

The Identity Economy

Raising the value of your work with a
clear professional identity

John Niland

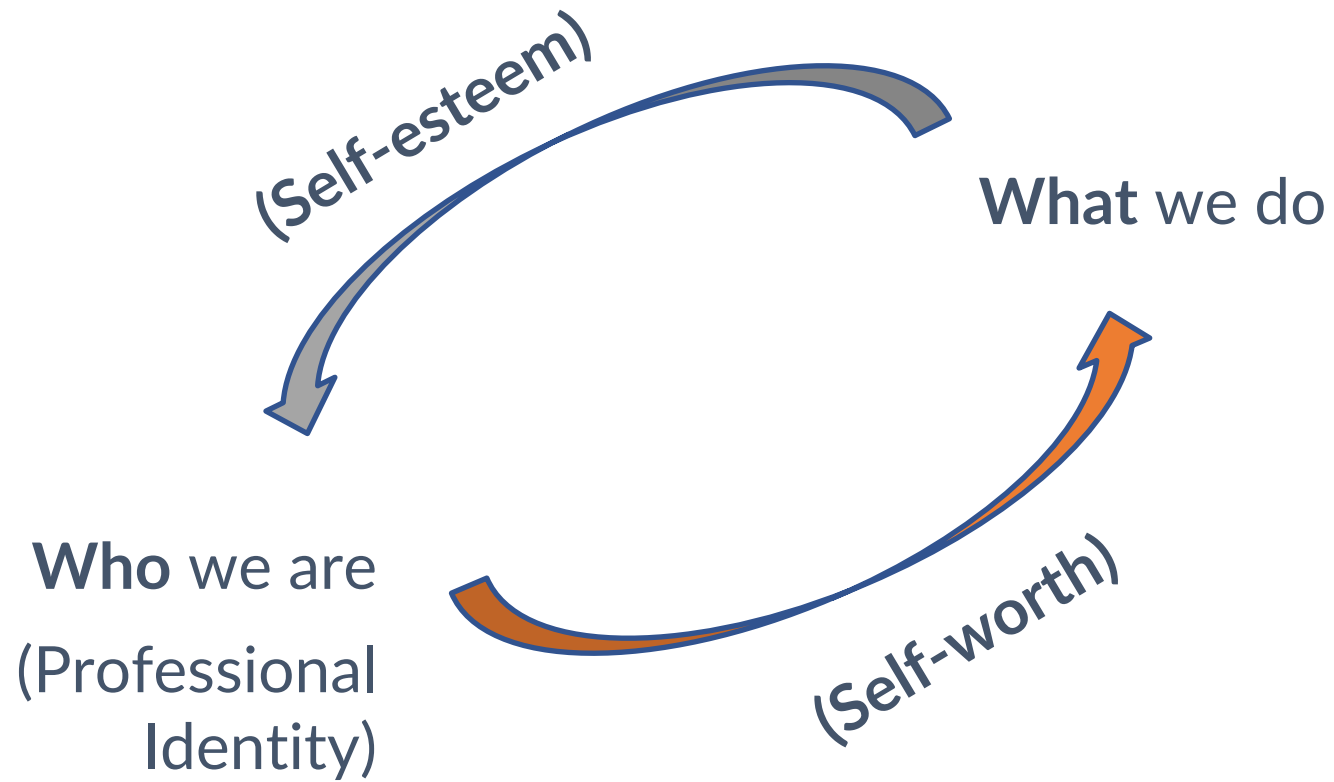
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The times we live in



Evolution of Identity



Context: Why professional identity?

- Virtual- / hybrid-working strips away old reference points
- Constant waves of change
- Many CVs / websites read much the same
- Longer working lives = more transitions
- Energy challenges: particularly during transition (when self-worth is also vital)
- Foundation of meaning & purpose
- To be able to communicate your value to others



