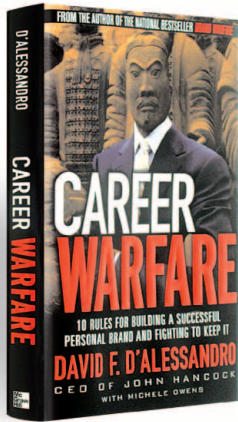


SOUNDVIEW Executive Book Summaries®

FILE: SUCCESS/CAREER TECHNIQUES



By David F. D'Alessandro

10 Rules for Building a Successful Personal Brand and Fighting to Keep It

CAREER WARFARE

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

What really separates those who get ahead? Hard work and accomplishments will only get you so far. If you intend to compete at the levels where the competition gets really ferocious — where everybody is hard-working and accomplished — you need a much more subtle advantage. You need the kind of reputation or “personal brand” that convinces people to trust you with new opportunities.

It's not easy to build a great personal brand, however. You first have to understand that people will judge you based on the way you behave even in the most insignificant moments. Then you have to become conscious of the personal impression you are making every day. Next you have to be noticed — and noticed for the right qualities. Ultimately, a big career requires everything from the right kind of manners, to the right style of handling your detractors, to the right instincts about when to leave a job and when to stick with it.

Career Warfare offers the unwritten rules of organizational life, the real truths you need to know in order to build the kind of personal brand that shouts “headed for the top.”

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What You'll Learn In This Summary

- ✓ How to build a personal brand that reflects what you are really worth.
- ✓ How to work with your boss, no matter where he or she stands in the organization.
- ✓ Why what you know isn't enough — your social skills count, too.
- ✓ Why sometimes you have to acknowledge defeat and move on.
- ✓ Why you sometimes have to take a stand and make enemies.
- ✓ How to handle the isolation that comes with success and not let yourself lose touch with those who really matter — your customers and shareholders.
- ✓ How to handle a major crisis without losing your identity or business.
- ✓ How to take the calculated risks that will let you rise to the top and avoid mediocrity.

CAREER WARFARE

by David F. D'Alessandro

— THE COMPLETE SUMMARY

You Cost as Much as a Mercedes, So Act Like One

The greatest obstacle to building a good personal brand is self-absorption. Few of us escape seeing the places we work in terms of our own self-interest. But to build a personal brand that will help you succeed, you will have to turn self-absorption into a desire for self-respect and the respect of the people around you. You may still be a navel-gazing egotist, but at least you'll be an egotist who recognizes the value of other people's approval. In order to build a good reputation, you have to view your actions in the same way that the people judging you will view them.

Look Beyond Your Navel

You can't build a good brand if you can't see yourself as others see you. Guard against excessive self-forgiveness. While you will tend to view your own less-than-heroic actions as no reflection on your basic goodness, others will have the opposite response — they believe you do what you do because of the kind of person you are.

Your behavior defines you — you are going to be judged by your external actions, not by your intentions.

Get Noticed

The best way to establish a personal brand when you are new to an organization is by becoming uniquely useful. Be smart. Stake out your territory by finding something the organization is missing that you can provide. This may involve tackling less-than-glamorous tasks since the high-profile ones get plenty of volunteers. By doing what needs to be done rather than what you would ideally like to do, you set yourself apart. Do something humble but essential, and you'll get noticed by those in power.

When you are young, getting access to powerful people is the name of the game. If you gain access to power early, you will learn an enormous amount very quickly and put yourself in an entirely different category from your peers who communicate with these people only through a hierarchy.

Become a Product With the Right Features

Getting the positive notice of powerful people is only

the first step. You want them to help you move up. For that, you have to develop a brand that shouts, "Upward mobility."

