



YOU ARE A BRAND!: Discussion Guide

Chapter 1: Take Charge of Your SelfBrand

1. A central thesis of the book is that we all have to be branders in today's competitive and uncertain workplace, and that personal branding is no longer just for Hollywood celebrities, top athletes and politicians; it's something we all must learn. Do you agree? Why or why not?
2. What are your current perceptions about personal branding? Kaputa defines a personal brand as someone who has a special promise of value that sets him apart. She defines self-branding as everything you do to differentiate and market yourself not just image. What is your definition? What is the special value that you offer in a work situation?
3. Envision the scenario described in the chapter: your boss walks into your office and says, "Sorry, I have to downsize and your job is being eliminated." What do you do now? What are your options? Who can you count on in your network?

Chapter 2: Think Different to Become a Brand Apart

1. What's different, special, unusual, or weird about Brand You? Unlike other people who do what you do, you (fill in the blank). In what ways are you better than other people?
2. If you were managing Brand You, where would you take it in five years? What should you be doing to make meaning in the world? What is the key piece of advice that you would give this brand.
3. What were your family messages regarding work and careers? What were the limits of the family creed? What assets did your family give you?
4. Strengths: What are you good at and love to do? Weaknesses: What are you terrible at and hate to do?
5. What are the opportunities in the market that could be good for you? What keeps you awake at night?

Chapter 3: Search for the Sweet Spot Where You and a Market Opportunity Meet

1. What are you really passionate about? What's your dream job? What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?
2. What is missing from your current life that you must have going forward? What could you do tomorrow to get started?



3. Creating Your Achievement Addendum: What is an important project or accomplishment you were involved with? What challenges did you face? Were there any novel solutions? What actions did you take? What were the results?
4. What's your 60-second Elevator Pitch that you would use in a job interview?

Chapter 4: Find a Great Self-Brand Strategy to Get Great Results

Exploring Various Positionings for Brand You:

1. Becoming an innovator: What did you develop an innovative solution for?
2. Becoming a leader: What have you done that demonstrates leadership?
3. Becoming a maverick: In what ways are you different from traditional leaders in your line of work?
4. Becoming identified with a particular trait: What attribute are you known for?
5. Developing a better solution or product: Did you create a new process or find a better ingredient for something?
6. Becoming an expert: What are you an expert in?
7. Becoming identified with a cause: What cause are you known for?

Chapter 5: Use the Principles of Visual Identity to Create a Powerful Self-Brand Package

1. Whether it's superficial or unfair, Kaputa argues that the way we "package" ourselves influences how people perceive us, even how well we can do the job? Do you agree? Why or why not?
2. If you were a car, what type of car would you be? Describe the car in as much detail as possible. Why does it symbolize you?
3. Do you have a trademark look or accessory? What is it?
4. What's different or special about the way you look or dress? What do you want your visual presentation to say about you? Is it consistent with your brand idea?

Chapter 6: Tap into the Power of Symbols, Logos, and Design to Imprint Your Brand Identity

1. What brand logos or symbols appeal to you? Why?
2. What message does your office convey about you? How could you make your office more in sync with Brand You?



Chapter 7: Harness the Power of Names, Signature Words, and Phrases to Lock in Your Message

1. What your name? What adjectives or imagery comes to mind when you say your first name. Which other people with this name come to mind? If you could choose your name, what name would you choose?
2. How do you describe what you do when you meet new people? Is there a better label you could use?
3. What keywords do you want to be known for? How can you lock them in?
4. Do you own your name on the Internet, such as www.yourname.com or LinkedIn/Your Name? Are you easy to find online or are there many people with your name? How can you make your name more distinctive such as adding your middle name?

Chapter 8: How to Speak for Effect, Not Just Facts

1. What does your voice say about you? What adjectives come to mind? Ask the other members of the group to share their thoughts.
2. Which speakers do you admire? What was it about their delivery that impressed you?
3. Kaputa argues that business presentations are often boring with too many facts and bullet points. What do you think? How could you improve your presentations? Think of a business accomplishment in a presentation and tell a story about it.

Chapter 9: Master the Art of the Elevator Speech and Pitch Yourself Anytime

1. Your brand differentiator for your elevator pitch: My job title says (fill in the blank), but in reality, I'm (fill in the blank)
2. How could you define Brand You in a memorable sentence?
3. Your career story: Name 3 memorable accomplishments and why they are important. What is the theme in your career narrative? Get feedback on how to improve it.
4. What's your elevator pitch in 60-seconds?

Chapter 10: Take the "Work" Out of Networking

1. Who's currently in your strategic network of sponsors, mentors, allies and connectors? How could you expand this important group?
2. What are your key networking activities? What's working best?
3. What specific things can you do in the next 3 months to increase your internal contacts at your company. To increase your industry contacts outside the company?



Chapter 11: Learn the Art of Cyberbranding to Build Your Brand Online

1. How would you rate your LinkedIn Profile? What is your headline? Do you tell a career narrative that highlights who you are and the value you bring? Have you incorporated “rich” media like videos or slides to your profile? What about your picture? Ask the group to weigh in.
2. How large is your virtual network on LinkedIn? Who else will you invite to be part of your LinkedIn network? How many recommendations do you have on LinkedIn? Who else could you ask to recommend you?
3. What kind of interesting content can you develop for your LinkedIn updates for business associates to read and pass along?
4. What are the key touchpoints where people come into contact with your brand online? Offline? How can you make the important ones more powerful?

Chapter 12: Think in Terms of Emotional Engagement with Your Key Target Markets

1. Who are the key people most important to your brand such as your boss? If you were a competitor, how could you top your performance?
2. What would your boss and colleagues like you to do more of? What are the sore spots? What specific things will you do to increase their satisfaction?
3. If you wanted to stay in your field, what could you do to make yourself more “relevant” to the current marketplace?
4. Kaputa talks about the importance of likeability in terms of business success. How popular are you at work? What can you improve your likeability at work?

Chapter 13: Become a Little Bit Famous

1. Gauge your online visibility by finding out your Klout score or you can use one of the other social media brand measurement tools. How can you build your visibility online? What specific things will you do in the next six months to increase your visibility?
2. Kaputa lists a number of low-visibility and high-visibility tactics. Which will you explore over the next six months?

Chapter 14: Develop an Action Plan That Gets You All the Way from A to Z

1. Set a goal and a time frame. What five actions could you take to achieve it?
2. What could you put in your brag book, such as letters of recognition and awards?
3. What are you going to do differently as a result of reading and discussing this book?