

The New You is about your new Brand – sometimes this is called **Brand You**. Successful brands each have their own personality, just as you and I have our own personalities. Our personality is who we are. It is formed by a combination of many things that lead to the way we behave – how we *think*, how (and what) we *talk*, and how we *act*.

Our Brand should always be a 'work in progress', because we are *always* growing and developing our talents and capabilities. At the same time, our Brand must *always* be consistent with our personality – if the two are not 'in synch', we will come across as not being authentic.

At the core of **Building the New You** is developing our *personality*. Our personality is not static throughout our lifetime, it can be changed. Changes may be voluntary or involuntary. Being exposed to a traumatic event can lead to an involuntary change of personality. Voluntary change occurs when we initiate an action which leads to a modification in our behaviour.

A key to successfully making such voluntary change is to understand more about our personality – in particular the '*many things that lead to the way we behave*'. Some of these are things that we consciously think about, while others are things that we do instinctively. Our personality can be likened to a '*jigsaw puzzle*' – many different pieces fit together to make the whole picture.

Building the New You addresses these *jigsaw pieces* of our personality, so that we are able to make changes to our behaviour patterns. This will allow us to develop our personality, which will in turn refresh our Brand. And this can be ongoing for as long as we need – helping us to stand out from competitors, and remain relevant to potential clients and employers.



Our '*personality*' is made up of many pieces – just like a *jigsaw puzzle*.

The 'Jigsaw Piece' Model of Personality

Within this model, each of the *jigsaw pieces* shows several related '*aspects*' of our make up; some aspects may comprise several parts [Note: *this is a conceptual model; each individual personality is unique*].

- **Self-Image** comes from self-esteem, self-confidence, and body image
- **Physical traits** include eyesight, hearing, physical strength, appearance
- **Cognitive abilities** include our capacity to remember, to reason, to learn
- **Beliefs** are inward convictions, including religious faith (or denial of)
- **Culture** is about the conventions, customs and ideas of a social group
- **Interests** include sports, community groups, hobbies, even politics
- **Experience** is familiarity which has been acquired through practice

- **Skill** is an ability, usually learned through practice, to do something well
- **Knowledge** is the ability to understand, retain, and use facts and information
- **Behaviour** is the way something acts or conducts itself
- **Attitude** is a way of thinking or feeling about something
- **Values** are the principles or standards behind behaviour

Many of these are closely interrelated, e.g.

- *physical traits* can have an effect on someone's *self-image*; self-image can impact *attitude*;
- *knowledge* is a building block for developing *skills*, skills are a building block for gaining *experience*;
- *knowledge*, *skills* and/or *experience* can also affect *attitude* (and *self-image* as well);
- *culture* and *interests* will often influence *beliefs*; beliefs will impact *values*;
- *values* and *attitude* regularly shape *behaviour*, including '*how*' we say or do something.

While some of our physical traits may be relatively '*fixed*' (e.g. height, eye colour, etc.), many of the other aspects of our *jigsaw pieces* can be changed. For example, we can improve our *cognitive abilities* (memory, reasoning, learning), which will boost our *self-confidence*, and enhance our *self-image*. This leads to a more positive *attitude*, which results in a *behavioural change*.

Alternately, we may decide to change our *behaviour*, *attitude*, or *values* for a particular reason (e.g. this happened to me when I entered the military – my choice was to either accept a new '*culture*', or to find a different career). This could flow through into a change in our *self-image* (*self-esteem*, *self-confidence*), and even into our *beliefs*

or *interests* (in my case, this is exactly what happened).

Personality development is something that we can initiate ourselves. The most usual starting points will be improvements in *knowledge*, *skills*, and *cognitive abilities*, and also changes in our *physical traits* (e.g. a 'makeover'). This allows us to take a 'building block' approach, as opposed to my military example, which was more of a 'cold turkey' situation (as I recall).

Self-Image is the cornerstone

Building the New You begins with the foundations. The *cornerstone* of our personality is our *self-image*. It is especially important that we develop a sound understanding of what this is and how it affects us. Once we do that, we are in a good position to seek out fresh engagements, opportunities, and challenges.

Self-image is the *mental picture* we have of ourselves in terms of our abilities and our appearance; it is a combination of *self-esteem*, *self-confidence*, and *body-image*:

- *self-esteem* is how we *feel* about ourselves – how we accept and value ourselves.
- *self-confidence* is about our belief that we are able to do something successfully.
- *body-image* is our perception about how attractive our appearance is to others.

Self-esteem and *self-confidence* are related, but are not the same (although they are often used interchangeably). *Self-esteem* tends to be an overall state, whereas *self-confidence* is often related to a particular situation, e.g. where we need to apply our skills to achieve something. In some situations we may have high *self-confidence* about our ability to succeed, but in other situations our *self-confidence* may be low.

Note: *Self-esteem* involves *self-acceptance* (acceptance of who we are as a person, including our faults, shortcomings, and failures) and also *self-worth* (our inner sense of value or worthiness).



Our '*self-image*' is how we see ourselves in terms of our abilities and our appearance.

Body-image is how we feel about the attractiveness of our body. This includes: height, shape, weight, hair colour, skin tone, facial features, ears, nose, teeth, eyes everything! In today's era of computer-generated imagery and cosmetic surgery, we are constantly exposed to the 'ideal' or perfect human faces and bodies. Little wonder then that many people hold a desire to change their appearance.

Low *self-confidence* will have a negative impact on our *self-esteem*, as will poor *body-image*. And low *self-esteem* will have a similarly negative effect on our *self-image* – the mental picture we have of our abilities and our appearance. Curiously, it is not uncommon for people who have remarkable talents, and who display high *self-confidence* in certain situations, to actually have low *self-esteem*.

If our *self-image* is not good, then other aspects of our personality, including our *attitudes* and our *behaviour*, are likely to be impacted. We are less likely to be comfortable engaging in activities where competition and/or risk-taking are involved. That is why *self-image* is the cornerstone of our personality – without a healthy *self-image*, we limit our opportunities and our potential.

Developing a healthy Self-Image

I will address the matter of developing a 'healthy *self-image*' in more detail in another **Building the New You** Post. In the meantime, the internet does offer a range of resources that may help us to develop a healthy *self-image*. I say "may" because while there are ideas, methods, programs, etc. on offer, the onus is on us to '*do the doing*'.

A word of warning: *we need to define our terms!* Many web resources, including videos, use the terms *self-image*, *self-esteem*, *self-confidence* (and also: *self-worth*, *self-acceptance*, *self-regard*, *self-respect*) interchangeably. On top of that, many web explanations and definitions of these terms add further confusion. Google plays a part in this as well, returning all manner of mixed results on searches. This is an example of why we need '**Information Literacy**'. My advice is: **always** evaluate the information before using it.

Worth a look

[Self Image by 1123Sumpeppy](#) Published Apr 29, 2013 – a US perspective on how people define themselves [video – 4min:43sec]

[Dove Real Beauty Sketches](#) Published Apr 14, 2013 – an artist's sketches of three women, based on their self-descriptions [video – 3min:31sec]

Coming next: Why Note-taking is a Survival Skill

<http://freezapnuggets.com/wordpress/?p=708>