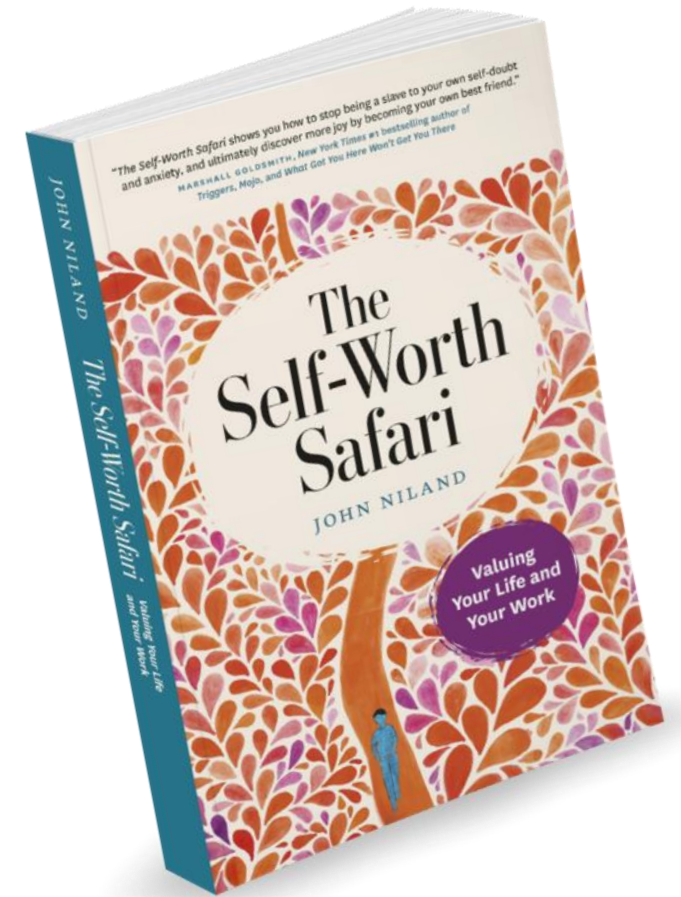
AGENDA

1. Professional Identity: what and why?
2. Self-Worth, why this is a vital foundation
3. Developing Professional Identity
4. Tips to develop professional identity with others



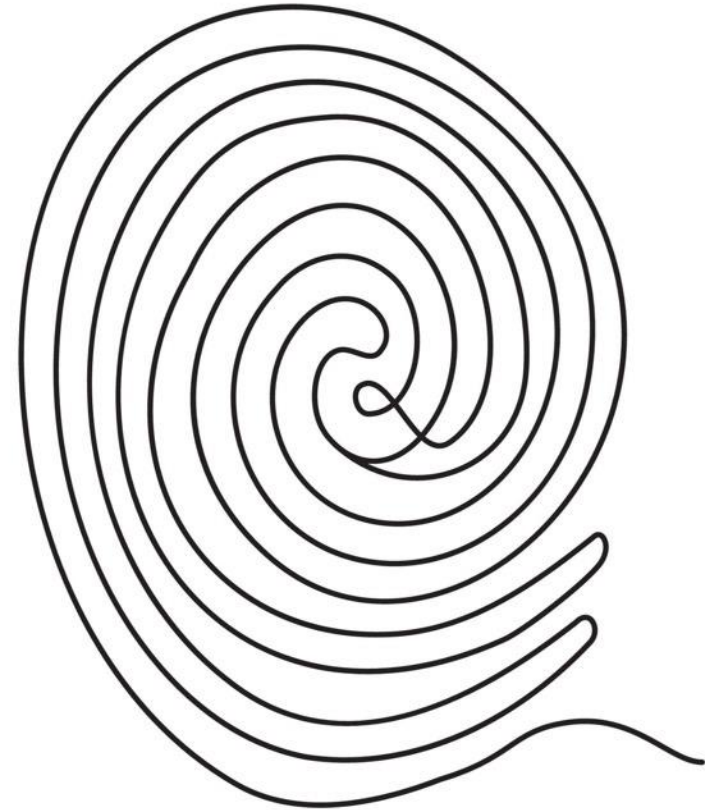
Introduction: John Niland

- Work with professionals on **professional identity & communication**
- Raising the **value** of work
- Supporting people in **transition** to find their place in the marketplace
- Boosting **energy** and confidence, so that work is **sustainable** and **enjoyable**
- Founder of Self-Worth Academy



What is Professional Identity?

