Video Transcript

Title: Networking and Branding Using LinkedIn
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Begin transcript:

Slide 1
Welcome to “Networking and Branding Using LinkedIn.” This session is presented to you by two members of your Walden Career Services advising team.

Slide 2
Before we get started, we would like to share a graphic we developed based on concepts from Herminia Ibarra’s book, Working Identity. This visual represents our holistic approach to proactive career management. Our career identities change as we gain new experiences, meet new people, and tell a new story about our academic and professional endeavors. We hope that you find this framework helpful as you progress through your academic program and start the next chapter of your career. In this session, we will focus on connecting with new people to build your professional network.

Slide 3
We will discuss branding and networking as well as strategies for building your network using LinkedIn and cultivating professional relationships offline. When networking with others, it is important to communicate a clear, concise and memorable message about who you are as a professional. This is called branding.

Slide 4
Your professional brand captures your unique strengths, experiences, and attributes. What is your reputation? What do others say about you? Think of this as your competitive edge.

**Slide 5**
Career professional Meg Guiseppi suggests the following steps to building an Authentic, Magnetic Personal Brand:
First, focus on your vision, purpose, values, and passions. Your belief system and vision for your work should be central to what you do. Next, identify your future career goals. Show how your abilities meet the employer’s needs. Also, reflect on your unique strengths and highlight them when you communicate your brand. Obtain feedback from colleagues. Resources such as the Reach 360 assessment offer your colleagues and others the opportunity to provide feedback on your brand. And finally, complete a SWOT analysis. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. This informal assessment will help you identify key areas where you stand out from others as well as areas for development. In completing these 5 steps, your brand should start to emerge.

**Slide 6**
Once you have identified your brand, Meg Guiseppi recommends the 3 C’s of Personal Branding to communicate it to your network: clarity, consistency, and constancy.

Clarity is being clear about who you are, knowing your audience and competitors, and strategically positioning yourself to communicate your message. Consistency requires you to regularly express the same brand message across all communication channels. And finally, constancy or visibility. Frequently update your audience regarding your professional advancement. Now let’s discuss specific strategies for communicating your brand...

**Slide 7**
Your elevator pitch communicates your brand and engages your audience in the time it takes you to ride up an elevator. It is your value proposition statement. Differentiate yourself, be memorable, and pique the listener’s interest.
These three statements can help you develop your elevator pitch: “I am”, “I help”, and “I am looking to connect with”.

Here’s an example of a student seeking a new role in marketing. ‘I have worked in marketing for 2 years, and am nearing the completion of my MBA degree. In my current role, I conduct market research on consumer trends in retirement planning. I am currently looking to network with professionals in the field of social media marketing for baby boomers.’

Hopefully this simple, but impactful introduction will intrigue the listener and spark a more in-depth conversation.
Slide 8
You can also showcase your brand on your resume or curriculum vita. In this resume’s profile section, the individual has branded herself with the headline ‘business analyst and client relations’, followed by supporting skill statements. This strong introduction highlights the candidate’s areas of expertise front and center for the reader.

Slide 9
Your business card is another opportunity to communicate your brand. Consider creating your business card with a branded headline rather than a specific title. Alishia’s headline is, ‘Connector. Human Relations. Professional’. She also includes her expected graduation date and numerous ways for people to contact her.

Now let’s review the importance of networking and how it relates to branding.

Slide 10
Networking is the art of building and sustaining mutually beneficial relationships. Your brand is key to successful networking-- communicating your brand makes you memorable in your networking activities. To be remembered, consider how you will build your network AND continue to maintain and provide value to your connections.

Slide 11
Networking is important because it can lead to opportunities, and plays a key role in the career management process. Having a strong network will make each piece of the career management process easier. Whether you are in an active job search, preparing for an interview, researching opportunities or proactively managing your career, realize that you are networking every day.

Consider strengthening your network by asking yourself:
What can I do to get better connected to my local profession?
What can I do to get to know and be known by my peers?
What can I do to become more visible in my professional community?
What can I do to establish a strong rapport with my network?

Slide 12
Now that we have discussed branding and networking, let’s review various ways you can expand your brand and network online. Twitter and Facebook are two social networking sites. When used professionally, they can be great mediums to expand your reach. MeetUp.com is a website that brings people with similar interests together and arranges meetings offline. You might also decide to explore the world of blogging to showcase areas of interest.

