

Building Your Brand: How to Develop Your External Value

During a conversation this week with a client who was formerly President and Chief Executive Officer of a multi billion dollar company, I asked him to tell me about his external [Reputation Enhancement Matrix™](#) strategy and action plan. His blank look was an indication to me that he:

- didn't know what reputation enhancement means,
- had not considered he would need to develop and execute an ongoing reputation enhancement program,
- did not understand the benefits of a reputation enhancement plan – when he was “in-place” or transitioning and
- had no idea why I was asking him that question.

He was fired from his position as a result of a corporate restructuring initiative. I was engaged as an executive coach to help him through transition; help him identify options for his next role; prepare him for interviews with search firms, corporate board members, private equity firms, etc., assist in the negotiations for his new role and be part of the on-boarding plan in his new company.

Over the years, I have received the same blank look from hundreds of senior executives. These corporate movers and shakers understand the value of meeting and exceeding revenue and net profit goals, they understand the benefits of executing a turnaround and achieving record customer satisfaction ratings. They understand the value of employing a legacy leadership approach, energizing their team and streamlining the operations.

What they don't understand is the fact that their continued tenure is based not only on their internal track record – but also on their external reputation. Achieving spectacular internal results is no guarantee of continued employment in their executive position.

Why?

Companies are acquired, CEOs come and go, board members have different agendas, infighting happens and today's fair-haired executive becomes tomorrow's has been. The investment that an executive makes today in developing an external leadership presence will assist him or her in attaining career goals and will greatly improve their external marketability.

So, how do you implement an external [Reputation Enhancement Matrix™](#) strategy and action plan? Write, speak, volunteer with non-profits, get on a corporate board, accept an officer appointment with an industry or trade association, regularly interact with industry "influencers," etc.

It's not who you know, but how you interact with "influencers" – that's how you achieve your career goals and maintain market presence.

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