

Simple Tips to Build Your Professional Reputation

When you build up from nothing, the quality of your work is most important

- Build a reputation of professionalism, sound ethics and follow through.
- Know your values and mission. Stick to it and make a stand when necessary.
- Always be collaborative and offer to help solve problems.
- Always take responsibility for yourself.
- Get feedback from others while working on projects. Be open to constructive criticisms.
- Choose your words carefully. Think about what you are going to say before you speak. Know when not to speak.
- Be present. Do not take excessive breaks during meetings and events. Stay in the room and in the discussion.
- Dress professionally and respectfully.
- Wear items to promote the movement/organization you are representing. (Shirts, Buttons, wristbands, etc.) This shows unity of common values and mission among advocates/activists.
- Know your limits. Take care of yourself and set personal boundaries.
- Keep your personal affairs in order. Influential positions are secured after background investigations are completed.

Network: Connections are Key in any Career

- Keep your contacts organized and accessible.
- Write something to help you remember details of people you meet on the back of their business card or in the notes of your contact file.
- Write professional emails with complete sentences.
- Do not rely purely on email and other text-based communications. Talking to people and building a personal rapport is important.
- Attend social events and gatherings on your own time.
- Be careful of what you post on social networking sites like twitter and Facebook. Think about how you want the professional public to view you. Realize that things live on the internet for a VERY long time.

Build Your experience – Promote what you have to offer

- Volunteer for unpaid opportunities that will give you experience and connections.
- Take notes and use strategies to learn as much as you can about the field. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Know the issues so that you can speak confidently and take the appropriate next steps.
- Keep a copy/file of all of your major projects.
- Keep a detailed record of everything you do professionally. At some point in your career, you may be asked for a CV which lists ALL of your professional accomplishments. The earlier you create this, the better.
- Have a few versions of your bio available. Keep it brief and highlight different pieces of your profile for different audiences.
- Update your resume often. Always have it ready.
- Make sure your resume is accurate and detailed.

Examples:

Committees:

Youth Advisory Committee, Citywide Oversight Committee
Co-Chairperson

October 2011-Present
January 2012-Present

Highlighted Presentations:

Workshop Presenter, *United NYC*, Families Together in NYS Annual Conference, Albany NY

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**Know when to step up and when to step back.
Take care of yourself and avoid burn out.**