

the personality
project 

Women of Personality

***20 Inspiring Women And
Their Stories Of Success***

1st Edition – April 2009

www.thepersonalityproject.com/wop

20 Visionary Women. One Big Question ...

Why does personality matter?

** This ebook compiles the stories of 20 extraordinary women as they recount the role personality has had in building their own successful careers and businesses. The goal of this ebook is to inspire future female entrepreneurs and business women of all ages to reach higher and achieve even more.*



The 1st Edition Contributors:

Stephanie Agresta – Consultant & Social Media Expert | www.stephanieagresta.com

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* Stephanie Agresta – Consultant & Social Media Expert



About Stephanie:

Stephanie Agresta has been a force in the online marketing industry for nearly 15 years. An expert in social media, affiliate program management and Web2.0 strategies, she is a sought-after speaker at industry events. Stephanie started her career with iVillage, a women-focused web destination and one of the first websites to build community online. She went on to hold prominent sales, marketing and business development roles with Internet powerhouses such as Barnes & Noble.com, Register.com and SpaFinder.

Throughout my career, I've been good at connecting people, ideas, products, and services using digital technology in new and inventive ways. I'm good at it because I am creative, I know a lot of people and I have a deep passion for and knowledge of Internet Marketing (built up over the last 13 years). To use "Tipping Point" language, I am a true connector (defined in wikipedia as people in a community who know large numbers of people and who are in the habit of making introductions). This natural skill made me a perfect fit for marketing and business development roles which have shaped my career success.

This characteristic has also come in especially handy in the social media world. From a personality perspective, "social" is something I've been since I was born. As a business development professional, networking has been my life blood for over 15 years. I love connecting with people and talking to others. I'm outgoing, open and friendly – a perfect trifecta for social media success. This medium is not for everyone. As Rohit correctly points out in "Personality Not Included," you have to be willing to bring your core self to the table.

For me, participating in social media is a very authentic, accurate representation of my life. And I truly enjoy listening to others and fostering the growth of the community. There are some downsides to having a lot of personality. Early in my career I found it confining to be in large organizations. I preferred start ups to corporations and then went on to start my own start ups.

Thankfully, another core aspect of my personality is persistence. My advice to others is to push forward until you find environments that suit your personality best. There is not one right answer for finding career success. I do know this for sure: if your path is based on a truthful recognition about who you are and what you truly enjoy, you will shine!

Learn More About Stephanie Agresta: www.stephanieagresta.com



* Kare Anderson – Emmy-winning Journalist & Strategist



About Kare:

Collaboration strategist, Obama campaign "partnerships" staffer, Emmy-winning former Wall Street Journal and NBC journalist, Kare Anderson is also a speaker and author of Resolving Conflict Sooner, Getting What You Want and Walk Your Talk, with two blogs, Moving From Me to We and Say it Better.

The innate personality of a reporter is curiosity, a garment that rested easily on me from the moment I started asking questions. As a child I was diagnosed as "phobically shy" a label I fiercely rejected yet since I seldom spoke, nobody knew. I was also a stutterer but it was my pleasure in daydreaming that most accounts for my silence through high school. Except for asking questions. An astute high school English teacher figured out that I'd be more comfortable asking than answering. That's how my journalism career started.

People love to answer questions about themselves, one after another, especially when each question taps into the part of their previous answer about which they felt most intensely. Somehow college opened a new chapter of my life. Upon arriving I stopped stuttering and began asking people questions - even when not in the role of reporter. (I recommend serial question-asking as a becoming way to turn strangers into friends and to deepen friendships.) Later those questions led me to work for the Wall Street Journal and NBC.

What have I learned from adopting that question-driven facet of my personality? That sometimes we mis-read others or inadvertently ignore or override them – and that we display just a few sides of ourselves. Instead, by becoming deeper listeners and asking more questions, we could become happier and higher-performing with others and demonstrate a different facet of our personality that most expresses how we feel and how we want to be seen now.

As Albert Schweitzer wrote, "In everybody's life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the inner flame."

Learn More About Kare Anderson: www.sayitbetter.com



✿ Susan Bratton – CEO, Personal Life Media



About Susan:

Susan Bratton treasures talent with unique perspectives about digital media, which she showcases in her weekly online show, "DishyMix," the #1 Social Media Podcast. As co-founder of Personal Life Media, she publishes 40 weekly podcasts on self-empowerment, consciousness and professional growth. "Talk Show Tips: 72 'Master Host' Techniques" is her system for preparing, producing and promoting interview-style shows. Susan is a motivational speaker with a focus on the intersection of marketing and technology. She's founded two industry associations and is on the board of numerous marketing technology companies.

At the intersection of personality and entrepreneurial success, there is one *character* and one *event* that have served me the most.

My life purpose or special capability is recognizing "the element" in people -- the perfect intersection of their talent and passion. You might not know when you are in your element, but I can see it and show you who you are through my lens. My level of appreciation for a individual's unique talent combined with my passion for being with a variety of personality types, naturally fosters many deep and sustaining relationships. Being an entrepreneur is not a solo experience. Because I truly "see" an individual's distinctive "element," many, many people connect with me on a more intimate level and subsequently bond to me. Then they "have my back" and actively support my endeavors, including my start up, my show and my products. Leveraging this aspect of my character on behalf of others in turn, gives me an authentic, competitive advantage!

