the personality project

Women of Personality

40 Inspiring Women And Their Stories Of Success

2nd Edition – October 2009

www.thepersonalityproject.com/wop2

40 Visionary Women.
One Big Question ...

Why does personality matter?

✻ *This ebook compiles the stories of 40 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.*

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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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Janet Arneau – Producer, Actress, Stand-Up Comedienne

About Janet:

Janet is a diverse film, television, and stage actress and comedienne. She has appeared in 16 films, 40 theatrical productions and numerous television commercials and roles on hit TV programs such as the FX channel's "Rescue Me." Janet has also appeared in industrial productions as a spokeswoman for Fortune 500 Companies such as AT&T, Coke, Phillip Morris and many others. Before launching her career as an actress, Janet owned and operated a successful retail dress business in Atlanta Georgia. Currently Janet creates, produces and stars in her own comedic, reality based television show-"What's Your Problem?" broadcast for 4 seasons on the Time Warner Cable system. She worked on the feature film, "The King of California" starring Michael Douglas.

Personality is important you and your personality are the essence of your business, you are your business, your business is you. I am stimulated by how people should feel, I created and am the Spokesperson for a comical interview style reality show called "What's Your Problem?", we ask those we interview one question: "What's Your Problem?"

People want to be on camera but when they have no formal training they get stumped. I guide and direct people into a funny place, bringing out their comedy, they feel so good about themselves so it makes me feel good. I have always liked people and been interested in people. With a little stimulus people open up in such refreshing unique ways. I treat everyone as my equal all ages and all races. These are choices I have lived by which in turn has shaped my personality and given me the privy of traveling the world, knowing and working with people worldwide.

I come from a family of 5 females, my mother, myself and three sisters, my father died at an early age. My mother taught us to rely on what we can earn on our own she said: "It can be a long wait, waiting for someone to give you some thing or you can go get it yourself". These are very stimulating words to a young person it gives you the perspective the world is your oyster, any thing is possible.

One of my favorite songs is Cock Eyed Optimist from South Pacific, this pretty much sums me up. Life is as fun as we want it to be. This is the direction I take my endeavors, fun, which includes creating reality television shows and their branding. I am currently launching the merchandise for my "What's Your Problem?" brand at www.whatsyourproblemtv.com. And being that I do like to laugh I am also a Stand-Up comedian.

Learn More About Janet Arneau: www.janetarneau.com

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

* Deepika Bajaj – Founder, President of Invincibelle

About Deepika:

Deepika Bajaj is the founder and president of Invincibelle, a company empowering diverse, multi generational workforce and women to thrive in a multicultural world. She has served on the board of the National Society of Hispanic MBAs and Women in Intel. Deepika is the author of the book "DiversityTweet: Embracing growing diversity in our world". She is working on the second one (yet to be named) that speaks to her experiences of being a global citizen. She is a Social media columnist for Active Garage. You can follow her at @invincibelle on Twitter.

One day when I returned from school, my Grandfather heard my mom scolding me. He came through the door and inquired why my Mom was so upset with me. She told him that I had fared poorly in my exams and had no interest in my education. He simply looked at me with his gentle eyes and said, **"A man can be robbed of everything he possesses BUT no one can steal the investment you make in your education and health."** And then, he sat down and told me a touching story:

"Once upon a time, there was little girl. She wanted to change the world. She wanted all the kids to have candies. Every time she tried to explain to the king, why he had to provide candies for all the kids, he dismissed her. She was very hurt and was crying when a passerby stopped to check on her. He was a sage and was curious to know why the little kid was so disturbed. When she told him the reason, he looked at her and said, "Why wait for the king to change his mind, why don't you learn to make candies? When you do so, you can sell the candies to the King's vendors and make a profit. From the profit, you can make more candies and you can distribute those candies to the kids." The sage told the little kid, if you are willing to learn then you have the power to do whatever you want."

That was it. At that moment, something changed in me and probably shaped my personality in a BIG way. I developed this hunger for learning and to change the world. To change the world, you needed new ways of thinking and for that you needed education. From that point, I surrounded myself with teachers. They recognized my thirst for knowledge and my passion to make a difference in the world. With the direction and focus I got from them, I started to see results and ultimately discovered my inner calling. This was when I started to build my company, Invincibelle.

Part of being in Corporate America for nearly ten years, I observed that the irony of ethnic/affinity groups was to create an inclusive environment by dividing people into different groups – Asian American, Hispanic, African American et al. This did not make sense. I believe that the most important thing is how will we create an inclusive environment in which the next generation of diversity leadership will come from. Today with technology and globalization, every single person, with his or her own combination of experiences and backgrounds is a unique global citizen. That is the new diversity. I believe that journey of entrepreneurship is full of uncertainty, rejections and accomplishments. You have to stick with it and see it through. If it were not for my personality that is passionate, tenacious, open to trying new things, reasonably comfortable with uncertainty, open to getting good help and willing to pay the price to change the world, I would not have embarked on making the world a better place for coming generations of diverse workforce.

Learn More About Deepika Bajaj: www.deepikabajaj.com

Melinda Blau – Award Winning Journalist & Co-Author, Consequential Strangers

About Melinda:

Award-winning journalist Melinda Blau has spent the last several decades researching and writing about lifestyle trends, family issues, education, health, and sexuality. Her most recent book, Consequential Strangers: People Who Don't Seem to Matter...But Really Do, examines the surprisingly vital connections beyond family and close friends–a subject that takes readers into the worlds of business and marketing, the Internet and social media, health and "place making." Many parents know Melinda as the co-author (with the late Tracy Hogg) of the best-selling "baby whisperer" series. In addition to her nine other books, Melinda's writing has been featured in The New York Times, and American Health and she has been a guest on Good Morning America, CBS This Morning, Oprah, and numerous other national and local TV and radio broadcasts.

