

# CAREER LEAP ONLINE COURSE

## How Do Others See You?

### Transcript

In the last lesson you spent some time identifying what your new career identity will look like and how that may affect you. Understanding your identity isn't a simple exercise, so ensure you have completed it before progressing.

Now, we're going to consider how others see you...

You've spent time thinking about how you see yourself, and now you want to spend time thinking about how others see you.

Some people hate the idea of thinking of themselves as a brand. They see it as inauthentic or even a bit crass. If that's you, then just remember your 'brand' is merely what springs to mind when people think of you. Think of it as being a combination of what you are known for and your reputation all round into one.

Your reputation is whether people trust you or not. Are you of good character — someone who is consistent and reliable, for example?

Understanding how other people see you is important because if your reputation is tarnished people will be far less willing to recommend you, go out on a limb for you or help your career. There are three ways we generally categorise someone's reputation:

1. 'It's all about me.' A person in this category typically has values which are inconsistent and their behaviour is incongruent. What they say and do are often quite different. Their self understanding and what drives their behaviour is usually low. If you're in this category, sadly your reputation is poor.
2. 'It's all about pleasing the right people.' For a person in this category their values are malleable and can shift as they seek cooperation and agreement from those in positions of power. They are usually easily influenced and can go against their own values to please others. If this is you, you'll find that your reputation is mixed. or...
3. 'It's all about us.' The person has clear and transparent values. They know what they stand for (and so do people dealing with them). They are willing to back themselves in the face of criticism. They are also willing to listen to others, which means they can both hold ground and give ground. Their self understanding is confident and purposeful. If this is you, then congrats because you have a strong reputation.

Obviously, your goal is to build or maintain an evolved reputation, but you may have some work to do to get there!

As well as your reputation, you will be known for something in your current market, typically the

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value or service you deliver.

Are you best known as a strategic thinker or a details person, a leader or a team player, a thinker or a doer, an ideas person or an implementer, a technical expert or a creative thinker, someone who is people focused or who is task focused? What else would you add to that list as it relates to what you are known for?

The best way to find out how others see you is to seek honest feedback — warts and all! Start by making a list of 10 to 15 people who know you in different areas of your life, including work colleagues, friends, family and contacts from community, voluntary or sporting associations. Aim for a broad mix of people who know you well and those who can offer insights into the initial impressions you make.

Ask each person for five words that spring to mind when they think of you. Then ask them to answer the following question: ‘In one sentence, how would you describe me and the work I do?’ Encourage them to be honest and not to overthink it. You may feel uncomfortable, surprised or even delighted by the responses. Regardless of how you feel, you will now have essential insights into what the market is saying about you.

Capture their feedback in your workbook on the page titled “My Feedback”. In the workbook you’ll also find copy of a suggested script you can use when approaching people for this feedback. After you have received that feedback, the next step is to identify the points of commonality or misalignment between how you see yourself and how the market sees you. To do this, look at the comments you wrote about yourself in the Look in the mirror activity, and compare them with the responses you’ve just received.

You’ll want to find both the points of commonality or alignment in perspectives, and any differences or misalignment in perspectives.

An alignment in perspectives won’t necessarily help your career leap. For example, you may see yourself as a technical expert, and find others do too, yet your desired career leap destination requires that you be less expert and more focused on hands-on operations.

The same, of course, is true of any misalignment. In some cases, you may wish to work towards greater alignment, which means over time shifting how people see you. However, there may be areas where the market is ahead of you, and what needs to change is your own perspective on you. For each element you’ll want to work out whether the current positioning helps or hinders your career leap.

There is space to capture all of this in the next workbook activity, which is titled “My Current Career Identity”.

This activity will help you see the alignment and misalignment between how you see yourself and how others see you. Then you will be able to determine if that helps or hinders your career leap.