The event that allowed me to live confidently into my own personality was my mid-life crisis. If you knew me in my early forties, you'd still be giggling about it. Wild ride. The best part was that I put a lid on my "auto pilot people pleaser" and started to *ask for and be* exactly what I wanted and who I really was. I unfurled my personal freak flag. I went from short brown to long blonde hair. I shucked my business suits in favor of Burning Man-inspired outfits. And more deeply, *I started to live for myself*. In that metamorphosis, I became more powerful, more fun, more alluring to others because I finally grew into my self. When you share your authentic personality, everyone delights in being in the presence of truth. The work I do in the world now, at Personal Life Media, is courageous and startlingly honest and I couldn't have been this forthright in my work and life until I *owned my true self*.

Learn More About Susan Bratton: www.dishymix.com



* Anita Campbell – Editor, *Small Business Trends*



About Anita:

Widely considered a “small business expert,” Anita Campbell serves as CEO of Anita Campbell Associates Ltd, a woman-owned consulting firm helping companies and organizations reach the small business market. As Publisher of several online media properties and syndicated content, Anita reaches over 1,000,000 small business owners and entrepreneurs annually. She is the founder and Editor-in-Chief of Small Business Trends, an award-winning online publication. She hosts Small Business Trends Radio, where she interviews other small business experts. She also publishes Selling to Small Businesses.

From the beginning, I knew that I would need to distinguish my online business if I had any hope of it standing out from the billions of pages on the Web and in the Google index.

Sometimes small businesses try to appear “larger” and more impersonal, in an attempt to gain credibility and impress potential customers. But I am a fan of Richard Branson and studied how he was bigger than life behind Virgin -- even to this day when it is a huge multinational company. So I embraced everything about being a business run by an individual – me! That’s what made it stand out in a sea of impersonal and faceless sites in the early days.

When you come to Small Business Trends, there’s no doubt that it is run by small business people, not some media conglomerate. There’s a from-the-trenches authenticity that no large media company can mimic.

Today the site’s gotten much bigger than a single-person operation. We have staff and many service providers helping run it. But I hope to always let people know there are real human beings – with individual ideas and passions – behind it. That’s one of our competitive advantages.

Learn More About Anita Campbell: www.smallbiztrends.com



* Krishna De – Personal Branding Expert



About Krishna:

Krishna De is an award winning brand engagement and digital marketing author, mentor and commentator. She is a member of the Social Media Working group of the Irish Internet Association and is the social media expert on the faculty of the Digital Marketing Institute.

Krishna is also the author of '42 Rules of Marketing in a Recession' and 'Managing Your Personal Brand Online: How to Master the 7 Keys of Professional Success in a Digital Age' which will be published in 2009 and has been recognized as one of the top 50 business women in Ireland.

Growing up I am not sure I paid much attention to the subject of personality as being critical for my career success. My family instilled qualities in me around working hard, applying myself to my studies and doing the best job that I could. As the eldest child I am sure that had an impact on my perspective and outlook on the world and I was certainly encouraged to be 'responsible'. Yet as I progressed in my career, I realized over time that being great at what you do in terms of strong performance was not sufficient for career success. I just had to look at the executives I had the privilege to work with to realize that some of them seemed to make a greater impact on the people in their organization than others. I remember one boss in particular who really tapped into my discretionary energy through his leadership and personal style – I know my performance, engagement and results in the organization I was working with was partly due to my interactions with him.

As an aside, I'm now a mother of twin daughters and I am intrigued by the subject of personality. Trying hard to treat my daughters and their elder sibling equally, it is interesting to see how different their personalities seemed to emerge and are distinctly different from each other when they were just a few days old.

I know that my personality and personal brand has developed over time partly due to my career experiences and also due to becoming clear about what I do want to be remembered for – as some people describe it 'the footprint' you want to leave in the world. What I've come to realize is that my 'message' is not relevant for everyone – some people will resonate with my teaching, writing or speaking and others won't. I hope that my personality will continue to develop based on my future experiences and the people I meet on my journey throughout my career.

Learn More About Krishna De: www.bizgrowthnews.com



* Zadi Diaz – New Media Producer, SmashFace Productions



About Zadi:

Zadi Diaz is a new media producer and co-founder of Smashface Productions..She is also the co-creator and host of EPIC FU, a popular Webby® award-winning web series about internet culture, as well as co-founder of Pixelodeon. Her work has been highlighted in the New York Times, Forbes, CBS Evening News, MTV, The Associated Press, The Guardian and others. She is a member of the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences (IADAS), on the advisory board for PBS Engage, as well as a member of the Transatlantic Network 2020, an international initiative founded by the British Council.

The most important lesson I've learned while developing my career on the web is how to be authentic -- or better put, how not to be afraid of being authentic. Sometimes in building a business or "personal brand" we acquire protective layers and forget that the best way to get our message across is to be raw and passionate about what we do. Zero in on that one thing that keeps you itching to do more. That thing that makes you excited to get out of bed and explore... people will want to explore with you.

The second most important lesson I've learned is that we're all ultimately looking for connection. Whether its another person, an idea, or a product, we ultimately want to feel understood. The easiest way to understand one another is to take the time to listen. Much of our personality is shaped through reaction. Much of our reaction is shaped by how well we listen.