I have always had an insatiable curiosity about people. In college, I spent hours "interviewing" my dorm mates; I knew everyone's problems and how to solve them. Eventually, I made a career out of it. But not before an uncommonly generous editor nursed me through my first article. "Blau!" he shouted, after reading my third draft. "You skip through life. Why are you lumbering on paper!" He was telling me to put my personality on paper. But what neither of us could have anticipated then was that forty years later a writer would also have to *be* a personality. Books are more plentiful in 2009, attention spans shorter. Skipping in print isn't enough. Like any "manufacturer" in the era of social media, for my "product" to sell, I have to connect with potential "customers" and stay in touch even after they buy the book. I need to amass a "tribe" of readers. Or at least, that's the theory.

I had a best-selling book once, way back in 2001–ancient history in Internet time. *Secrets of the Baby Whisperer* was that rare perfect storm in publishing: Twelve houses vied for the proposal. A two-book deal and a hefty six-figure advance followed. We launched on *Dateline* and *Today* and hit the list immediately. But I was the writer, not the personality. Tracy Hogg–the original super nanny–did all the post-publication work. I collected royalty checks. The books had staying power for two reasons: I'd managed to capture Tracy's presence on paper–her personality came through. Just as important, Tracy genuinely loved interacting with her readers. She answered their emails, left posts on the message boards, met for online chats, and did consults by phone. Even after she was diagnosed with esophageal cancer, she spent hours "with" her fans. And they loved her for it. Though she died in 2005, shortly before a third book was published, they continue to keep her alive. Not so incidentally, our books are still selling.

I am not just the writer of my latest book; I am its personality. I blog for several sites including my own. I twitter and visit Facebook many times a day and reply to everyone who contacts me. I share bits of my own life. It takes time, but I do it because–naturally–I want people to buy the book. It took me three years to write; now I want it *read*. I also do it because I still love hearing people's stories. It's who I am. But the biggest carrot is the feedback. When someone tells me that reading *Consequential Strangers* helped her gain a fresh perspective on a problem in her own life, I remember why I became a writer in the first place.

Learn More About Melinda Blau: www.consequentialstrangers.com

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Victoria Colligan – Founder, Ladies Who Launch

About Victoria:

Victoria is the Founder of Ladies Who Launch, the first new media company to provide resources and connections for women entrepreneurs. She is the creator of Ladies Who Launch Online and the Featured Lady stories. She is also co-author of the book Ladies Who Launch: Embracing Entrepreneurship and Creativity as a Lifestyle. Victoria has been featured on "The Today Show," in The New York Times, and in many other media outlets. Prior to starting Ladies Who Launch, Victoria worked as director of content and business development for Amsale, a high-end wedding gowns designer, where she relaunched their Web site, started an online magazine, and developed numerous strategic partnerships.

For me ***Personality*** is synonymous with ***Authenticity***. In the beginning, when you first start a business, being authentic can be challenging. You are learning so much. There is tremendous pressure to get things right, make the right decisions. Yet, authenticity is necessary to be successful. What you don't realize early on is that if you can tap into that unconscious part of you that is all-knowing, you are more likely to be successful and make choices that benefit you and your business.

I once read an article by a very prominent guru and public speaker in which he describes his process for getting ready for a presentation: He said that in the beginning of his career, he would spend hours preparing for presentations and transcribing, in meticulous detail, what he thought he would say. Fast forward years later, post self-awareness development, he describes his process as completely the opposite. In fact he no longer prepares at all, choosing instead to focus on the present moment and to draw on his inner wisdom of what is required in that moment to convey. Building a successful business is a comparable analogy.

Staying in the present moment and developing the ability to make spontaneous, yet advantageous decisions that are at once strategic and relevant are required to get to the next level. Unfortunately, we often confuse true inner wisdom with that thought which is emotionally charged, letting emotion, rather than authenticity, drive our choices. If I am ever feeling stuck, I often ask myself this question, if it were one year from today and I were looking back on this moment, what decision would I have made? This rationale and way of thinking can be applied not only to business, but also to life. And for many, like me, the two are inseparable.

Learn More About Victoria Colligan: www.ladieswholaunch.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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Shayna Englin – Principal, Englin Consulting

About Shayna:

Shayna launched Englin Consulting, LLC with over a decade of experience identifying and mobilizing supporters for non-profits, causes, and political candidates. From her roots in Colorado as an organizer for Colorado NARAL, to her role as Fundraising Practice Manager at Mindshare Interactive Campaigns (now Verilion), to her leadership as Program and Political Director at the Women's Campaign Forum, Shayna has been on the cutting edge in producing innovative and effective plans, programs, and materials that yield results: dollars raised, votes won, and policy changed. Shayna lives in Alexandria, Virginia, with her husband, David, a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, and their son, Caleb.

I don't build widgets or sell gizmos or produce anything tangible. I have ideas, I recognize other people's good ideas, and I help them put those good ideas to work changing the world. I do this because I love it, but I also do it for a living - my work pays the mortgage and feeds my family and generally keeps us in the manner to which we've grown accustomed (that manner includes excellent wine, lots of evenings with friends, fabulous travel, and many Apple branded gadgets, in case you're wondering).