- More than just a job title or qualification
- It's **who you are** in the workplace, not what you do
- The “**red line**” that runs through all your various roles, businesses, projects
- The **fingerprint** you leave on anything that you do



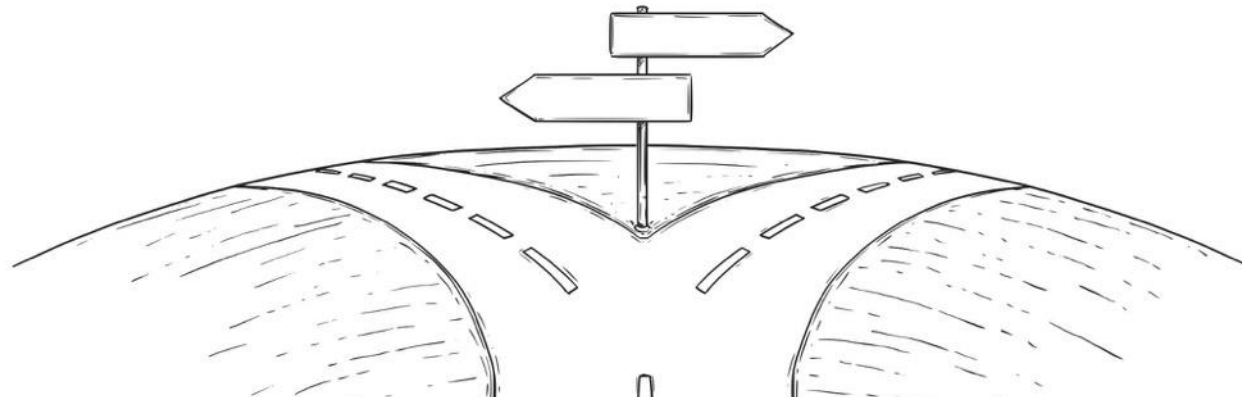
Two project managers - a world apart

“Petra”

- A wide variety of roles
- Defines expertise in terms of project-management
- Seen as a service-provider, among many others

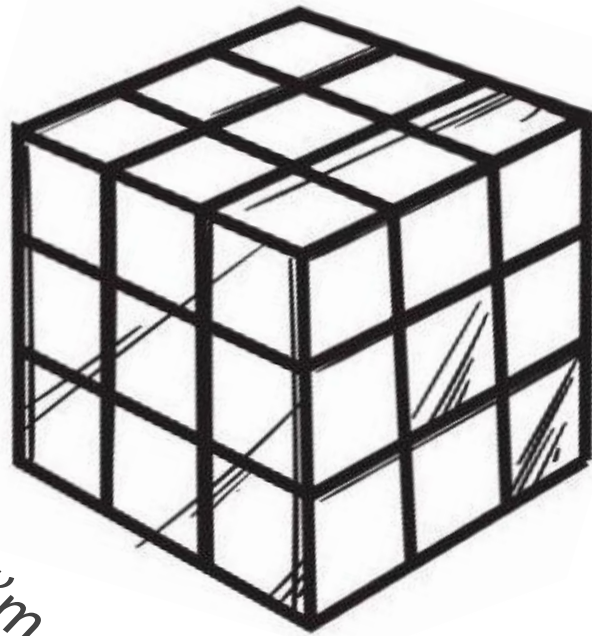
Joanna

- Identity = Approach
- *“Trust and Credibility with stakeholders”*
- **Clear** about which projects she does / doesn't
- Known for this Approach: has **“Ambassadors”**



Three dimensions of professional identity

Needs of Others =
*Usefulness in current or
future marketplace*



Strengths = *what I'm good at*

Values = *what matters to me*



Resources

www.SelfWorthAcademy.com/links

- Slides
- Articles
- Events



Expressing Identity

Context



- “You know how projects are often competing with the demands of the day-job

Issues



- ... creating delays, resource-conflicts, constant rescheduling and loss of momentum

Identity



- ***I see myself*** as a “Trust and Credibility Builder”
- ***which means*** I work with senior stakeholders to establish trust and credibility at the start of a project