How do you do that? Package yourself as an expensive product — because that's exactly what you are to your organization, your boss and your customers. You cost as much per year as a Mercedes. You'd better deliver the performance they expect from a luxury brand. When it comes to employees, certain things are not negotiable when it comes to being considered for higher office. To go far, you must develop a reputation for five key qualities:

- **Earning the organization money**
- **Telling the truth**
- **Being discreet**
- **Keeping your promises**
- **Making people want to work for you**

If you are missing any one of these qualities, you don't have the right kind of brand for a big career, and it is highly unlikely anyone will consider you executive office material.

Let's look at ways you can show you have the five key qualities. First, get yourself into a production or development job where you can be credited directly for beautifying the bottom line. Being a successful hunter can give you a huge advantage over your peers. If you're generating revenue for the company, the people

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<http://my.summary.com>

Published by Soundview Executive Book Summaries (ISSN 0747-2196), P.O. Box 1053, Concordville, PA 19331 USA, a division of Concentrated Knowledge Corporation. Published monthly. Subscriptions: \$195 per year in U.S., Canada & Mexico, and \$275 to all other countries. Periodicals postage paid at Concordville, PA and additional offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Soundview, P.O. Box 1053, Concordville, PA 19331. Copyright © 2004 by Soundview Executive Book Summaries.

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You Cost as Much as a Mercedes, So Act Like One

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in charge will listen.

Second, be honest. Trust is the oil that greases the wheels of commerce. When you have a thriving business, the risks of dishonesty far outweigh any potential profit you might gain from it. Just consider how rapidly the market capitalization of WorldCom and Enron collapsed after their dishonest accounting practices came to light. A reputation for dishonesty is a career-ender.

Third, be discreet. If you aren't, no one with any power will trust you. Don't gossip and don't say anything in public or even in an e-mail (they have a tendency to become public, fast) that puts your company, employees or customers in a bad light. Do not write or record anything you wouldn't want subpoenaed or published.

Fourth, always deliver on time. If you overpromise and undeliver, you won't be trusted. On the other hand, showing you can do what other people cannot will propel you up the ladder. To elevate your personal brand, make bold promises and deliver.

Finally, you must be able to manage people effectively. Rise high enough, and you move from managing projects to managing people who manage projects. Eventually you will manage people across disciplines, at which point your ability to do things yourself is relatively meaningless. Your ability to get things done through others becomes what you're getting paid for.

How do you lead people? First, it's about the people, not the theory. They all need to be motivated differently. Second, know what you don't know. It's not your job to be an expert at everything, and you will never be effective if you insist on pretending that you are. Instead of teaching your subordinates to do their jobs, hire people with great skills who will teach you. Finally, treat subordinates fairly. ■

Your Boss Is the Coauthor Of Your Brand

You have to pay your dues. You can expect your boss to take credit for your ideas, exploit your energy and siphon the positive attention your efforts attract. Early in your career, you will be making most of the money for the organization and expending most of the sweat while senior people reap most of the rewards. That's the way organizations work.

If you can't accept that reality, then you need to start your own organization. Otherwise, you simply cannot fight the power structure. It's dangerous to try to fight it

Glamour Has Brand Value

Associate your brand with something glamorous and valuable, and you will become valuable, too. That's what the author did when he set out to establish his brand early in his career.

He convinced Mobil Travel Guides it needed a more aggressive campaign to call attention to its restaurant awards. Through press releases and food critic television slots, restaurants selected for the prize got tremendous publicity. Since these were arranged by the author, he quickly became a welcome sight at restaurants across New York City. He had no trouble getting reservations anywhere. Soon his bosses realized that getting into restaurants that were nearly impossible to get into required only a word from their junior associate.

Getting bosses and their out-of-town guests reservations at some of the world's best restaurants was quite an accomplishment for a junior associate, and wasn't quickly forgotten in a world where image counts for a lot.

If you have the opportunity, try to take advantage of what marketers call "the halo effect." Associate your brand with something glamorous and valuable, and by extension you will become valuable, too.

because no one has more influence over your life than your boss. He or she determines how much money you make, what kind of experience you gain, how much authority you have, what the next step of your career will be and whether you'll be posted to Paris, France or Paris, Maine. To a great extent, your boss controls your personal brand.