For me to make a successful living, people looking to change the world have to believe I can help them. They have to believe I'm so good that they should pay me to to help them. And since I don't have any gadgets or widgets or sales charts or whatnot to prove it, they have to go with me on the basis of my personality. In my business, there's pressure to be harder, more closed, and, let's be honest, more male. It's just not in me.

My personality is an authentic outpouring of who I am, and it's been the key to my unconventional success in a business that is notoriously hard to stay independent in. I'm warm, I'm enthusiastic, I'm curious, I'm driven, I'm supportive, I'm confident, and I will consider you a friend faster than maybe I should.

All of that comes across clearly, immediately, and thus far (knock on wood) to great effect.

Learn More About Shayna Englin: www.englin.net

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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Jill Foster – Founder, Women Grow Business

One thought keeps muscling through on how personality has impacted my career: enthusiasm begets enthusiasm. It's that "Holy Smokes, this is cool!" mentality and letting it emit in its natural verve. When I'm on fire about a new idea or new member to the blogger team or new video project, etc it's the enthusiasm that has most shaped opportunity for new partnerships with people that are as on fire about the project or topic at hand. Then that shared zeal just compounds in the collaboration and partnership; this exchange with the other person or team involved really appeals to me.

This enthusiasm has fortified professional and personal relationships with a sense of trust -- a type of trust that wonderfully seems to surmount obstacles and doubt. So from the perspective of contributing to and emerging ideas, the "Oh this is volcanically great!" type of attitude shared with folks has led to some fantastic progress, outcomes, and relationships.

About Jill:

Jill Foster, co-founder of DC Media Makers, teaches social media and serves as editor for Women Grow Business, a Network Solutions blog and community. In August 2008, Jill covered events at the Democratic National Convention using mobile media. And in May 2009, her mobile media report co-produced with Shireen Mitchell won the Apps for Democracy Social Citizen Award in Washington, DC. Conversations regarding her work have appeared in the Washingtonian, Washington Post, GuardianUK, Indy Star, and other media outlets; she enjoys participating in tech and entrepreneurship communities including DC Web Women and Women Who Tech

Learn More About Jill Foster: www.womengrowbusiness.com

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Kathy Korman Frey – Founder, Hot Mommas ® Project

About Kathy:

Kathy Korman Frey is the founder of the Hot Mommas® Project and teaches Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership at the George Washington University School of Business. She is a contributor to Maria Shriver's new national women's site, and a featured blogger on Yahoo! Small Business and ForbesWoman. She lives in DC with husband Josh, two munchkins Maxwell and Delilah, and dog Foxy Frey.

Here's how I knew I was onto something with the Hot Mommas® Project brand:

Setting: Phone call to sponsor
Me: *Hi. This is Kathy Korman Frey. I teach Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership at the GW School of Business. I'm following up on something I sent there last week.*
Person on end of phone: [Sorting through mental rolodex, unsuccessfully] *Ummm…okay…can you tell me a bit more?*
Me: *It was a big envelope. It was bright red and shiny.*
Person on end of phone: [One step away from "Bueller, Bueller"] *Sure…er…yeah…umm.*
Me: *It was from The Hot Mommas Project.*
Person on end of phone: *Oh yes! Of course! I'll put you right through. We love that name. We were all talking about it. What do you all do?*

To answer the question, The Hot Mommas® Project produces teachable role models for women and girls …or rather, you do. We invented an online "case wizard" which allows women to tell their stories in an educational format. We are the largest collection of such stories in the world and have won hoity toity awards. Those cases, and our other curriculum, are used to TEACH WOMEN LEADERS. No, you don't have to be a mom.

Brand birth. That phone call marked my transition from uber-boring white collar consultant to red leather-wearing branding chick. All my spreadsheets, my MBA, and my resume couldn't get me what I had gotten right there on the phone: Instant recognition.
Go big or go home. For The Hot Mommas® Project, the bar is raised because of our interesting brand. We have a big name, and we better deliver big. That mentality infuses everything we do. I honestly felt less motivated when I had my highly-successful-yet-boring consulting firm. Deep down even I found it boring.
The nay sayers. With a big brand come risks, followed by hate mail. Well, okay – not really – but, we get the occasional person questioning the name. We tested the name extensively and recruited a feminist literature professor as an advisor. You know what we found? People LOVED it. Those who did not were primarily worried about what *others* would think.
Branding the unbranded. One of the main reasons people liked the name? Recognition. We branded the unbranded. We said, "Hey you dynamic women out there…multitasking at home, or working it at work…you MATTER. You have something to teach, and we're listening."

What's next? Well, Cool Daddies of course.

Learn More About Kathy Korman Frey: www.HotMommasProject.org

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Adriana Gascoigne – Founder, Girls in Tech

About Adriana:

A seasoned Web 2.0'er, Adriana is a video blogger and publishes her own tech lifestyle blog and buzzes around Silicon Valley speaking at industry events. Her current role is Director of Global Communica-tions for SGN, a gaming company. Prior to that, Adriana was the Director of Global Communica-tions for hi5, one of the world's largest social networks . In March 2007, Adriana launched Girls in Tech, an organization focused on touting women's achievements in tech and beyond. In Spring 2009, she will be launching Smitten With Mittens, a non-profit providing warm mittens and clothing to orphans in developing countries during their respective winter seasons.