Value

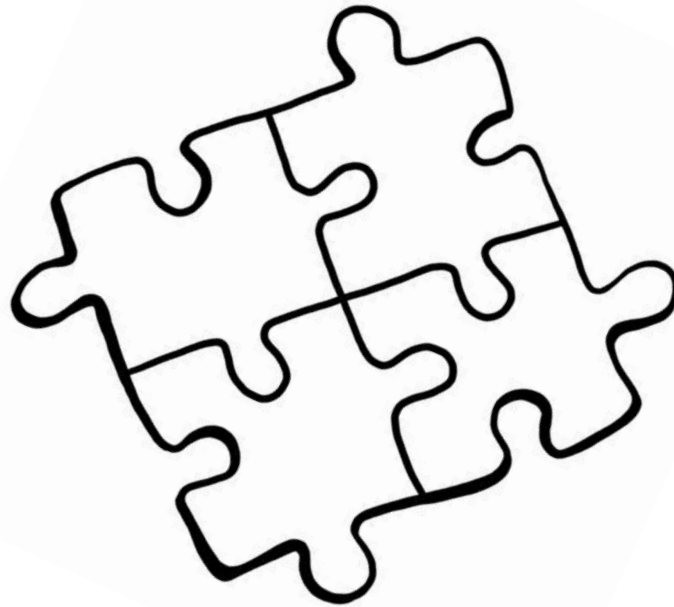


- ***focusing everyone involved to play their part and therefore ensure timely delivery***



Four key benefits of an Identity based on Self-Worth

4: Developing Talents of others



2.

Opportunity

You communicate with
more impact

Others can be
your Ambassadors

3.

Value

Raises the value of work

You are their Partner... not
their Servant

1. Energy & Focus



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Why Self-Worth?

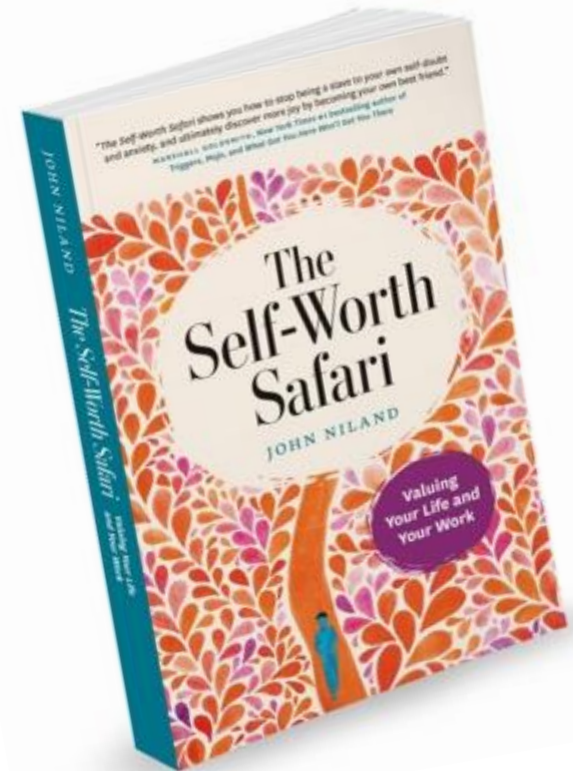
Resilience: Dealing with multiple transitions at once, swift recovery from setbacks