The third most important lesson I've learned is to keep a balanced perspective and not lose too much sleep when things don't go as planned. Sometimes the road to authenticity and connection leaves us open to criticism that can oftentimes be unexpected and harsh. Leave yourself time and space to regroup, to re-evaluate, and return with a fresh perspective and desire to continue exploring.

Learn More About Zadi Diaz: www.smashface.com



✿ Kimberlie Dykeman – On-Camera Personality, Motivational Speaker & Author



About Kimberlie:

Kimberlie Dykeman is one of those people you don't soon forget. She has dedicated her life to being a motivator, entertainer and educator; and whether on-camera, on-air, on the field, or on paper, Kimberlie exudes a charismatic, vivacious presence that has fueled a loyal following. She is an On-Camera Personality and Executive Producer, Lifestyle Coach and Motivation Speaker, International Spokesperson, Author. Over the past dozen years, Dykeman pioneered a groundbreaking system of coaching, launched her first book, PURE SOAPBOX, and established SOAPBOX® as a multi-dimensional brand powerhouse.

First off, I must humbly say that my personality is the best thing I have going for me! It has evolved from my parents' influences, countless roller-coaster personal experiences, the growth of my faith, and unbelievable entrepreneurial ventures; and after years and years of folks telling me I'm one of the most memorable people they've ever met...I started to believe them!

A business can begin, grow and survive without things like a full-fledged business strategy, a jillion connections, investors, or employees. But you just can't acquire a personality from your local 7-11 store or Walmart, folks. Personality fronts a strong mission, supports a team, engages loyal customers and cultivates a promising future. And that said, a GREAT ONE is priceless!

On another note, though, personality is not just what you present and share with other people...it's something that you carry inside you and tap into daily for momentum. I know that my passion for motivating, entertaining and educating the masses is overflowing and contagious to those surrounding me. I witness it every day! But it's the times alone where I know this enthusiastic, determined, risk-taking engine of a personality keeps me going to handle the challenges of the entrepreneurial life I have chosen.

Net-net: it is because I know I am doing what I am supposed to do in this lifetime, that I can be authentically **Kimberlie**. I know WHY I am doing WHAT I do, and my personality reflects that... and people gravitate to that in spades! I've created a path where I get to interactively connect with people of all walks of life, all over the world, and the joy and peace that this brings me only ignites my personality more!

Learn More About Kimberlie Dykeman: www.puresoapbox.com



✿ Dr. Marsha Firestone – Founder, Women Presidents’ Organization



About Marsha:

Dr. Marsha Firestone is the Founder and President of Women Presidents’ Organization (WPO), initiated in 1996 as a peer advisory organization for women who own multi million dollar businesses. She is also the Founder and President of Women Presidents’ Educational Organization, dedicated to increasing access to business opportunities for women’s business enterprises (WBEs).

*Dr. Firestone is the author of *The Busy Woman’s Guide to Successful Self-Employment* and has published research in business and educational journals on adult learning theory, nonverbal communication, and managerial competency.*

The success of any business can, in part, be attributed to the way in which that business is led. I believe the personality of a business to be inherited from its leader. The Women Presidents’ Organization began in 1997 with my vision of helping women entrepreneurs break through barriers and bring their businesses to the next level through the help of their peers and professionally trained facilitators. It is now an international organization with chapters in Canada, the US, Peru and the UK.

A successful business owner knows how to steady themselves in most situations. As a leader it is important to have a stable personality that does not fluctuate greatly with highs and lows. One dimension of a successful leader is the ability to take some risks and yet be tenacious, especially in the beginning of a new effort. It is also important to remain optimistic. Believe in what you have built and others will follow if you are able to enthusiastically convey your message. Most of all, even on the worst days, an optimistic outlook will insure that you and the business can move ahead.

Perhaps the most important personality trait is the willingness to assume responsibility for the company’s actions. The best CEOs know the buck stops with them. When the company grows, that same CEO knows when to let go so that a real division of labor is implemented. CEO self-awareness is perhaps the most important key to company growth.

Learn More About Dr. Marsha Firestone: www.womenpresidentsorg.com



* Jackie Huba – Author



About Jackie:

Jackie Huba is the co-author of "Citizen Marketers: When People are the Message" and "Creating Customer Evangelists: How Loyal Customers Become a Volunteer Sales Force." She is the co-author of the award-winning "Church of the Customer" blog, and co-founder of the Society for Word of Mouth (SWOM). She lives in Austin, Texas..

I love many things, but here are four of my favorites:

- * The Pittsburgh Steelers
- * Mini, my pet poodle
- * 80's music
- * Karaoke

They are my passions, and I am not shy in sharing that with you. I weave my passions into my work, too -- at speaking engagements, in blog posts and online videos. I've blogged about my Steelers tattoo. I've told audiences about being a pet parent and raising a four-legged furry child. I've sung (badly) in a few podcasts and online videos. I've led large groups of people in song and trust me, I'm no Joan Baez (or Britney Spears).

When I first began to weave my passions into my work, I was pretty scared. What if someone loves the Dallas Cowboys? They might not like me. What if someone thinks poodles are ridiculous? What if someone thinks "there's no singing in the workplace!" What if, what if, what if. So many risks!