Since I started my career, I've been fascinated with emerging technologies and how those technologies impacted everyday life, particularly innovations in social media. As I really started diving in and exploring the overall industry more in depth, I saw there was a drastic disproportion of men to women working within the marketplace and that this issue was not being addressed in a way that allowed women to feel like an integral part of the field. In talking with others, this was a common theme, yet there wasn't a forum or outlet where we could come together and discuss technology, receive support and education, and feel empowered by our contributions to the field. As this impacted my life and that of my girlfriends, I started regular meet-ups that then became Girls in Tech – a social enterprise aimed at empowering, educating and elevating the status of women in technology.

My background is in communications and through the use of social media tools, I have been able let other women know about Girls in Tech and the resources available to us within the industry. The organization has grown from just a few members meeting over coffee to a worldwide organization with more than 5,000 members in every corner of the globe.

Through Girls in Tech, I am hoping to reach every woman who shares my passion for technology, and help them embrace both their femininity and enthusiasm for all things tech.

Learn More About Adriana Gascoigne: www.adrianagascoigne.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

Lynne d Johnson – Social Media SVP, Advertising Research Foundation

About Lynne:

Lynne d Johnson is Senior Vice President, Social Media for the Advertising Research Foundation. She was formerly the senior editor and community director of FastCompany.com, a leading website and community for Fast Company magazine. She writes Digital Media Diva, a technology blog following web, media, and consumer trends for FastCompany.com. Also a consultant, Johnson works with media properties on digital content, branding, and social media development and strategy. Prior to Fast Company, she served as the general manager, new media for VIBE, and SPIN. She is an adjunct professor in the Audrey Cohen School for Human Services, Metropolitan College of New York.

I don't think I started my career thinking about the role my personality played in its development, at least not as much as I thought about acquiring multiple skills. But somehow and somewhere along the way, in my quest to develop those skills, my personality began to emerge as a significant force in building the bridge to my future.

At some point, early in my career, I came across a book, *The Personal Touch: What You Really Need to Succeed in Today's Fast Paced Business World*, written by Terrie Williams, a very successful African-American entrepreneur with her own PR agency that services several stars. The book was about Williams' personal touch philosophy and her unique formula for success that combines a distinctive work ethic, with attention to detail, drive, determination, honesty, and integrity. What I found out is that I was already doing a lot of what Williams wrote about in her book. Sending handwritten thank you notes, even for the slightest thing. Making it a point to remember names. Maintaining relationships by developing mutually beneficial relationships with contacts, and connecting others to do the same. Doing favors for people big and small--from the heart, with passion. Going the extra mile. But like Williams in her book, none of these things were gimmicky for me. They were real, a part of who I already was as a person and who I was becoming as a business professional.

In these days of social media, it seems that the personal touch would be harder to achieve given the various networks one may belong to. But actually it becomes a lot easier. There are tools that track your conversations and your relationships. Tools that help you make connections and get introductions. And sometimes though your bio may get you in the door, it's who you really are that's going to make a difference. Your character, that first impression truly opens and closes the door to business, even on the Web. You can't build a personal brand without being personable. Though it may be cliche, and from Shakespeare's Hamlet, to thine own self be true is the best thing anyone could ever do for herself in business and in life.

Learn More About Lynne d Johnson: www.lynnedjohnson.com

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Julie Silard Kantor – Social Entrepreneur

About Julie:

Julie Silard Kantor has taught entrepreneurship to urban youth since 1992. Before becoming the Vice President of Government Affairs, Ms. Kantor served as Executive Director of the NFTE Greater Washington DC office. She received the NFTE Leadership Award in '05 & '07, was NFTE Executive of the Year in '99, Washingtonian Magazine's 100 people to watch under 40, & SmartCEO Magazine's Top 20 Leaders in '07. In her new book, I SAID YES: Real Life Stories of Students, Teachers and Leaders Saying YES! To Youth Entrepreneurship in America's Schools, Ms. Kantor gives her first-person account as an entrepreneurial leader, taking the reader inside the real-life stories of inner-city youth and others whose lives have been influenced, inspired and forever changed through an interest in becoming an entrepreneur.

Email, Facebook, Twitter, Cell Phone, Business Meetings, Linked-In, Friends of Friends ... Mother, Daughter, Wife, Artist, Social Entrepreneur, Sister, Friend-- We all wear many hats and there are many many ways people can get in touch with us and visa versa. So when you make a CHOICE to meet someone, what is it that makes you want to spend time with them-- connect... answer the phone when they call or actually call that person back? Its usually personality. You want to call them back, you want to see them, and you feel that you have something that YOU WANT to connect on. I have never been a big fans of SHOULDS and COULDS-- life is a lot more fun when you are with people you want to connect with and learn from and about.

Over the past 16 years, I have been building a global movement with an amazing team called Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE)-- we are now the world leader in youth entrepreneurship education with over 230,000 graduates in 13 countries. I head up Government Affairs and also the Greater Washington office. Many years ago I was at a conference I wasn't suppose to be at. The founder of NFTE spoke, Steve Mariotti in front of 1,000 people and his story changed my life. (Steve and NFTE story are detailed in my book *I Said Yes*). I had a window of 4 minutes to meet Steve and I knew that I needed to say something that would create a connection. I needed to impress him and somehow get on his radar screen with so many people standing in line to meet him.

As Steve would tell you, I took his picture for the magazine and told him that I wanted to come work with him-- the following week-- I guess I made an impression, although I remember the story a bit differently. The important thing though is that was 16 years ago and its been and amazing journey.

So how do you use your personality to open a door? break down a door? who gets on your radar screen as a leader or a friend? and once they are in the door of your life, how are deep and meaningful personal and professional relationships built. is it the loud person or the driven person or the quieter person who speaks little but says so much in few words? Networking is a hallmark skill of an entrepreneur, and one of our objectives is that every young person should and can learn these skills and it takes confidence and passion to let **your unique personality** to come out and shine!