Productivity: getting on with the job / studies vs. chasing validation

Teamwork: better able to do self-presentation in a group setting

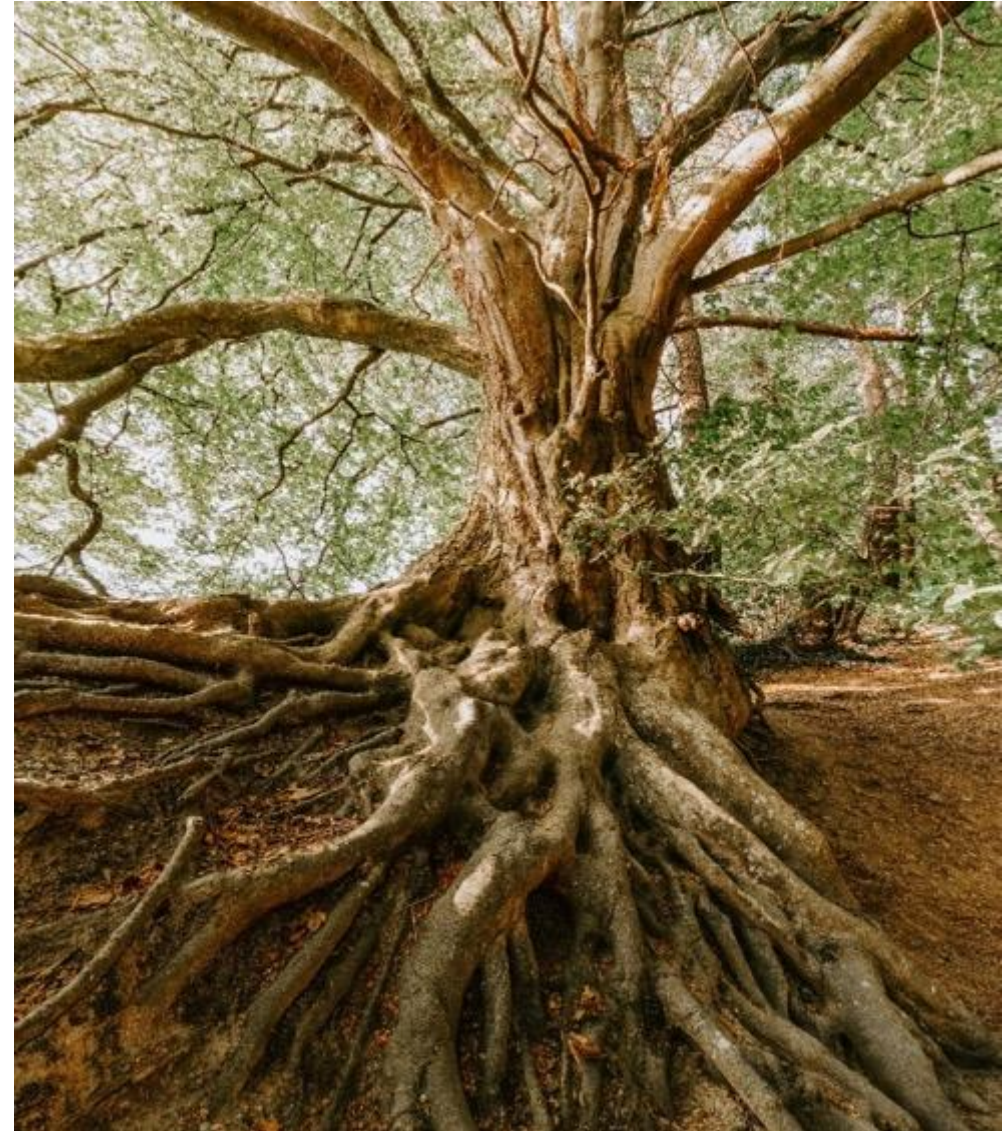
Creativity / Opportunity-focus

Courage to deal with uncertainty / change



Self-Worth vs. Self-Esteem

- We are usually measuring **self-esteem**
- Self-worth comes **from within**, not from performance or achievement
- **Unconditional** vs. Conditional
- Our upbringing usually focuses on self-esteem, not self-worth
- The strongest possible **roots** of confidence and performance
- Other-esteem: what they say about us, or we imagine they do



Limitations of Self-Esteem

- Can lead to excessive self-preoccupation and narcissism
- Comparison with others: “How am I doing”
- Anxiety: not being enough
- Energy expended chasing validation
- Imposter Syndrome: the gap between the image and the core identity
- Hidden stress



A Classic Pitfall

Building a professional identity on self-esteem!

Result:

- Another “Me Story”
- Trumpeting achievements or philosophy or expertise
- Limited impact
- Vulnerable

