasing revenues, company growth, or increased productivity?*
- *Did you save your company money? How much and under what circumstances?*
- *Thinking in terms of your day to day tasks, when and how did you deliver results ahead of deadline, under budget, or exceed expectations?*
- *Were you appointed to any teams? Why and what did you provide to the team?*
- *What special projects have you worked on? Why were you chosen and what were the results?*
- *Have you done anything to improve customer or employee or strategic relationships with the company?*
- *Have you done anything to improve communications, either internally or externally?*
- *Did you recruit new customers for the business?*
- *Did you recruit new employees for the business?*
- *Were you chosen to train, mentor, or guide others?*
- *Were you rewarded with any additional responsibility?*

## STEP 2:

Set aside enough time to update and refresh your resume and online profiles, even if you aren't planning to search for a new career opportunity.

This is important because an updated, highly professional LinkedIn profile, as just one example, also reflects well upon your place of employment.

It's hard to write about yourself. If you need help, turn to professionals to work with you to tell your professional story and develop your brand.

## STEP 3:

After you've brought your professional documentation up to the minute, then you're in the ideal position to begin recording your accomplishments going forward. Some people like to use a physical notebook that's specifically designated for that purpose. Others like to talk into a recorder, whether one on their smartphone or a digital handheld one, capturing thoughts as they speak.

Still other people prefer digital options. If you're in this group, here are a few of our favorites. Note that there are free versions and, in some cases, fee-based upgrades that you might choose to use.

- [Evernote](#): This app allows you to take notes, wherever you are, including when you're sitting in a waiting room. You can quickly and easily organize those notes, share ideas with colleagues, and much more. All can be archived for convenient retrieval and, to quote the app's website, "with Evernote as your note taking app, nothing falls through the cracks." So, when something awesome happens, write it down!
- [Microsoft OneNote](#): This is similar to Evernote and works just as well. It's really a matter of preference.
- [Google Keep](#): Check this option out, as well, and then choose which app works best for your style. What really matters is that you get started, ASAP.
- [Penzu](#): This is a type of online diary, where you can record your accomplishments, as well as private thoughts. Like the note-taking tools, you can record your thoughts wherever you are, just as long as you have your smartphone or a computer with an internet connection. With Penzu, you can set up customized reminders to keep yourself on track with recording.
- [Monkkee](#): This is another version of a private online diary. This one is funded by donations.
- [Journalate](#): Here's yet another option to consider if you decide to keep an online diary.
- [Trello](#): Trello is a list-making type of productivity app. To quote the site, its "boards, lists, and cards enable you to organize and prioritize your projects in a fun, flexible, and rewarding way." You can use this app to keep track of your successes.
- [Todoist](#): This is another list-making option to consider, one self-described in this way: "Regain clarity and calmness by getting all those tasks out of your head and onto your to-do list (no matter where you are or what device you use)."
- [Remember the Milk](#): This choice now works in tandem with Google Assistant. "Tell your Assistant to remind you, and the task will instantly be added to your list. Want to know what's coming up? Ask your Assistant what's due and stay on top of your tasks. Need some help with all those tasks? Ask your Assistant to give a task to a helpful contact."

## STEP 4:

This is an ongoing process, one that's applicable until you retire. Try spending five to fifteen minutes jotting down your accomplishments, successes, and achievements each day. Is daily too much for you? Try weekly or monthly. The idea is that as things happen, you record them. As you go about your career, you don't just concentrate on getting the ball to the other end of the court but you also benchmark success for yourself!

By recording your accomplishments, it becomes easy to keep your career branding on point and fresh.



You also know exactly what you are bringing to the table and don't be surprised if you find yourself feeling empowered.

Stay tuned for parts two and three!

## **PART 2:**

If you've found this post through an internet search, welcome! We're glad to have you here and we hope you'll find this breakthrough self-assessment process a real boon for your professional career.

Revisiting Part 1:

1. Review your resume, LinkedIn profile, and other professional documents.  
Are they up to date and complete?
  - If yes, keep reading!
  - If not, you'll benefit from reading part 1 first.
2. Are you in the practice of regularly recording your professional accomplishments?
  - If yes, you know what to do. Keep reading.
  - If not, then you'll benefit from reading part 1 first.

You know who you are and what you do, but others don't. When a person asks you what you do, everything you say feeds into how that person perceives you. They will categorize you, judge you and know whether they like you and if they want to invest any more time talking to you. In order not to bumble these tiny opportunities, having a pre-set, memorized, practiced and smooth self introduction is a MUST.

Example:

"Nice to meet you Judy, what do you do for a living?"

"I'm a business analyst."

Judy just missed an opportunity to tell her story and forge a strong persona that isn't easily forgotten.