As a manager, leader, friend, social entrepreneur and family member I come in contact with so many personality types-- what are they passionate about? What makes one's heart soar? Is this person curious about life and growing? Can I really 'see' who this person is... and if the answers are clear to me than the emails, the cell phone calls, the Facebook connects are all welcomed!

Learn More About Julie Silard Kantor: www.nfte.org

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

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 a 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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

✻ 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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

✻ 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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Charlene Li – Author & Founder of Altimeter Group

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.

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, USAToday, Reuters, and The Associated Press. She is co-author of the business bestseller Groundswell.

Learn More About Charlene Li: www.altimetergroup.com

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Michelle Madhok – Founder, SheFinds Media

About Michelle:

Michelle Madhok is the founder and CEO of SheFinds Media an online media company that publishes editorial websites about shopping for busy, professional women. Since its 2004 inception, the company has demonstrated exceptional growth using its capital efficient, highly scalable model. Previously, Madhok was group director of online content at AOL where she built and ran what became the world's largest online women's channel. She began her media career at CBS in 1995 as director of entertainment marketing and one of the founding executives of CBS.com.

Personality is what gets you noticed.

From 1998 – 2003 I oversaw editorial content for women on AOL, which had the largest audience of woman ever. The service had 35 million subscribers and 52% were woman. I learned a lot about what women want from the Internet. One of the things they use the Internet for, is to save themselves time. As women get busy with life - kids, job, you lose that time for yourself to go shopping and keep up with the latest trends. While employed at AOL I had the idea for a site that would help cut through the shopping clutter and wanted to build the site for the company. Having a big idea and stepping out of the corporate org chart didn't win me any points. I remember one boss yelling at me when I brought the idea to him that I should stop trying to be so "entrepreneurial."

I eventually took a severance package and left AOL and then tried to shop the idea to other big media companies. At Conde Nast the person I met with said "I think you're a marketing person trying to be an editorial person and that doesn't cut it at Conde Nast."

So I decided to start the business on my own. I bootstrapped and built a $500 website. Every morning I would wake up thinking "how can I make money?" I did my own ad sales and own PR. I ran shopping tours in NYC to raise cash. I bartered beauty products for the domain name SheFinds.com. In 2007 I won a small business competition "Make Mine a Million" where you present your business to an auditorium full of people and they vote on whether or not you were going to be a success. In the audience was a reporter from Inc. Magazine who was impressed with my pitch and covered me and my business in a two page spread for the magazine. Shortly after that was published we got a call from an investor in Vancouver who had read the article in the airport. Last fall we sold a minority share of our company to that investor for $1.3M.

Since then we've been profiled in videos for Dell Small Business, IKEA and Geek Squad. I've been a paid spokesperson for Bank of America and Paypal. My personality is the engine pushing us into new opportunities and I can't wait to see what happens next.

Learn More About Michelle Madhok: www.shefinds.com

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Jennifer Marchetti – Founder, GoosieCards.com

About Jennifer:

Jennifer Marchetti is the founder and CEO of Goosiecards.com. Goosie Cards® are the first and only personalized flash cards on the market and were inspired by her son, nicknamed "Goosie". She had her "AHA" moment when she had the idea to turn her family photos into personalized flash cards. She turned her passion into a business and Goosiecards.com was launched online in June 2006. Goosie Cards are award-winning flash cards that have received celebrity exposure, national and international television coverage and featured in over 100 print and online media outlets.

My personality helped take my product from a "what" to a "why". Yes, I created a one of a kind product that helps me stand out from the crowd. But I built the Goosie® brand based on how important it was for me to teach my child and be a "hands on" mom. This is who I am and it is my biggest asset for my business. My philosophy resonates with other moms and transforms my product into a parenting *lifestyle* that moms truly believe in.

I remain authentic and let my personality shine through everything I do *inside as well as outside* of my business. Being true to who I am connects me to this amazing social community of moms on every level. These moms are my secret WOM sales force that drive my sales and give Goosie a life of its own.

My advice is to always be yourself and to celebrate your uniqueness in your business and let your personality shine through. The greatest gift we have is our authenticity and it's the best way to stand out from the crowd!

Learn More About Jennifer Marchetti: www.goosiecards.com

Debra Morrow – Brand Consultant, Inventor, Fmr. Ad Agency President

About Debra:

As a past president of Witherspoon, (recognized by Adweek Magazine as a pastTop-50 Southwest ad agency), Debra Morrow built an award-winning creative department from the ground up, leading the Fort Worth, TX, shop to regional and national recognition. During her 14-year tenure, she received more than 200 industry awards for her writing and creative direction. Morrow has held numerous board memberships and has been recognized for her community leadership with the Boys & Girls Clubs, the Women's Shelter, Senior Citizens Services and many others. She was also a Texas Wesleyan University commencement speaker, and a Top Ten Most Powerful Women in Fort Worth Honoree.

My penchant for making every assignment fun began in college when a University of Texas at Austin professor asked our speech class to share hobbies. Well, I liked to eat, so I brought a big platter of spaghetti to class and demonstrated all the ways you could consume it -- from the Single-Noodle Slurp to the Twirled, Full-Fork Stuff. Got an A.