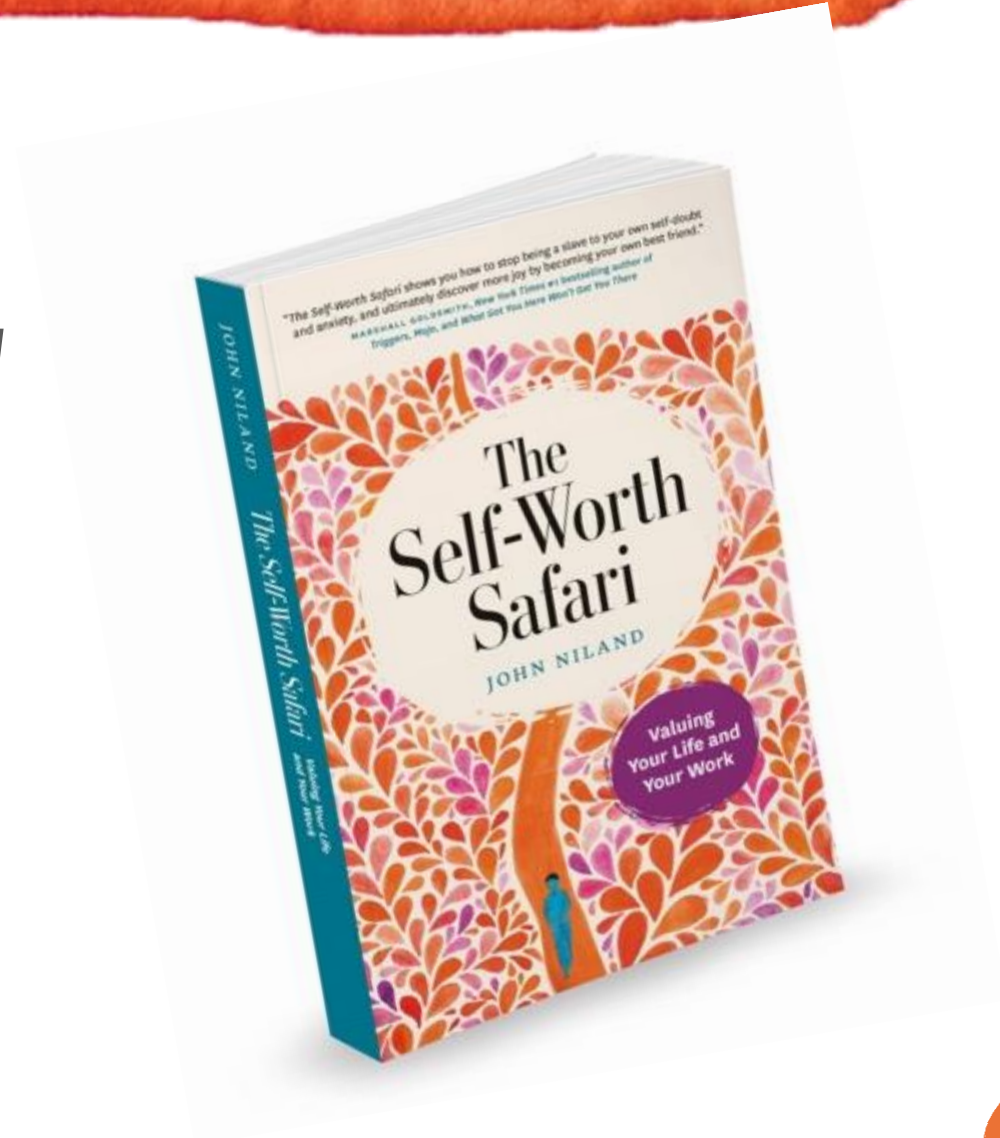
If built on self-worth:

- Focus on **usefulness**
- **Others** can share your approach
- Impact is **multiplied**
- Deeper roots



Quiz: Self-Worth or Self-Esteem (p.28)

- *“A healthy lifestyle is essential to a good relationship with myself”*
- *“No matter what, I am a good friend to myself”*
- *“I am so proud of my children”*
- *“If I could only find meaningful work, I would feel so much better about myself”*
- *“I deserve to be happy”*



Shift #1: From Assessment to Assertion



What assessments are you making about yourself?



The problems with Self-Assessments (even when “Positive”)

Reinforce a conditional relationship with self

- Never-ending struggle to reach the end of the rainbow
- Blank cheque for future anxiety
- Constant comparison with others, loss of energy
- Positive assessments can just reinforce the addiction, without a deeper sense of worth



EXERCISE:

What are your habitual self-assessments?

Negative

- I'm stupid?
- I'm unattractive?
- I'm not successful?
- Nobody listens to me
- I'm always changing my mind?
- Yours?

Positive

- I'm smart?
- I'm good looking?
- I'm an achiever?
- I'm a natural leader?
- I'm reliable?
- Yours?



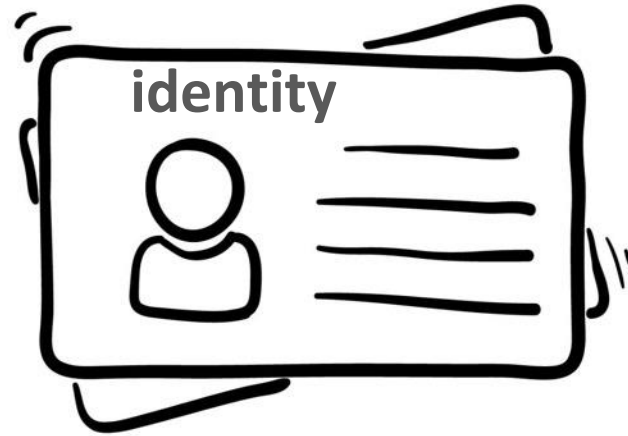
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Common misconceptions

