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# RWU Professor Writes Book on Personal Branding

In “Brand YOU!” Professor Hume Johnson offers a five-step guide to building and communicating a personal brand



March 11, 2019 | By Hannah Kaplan '20

**BRISTOL, R.I.** – What is your personal brand?

That is the question that Roger Williams University Associate Professor of Public Relations Hume Johnson helps professionals and students to answer. In her new book, “Brand YOU! Reinvent Yourself, Redefine Your Future,” she offers strategies to help people effectively communicate their personal brand and message with confidence. The book provides tools to build a career based on each person’s skills and unique talents.

“ ‘Brand YOU!’ delivers a five-step blueprint to help them identify and define the variables that shape their image, discover their own unique value – what can they offer their clients, customers, colleagues, and constituents – as well as practical lessons on how to create a compelling personal brand and communicate it offline and online,” Johnson said. “ ‘Brand YOU!’ essentially gives you the tools to reimagine your professional identity, package your skills, position yourself as an expert in your industry, and build a career where you can show up as your authentic self.”

Johnson is a former broadcast journalist with the Jamaica Information Service (JIS TV) and Radio Jamaica. She was also a political speechwriter and consultant with the government of Jamaica. She holds a doctorate in political science from University of Waikato (New Zealand).

In addition to “Brand YOU!,” she is the author of “Challenges to Civil Society: Popular Protest and Governance in Jamaica,” and she and fellow RWU Professor Kamille Gentles-Peart wrote “Brand Jamaica: Re-Imagining Jamaica’s National Image & Identity.”

Johnson consults for professionals, providing them with strategies on branding and communications. She coached Nellie Gorbea before she became Rhode Island Secretary of State, Providence Senior Deputy Chief of Staff Theresa Agonia, who graduated from Roger Williams University with a bachelor's degree in public relations in 2013, and former Rhode Island gubernatorial candidate Paul Roselli.

Johnson believes that all professionals need a personal brand.

“There was a time when you could get away without knowing your personal brand,” Johnson said. “You could leave school, work in the same company for 20, 30 years and have job security. Not anymore. With the job market changing, we no longer have job security. It is a fiercely competitive job market and business environment out there.

You can't attract prospective employers until you know what value you can offer them."

Johnson encourages her clients to become a storyteller of their life. She tells them to break down their story into a beginning, middle and end. She explains that, "Your 'before' part of your story is what is happening in your life previous to where you are now."

In the book, she wrote, "As emotional beings, stories serve to connect us to our common humanity by allowing us to relate to one another."

Agonia, 2016 Miss Rhode Island and Senior Deputy Chief of Staff for the City of Providence, has used "Brand YOU!" as a tool to create her personal brand.

"I worked with Hume to train for Miss USA 2016," Agonia said. "Part of the nationally televised competition involves being interviewed for both media reports and the interview portion of the competition. What I worked with Hume on was having a brand, standing out amongst the 51 contestants and knowing how I wanted to message myself and create my story."

Johnson urges her clients to be their authentic selves and to create their responses based on their personal brands. There must be clarity around their personal values and messages.

"Through Hume's book and coaching, I have carried out those skills during Miss USA and in my job working for the City of Providence," Agonia said.

Johnson wants to change the world one brand at a time. She was taught to be confident and to not apologize for her presence. She draws on her skills and her own experiences to help others discover their brand and communicate their message with clarity, confidence and credibility.

"[Brand YOU!](#)" can be found on Amazon.

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