Throughout my career, I've always looked for the fun factor – it's just part of my personality and it helped me earn nine promotions. No matter if I was writing about bras at Dillard's, managing a $40-million media budget for Color Tile or building a top-50 Southwest ad agency in Texas, I made it a personal mission to get people to lighten up and enjoy their job. After all, most of us spend our whole lives sitting in windowless offices. We might as well work in a relaxed and accepting atmosphere. That's when the best work happens and when the best people hire on. Clients appreciate it, too. When we presented a campaign theme, "The Lower You Go, The Less You Pay" to a large newspaper client, we served virgin pina coladas and set up a limbo bar in the conference room. We were hired.

Now in my fifth year of being an independent brand consultant, I'm still having fun in all kinds of ways: helping clients define their brands and messaging, pursuing inventions, selling intellectual property and serving non-profit organizations. Like the spaghetti in college, I'm still throwing ideas against a wall to see if they stick. It's a great feeling when they do.

Learn More About Debra Morrow: www.morrowcompany.net

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Melanie Notkin – Founder, SavvyAuntie.com

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.

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 Entreprenerial Ideas of the Year (2008)..

Learn More About Melanie Notkin: www.savvyauntie.com

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

✻ 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

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Deborah Schimberg – Entrepreneur, Founder, Verve Inc.

About Deborah:

Deborah Schimberg is the founder of Verve, inc., manufacturer of two all-natural, eco-friendly candy lines: Glee Gum and Make Your Own Candy Kits. The concept for Verve, inc. was born in 1992, the year she and her family visited an economically depressed chicle-producing community in Northern Guatemala. Since the harvest of chicle is sustainable and benefits both the rainforest and the local economy, Schimberg became inspired to create a market for it in the States. Her efforts led to Verve's first product, the Make Your Own Chewing Gum Kit. Building on the popularity of the Gum Kit, Verve introduced the Glee Gum brand in 1996. She also served as the Executive Director of Social Venture Partners of Rhode Island, which helps non-profit organizations develop earned income revenue streams and taught social entrepreneurship at Brown University.

I've always been passionate about environmental issues and education, and honestly, I never thought too much about candy. Then a Kellogg Fellowship afforded me the opportunity to study models of sustainable development in Guatemala. And, in the process, I learned that the original material that gives chewing gum its "chew" comes from chicle, the sap of the sapodilla tree that grows in the rainforest regions of Mexico and Guatemala. Who would've thought? After some trial and error in my kitchen (with the help of my 3 kids), I created a "Make Your Own" Chewing Gum Kit, and then, Glee all natural chewing gum. We're the only ones who use chicle (everyone else's gum base now is totally synthetic), and as a result, we're actively providing a value for the trees, an income for those who harvest it, and aiding rainforest conservation.

We try to make our products "Connect", "Create", and "Captivate", connecting consumers to producers, captivating their imaginations and, ultimately, inspiring commitment to responsible consumerism. The Glee guy, the mascot who graces all our gum packages, is a dapper chap with a wholesome, retro vibe. Ageless but nostalgic, his grin represents a zest for living in the present and an optimism about the future. Our brand is a reflection of my feeling that we must move more and more to a world where products are "green", functional and fun.

Learn More About Deborah Schimberg: www.gleegum.com

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Clara Shih – Entrepreneur, Author, Thought Leader

About Clara:

Clara Shih (@clarashih) is an entrepreneur, author, and thought leader on sales and marketing on Facebook and Twitter. In 2007, she helped kicked off the "social CRM" movement with her Faceconnector application, which integrates Facebook and Salesforce CRM. Clara is author of the newly released business bestseller, The Facebook Era, which has been featured in The New York Times, Chicago Sun-Times, Fast Company, CRM Magazine, and is being used as a textbook at Harvard Business School. Clara is founder and CEO of Hearsay Labs, which helps brands build, engage, and measure on social media.

Personality is what makes each of us different. Having personality makes everything more fun, both for us and those around us. Whether at work or play, I always enjoy myself most and feel most inspired when I can truly let loose and be myself. When I am around other people, I strive to make them feel comfortable so that they too can let loose and their personalities can shine.

As an immigrant from Hong Kong, I was raised to focus on work ethic and book smarts. But I was also lucky enough to encounter some terrific personalities throughout my school, career, and social life who inspired me to inject optimism, humor, and more of who I am into everything I say and do.

Facebook and Twitter have been transformative for society largely because they enable us to show our personality while getting to know others. Whether it's the music and brands we identify with, photos we share, or our day-to-day musings, social networking sites let us share our individual personalities online in a way that was never before possible, secure, and socially acceptable.

I wrote *The Facebook Era* and founded Hearsay Labs to help companies showcase their personalities across different types of social media. Developing an authentic, differentiated presence on social media allows companies to connect with customers in new ways and build lasting relationships that are loyal, mutually fulfilling, and true.

Learn More About Clara Shih: http://facebook.com/thefacebookera

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Rashmi Sinha – Cofounder, CEO of Slideshare

Right from childhood, I have had a streak of independence which means that I have never had a "real job" as my husband puts it. I was at a University, then did consulting, then a startup, then another. At this point, I am afraid of a real job. This fear means that I have to work on something I started.

Also, I am impatient. I get bored easily. I need something that holds my attention and is constantly changing. Being a startup CEO is very appropriate since the job changes every six months as the product and company grow. My current role is very different than when SlideShare was a just launched website and there were five team members. Overall, I might be tired and overworked, but I am never bored.