≠ Current / last role



≠ Qualifications

≠ Personal Brand

≠ Values

≠ Achievements



Differences with “Personal Brand”

Personal Brand

- *About “Me”*
- *Focus: How I am seen in the marketplace*
- *Success determined by Extent (e.g. likes, followers, shares etc)*
- *Sets you apart from others*

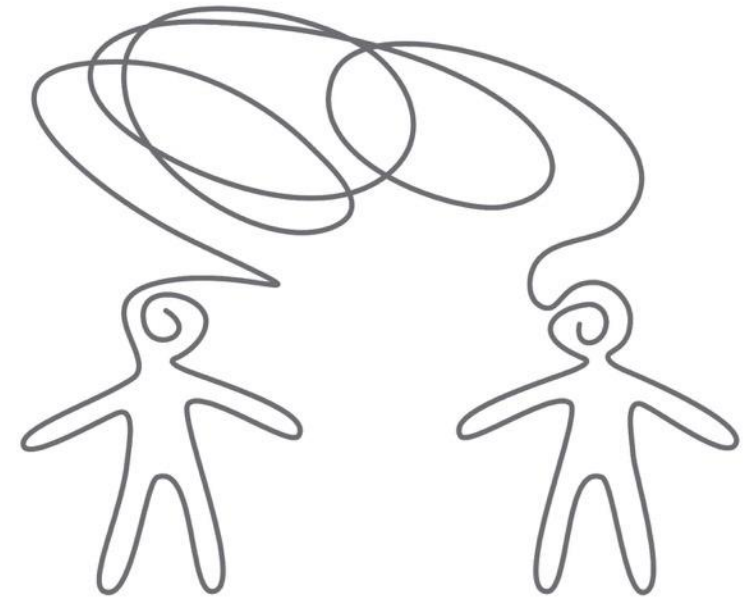
Professional Identity

- *About what I stand for, at work*
- *Focus: Knowing who I am in the marketplace*
- *Success determined more by Depth / Meaningfulness*
- *Connects you with others*



Practical Tips to develop Identity with Others

- Interrupting their **routine narrative** or career-story
- Translate their **strengths** into relevant **insights**
- The hunger for **self-validation** (driven by self-esteem)
- **Ask them to explore** “How am I valuable? rather than “How valuable am I?”
- Educate them on the difference between **self-worth** and **self-esteem**

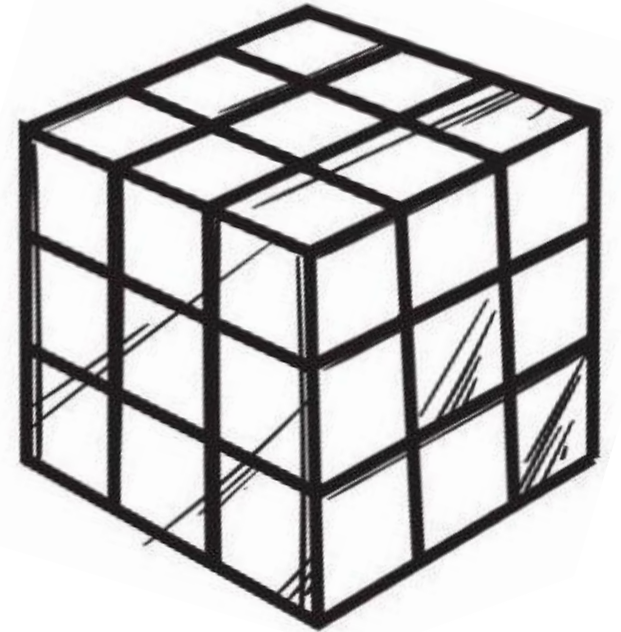


Practical Tips



Steps to find your professional identity (some of)

- **Assess:** www.SelfWorthAcademy.com/links
- Shape your **Strengths** into **Insights**
 - distilled lessons from your experience
- What are the **marketplace trends** that make your identity more relevant in the future?
- Choose / refine your **Identity Story**
- **Distil** ideally with a challenging coach / mentor
- **Test** via Explorer Conversations



More?

- **Facilitator Course** for those wishing to develop professional identity with others:
John@SelfWorthAcademy.com
- Webinars / events / resources
www.SelfWorthAcademy.com/links
- **In-house** workshop? To discuss:
<https://calendly.com/talktojohn>
- The “**Self-Worth Safari**” is on Amazon

