**TRANSCRIPT**

**Michelle Gibbings:** Hi there. Happy hump day. It's Wednesday.

Just as companies have brand or brands, so to do individuals. Now I know a number of people who hate the notion of thinking of themselves as a “brand”, so if you don't like the term brand just think of it as your reputation. Knowing your brand, your reputation in a work context is really important. You need to have clarity on how people see you. Seth Godin talks about how a company's brand is that set of expectations - the memories, the stories and relationships that when considered together, determine the reason why a person chooses one product or service over another.

Your personal brand is essentially what springs to mind when people think about you. It's what you're known for. It's a combination of how you make people feel of what you do or what you say and what you don't do or what you don't say.

If you don't understand your brand and your reputation, it's going to be very hard to make good progress in an organisation. Think about it. Are you the person who's the strategic thinker? You're the person who's known for building great teams or are you seen as a technocrat? Someone who's a deep technical expert?

The challenge arises when what you're known for and what you want to be known for are two different things. For example, if you want to be seen as a great leader, a visionary leader, the person who builds really awesome teams and yet you're seen as a technical expert, there's a mismatch and expectations. If you want to be seen as the deep thinker, the expert and yet you’re seen as really tactical, really operational, once again there's a mismatch. When there's a mismatch, it's going to be very easy for your career aspirations to go unfulfilled because the people around you, potentially particularly the people who are in decision-making roles, aren't going to see you for what you want to be seen. You're not known for what it is you want to be known for and so when they're thinking about making appointments, hiring people for roles, you're not the person who's going to spring to mind, you're not the person who they're going to think about wanting to put into that role.

Now you can reshape your brand and your reputation but of course it doesn't happen overnight and it absolutely starts firstly with knowing how you're seen, knowing what you're known for. And the only way to do that is to ask people. So what you can do is you can write down a list of words that you think characterise you, that you would like to be known for and then go out to people that you know - both people that are well known to you and people who are also less well known to you but they need to be people that you trust, people that you know will give you honest feedback and then just simply ask them.

When you think of me, what words spring to mind? Just give me your top five. Then what you want to do is when those words come back, is match the words to what you wrote about yourself and you'll see very quickly with it where there is a disconnect. And what you want to look at when you see those words is: Where's their commonality? Where are there gaps? What most surprised you? And then ask yourself what is this telling me and what do I need to do about it? That can take some time and it can take some work to really work through once you've understood those gaps and what those next steps will be.

I always remember reading the book by Tom Peters and he talks about that particularly in this modern day era. All of us need to understand the importance of branding and that we're really CEOs of our own company - what he called “me Inc.”. And that to be in business today, one of the most important jobs is to be the head marketer for the brand called YOU.

So if you're the head marketer for your brand, for you what are the things that you need to do differently? What do you do need to do more of, less of? How do you need to deepen relationships and really help people understand you and where you're coming from? But also what behaviours might you need to shift or change? Or new things you need to learn so that you can close the gap between where you are and where you'd like to be?

So that's it for this week. I will see you next week.

Have a great week.

Take care.