Organizations are caste systems. Assistant vice presidents talk to assistant vice presidents. At whatever level your boss is, you can be sure he is talking about you to his peers. The caste system means that your accomplishments may win you one kind of reputation among your peers and subordinates and another in the boss empire. Your personal brand among the higher-ups is usually less dependent on objective evidence and more dependent on the subjective things your superior is saying about you. You must manage the relationship with your boss intelligently, no matter who he or she is.

Bosses Want Loyalty and Good Advice

What do bosses want? More than anything, they want loyalty. That's because most bosses, deep down, are frightened. They want to make sure the people who report to them are not trying to do them in. The fastest method of suicide in organizational life is talking nega-

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Your Boss Is the Coauthor of Your Brand

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tively about your boss to others. Hell really hath no fury like a boss scorned. Your boss will find a way to take you out.

Be especially wary of complaining about your boss to higher-ups. You will develop a reputation for disloyalty that senior executives will hold against you. This means that even if your boss is barely worthy of respect, you will have to give him a certain degree of loyalty.

Bosses also want good advice. This is a commodity that's hard to come by in organizational life. Bosses put subordinates into three categories — sycophants, contrarians and balanced players. Only the latter offer advice worth listening to.

Sycophants make up about 70 percent of the people in any organization. These are the people who agree with their bosses on everything. They don't want to be noticed, they want the kind of career that will reward them with a three percent pay increase every year, good benefits and a pension plan. Do not allow yourself to be thought of as someone who is afraid to speak your mind. It will brand you as mediocre.

You don't want to be branded a contrarian either. They make up about 10 percent of the workforce and disagree for the sake of disagreeing. The boss starts to cringe when a contrarian comes in the office because it is an unpleasant experience each and every time. Most contrarians are that way because they are the boss's intellectual superior and they cannot understand how their boss got this far.

Avoid the contrarian trap. Don't assume your intellect alone is enough to propel you to the top. It isn't — you need the right kind of character, too.

You should strive to be a balanced personality — the kind of person with the personal courage to tell the boss when he or she is right or wrong. Timing is important, too. Give advice before the decision is made, not after. Advice given too late looks like nothing more than a challenge to the boss' authority. ■

Put Your Boss on the Couch

What you want from your boss is a good deal. In exchange for all you do for them, you want help building your brand. Not all bosses, however, will give you that help and it's not always easy to know who will and who won't. That's why you have to put your boss on the couch and play amateur shrink.

Many bosses fit into one of seven basic categories. Placing yours will tell you a lot about how supportive of your brand he or she will be.

When To Say No

There may come a time when you have to challenge your boss's decision. When he or she wants to do something illegal, you simply have to resist, even if it costs you your job. Otherwise, it may cost you your career or even your liberty down the line.

If reasoning doesn't work, go sideways, go upward, blow the whistle, and call in the authorities. Just don't compromise your integrity for any boss.

● **The Little League Parent:** Many bosses treat you as if you are an errant son or daughter. Just remember, parents are self-sacrificing, bosses are not. Understand that what this boss does for you is not for love, but to further his or her own brand.

● **The Mentor:** Hope for one of these. A mentor will make sure your reputation rises in tandem with his or hers.

● **The Wastrel:** Sometimes you run into a boss you have to do everything for. If you do, tolerate his or her weakness and use the opportunity to build your own brand by taking on the assignments he or she can't or won't tackle.

● **The Pariah:** Try to keep your brand distinct from this boss. Defend yourself by proving your loyalty to the whole organization.

● **The One-Way User:** If your boss is one of these, you have to find a way to move on.

● **The Wimp:** Won't let you build your brand because he or she won't let you do anything.