One thing I've learned over the years is that a bland, beige personality is an invitation to obscurity, something we're all working hard to avoid. People do business with people they like. The companies with the best buzz typically have leaders with big personalities. Their personalities drive the company's DNA. Successful leaders are typically personality-fearless. So the best thing is: Try hard to be yourself. Then try harder. Your personality, especially for women, may be your most strategic asset in attracting and retaining customers, especially the ones who share your passions.

Learn More About Jackie Huba: www.churchofthecustomer.com



* Karen Kerrigan – CEO, Small Business Entrepreneurship Council



About Karen:

Karen Kerrigan has been at the forefront of leading key initiatives to help foster U.S. and global entrepreneurship. She is president & CEO of the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council, and founder of Women Entrepreneurs Inc. (WE Inc.). Among other accolades, Inc. Magazine named Kerrigan to its small business "Best Friends in D.C." (2006); Fortune Small Business to its "Power 30" list (2000); and The Hill newspaper to its "most influential small business" list (2006), as it described her as "the hardest working woman in show business." She is a founding member of the World Entrepreneurship Forum.

A core attribute that anchors my personality is authenticity - that is, not allowing outside influences to crush or confuse my genuine spirit or the way I approach life, leadership and business. From an early age we are pressed to conform and that continues well into adulthood. And, while a certain level of conformity is necessary to have healthy relationships and a productive business life, I have not compromised (or been forced to forfeit) key traits that remain essential to leading and achieving higher levels of success.

Primarily, I do not like it when I am told "it can't be done." Being both tenacious and competitive, these are "fighting words" to me. When I have a vision or goal, I am convinced "it" can be done with hard work, creativity and teamwork. I don't know if this determined personality trait is inborn or developed, but I do know it has routinely helped to attract the right people, resources and results to all my projects, organizations and work.

Though competitive, I really enjoy working with other people to achieve win-win outcomes. I love to collaborate and am truly energized by creative give-and-take, and executing a project to final completion. I think people sense this openness and positive energy, and therefore more opportunities continue to follow. I am a true optimist. Some say I convey a "too sunny" outlook at times - but sorry, I am not going to be miserable or buy into your doom-and-gloom view just to make you happy (or to conform!)

Being inquisitive and always wanting to learn, I feel that I gain something of value from every human interaction. People you come into contact with intuitively know whether such interactions are genuine or contrived. I have true respect and affection for my fellow woman and man, and as such this continues to foster success that is satisfying to the soul.

Learn More About Karen Kerrigan: www.sbecouncil.org



* Mia Kim – Founder & Editor, *Popgadget.net*



About Mia:

Mia Kim is the editor and founder of Popgadget.net, the popular technology review site for women. She is the electronics editor for Shop.com, and contributes to BusinessWeek Television and People Magazine. She has taught new media strategy at New York University, where she got degrees in Film and in Interactive Telecommunications.

Mia has been interviewed as a technology expert for the New York Times, BBC, Oprah Magazine, The Wall Street Journal, Fast Company, Business 2.0., NPR, and G4TV.

"Dear Ms. Kim, we admire your work and wonder if you might be a candidate for world's hottest _____. Please enclose a photo, no nudes, but sexy is great! Good luck!"

"Hey Mia, we thought you'd like to try out our new product, since you obviously play with these toys in your work. We've included two, in case you want to take any pictures that mirror our new campaign. You'll see strategically wearing these will make a mighty fine bikini!" (These were tiny, medallion-sized mp3 players.)

Typical of the type of email feedback I get on a daily basis, it's a bit salacious but what was I expecting when I got into my ultra-masculine field: technology reporting? What's sad but true is that although women buy more consumer technology than men do, and brilliant women do amazing things working in technology, women often face discriminatory practices if they want to become computer scientists, write for a technology blog, or even just buy a new cell phone at an electronics store.

One day, as I was buying a computer magazine, the bookstore cashier leered at me and said, "yeaaahh, you and me- we both like computers and the hot girls, huh?" It was a breaking point. I'd had enough. I didn't want to have to buy another magazine that was ostensibly about computers, but could easily pass as a girlie mag for a desperate teenage boy. I wanted a magazine that was for someone like me- someone who'd just as happily shop for a smartphone as I would for a new handbag. Oh sure, there were women in the magazines, but they were wearing, licking, or seductively draped over the products, never using them.

So I created an online magazine and called it, "Popgadget- technology and innovative lifestyle- for and by women". The important thing is, it's not the technology that's feminine, it's the viewpoint, it's the presentation, and for once, a door that says, "women come on in!" And every time a woman tells me they never thought that technology was something they could understand and enjoy, then I know that I've created something pretty cool.

Learn More About Mia Kim: www.popgadget.net



* Leah Komaiko – Brand Consultant, Author & Recovering Comedienne



About Leah:

Leah Komaiko helps businesses realize, create, and tell the simple stories that make them authentic, delightful and relevant to customers who are looking to fall in love with them and stay in love with them. Leah was the marketing director for a beloved luxury skincare company. She loves story and content in business. She is also the author of twenty New York published books – nineteen for children (where she learned how to keep a message simple, real and engaging), and a best selling memoir for adults which was bought by Hollywood. Many years ago, she was a stand-up comedienne at the Improv in L.A and has been on "The Today Show" and on "CNN" as well as in numerous national publications.

