

# Attracting employment through personal branding

By [Mbongeleni Hlomuka](#)

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You may have read a lot of articles online about how to stay relevant in the marketing industry, so this is my perspective, which I compiled for you based on personal observation and research.



Kay Vittee

Marketing is more of a creative industry than anything. You need to be conscious of the fact that we are all competing against each other on a national and international front. This means those with diplomas against those with honours degrees, those with experience versus those without experience. A marketing graduate needs to be conscious that this industry is not like any other industry where you study then simply get a job because you sent a CV or 20, or better, be hired before you even graduate. It sure would be nice if that were the case wouldn't it?

## Keep in mind

Here are a few things which I suggest to keep in mind:

- Firstly, know and understand your strengths and put them out there. If you are good at writing, put it out there. There are many community newspapers that would use an industry expert or a well-informed opinion.

This helps you build your portfolio, personal brand credibility and will give you a lot of confidence in what you do. If you are more of an ad creative, then think of teaming up with other graduates like yourself or even television students to create a project. Remember that you are all looking to create a name for yourselves, so let your great minds get to work. You can even go all out to product extension ideas and sending them to companies.

- Secondly, stay online 24/7 - you never know what you'll bump into. I cannot overemphasise this point, if you literally have the last R200 either to buy underwear or Megabytes, I suggest you buy Megabytes. It is not how much you spend; it is how

much it will make you, i.e. try to make three times more than you spend.

With the help of the internet, it is easy to spy on other young and experienced marketers to see what they are doing to get exposure without them ever finding out that you are onto them. You will find out who is doing what and what company is doing who. This is an opportunity to socialise with the right groups of people on Facebook, Twitter, Linked in, Instagram, Pinterest etc.

This is important because many job descriptions I have seen lately require marketers to be able to drive web traffic to say the least. Being online will help give you the edge. It will inspire and give you ideas on how you can best sell yourself

- Thirdly, attend as many relevant events as possible and network, network, network. I recently attended JT Foxx's Marketing Conference, which helped me learn more about the marketing landscape in the American business environment.

From attending the conference, I have one more client on my books who is about to launch her new restaurant in the east of Johannesburg. Conferences are everywhere online, and some are free. A publicist friend of mine went with me to an Orgella Helping Hands campaign for Madiba's 67's - Feed the Homeless - and three months later she has three more clients. My personal favourite is Markex, which is held annually at the Sandton Convention Centre around May and June. There you will see products that have not yet hit the shelves. You will have the opportunity to network with other experienced marketers. The great part is that it's free! Oh, I think we said that already.

- Lastly, do not spray. Do not waste your time with the 'spray and pray' way of applying for a job. It is tiring to you and will demotivate you quicker than you can say your name.

Take time to match your strengths with duties of the job. Write an appealing cover letter to go with every application. It's better to have three great applications per week than 20 simple applications. I took the time to respond to you in a form of a letter so that you can see what I mean by personal branding and a professional cover letter. (HINT: if you are not sure about something like the size of a planet or a peanut, a fact or spelling, always let Google help you out, no one will ever know you do not know how to spell.)

So do as I do; keep these points in mind or share them with others, but remember always to look at life from a positive side as there is always a better view there.

## ABOUT MBONGELENI HLOMUKA

Behold Mbongeleni Hlomuka. A slinger of words, a super content writer working on his cape. Scout's honor. Don't have the time to read through all my articles? Well, get a rad dose of my commentary in 140 characters. Doctor's orders. @bonga\_rh. See you soon. ;)

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