● **The Know-It-All:** These bosses never listen. Avoid if possible.

The Power Balance

There are four types of power you have against a boss who wants to stop you from building your brand:

You can turn down passage on the Titanic. During a job interview, you should be doing as much judging as the interviewer is doing. Bad bosses often give themselves away in interviews. Inquire about a potential boss's reputation before you take the job. Don't sign on if you think he or she is unlikely to enhance your brand.

You can get out of Dodge. Boss relationships are a Faustian bargain — you want experience and contacts, they want hard work and performance. The bargain is only meaningful so long as you are learning. Move on when you've learned what you can, or you risk being lulled into comfortable mediocrity.

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Put Your Boss on the Couch

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You can make friends in high places. The boss's boss will notice your hard work, but don't whine or complain about your boss. If you do, you'll be branded as untrustworthy for violating the chain of command. Unless asked by a higher-up for input on your boss's less-than-stellar performance, don't raise the topic. Your best opportunity to shine may come during a crisis. If you are suffering under incompetent management, welcome upheaval. It will let you see who is really in charge — the people you need to win over on your way up.

You can enjoy a dish best served cold. Someday you may very well wind up in a position of power over the person who once abused his or her power over you. ■

Learn Which One Is the Pickle Fork

Believe it or not, even in today's informal world, etiquette matters. Good manners are an essential tool of brand building. Without good manners, you will seem clueless about the world that successful professionals inhabit — definitely not a candidate for membership in the club. Whether it's fair or not, people interpret your cluelessness about how to behave as a sign that you are clueless about how to do your job, too. Good manners are a way of showing compassion and respect for your bosses, colleagues and subordinates.

The first rule for brand builders is, "Above all, avoid embarrassing yourself." Sometimes a single embarrassment can be enough to alter people's opinion of you forever. Go out of your way to not associate your personal brand with anything unethical, unsavory or just plain ugly.

Don't Monitor the Bathroom

One lapse into embarrassment can derail a career. Consider the case of a senior vice president who created a water conservation program during a drought. Local government officials had recommended not watering lawns and fined people who wasted water. The vice president implemented his own conservation program and ordered employees to not flush every time they used the urinal. He actually issued a memo outlining when and how to flush. The drought passed, but he forever became known as the flush-control guy. Everyone understood that no matter what level he had attained in the corporation, his real level was that of bathroom monitor.

Personal habits in food and dress count. If you want success at a high level, it's important that you look and act it. Dress professionally. Dress appropriately. Make sure your clothes are the right size. It matters.

It's also important that your table manners indicate you are a worldly person, familiar with the rules of civilized life. Manners that demonstrate a lack of knowledge will hold you back. If you find yourself at working dinners with a dozen pieces of silver in front of you, take the time to learn which one is the pickle fork. It might not seem relevant to your personal brand, but it is.

Be careful about making snap judgments about people. Don't hurt your reputation by deciding too quickly who deserves your attention and who doesn't. It's dangerous to slight someone you don't know. Keep your prejudices, whatever they are, to yourself. Slowing down and observing people before you judge will keep you from developing a reputation as a horse's ass.

The most dangerous of all work occasions for your career are the ones that are supposed to be fun — the office parties, victory celebrations, conventions out of town and off-site meetings. You will be judged even in circumstances that seem like recreation. A lot of people, when offered any temptation — food, alcohol, sex or an opportunity to speak frankly — in a work related situation succumb so completely they destroy their reputations in the process. The office party is not a timeout.

So, not only should you not let your hair down at a social event sponsored by the office, but you should be twice as cautious about protecting your personal brand. Obey this one simple rule — don't drink. And don't hang around the boss.

The most dangerous event is the off-site meeting or retreat. The accommodations and the agendas don't matter, they are all snake pits for reputations. They are always driven by some executive's need to bring the organizational "family" together — a dysfunctional one. Someone always drinks too much and commits some form of self-immolation. Don't let it be you.

