

Managing the Dimensions of Your Brand

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An impactful professional brand can drive the career momentum of any finance professional, and a lack of commitment to investing in it or even knowing and carrying about it can create an inherent barrier to career success. In today's world of all things AI and technology finance professionals need to stand out amongst their peers and demonstrate they have skills that matter no matter where technology takes the finance profession.

A professional brand consists of many components. The components need to align as that alignment amplifies the impact of a professional brand within a finance team, beyond a finance team to work colleagues, and to professional peers and current and potential new employers.

Five key components of any professional brand are:

- 🔗 Your Professional Value Proposition
- 🔗 Your LinkedIn Profile
- 🔗 Your Resume
- 🔗 Your Skillset
- 🔗 Your Network



Figure 1. Professional Brand Components

Your professional value proposition demonstrates the value that you deliver to your employer, colleagues, and professional peers. It is what many people used to call your "elevator pitch". The task of crafting a professional value proposition can seem daunting to any finance professional regardless of the stage a person is at in his or her career. I have come up with questions that each person wanting to craft a professional value proposition can ask of themselves to illuminate the key pillars of that value proposition.

- 🔗 **What good things do your current or previous boss(es) have to say about you?**
- 🔗 **What good things would your current or previous colleagues say about you?**
- 🔗 **What good things would people that work for you or used to work for you say about you?**
- 🔗 **What good things would your connections at your Fintech/bank partners say about you?**

I share how to craft a professional value proposition in detail in The Finance Collective Finance resource [Defining Your Value Proposition](#).

Your LinkedIn profile serves as the foundation of your online brand. If you do a Google search on your own name, the link to your LinkedIn profile will be the first result. Your LinkedIn profile is the first impression you will make on thousands if not tens of thousands of people who are interested in learning more about you including current and potential new employers, colleagues, and professional peers. As the saying goes "there s nothing more

important than making a good first impression” in any relationship, so finance professionals need to invest in creating and managing an impactful LinkedIn profile. Each section of a

LinkedIn profile is important. The steps in creating an impactful profile are depicted in Figure 2. If you want to learn more about how to create and effectively manage your LinkedIn profile watch the Generation Finance video resource **Building and Managing an Amazing Linked Profile**



Figure 2. Steps to Creating an Impactful LinkedIn Profile.

Even in today’s digital world resumes matter. Your resume should reflect your professional value proposition and align with your LinkedIn profile. Creating a top-notch resume is as much about what to avoid as it is about what to include in your resume.

Five tips for creating a strong resume:

- 🛡️ Optimize the length of the resume to your brand and experience, and do not cram too much into a resume to force it to be only one page.
- 🛡️ Your resume summary paragraph should include information that is directly relevant to the specific position for which you are using it to apply.



- 🛡 Your employment history should only go back 10-15 years and be done in reverse chronological order.
- 🛡 List specific achievements that depict how you have made specific contributions to each employer listed in your work history.
- 🛡 List system and technologies which are familiar and any specific training and/or certifications. Highlight systems and related expertise that are directly relevant to the job to which are applying.

Your skillset is critical to job success at any stage of your career. Investing in new skills as well as updating and upgrading existing skills is important. Given the explosion of AI and automation soft/human skills are more important than ever for every finance professional. Generation Finance is all about helping you develop and share your human skills ranging in areas from effective listening to negotiating with purpose to telling the story beyond the numbers.

Ten skills that impact the performance of any financial professional are:

- 🛡 Interpersonal Skills / Relationship Building
- 🛡 Effective Communication- written (e-mail, reports) and oral (presentation)
- 🛡 Finance Blocking & Tackling Skills
- 🛡 Analytical Abilities
- 🛡 Problem- Solving
- 🛡 Tech Savvy- Acumen relative to financial systems and other key systems
- 🛡 Leadership
- 🛡 Innovative/ Entrepreneurial
- 🛡 Passion for Learning / Embrace Change
- 🛡 Knowledge of Relevant Industries

A powerful professional network has many components and needs to be managed in order for it to deliver value. You need to have it in addition to knowing how and when to leverage it. In developing each dimension of your network, it is important to keep the following questions in mind:

- 🛡 **Who Do You Want to Know?**
- 🛡 **Who Do You Need to Know?**
- 🛡 **Who Do You Already Know?**
- 🛡 **Who Know Who You Want to Know?**
- 🛡 **Who Knows Who You Need to Know?**

A robust network has people from these groups of people from a professional life:

- 🛡 ***Finance Departmental Colleagues***
- 🛡 ***Colleagues Beyond Finance***



- 🛡 **Sales**
- 🛡 **Marketing**
- 🛡 **HR**
- 🛡 **Operations**
- 🛡 **Service & Tech Providers**
 - 🛡 **Bankers**
 - 🛡 **Consultants**
 - 🛡 **ERP**
 - 🛡 **TMS**
 - 🛡 **AP & AR Solutions**
- 🛡 **Your Company's Customer & Suppliers**
 - 🛡 **Finance to Finance**
 - 🛡 **Facilitating Payments**
 - 🛡 **Facilitating Receipts**
- 🛡 **Finance Professional Peers**
 - 🛡 **On LinkedIn**
 - 🛡 **At Live Events**
 - 🛡 **At Virtual Events**
 - 🛡 **At Networking Events**
 - 🛡 **Generation Finance Community**

If you want to learn how to build your network with each of these groups of people watch the Generation Finance video [The Art & Science of Network Building](#).

Finance professionals need to invest in their professional brands and do so with the mindset of continuous improvement. A great brand can drive the career success of any finance professional.