Growing up, I never understood a famous line I heard in many movies, "it's just business. Nothing personal." Then the character being assured this, would lose his job or a few knuckles. That always looked pretty personal to me. As I grew up and grew a career with creative and strategic opportunities taking me to a wide range of businesses, I have learned, in fact, business is personal because it is largely about personalities. And everybody has one. An aspect of mine that I am grateful for and learn to use daily is my sense of humor.

Humor sets the tone for how I operate. I am not looking to be the class clown but to be spontaneous. This is authentically who I am. To me, a laugh makes the difficult simple again. A little joy can't hurt. I have learned (the hard way) that true humor is a surprise. I don't know how it works, but once I hear the authentic "ring tone" of someone else's laugh and let them hear mine, there's no turning back. We see and know a little something about each other beyond words. Where, for example, branding lives. It frees up thinking and creativity. It makes us happy. It allows us to take a breath. I have found just in listening carefully to what another has said and repeating it later in a comic twist that works in the moment, people laugh. It delights us to know we have been heard.

A year ago I had an interview with the new CEO of a major corporation. First they had me interview in L.A. – then I went to a meeting in New York to meet with their new owners. I was drilled. I wanted this client. I was enthusiastic and took it seriously. It was serious. I was prepared to discuss strategies and the competition and new products. I sensed they were interested. But it wasn't until somehow it made sense to bring up that I had, many years ago, been a stand-up comedienne, that the deal seemed suddenly sealed. I had no plans of ever saying that. It was a surprise. I heard their "ring tones." They loosened their ties. I got the account. Perhaps it is because many companies know that in business, like in comedy, timing is everything and your audience decides in the first 16 seconds if you are going to bomb.

Learn More About Leah Komaiko: www.leahkomaiko.com



* Yvonne Lembi-Detert – CEO/President, Personality Hotels



About Yvonne:

Yvonne Lembi-Detert, president and CEO of Personality Hotels, is a true pioneer of San Francisco boutique chic, having made her mark with the opening of the city's first boutique hotel more than 20 years ago. Fresh out of the Rudolph Shaffer School of Design and San Francisco State University, her talents were enlisted to remodel and convert a historic hotel building into Hotel Union Square in 1982. Since then, Yvonne's hotel collection has grown to encompass seven properties, including Hotel Metropolis, Hotel Union Square, Kensington Park Hotel, the Steinhart Hotel, the flagship property, Hotel Diva, and the 2 newest additions: Hotel Frank & Hotel Vertigo.

Personality has always been such an important ingredient in my life. The reason I call it an ingredient is because a personality can change like the flavor of a recipe, but the important part about the change is how you gauge it & use it to your advantage. I try to make sure my personality always shows the truth through being just who I am.

One of the best exercises I ever gave myself while interviewing candidates, is to try to imagine that the person I am interviewing IS a young toddler in the preschool play yard interacting with the other small kids...& me being one of those kids. Then, believe it or not, I see the mannerisms change in the interviewee because any sense of intimidation leaves the room, and the both of us are on the same school yard grounds. I want the person to feel comfortable and an ease begins to melt & their true PERSONALITY shows through in the interview process. This is a success story for me because it allows me to identify the right candidate when I interview.

A personality can make or break a moment. It can show its true colors in a very uncomfortable situation or it can settle the hearts of many by your personality sticking out from crowd and lighting up the room with honesty, courage, and leadership.

I believe in the Golden Rule: Treat others with your PERSONALITY as you would like to be treated!

Learn More About Yvonne Lembi-Detert: www.personalityhotels.com



* Charlene Li – Author & Founder of Altimeter Group



About Charlene:

Charlene Li is an independent thought leader on digital technologies and the founder of Altimeter Group which provides consulting and digital strategies. Charlene is one of the most frequently-quoted industry analysts and has appeared on 60 Minutes, The McNeil NewsHour, ABC News, CNN, and CNBC.

She is also frequently quoted by The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, USA Today, Reuters, and The Associated Press. She is co-author of the business bestseller Groundswell.

For me, personality is about the personal. As a woman and person of color, it's often tempting for me to check aspects of my personal life at the door in order to fit in better with crowd that doesn't look like me. But I realized early on that no matter what I did, I would still have breasts and different color skin -- so I may as well make the most of it!

So I use my personality -- aspects of my personal life -- to connect with people, whether it's in one-on-one meetings or on stage in front of a thousand people. I share parts of my personal life, my personal thoughts, and my personal perspective frequently. It could be insights gleaned from being a parent one moment, and the next as an advisory to CEOs. It's sharing the frustrations of being a working parent, second generation Chinese, and as a digital evangelist. And it's showing that I understand and empathize with what other people are going through.

As a result, most people would describe me as "smart", but more importantly, "nice". Yes, it's hokey, but I really do try to connect and show appreciation in all my interactions with people. Being perceived as nice has been particularly helpful in my business, as I'm seen as easy to work with, especially in a space that's filled with super-sized egos. Smart people abound, but it's my personality as a very human, very real person that wins me the business at the end of the day.

Learn More About Charlene Li: www.altimetergroup.com



* Laura Mayes – Co-Founder, *kirtsy.com*



About Laura:

Laura Mayes is an Emmy award winning writer who joined two friends she met through design blogs to start kirtsy.com, a user-generated content aggregator for online news.