Don't bring a date to company events. Too much variety brands you, while bringing the same date may mean trouble when you split up. You will be judged most harshly if the person you are dating is someone you work with.

Marriage, on the other hand, is a public institution. How, why and whom you marry inevitably colors your professional brand. And those who marry and divorce repeatedly suffer. Don't let your spouse speak to your boss about your real or imagined grievances either. Doing so will give you a reputation for weakness you cannot possibly live down.

Treat your boss' spouse with great respect, but don't try to get too close. ■

Kenny Rogers Is Right

If you intend to have a big career, pick your battles and avoid spending your time and energy in places where you will never move your brand forward. In “The Gambler,” Kenny Rogers sang, “You got to know when to hold ’em, know when to fold ’em.” Kenny’s right.

Nepotism Means ‘Not You’

The best brand attribute you can possibly have in business is the right name. Ford, Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, to name a few. Consider that 60 percent of large public companies, according to the Family Firm Institute, are family-controlled. If you have the right last name and a limited amount of intrafamily competition, your chances of rising to the top are excellent.

The reality is that without the right name you may put in 30 years with a company only to find your ascension to CEO barred by a favored son. Dynastically inclined bosses may not care that you’re the best qualified for the job. At a family run company, your brand will always be deficient — it will be the brand of a caretaker, a valued house servant, but never, ever the brand of a true leader.

Learn all you can at family run companies, but when the time is right for you to lead, find another sandbox.

If a Gang Controls the Turf, Set Up Shop Elsewhere

Be careful about who runs the show, especially if the group looks less than diverse and you don’t fit the mold. Unfortunately, discrimination is still alive and there are places where you will bang your head against the ceiling simply by virtue of who you are.

There are elements of your brand you cannot do anything about — such as having attended a community college instead of an Ivy League school, or you’re a single mom, or born overseas. If you want to build a big career, you cannot afford to waste years in a place where the power structure is going to resist, no matter what your performance.

Don’t Let the Hazing Go On Too Long

The basic dynamic of established partnerships in law, consulting, accounting and architecture is that the old take advantage of the young. They hire the best and the brightest and force them to grind away 14 hours a day, six days a week for years, generating big bills for the firm’s clients, at work well below their abilities under conditions that are demeaning — all on the off chance of making partner.

If you work in one of these industries, don’t become so addicted to the place that you are irrational about your chances of making partner. Remember, partners

aren’t enthusiastic about adding partners — it dilutes their equity in the firm. They aren’t going to share unless it’s very likely that you will enlarge the pot with new business. If you can’t, move on. If you don’t make partner by your mid-thirties, you will be tainted and on the way out the door in favor of someone younger and cheaper. If you’re passed over twice, move on.

Beware Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurial companies are dangerous. You can learn a lot from these cowboys, but don’t stay too long. Entrepreneurs are difficult because:

- **Everything is personal and any show of independence is a betrayal.**
- **Entrepreneurs are insanely controlling.**
- **They don’t like to share.**
- **They like to play Toy Soldier with their workers, buying the best and discarding them when bored.**

Do not allow yourself to be bound by gratitude or charisma to the point where your brand cannot grow. ■

It’s Always Show Time

It’s not the big events that define you, but the patterns you establish over time. Little things matter even more as you rise. The pyramid narrows, there are fewer and fewer promotion shots and your superiors will be trying to distinguish between many qualified applicants.

Decisions from what to wear to how you treat an acquaintance on the train should be conscious. How you treat the receptionist can be seen as proof of your managerial abilities.

There are three kinds of meetings whose premises you should understand.

Staff meetings are particularly dangerous. Don’t use them for anything except letting the boss know what’s going on. Don’t use them to argue for something you want from the boss. Don’t attack peers. Staff meetings are designed to make the boss feel good, the proud patriarch or matriarch of a great team.

