

# Fame 101: A Road Map To National Recognition

Is your MBA fast-tracking your career, or are your peers leapfrogging you to the corner office, getting massive start-up funding, attracting mega-deals, and otherwise leaving you in the professional dust? Maybe it's time to revamp your professional brand strategy.

A recent study of America's success icons reveals a common element — all are as adept at personal branding, promotion, and publicity as any Hollywood superstar. The study's authors hypothesize that the elite 1% of any industry, from Silicon Valley tech to Wall Street money to DC politics to Southern California real estate superstars, all use the same fame formula to build visibility, credibility, recognition, and income.

Further, the authors demonstrate in their recent book, *Fame 101* (Sutton Hart Press) that any professional can build and leverage his or her own compelling personal brand to capture and dominate a particular niche. The book offers a dozen must-do actions for serious career adrenaline. Here are three an MBA can launch today.

## Public Speaking Done Right

Speaking to the right audience is a sure career booster, but most would-be power speakers miss the best opportunities because they pick the wrong venues and fail to prepare like a professional. Conversely, the MBA who gets these two things right can join the surprisingly lucrative world of professional speakers where \$5,000 to \$20,000 for a one-hour presentation are common.

Most professionals follow a customary tendency to share hard-earned

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expertise with their peers at their own industry conferences. For example, an intellectual property pro might lobby for an on-stage spot at the IP society annual event to share his take on the latest industry trends. While this might feed your ego, this sort of gig has only a modest effect on your professional brand.

Power brands will speak to prospect-rich audiences of potential clients, likely customers, possible marketing partners, or prospective funding sources. The intellectual property expert can gain much more career traction by addressing the Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce or Association of Music Industry Executives at a quarterly dinner event. Learn where your prospects congregate, and lobby for an on-stage spot. The results can be a line item on your personal balance sheet instead of just your resume.

But as important as winning the right speaking engagement is, your message and its delivery is perhaps even more so. That's where a speaker can differentiate him/herself from 95% of all other presenters. In essence, there are three types of speakers: the stumbler, the competent B-school-trained powerpointer, and the kind who causes an audience to leap to their feet at the end of the message, buzz

for weeks about it, and take action on what they learned. The difference between the three? The right preparation and message.

*Fame 101* tells us that all great speakers 1) use a speaking coach to help them perfect their basic speech, which can then be amended for differing audiences; 2) initially prepare at least one hour for each minute onstage; 3) practice until they speak “naturally;” 4) tell compelling stories of people the audience can identify with; and 5) always deliver a take-away of an action step or an intriguing piece of information audience members can use and share.

## Publicity Done Well

In a country where “celebritified” personal brands dominate every industry, nothing is more valuable than media attention. Americans all want advice from the guy they saw on Good Morning America and perceive that advice to be geometrically more valuable than that offered by someone not media-endorsed, so to speak.

At the same time, 90% of people have no clue how to get the CNN expert slots or other brand-building media wins. Worse yet, of the 10% who do get into print or on the air, 90% don't know how to leverage those spots to further their career. The great news is that any professional can quickly become a media magnet by following just a few rules. The simplest? To differentiate yourself from the tens of thousands pitching for media attention, you need remember a single truth: Reporters, producers, and others who operate print, television, and on-line news outlets

care only about their audience. They couldn't care less about you and your professional accomplishments except as they relate to educating, entertaining, or informing their readers, listeners, or viewers.

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A press release leading with “Bob Jones, a Harvard MBA with seven years experience at Wall Street giant...” will be deleted or trashed without being read. A note to an editor leading with “I think your audience would be interested to know four hidden pitfalls in buying small cap stocks. Harvard MBA Bob Jones discovered them when he....” Or even better, “I think your audience should know five new tax breaks the IRS hopes most will overlook.” Those sort of pitches will get attention every time.

Finally, when Bob does gets the Today Show appearance, he typically expects the phone to ring off the hook with new clients or business opportunities. Media-savvy professionals know that doesn't happen. The big value of the appearance comes when you capture the video and put it on your web site or electronic resume. It only takes a few good media spots to give you the professional cachet your competitors can't touch. And it lasts for years.

### Author Status

Americans generally love authors. We often elevate them to a special status in society. Written, promoted, and launched correctly, a book will deliver unequalled credibility and become an unbeatable competitive advantage in any field. Published authors win speaking engagements over their unpublished rivals, a well-titled new

book opens the door to unlimited media appearances, and when competing for a job or professional engagement, the candidate who concludes the interview by passing his or her latest book across the table is always the winner.

What MBA hasn't at some point considered writing a book, coveted media attention, or considered public

speaking as a career enhancer? Done right and in a synergistic manner, these activities will keep you in demand, assure quick promotions, and catapult you to a spot among the elite 1% of your industry. This is the fame formula used by Donald, Ellen, Martha, Gates, Jobs, Sarah and President Obama, and today's MBAs can use it too. ■

### A Book Deal; The Ultimate Career Differentiator

*You spent several years and many dollars to earn your MBA. Take the next step and get valuable author status with these insider tips:*

**Write Fast.** The average non-fiction book is 60,000 words. Experts say if you start with a blank screen and write one word at a time, you'll never finish, or if you do, it might take years. Prolific authors pick their title, list 12-15 subjects they could talk about for seven to 10 minutes each, use a digital recorder to capture those short talks, and finally get them transcribed. The first draft of your book is complete in 60 days or less.

**Skip Self-Publishing.** A legitimate book deal will cause your career to soar. Self-publishing can brand you as an amateur and drastically limit your distribution options, e.g., you won't be in the bookstores. A professional with a well-timed, well-developed book idea, a hot title, a publicity plan, and a strong platform can get typically get published if he or she has a compelling personal brand.

**Select A Mid-Sized Publisher.** The large publishing houses take 18 to 24 months to get a book to market and no longer invest in publicity for new authors. Small houses are not connected to the big distributors and can't afford the publicity it takes for a first-time author to become known. A mid-sized publisher will get to know you personally, get your book out fast, maximize your exposure, and have national distribution channels.

**Focus On The Title.** Titles and covers sell books much more than content. A sizzling title will also get media attention and interest from speaking bookers. Do you want to read Monetizing Intellectual Property Rights by Sally Smith, MBA or Cash In On Your Ideas by Sally Smith, America's leading intellectual property advisor?

**Broaden Your Subject.** Most professionals want to write about their expertise, which is typically a narrow field where they have focused for years. Unfortunately, this guarantees a limited audience and few spin-off opportunities. Learn from top trial attorney Gerry Spence, who could have written Trial Techniques from America's Best Lawyer, but instead wrote How to Argue and Win Every Time. The broad-interest book and his platform earned Spence a one-hour interview on the Larry King Show and countless other media spots.

An MBA opens many doors, but adding “author of...” to your title is an unbeatable advantage in any business competition when combined with that MBA. A published author has more credibility, visibility, and personal brand power every time.

**Fame 101** authors Jay Jessup and Maggie Jessup lead Platform Strategy, an award-winning publicity and branding firm. For more information [www.platformstrategy.com](http://www.platformstrategy.com).