Today, kirtsy is a thriving community and a profitable company. Kirtsy created and hosted the Mom 2.0 Summit and has launched a nationwide hands-on campaign to educate women about social media.

Kirtsy is releasing a book, Kirtsy Takes a Bow: A Celebration of Women's Online Favorites in Summer 2009. In her 88 hours of weekly spare time, Laura enjoys hanging with her brilliant husband, chasing their energetic son around the house, and destroying food for dinner parties.

Any question about personality is not really a fair one. Because everyone thinks she has a swell personality and great taste in music. And considering I live with an ardent Wiggles fan... well, you can see the flawed logic on at least the second half of that former statement.

So, it seems, there's just no telling how much any given personality can help or hurt a situation. But I have to believe in today's world, you can fairly easily find your personality matches, your psychographic twins, if you simply, authentically put your true self out there.

A few months after my Wiggles fan was born, I did just that. In 2005, against all professional recommendations at the time, I started a personal blog to share photos with my little sister, who was then living 2,000 miles east of my house. I put myself out there. My real self. Uncensored. Unapologetic. And like minds found mine. Two of those minds and I eventually had an idea to create a fun aggregator of more like minds. And kirtsy.com was born.

When we started moving forward with our idea, we'd never met, never spoken, never high-fived. But we felt like we already knew one another. Because for more than a year, we had read each other's blogs. This is the power of the medium. The power of the people and personalities online. A community of personalities.

So I'd say the power and potential of personality has been a path for me. A path to find what, and who, is right around the corner to connect me to what's now...and what's next.

Learn More About Laura Mayes: www.kirtsy.com



✿ Melanie Notkin – Founder, SavvyAuntie.com



About Melanie:

Melanie Notkin is the founder and CEO of SavvyAuntie.com, the first online community for cool aunts, great aunts, godmothers and all women who love kids. Melanie is a regular panelist on the Strategy Room on FoxNews.com and a contributing editor to Toy Wishes Magazine. She and Savvy Auntie have been featured on NBC, CBS, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Business Week, The Washington Post, Huffington Post, Mashable and TechCrunch, among others. SavvyAuntie.com was ranked as one of Springwise's Top 10 Entrepreneurial Ideas of the Year (2008)..

When I first developed my plan for Savvy Auntie, I had two fundamental strategies for success. I found powerful consumer data on the segment I have dubbed PANKs - Professional Aunts No Kids. Then I worked closely with a top-tier creative agency to develop a really strong product. But the formula, I found out quickly, was still missing the secret ingredient that would propel it to success; it was missing "me."

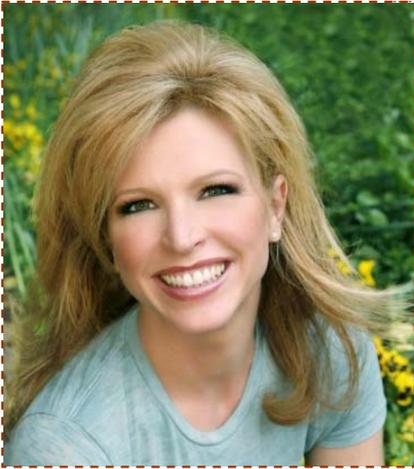
As I began to develop my company, I simultaneously shared my story through social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook and my "behind-the-scenes" business blog. By revealing much of myself and my business in an authentic and transparent way, I was closing the gap between "business" and "personality," creating trust. And by creating trust, I was laying down the groundwork for becoming a brand.

First, the people connected with me. Then the media did. Then sponsors, like Disney, came calling. Now my road to success is guided by a three-pronged strategy: Powerful Niche; Strong Product; Social Influence. Sure, you can start a company with just the first two. But imagine the potential of leveraging your own personal passion to really make it soar.

Learn More About Melanie Notkin: www.savvyauntie.com



✿ Laura Ries – Branding Guru & Bestselling Author



About Laura:

An expert on marketing and branding strategy, Laura Ries is the best-selling author of some of the nation's most respected branding books. In 1994, she partnered with her father and Positioning pioneer Al Ries. Together they founded Ries & Ries, a marketing strategy firm now based in Atlanta, Georgia. Together, they consult with fortune 500 companies and have written 5 books together. Their latest release is War in the Boardroom: Why Left-Brain Management and Right-Brain Marketing don't see eye-to-eye and what to do about it. Laura has been honored as a "Management Guru" by Business 2.0 and named as a top 40 under 40 by the Atlanta Business Chronicle. She frequently appears as a commentator on Fox News, CNBC, CNN and others.

Early on, I figured out that I was a very independent person, not easily swayed by the opinions of others. In terms of getting ahead in the business world, this was a significant discovery.

What kind of a personality does it take to succeed in the corporate world? Obviously I didn't have that kind of personality. A totally independent person is never going to make it. In the world of big business, you need to fit in with the crowd. As they say in Australia, "the tall poppy gets hammered down."

Where can an independent person go to get ahead? I had two choices. I could be an entrepreneur or I could be a consultant. Both occupations fit my personality. Fortunately, my dad was a marketing consultant and was more than willing to take me into the firm.