However, for professional networking and branding, we highly recommend using LinkedIn.

Slide 13
LinkedIn is the world’s largest professional network on the Internet. LinkedIn has members in over 200 countries, and students and recent college graduates make up their fastest-growing
demographic. Companies use LinkedIn to create company pages, and members are able to share their insights and knowledge in LinkedIn groups.

**Slide 14**
LinkedIn can benefit you in many ways. On LinkedIn you can: establish your professional presence, stay in touch with current and former colleagues, connect with other professionals, identify experts, new ideas and trends, explore new opportunities, and research companies. Experts in Career Development say that approximately 70 – 80% of jobs are found through networking, so it’s important to build and maintain a strong professional network throughout your career. In Career Services, we advise that your network be the centerpiece of your career management strategy and LinkedIn is an excellent and powerful tool to build your network.

**Slide 15**
Once you get started on LinkedIn, build your brand by creating a catchy headline. In this example Annette created the headline ‘IT/Procurement Executive with significant savings and operational results through right sourcing and process transformation’.
LinkedIn also provides you with a summary section. Your summary should support your headline and provide a brief overview of your background.
Finally, build your brand by joining LinkedIn groups. This will further showcase your expertise and professional involvement.

**Slide 16**
After you have established your LinkedIn profile and brand, build your network! Connect with those you know professionally. This may include current and previous colleagues and supervisors, mentors, and leaders in your field. Also connect with the Walden community- your classmates and instructors. By growing your network, you are connecting yourself professionally and allowing others to see what you have to offer.

**Slide 17**
When connecting with new people, write a personalized invite. LinkedIn’s default invite message is “I would like to add you to my professional network on LinkedIn”. Take it a step further and remind the person how you know each other, or comment on a presentation they delivered or book they wrote. In this example I had recently read a book by Jane Bozarth and wanted to connect with her on LinkedIn. I sent her a personalized invite to connect letting her know that I read the book, stated our commonalities and that I would like to connect.

**Slide 18**
You can also expand your network by joining groups. When you join groups you become connected with likeminded professionals, and gain access to group information, job postings, activities, and discussion boards. When you join a group the logo will be displayed on your profile which will further support your brand.
When searching for groups to join, you may start with groups that correspond to your profession and past educational institutions you have attended. Also, search for groups associated with Walden. For example, you can join the Walden Career Services Center LinkedIn group to stay up to date with webinars we host, articles of interest, and questions from fellow Walden students or alumni.

Now that we have discussed building your network online with LinkedIn, let’s review ways to build your network offline.

**Slide 19**
This word cloud lists a few ways to cultivate your network offline. You may choose to get involved in your neighborhood, or join a professional association. You could also expand your network through volunteering or by taking a class or attending a conference or seminar. Even attending social events in your community are great ways to meet people and develop your network locally.

After you decide where to network, become engaged and give back. Do this by sharing your knowledge and expertise with others as it’s a great way to cultivate strong networking relationships. Can you attend meetings and conferences, serve on a board, write an article, deliver a workshop, or become a mentor?

Another way to network is through informational meetings. Let’s go into more detail about what they are and what they entail.

**Slide 20**
The purpose of an informational meeting is to obtain advice in a new career field from someone who has established themselves in that profession.

First, identify someone in your network who might be able to provide you with helpful advice and information about your career path. To set up this meeting, identify yourself as a student or recent graduate and ask for 30 minutes of the person’s time — at their convenience. During the meeting, be prepared with questions, along with any resources you have to share. Be sure to thank the person and follow-up with updates on your career progress.

**Slide 21**
We have covered branding, networking, building your network online with LinkedIn and offline through other avenues. Who will you connect with next? Is there a professional association you could join? Can you approach a possible mentor or find a role model in your workplace to master leadership skills?

**Slide 22**
Be confident in your brand and maintain your value by contributing to your network. You may opt to deliver a presentation, stay in touch through email, pass along relevant articles, or offer to mentor a new employee.
Slide 23
In closing, here is a list of references used throughout this session for further information.

Slide 24
We would like to wrap up with a final thought about the importance of networking, branding, and the use of LinkedIn.

“You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.”