About Rashmi:

Rashmi Sinha is cofounder and CEO for SlideShare, the world's largest community for sharing presentations and documents. SlideShare is growing rapidly (more than 18 million monthly uniques) letting everyone from marketers, conference speakers and academicians share presentations and connect with others. Rashmi has a PhD in Cognitive Psychology from Brown University and did research on search engines and recommender systems at UC Berkeley. She is a frequent speaker at conferences such as Web 2.0 Expo and Future of Web Apps. She writes a blog at rashmisinha.com about running a startup.

Learn More About Rashmi Sinha: www.rashmisinha.com

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Kelley Murray Skoloda - Author, Marketing-to-Women Expert

About Kelley:

Kelley Skoloda is a mom, an author, an MBA and a public relations executive. She is a partner/director of Ketchum's Global Brand Marketing. She is the architect of the widely-publicized Women 25to54, a communications offering that offers a better way to reach female consumers. In early 2009 she published her first book, Too Busy to Shop: Marketing to Multi-Minding Women *that is a collaboration of 20+ years of personal insights, proprietary research, interviews with senior marketing pros and in-depth discussions with real women - in person & on her blog.*

As the child of a father who spent 22 years as a Marine Corps drill instructor, I could not help but have discipline in my blood, and as a direct result, a big part of my personality. During my childhood, developing a disciplined personality was occasionally annoying and I remember not being too fond of my dad at times.

There were many times when I wanted to skip practice for some sport or activity to attend a "fun" event, but my dad insisted that practices were an important part of the commitment I made to the teams. So, commitment won out and that commitment to priorities, rather than the fad of the moment, has prevailed in my work and my life.

The lessons in discipline turned me into a straight-A student and a professional with a strong sense of priorities and prioritizing. Those skills have served me well in my adult life as a wife, a mom, a public relations executive and now, an author. The constant juggling -- both multi-tasking and multi-minding -- is absolutely doable with discipline, a very practical and visible part of my personality. The whole process of book writing and publishing came to fruition with a strong timeline and a respect for self-imposed deadlines.

In addition to being disciplined, my dad also had a great sense of humor and appreciated having fun. Those characteristics have formed a personality that helps me navigate both business and raising kids. I thank my dad, now gone, for instilling a very healthy degree discipline, and love for fun, in me.

Learn More About Kelley Murray Skoloda: www.KelleyMurraySkoloda.com

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

✻ Marcia Silverman – CEO, Ogilvy Public Relations

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.

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."

Learn More About Marcia Silverman: www.ogilvypr.com

1st EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Denise Smith – Founder, Chicks Who Click

About Denise:

Denise is the founder of Chicks who Click – a community of women that are growing and flourishing through Social Media. The vision of the organization was to create a conference, a think tank, if you will, for women to come together to listen, teach, experiment and connect with like-minded women face to face, stay connected through Twitter, Blogging, Facebook or Flickr, and to empower each other in achieving great heights in our careers and journeys; and lastly, to collaborate our efforts as women in the male-dominated field of technology.

From an early age, what I've known about my personality, is that two personality traits drive me: humor and passion. I wanted to try everything and consequently, be the best at everything, from music to sports to foreign language to cooking to building things...yes, there were some epic fails and some small successes, but mostly what I remember is that I learned to laugh at myself. It helps, when you are the kid that clearly can't play the flute or wear the tutu, but you can kick a soccer ball better than most boys. I realized I couldn't be great at everything, but learning to brush off the failures and acknowledge that I had at least tried, kept me balanced. Focusing on the successes, the things I loved and the passion for wanting to be the best is what kept driving me.

I am a social creature by nature, so when I got into event planning, I knew I had landed in the perfect spot for me! Take 150 people to Switzerland on an incentive trip, lose 10 bags, 2 people and a car-yeah, you better have a sense of humor and a quick wit to solve the problem. I found out through many events and many incentive trips, that my clients loved my personality: driven, passionate and on occasion-humorous. It was perfect for this type of work.

When launching Chicks who Click, I knew I could combine my personality traits to launch something fantastic, I had the passion, vision, and the energy! I am passionate about social media and how it is impacting communication, I am a connector of people, I love the community of women it has inspired and the conversation it has created. I built the structure, but it would not be standing without the amazing women it houses.

Learn More About Denise Smith: www.chickswhoclick.net

2nd EDITION CONTRIBUTOR

Denise Wakeman – Founder, The Blog Squad

About Denise:

Business blogging expert Denise Wakeman is an online marketing advisor and co-founder of The Blog Squad. With more than two decades of business and online marketing experience, she helps authors, speakers, service professionals, and small business owners optimize and leverage great blogs as well as strategically use social media tools to gain visibility, build credibility and manage their online reputation. Denise has been using the Internet as a marketing tool since 1996; she writes regularly on 3 blogs and has co-authored many blogging programs including "Build a Better Blog," "Better Business Blogging" and "The Blog to Book Project."

Until a few years ago I had always been the "behind the scenes" person. Nobody knew me. And that's the way I liked it. I was shy and uncomfortable in social situations. I avoided them. Then, things changed. Through a series of events I found myself in a position to start my own business. Being the sole person in my business put me in a new position. I had to be "out there." And the Internet helped me do that. I wasn't shy online. I was assertive, smart, and capable, on top of trends and sharing them with clients. It was a different me, the real me.

My world changed with blogging and social networking. I emerged, became visible and my business grew. I had to step into the "real me" in a very public way. More visibility has created more opportunity than I ever imagined and the certainty that I don't have to be someone I'm not. Being in a highly competitive niche, the big personalities are the ones who get the most attention. And when I have tried to emulate others in my niche, it doesn't work; it's awkward and everyone knows it.

