



E L I T E

How to Build Your Brand and Tell Your Story





WHO ARE YOU

First, take the time to learn what makes you *you*. Who are you? Why do you do what you do? What motivates you? What hobbies, passions, or skills do you have that you're most proud of? What purpose do you want to serve? During this brainstorm, involve those who know you best (parents, coaches, friends, family, etc.) and ask them what makes you unique. Have them weigh in on both your strengths and weaknesses. Also, try to involve people who might not know you as well. Make a running list of all the words/phrases used to describe you while being as descriptive as possible.



HOW DO YOU WANT TO BE KNOWN

Chances are while going through the previous exercise, “athlete” was one of the first words that came up. Although being an athlete is a major part of who you are, this exercise is to help you think beyond just being known as a really good *insert sport* player. This is about thinking how you want others to talk about you when you’re not in the room on the type of person, teammate, player, friend you are. As it relates to fans, people in your community, or followers who have never met you, how do you want them to perceive you? Now, go back to the list from the previous exercise, and honestly assess how people *actually* see you compares to the person you *want* to be.



EMBODY YOUR BRAND

It's easy to say, you want to be known as "a hardworking teammate who sacrificed personal fame for team success" or "a role model in the classroom and community." But, are you actually living out those words? Are you walking the walk? Is this how you carry yourself on a daily basis? If you're not, people will immediately see through you and will no longer trust or want to support you. Without the trust and support of others, you'll find the path to success to be much rockier. Consistently embodying your brand and how you want to be known is the first step to getting people interested in your story.



PEEL BACK THE CURTAIN

To really bring your story to life, you want to give people the ability to see who you really are. This means being authentic, honest, and vulnerable in your interactions with others. This can mean, whether on social media or in person, being open about both your successes and failures. It can be showing behind the scenes moments on social media of your everyday life, such as your workout routine, how you go about studying for an exam, volunteering at a local shelter, etc. The objective here is to let others see the human side of your story and provide them an experience that they can connect with.



KNOW WHAT OTHERS WANT

What makes the behind the scene moments so powerful are that you're showing others how you navigate a similar life that they live. Nobody pays much attention to you posing next to a luxury car because that's not their reality. What they can relate to though is that even though you're a top athlete you still go through a normal life and face challenges. You have to do homework, you have to wake up early for school/workouts, you get excited for a new movie coming out just like everyone else. The key to having a story that people want to follow is to understand what others actually care about, what their problems are, and how you can help and inspire them.



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