Watch your behavior at get-something-done meetings, too. Don’t just cut off ideas, even those you know are useless. Tell the presenters you’ll think about it. Let ideas flow, but make sure the group stays focused.

Then there are combat meetings — involving money or approval. At these, make sure you understand the players and the agenda. Be ready to admit victory or defeat when either is obvious and move on. Accept bad news gracefully. ■

Make the Right Enemies

You cannot build an effective brand by never offending anyone. No matter how smart, hard-working or kind you are, you will make enemies. In organizational life, you never know how many enemies you really have, but it's always more than you think you have. Some will be your enemies simply by virtue of who you are — your sex, race, age or where you went to school.

You are especially likely to make enemies if you are ambitiously trying to build a personal brand by taking risks and accomplishing big things. The more successful you are, the more enemies you will have. Manage them by making your bosses' lives better and attaining the next office before the people who have it in for you can drag you down.

Your enemies will rarely confront you directly. Instead, they will try to hurt you without leaving fingerprints. They will often try to destroy your brand with gossip.

How do you know when an enemy is trying to do you in? The telltale signs include:

- **It's taking longer for your calls to be returned.**
- **People you used to get appointments to see easily now are often busy.**
- **People greet you with "How are you doing these days," code for seeing if you know your days are numbered.**
- **Many people are using the same metaphors about you.**
- **At parties, the boss's spouse barely glances at you.**
- **Other people are unusually concerned about your well-being.**

If this sounds familiar, find out what's going on and fight it energetically.

However, make sure that you distinguish between someone's willingness to disagree with you and disloyalty. Criticism is not a betrayal and deserves respect, not retaliation. An attempt to undermine your authority, on the other hand, deserves everything you can throw at it. If you can, make sure you fire traitors as an example to others. You have nothing to gain and everything to lose if you fail to make an example of someone who tries to undermine you.

Sometimes you have to take a stand even when your brand may take a hit. You may even have to provoke some giants. Don't be afraid to take on someone more powerful when those weaker than you need a champion. ■

Don't Be Swallowed By The Bubble

Let's assume that you have done everything right when it comes to your personal brand. People trust you, want to work with you and respect you. You're rising in the ranks. Life is good. Now you're ready to handle the greatest danger yet — success.

Attention, praise, money and power can be isolating and unsettling. That's why so many successful people self-destruct. Becoming an executive is close to being royalty. As much as you may enjoy the flattery and perks, there are two problems with getting the royal treatment. First, it can be bad for your humanity. You get used to being "yes-sirred" and grow unused to being contradicted.

Second, it can be bad for your career. The more you're treated as exceptional, the more likely you are to believe the rules don't apply to you and the more likely you are to break the rules that are taken seriously by the rest of the universe. The implosions at Enron, Arthur Andersen, WorldCom, Tyco and Adelphia demonstrate that even pillars of the community succumb to the temptations of success.

Unless you are very careful, your achievements will nudge you into a kind of bubble that distorts your judgments. That can make you very, very arrogant and careless. It is almost impossible to avoid the bubble completely, but don't let it swallow you. Follow the six rules for keeping some perspective on your success:

- **Be skeptical of your own genius.**
- **Surround yourself with equally skeptical people.**
- **Keep friends who remind you of your humanity.**
- **Have some sympathy for your victims.**
- **Develop interests other than golf.**
- **Remember who feeds your family — your customers and shareholders.**

Build Goodwill Outside Your Kingdom

Use your success to connect with the rest of the world. It's smart to win the approval of the community around you. One way to build goodwill is to treat the press respectfully. Cooperate with reporters, be generous with your time, and don't expect every story to be positive. Nonetheless, treating the press badly is a slow form of brand suicide.

Another goodwill builder is to create an organization the world admires. If you do, your shortcomings will be seen as the exception to the rule, not the rule itself.