Our consulting firm works with many large corporations, so I've had a chance to observe the dynamics that happen in big companies. I keep thinking to myself, "That's not a place for my personality."

Learn More About Laura Ries: www.ries.com



✿ Kaira Sturdivant Rouda – Author, Real You Incorporated



About Kaira:

Kaira Sturdivant Rouda is a marketing expert, entrepreneur, motivational speaker and mom. She is the best-selling author of Real You Incorporated: 8 Essentials for Women Entrepreneurs, founder of Real You and president and creator of Real Living—the first national women-focused brand in real estate. She has appeared in hundreds of blogs and print publications, and was recognized in Entrepreneur magazine's Top 50 Fastest-Growing, Women-Led Companies list. She resides in Columbus, Ohio, with her husband and four children.

I don't like snarks or honk monsters, but I do "honk" when I laugh. Usually, in a meeting, I'm the one fidgeting and multi-tasking when I can get away with it. My personality is what it is: I came this way. I like to travel in groups—so it's hard for me to work alone. I love building and nurturing teams, at home and at the office. I'm a pretty fierce feminist—and I don't consider that an "f" word. I've dedicated my career to marketing, inspiring, creating and empowering women. And I've been blessed.

Sure, there have been plenty of hurdles along the way. Naturally, I haven't always fit in with the boy's club. But today's business is no longer dictated by the old networks—it's all about social networks, the Internet and the power of women. It's the decade of the entrepreneur, and women are leading the charge. I can feel it. And it's exciting. That's me, in a nutshell, and it's the philosophy I bring to keynote addresses and one-on-one consulting meetings: energy, vision and passion. It's also the point of view of my book: Real You Incorporated: 8 Essentials for Women Entrepreneurs.

When I created the Real Living brand, I went through the 8-step method outlined in my book and created the first female-focused national real estate company in the U.S. I needed the brand to come to life. It needed to be spunky, like me. The logo is round in a sea of squares, proudly red and real, built on a tradition of 50+ years in the business. We hand out lava lamps and have them at our branches. Real estate is a service, but the real estate industry for too long aligned its feel with banks. (Read stodgy.) And, in what is the opposite of personification, most real estate brands were (and still do) talking to themselves instead of the consumer. (Who is a woman, by the way, as is most likely your customer.)

Real estate brands, like brands in many legacy industries, make a big show of holding onto the past and thumping their chests. And that's the opposite of connecting, the opposite of real. What you need to put into your business, now more than ever, is the Real You.

Learn More About Kaira Sturdivant Rouda: www.realyouincorporated.com



* Roz Savage – eco-Adventurer, Author & Motivational Speaker



About Roz:

Roz Savage is a British eco-adventurer, author, speaker and renowned environmental activist, emphasizing the importance of positive action at both individual and global levels. Roz first gained attention in 2005, when after 11 years as a management consultant, she embarked upon a new life of adventure by rowing solo across the Atlantic. Her unlikely transformation from office worker to ocean rower, described with humor and soul-baring honesty online, captivated and inspired a worldwide audience. Roz is currently engaged in an epic effort to row solo across the Pacific Ocean.

It was the year 2000, and I was supposed to be happy. I had it all: the well-paid job as a management consultant, a beautiful big home in west London, an accomplished husband and a little red sports car. But there was something wrong with this picture. I didn't feel fulfilled. I didn't feel I was contributing anything to the greater good. I knew I was here for a purpose – but I didn't know yet what it was...

...Fast forward to March 2006. I am all alone on a tiny rowboat, bobbing around somewhere in the western Atlantic. I am homeless, penniless, and divorced. All four of my oars have broken and it's been 3 months since my last hot meal. I've had no communications since my satellite phone broke 24 days ago. I've got saltwater sores on my backside and tendonitis in my shoulders. But odd as it may seem, I've never been happier. At last, I have found my life purpose. After 3,000 miles and 103 days alone at sea I am about to realize my dream and arrive in Antigua.

So how has personality helped me to succeed? My personality is expressed in its truest form when I'm living life in line with my true purpose. It was only once I began living this way that I started to feel fulfilled – and successful. To me, success is about so much more than rowing across oceans. It's about creating a ripple effect: showing others what an ordinary person can achieve when they dare to dream big. I'm just an ordinary woman, but I've managed to achieve the extraordinary by believing that I could.

So I share my life online, through blogs, podcasts, Twitter and video, showing by example how life can be happy and fulfilling when you value yourself according to who you are rather than what you own. Contributing to the greater good by inspiring others to take those courageous steps toward living an authentic life in accordance with the inner wisdom we all possess – that's what makes me feel successful.

Learn More About Roz Savage: www.rozsavage.com



* Marcia Silverman – CEO, Ogilvy Public Relations



About Marcia:

Marcia, a 28-year veteran of Ogilvy PR, was most recently Ogilvy PR's first President of the Americas. She previously headed Ogilvy PR's largest office, in Washington. PRWeek, a leading industry trade publication, recognized Marcia's contribution to the industry by profiling her as one of the "50 Most Powerful Women in PR" and as one of the "100 Most Influential PR Professionals" in the 20th century. She was recently named PRWeek's "2009 PR Professional of the Year" and one of Washington Business Journal's "Women Who Mean Business."