Being true to my personality attracts the right clients and colleagues and opportunities. I have a reputation for being pragmatic and down to earth; I'm no -nonsense and I don't sugar coat stuff. Not everyone likes that, and it's OK. I'm also supportive, excited, passionate and loyal. People get this about me quickly because I don't beat around the bush and those who like my style love me. The bottom line is that my public persona is the "me" I can represent all the time so there is nothing incongruent or inauthentic when you meet and work with me.

Learn More About Denise Wakeman: www.DeniseWakeman.com

Yuli Ziv – Cofounder, Editor-in-Chief of MyItThings

About Yuli:

Yuli Ziv is a co-founder and EIC of My It Things, a leading user generated fashion magazine and community. She is a founding member of Style Coalition, an alliance of independent online publishers in the fashion vertical. Style Coalition is responsible for the creation of Inside The Tents, the first portal for the coverage of NY Fashion Week in the social media. Yuli is an avid speaker on the topic of social media as it relates to the fashion industry. She organizes and leads the Fashion 2.0 discussion panels and networking event series in NYC, bringing together fashion and technology worlds.

I spent the first 20 years of my life trying to blend in. First, as a Jewish girl growing up in a communist Russia and hiding my ethnicity behind school's uniforms, later upon arrival in Israel serving in the army as a mandatory step all girls my age did. Perhaps these earlier events pushed me into discovering my own personality, which I started embracing not long ago. When I left my job to take on the entrepreneurial path in 2007, my personality was crucial to attract our first users. What started in uniforms, ended up in personal style featured in the latest issue of Glamour magazine. The process of finding this personal style was part of finding my own personality, and eventually helped to shape the brand for MyItThings.com – an online user-generated fashion magazine. What makes this brand to stand out in the crowded space of online publications is its own unique style and the attention to visual details that I care so much about. Not blending in is as important in business as in personal style.

Raised on ideals, I learned to try and find a mission in every single project I do: My It Things democratizes the world of fashion by giving everyone a chance to contribute to an online fashion magazine. Style Coalition, a network of independent online publishers I co-founded promotes ethics in online content creation, in addition to helping publishers with monetizing.

Having a mission gives me the much needed passion to work hard and achieve results. It also gives me the courage to voice opinions, even if they are different from the mainstream. Those opinions may have challenged people, but they were the ones quoted by the Associated Press, Huffington Post and the New York Observer. Having opinions and sticking to beliefs is what shapes my personal brand, eventually.

Learn More About Yuli Ziv: www.YuliZiv.com

The real story of this ebook:

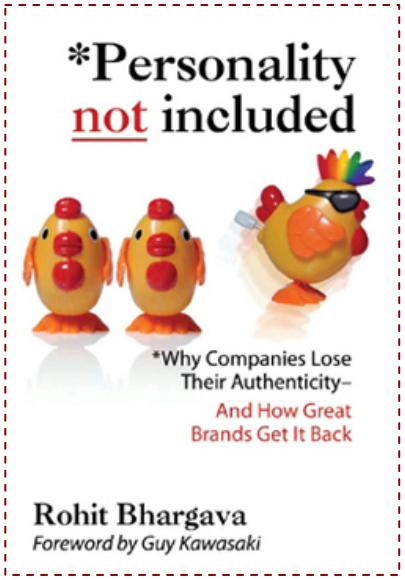
About Rohit:

Rohit Bhargava is SVP of Strategy at Ogilvy and writes the popular Influential Marketing blog. He speaks internationally on marketing & branding techniques, has appeared in the Wall Street Journal, SkyNews and Fast Company. He teaches global communications at Georgetown University 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 8 languages by McGraw-Hill. He is commonly described as having a personality.

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 else is behind this ebook?

Rohit was assisted by Henna Merchant, a PR specialist in corporate and healthcare communications and graduate student in public relations at the University of Houston's Jack J. Valenti School of Communication. Henna was supported byJacqueline Sibanda, the African Communications Fellow at Georgetown University's Center For Social Impact and blogger at the Brand53 blog, which focuses on communications in Africa .

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?

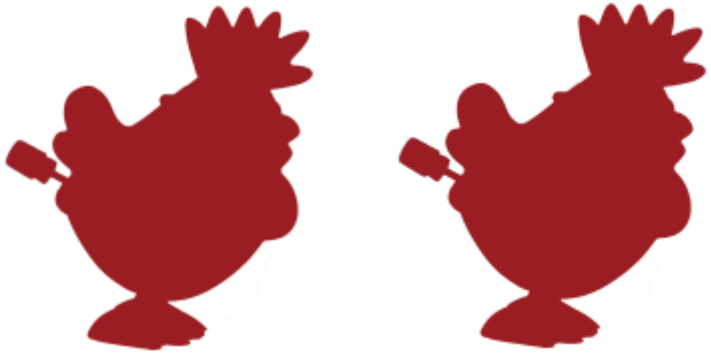
If you enjoyed this ebook, the best place to get more content like it is to follow the links provided on the pages of each of the contributors. Buy their books, join their organizations and spread the word about them. The karma is great and it will all come back to you one day.

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

This is the second edition of this ebook and if it is anything like the first edition, its release will generate lots of conversations and suggestions for new contributors. If there are enough suggestions to support a third edition with the same quality of voices – we're certainly up for it! To submit someone, just visit the main page where you downloaded this ebook at www.thepersonalityproject.com/wop2 and follow the links from there, or send an email to rohitaustralia@gmail.com.

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/tag "WOP" or "WOP2"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!



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