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For Additional Information about how not to treat the press, go to:
<http://my.summary.com>

Don't Be Swallowed by the Bubble

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Finally, give back something significant, whether your money, your time or your influence in supporting good causes. Give because the world has made you prosperous and successful and you owe it a debt. Give where you can make a difference, locally and personally. If you do, you will build a goodwill reservoir you can tap. ■

For Additional Information about stockpiling goodwill, go to: <http://my.summary.com>

The Higher You Fly, The More You Will Be Shot At

It doesn't take a crime or some extremely immoral act to generate negative news. Under the right circumstances, all it takes is the fact that you spend too much money on your hairdresser, you launched a product no one likes or you play racquetball on company time.

Everyone makes mistakes and everyone does well-intentioned things that look like mistakes. The more your profile has been heightened by success, the more likely any mistake you do make will get a broad airing. It's very simple. The higher you fly, the more interesting it is to shoot at you. Do people care if a White House intern is having an affair with a White House intern? No. But if the President is, now, that is interesting. And even more so if he lies about it.

Bill Clinton may be an extreme example of someone who seemed to enjoy flying high without a parachute, but there isn't any prominent person in any field whose brand has not been a target at some time. This includes university presidents, the heads of non-profits, movie stars, politicians and business leaders. It simply comes with the territory.

Prepare for bad news right now. Sooner or later, you will face unpleasant headlines. If you handle it well, you can turn what might be a year-long story into one that lasts a few weeks and inflicts no lasting injury on your brand. If you handle the attack brilliantly, you may even come out of your trial by fire with your brand enhanced.

The first tactic is to blunt bad news before it becomes a huge story. Explain bad news to the world. Fortrightness is disarming. And once the story breaks, behave in a forthright and reasonable manner. Explain yourself and move on. If you refuse and retreat to the bunker, the story changes focus from one mistake to every unfortunate thing you have ever done.

Don't even think of lying publicly or your brand will be finished. If you lie under scrutiny, you can no longer successfully refute anything, even the most outrageous story,

because you will have no credibility. Remember, the truth may be bitter medicine for a brand, but a lie is toxic.

Whatever you do, don't go on a jihad. Don't blame your employees, your accountant, your students or your spouse. Don't blame a vast, un-named conspiracy. If you try to shift blame, you make a bad story worse. Finally, don't be your own lawyer. Get advice from people who can be realistic about what is happening to you. ■

Make Sure You Stay A Contender

Somewhere between ages 25 and 65, most ambitious people go wrong. They start their careers ready to set the world on fire, yet at some point they make decisions that give them a personal brand that is notable only for its mediocrity. Even if you follow every rule in this summary, middle age and midcareer are dangerous. Your responsibilities are growing, you may have children, your parents are aging and you probably have a mortgage. All these things conspire against risk and change. To keep momentum going long after your colleagues' brands have settled into inertia:

- **Don't be generic, be Tylenol.** Be distinctive.
- **Get back on the horse.** It's foolish to throw in the towel after a setback or two.
- **Ask for opportunities and promotions.** It will remind your bosses that you are someone to keep in mind for big jobs.
- **Never sell your brand for short money.** Make sure assignments include interesting opportunities, not just a raise.
- **If lightning is about to strike, make sure you are standing in an open field.** Change will happen around you. You probably cannot control the events that lead to a promotion, but you can make sure that you are in a position to be the obvious choice.
- **Gamble shrewdly.** Promise to do something difficult and then deliver.
- **Create a brain trust.** Develop a circle of people whose advice you trust to help you bet wisely.
- **Tinker with success.** You are building your brand until the day you die, so expect to make adjustments.
- **Don't lie, cheat or steal.** Power won't protect you from disgrace.
- **Understand that the unexamined reputation is not worth having.** Be conscious every day of what you are building. This alone will set you apart from 99 percent of the people you will meet in your working life. You have to use your brand as a template for all your actions. Ultimately, if your brand is to mean anything, you have to live it to the very end. ■