Example:

"Nice to meet you Judy, what do you do for a living?"

You know you can't make business decisions without information. The success of an organization hinges upon the data and information supplied to senior leadership. I accumulate and assimilate that data into a format that is easy to understand and useful to senior leadership. My title is Business Analyst but I consider myself an agent of change within an organization.

Judy just capitalized on an opportunity to present herself in a high-level, memorable manner that may open doors later.

## **Concept of Elevator Pitch AKA Self-Introduction**

An elevator pitch is a clear and concise message about who you are, professionally speaking, what you're looking for in your career, and how you can benefit a company or person.

# Creating Your Own Pitch

A successful elevator pitch gives other professionals the essence of who you are in just 30 seconds.

Just as it's generally easier to write a longer piece of content than it is to boil it down into something shorter, an elevator pitch may start out as a longer message, one you can strategically distill for the greatest impact. So, it may help to write down potentially relevant information as fully as you can and then choose to include what's most powerful.

Here are some questions to consider:

What do you do and how do you do it?

- ◇ How does your work affect others? What is the result of your work?
- ◇ How would you explain what you do to a child?
- ◇ What has been your biggest, most current success?
- ◇ What is an intriguing fact about what you do or where you do it, that people would find memorable, interesting, or relatable?

If you're still in the early stages of developing your pitch, it can help to ask five trusted colleagues how they would describe you using three to five words. From those responses:

- ◇ What have you learned about how they perceive you?
- ◇ Do their answers dovetail with what you see as your own strengths?
- ◇ If not, how do they differ?
- ◇ Has this helped you to identify strengths you hadn't recognized?

Now, here's one more thing to consider and write about before you select the most impactful text. Imagine being at a party, networking event, or conference. Write down how you typically introduce yourself. Also think about people you meet at those events. How do they introduce themselves? In particular, what are some of the most impressive statements you can remember?

## Narrowing Down the Gist

Now that you've created this list of potential items to include, review your resume, LinkedIn profile, and other professional documents and profiles. What is included in these that didn't make your list? If they're applicable to your elevator pitch notes, add them.

Next, reduce what's on your list to the 20 to 25 most important bullet points. For this step, think about a broad elevator pitch that would be relevant in a typical professional encounter. Then, see if you can cut your list in half. Then, cut it in half again, and then it's likely that you've got the most influential aspects, the ones that will make the most compelling elevator speech.

Now craft it so that you're introducing yourself and giving a brief explanation of who you are; this could include your company's name and your title. Then share your professional accomplishments, ending with a future-forward comment.

Avoid buzzwords that can quickly sound tired.

Consider creating different pitches for different people and situations. How would you introduce yourself at a networking event to a potential future employer vs the introduction you would give to colleagues at an internal company event vs people you meet at a personal event like a wedding or night out with friends.

## Practice, Practice, Practice

Rehearse until you feel as though you could provide this pitch underwater, blindfolded and hogtied. Practice until you can deliver your concise speech naturally, confidently, and passionately.

Practice giving it while looking in a mirror, until you feel comfortable smiling and making eye contact. Rehearse until your elevator pitch is 15 to 30 seconds long. And then practice ending your pitch by asking the other person a question or making a conversational comment—and then listening carefully to the response.

You'll need a couple of varieties of this question or comment. If, for example, you introduce yourself first, then asking about the other person is a natural follow up question. But, if his or her elevator pitch was given first, you'll need to say something else. Perhaps, as just one example, you can note common interests and then listen to what the other person says.

This brings up another point. While it's important to have a prepared elevator pitch you can share, you'll need to notice who the other person might be and customize your comments appropriately.

Watch for part 3 for more information about how you can level up your career branding!

## PART 3:

When you look at your career to date, are you fully satisfied with where you are—meaning, have you already accomplished all of your dreams? For those not nearing retirement, are you ready to plateau and stay where you are? The answer for many professionals is a resounding “no.”

If you're in that group, then the next question is, “*What do you want to become?*”

When you've become crystal clear about that goal, then what's left is to create and follow a plan to get there—which is exactly what this post is designed to help you accomplish.

We're all in a different place on that journey. So, first:

- ◇ If your resume and LinkedIn profile—and other professional documents and profiles—are not up-to-the-minute updated, start with post #1 in this series.

- ◇ If you haven't yet established a system to record your accomplishments as they happen, start with post #1 in this series.
- ◇ If you've already updated your professional documents and profiles AND are regularly recording your accomplishments—and you're ready to create and/or refine your elevator pitch—start with post #2 in this series.

If you're good to go with all of the career clarity items listed in the bullet points above, just keep reading!