When I joined Ogilvy, I did not think about whether this career path would be short on opportunities for me. I simply rolled up my sleeves and became immersed in a profession that still excites and challenges me—in a corporate culture that provides continual opportunities for learning and personal growth.

In my 28 years with Ogilvy PR, personality has shaped the agency's commitment to teamwork, client service and education and is what makes our many achievements possible. For example, our 360° Digital Influence employees saw a need for a comprehensive social media practice—and were given the freedom to address it. Now their innovation is breaking new ground in the fundamental practice of PR.

The fresh lessons in training methodology we have added are renowned in the industry and uniquely global in scope. We're integrating more than 1700 individual personalities to collaborate for clients across continents. Personality is what has helped me strengthen our global network. In fact, last year I traveled to 40 offices worldwide, and saw firsthand the brilliant and fascinating personalities of our agency's people on a daily basis.

I take great pride in our accomplishments today and know the agency is capable of even greater triumphs in the years ahead thanks to its ability to leverage the personalities of many into one very strong brand.

Learn More About Marcia Silverman: www.ogilvypr.com



The real story of this ebook:



About Rohit:

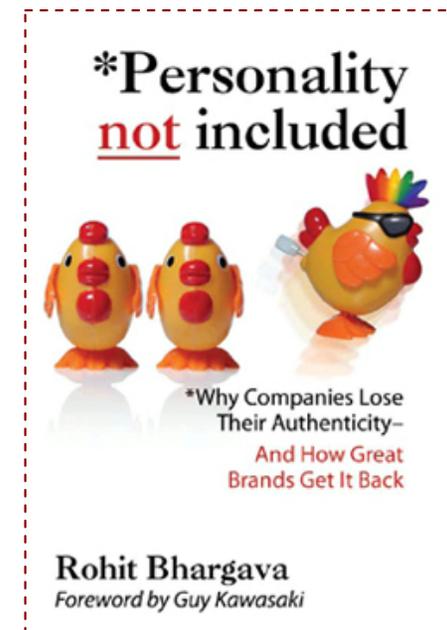
Rohit Bhargava is SVP of Strategy at Ogilvy 360 Digital Influence and a leading marketing blogger at the top ranked Influential Marketing blog. He speaks internationally on marketing and branding techniques, has appeared in hundreds of magazines and blogs and lives in Washington DC with his wife and two young sons. *Personality Not Included* is his first book and has been published in 32 countries and 7 languages by McGraw-Hill.

You probably already noticed, I'm not a woman. So why am I here at the end of this ebook? The short answer is because I edited this ebook and invited all the contributors. The slightly longer answer is that about a year ago I wrote a book about business and personality. It explores how a growing number of successful companies are finding their humanity and being more authentic. Glass ceilings are falling, office doors are staying open (if not disappearing altogether) and passion from employees (and customers) is finally being heard and embraced. This is the trend behind the big idea of *Personality Not Included*.

In the months after it came out, I got dozens of emails from some amazing entrepreneurs and business people talking about how they had already intuitively been using the lessons in the book – and how much they believed in the idea. As I looked back over them, I realized something interesting ... the majority were coming from women.

Those emails led me to the idea for this project – to gather some of the most pioneering women in business today to share their stories of how personality has helped them succeed. Now that you have read some of them, I hope they inspire you to do business in a more authentic and personal way. As you do, you'll clearly be in very good company

Learn More About Rohit: www.aboutrohit.com



Everything else (you ever wanted to know about this project)

Who is behind this ebook?

Rohit Bhargava (www.aboutrohit.com) compiled and edited these stories. He was assisted by Henna Merchant, a PR consultant and graduate student in public relations at the University of Houston. The topic is inspired by Rohit's book called *Personality Not Included* which is all about why brands (and people) need to have a personality.

How were the contributors chosen?

The contributors to this ebook are some of the most visionary, approachable and interesting women in business today. Each of the participants was chosen because she has not only built a successful career for herself but has also made significant contributions to helping other women become successful as well.

Where can I go to get more content like this?

If you enjoyed this ebook, the best place to get more content like it is to follow the links provided on the pages of each of the contributors. Buy their books, join their organizations and spread the word about them. The karma is great and it will all come back to you one day.

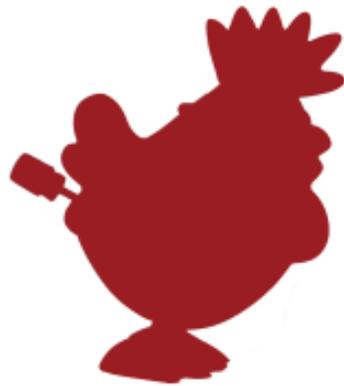
I'm a visionary woman too (or I have one to suggest)! Is there a second edition?

Even before completing the first edition of this ebook, there have been people who have suggested additions to the list and contributors they knew that would be ideal. It would be a shame to exclude these voices, so this version is intentionally called the 1st edition and there will be a second edition! To submit someone to be considered, just visit the main page where you downloaded this ebook at www.thepersonalityproject.com/wop and follow the links from there.

How can I support this effort?

This ebook is completely free to distribute and share, so feel free to share it as widely as you like. If you do a blog post, or send an update to your followers on Twitter, just use the keyword "WOP" and that way we can all find one another's conversations online and use it as a way to connect through social networks and perhaps in the real world as well!





www.thepersonalityproject.com/wop