## Practice, Practice, Practice

After you're clear about what you've achieved in the past and what you're currently accomplishing in your career, it's time to think about the bigger picture, to consider your future. After all, the more clarity you have about where you want to go, the more likely it is that you'll get there!

So, here are questions for you to consider (feel free to use the digital journal we talked about in Part 1 to record your answers):

- ◇ What are five goals you would like to accomplish in the next five years? How thoroughly can you describe them, both quantitatively and qualitatively?
- ◇ What are five goals you'd like to accomplish in the next ten years? Are they an extension of your five-year goals or are they additional ones?
- ◇ For each of your goals, what do you need to do today and in the future to lay the groundwork?
- ◇ What skills do you need to keep current and relevant to achieve your goals? How are you doing that?
- ◇ What new skills are you currently developing? How?
- ◇ What new skills do you still need to start developing? What's the plan and timeline for those?
- ◇ What is unique about how you do your job? How does that uniquely position you for the future?
- ◇ How are you investing in yourself?

Also envision the ways you're interacting and plan to interact with others in the future. Here are questions to consider about that:

- ◇ Who are your mentors? In what areas of life are each of them mentoring you? Are they good fits for you going forward?
- ◇ How are you forging a stronger network? What else can you do?
- ◇ Whom are you mentoring? Is this a productive relationship for both of you? Does this invigorate you? Drain you? If the relationship is draining but you believe it has value, how can you make healthy and productive changes?
- ◇ Outside of mentoring, how are you helping others?
- ◇ How are you improving the world?

As you make your plans for the future, it can help to reach out to trusted friends and colleagues to see how they perceive you. This can help you to uncover strengths and capabilities that you'd never considered when making your five- and ten-year career plans.



Questions can include:

- ◇ What do you see as my strengths?
- ◇ What sets me apart?
- ◇ When have you seen me go above and beyond what was required?
- ◇ What do you think I should know about myself that I may not be aware of?
- ◇ What can you imagine my doing in the future?

## Creating Your Not-To-Do List

Professional people often take on significant responsibilities, both at work and outside of it, including but not limited to volunteer positions. Which ones no longer serve you well? In other words, what do you need to take off your list?

Perhaps, as just one example, you've been mentoring someone for a period of time and it's no longer satisfying. It may be, as mentioned above, that you need to change up what you're doing together. Or it could be that your mentee is ready to move on to someone else who can guide him or her in different skill sets. Or, maybe that person is now ready to soar!

Or, you may belong to a group that is no longer benefiting you and perhaps it's time to thank the organization and its members for all you've received while also sharing it's time for you to put your focus elsewhere in the future. Or, maybe you've been an officer in that organization and, although you've like to stay in the group, you're ready for someone else to take that leadership role.

Again, each situation is unique. But, nearly every busy professional has things that most likely should be put on their not-to-do list.

## Motivating Yourself to Accomplish Bog Goals

No two people are motivated in the exact same way, although it often involves setting targets and a reward for accomplishing them. Some people may decide to treat themselves to a get-away after achieving key goals, while others may make a desired purchase. To help, here are two ways that clients of ours have creatively motivated themselves.

One professional, whenever he's embarking upon a new challenge, purchases an expensive bottle of champagne. He then describes the accomplishment he wants to achieve directly on the bottle's label. Each day, he opens his refrigerator to look at the champagne to remind himself of what he needs to do.

Sometimes, a particular bottle of champagne will sit on the refrigerator shelf for weeks. Other times, it's months. A few times, it's even been years!

But, when the time finally arrives, when that goal is finally achieved, our client pops the cork and celebrates his sweet victory.

Another client specifically chose to work with us because of our company's name: Vision Board Media. That's because he uses a vision board. Well, sort of. Instead of a cork board, he creates a PowerPoint where he includes images that move him and music that inspires him, turning his life into an evolving movie.

Then, each and every morning, he watches that movie, allowing it to wash over him and provide momentum for what needs to be accomplished that day.

*What would work best for you?*

## How Can We Help In 2020 and Beyond?

As the new year—new decade, actually!—is just beginning to unfold, it's a good time to refresh, renew and revamp. It's the ideal time to think about what you've done and what you want to do, both at work and in life, overall.

You can find information about the types of [career services](#) we provide, including the following:

- ◇ Career branding: Resume & Cover Letter, LinkedIn profile, bios, coaching, etc
- ◇ Executive branding
- ◇ LinkedIn branding
- ◇ Corporate LinkedIn services
- ◇ Marketing services
- ◇ Ghost blogging
- ◇ Account management services

If one or more of these services could help you to achieve your goals, reach out. A call is so simple, so let's talk to figure out what you need and how we can help. [Schedule a call](#), or call us at 215-839-0008 or email us at [donna@linkedin-makeover.com](mailto:donna@linkedin-makeover.com)

