

Design Life Well *presents*

Brand Positioning **for Freelancers**

Overview:

Establish Who You Are

Research Your Competition + Ideal Client

Develop a Value Proposition

Create a Solid Marketing Strategy

Practicing Mindfulness

Conclusion



Hi, I'm Tüندی, the founder of Design Life Well. I'm a digital design director. My clients include Google Creative Lab, Google, The Army, Oscars, IBM Watson (AI cognitive division), NBC Universal, The Oscars, Royal Caribbean Innovation Lab, OkCupid, Gucci, Hermes, Diesel, etc.

My work has won a Webby Award (equivalent to an Oscar for the internet) and has been featured in ProductHunt, The Verge, VentureBeat, CNET, VoiceBot.ai, and many other publications and news sources.

I've worked as a creative for 14 years, with over half of those being independent. Throughout the years mentoring creatives, I've distilled everything down into a 6-module framework which is now known as Design Life Well.

I've spoken to creatives about their work, from portfolios to pricing, at the **Parsons School of Design, Pratt Institute, NYU Tisch, SVA, and at CULTUREHUB.**

I'm also a certified creative and mindfulness coach. For transparency, my meditations are used by people of all doctrines and backgrounds, but I come from a Christian perspective living in a culturally diverse world.

You're getting information that's not theoretical or half-baked, but rather advice from a seasoned pro who's run a business that's earned me income, clients, and recognition.

Client List:

Google Creative Lab

DIESEL

WIRED

NEW IN CH

Google

IBM Watson



UFC

(RED)

Calvin Klein

GUCCI

HERMÈS PARIS

State of the Art

Bèhance



LANCÔME PARIS

J.P.Morgan

starwood Hotels and Resorts

RANGE ROVER

NBCUniversal

verizon

DELTA

Morgan Stanley



Let's Begin.

A strong bio and brand is integral to the longevity of your business. It isn't really about you, but rather the way you connect with your audience through your unique story and perspective. By introducing who you are and what you do, your unique experience, personality, and accomplishments, you give your customer the specific reasons you match up to their needs.

So many things rely on how you position yourself. For example, how strong your customer relationships are, who will hire you, and who you'll collaborate with, and so on.

The Branding Journal says that “**Brand positioning describes how a brand is different from its competitors and where, or how, it sits in customers' minds.**” In other words, brand positioning is all about how you want your customers to perceive your brand and how they'll see you as a more ideal candidate than your competitors.

Why is all this important? Because especially in a post Covid-19 era, the freelance world is getting bigger than ever. So, you've got to **design your brand and bio** to help your customers discover you clearly. No matter the industry you're in, follow these tips to better position yourself as a freelancer.

1. Establish Who You Are

Whether or not you have studied marketing, you're probably aware of the importance of branding.

It's nearly impossible to position yourself successfully in a niche if you have yet to define your personal brand clearly.

Your bio communicates with others what you do to help set you apart and have others hire you. It's not just a set of well-rehearsed words. It's a statement about what you're up to in the world.

Your brand reflects who you truly are and shows how you differ from the competition. And this brand then tells a unique perspective that shows up on your site, your social media and when you're networking online. It answers the questions: Who are you? And what can people expect from you?

Additionally, your brand helps boost your credibility. This builds TRUST and that know/like/trust factor works in your favor in the long-run even while you're not working.

So, take the first step in building your brand by:

- Deciding what you stand for and what you uniquely offer in business.
- Identifying your strengths and weaknesses.
- Listing your unique qualities.
- Listing any accomplishments or awards you've received.
- Listing your values.

If you're having trouble, leverage your network and/or friends and family by asking for honest feedback about their opinion of your work and strengths.

After establishing who you are and defining your brand, you can move on to the next step.

2. Research Your Competition + Ideal Client

Discovering your competitors and ideal clients (whether they're companies, startups or independent brands) is key as you position yourself as a freelancer. How are you different from your competitors? Who is your ideal client? How do you want them to perceive what you do?

Questions like these are the core of defining your brand positioning and bio. And to answer these questions thoroughly, it's wise to do some serious research on top freelancers in your industry and your ideal clients.

Some resources to view where creatives hang:

Designers:

CoFolios, Behance, Designer Chat, Sidebar, Designer News, Reddit Web Design

Programmers:

Hacker News Slack, Hacker News, Reddit Web Dev

Writers/Content Marketers:

Inbound, Copyblogger forum, Scribophile

Take a look at what others are working on, find out what services they offer, and how they're marketing them to their ideal client. In addition, learn all you can about your ideal client. Find out about their pain points, how they think, behave, and what they expect from a freelancer. This will help you target your message, branding and bio.

3. Develop a Value Proposition

Once your brand is built and you know your competitors and target audience, it's time to develop a value proposition. A considerable part of successfully positioning your brand as a freelancer is being clear about what you do for your clients.

Your value proposition is what makes clients hire you and the exact value you will be delivering to them as a creative.

1. Your value proposition tells your clients how you can solve their problems or improve their problems.
2. Your value proposition explains the unique benefits you bring to the party as a freelancer, consultant and solution provider.
3. Your value proposition makes clear why clients should go with you rather than your competition.

So, when you can clearly define the value you bring to your clients, you can better position how you sit in your customer's minds.

Another thing to note, if there are things that your competitors aren't doing that their customers are constantly complaining about, **you can do those things often** and make them a part of your value proposition. It sets the tone for how different you are from your competitors. And you need this for successful brand positioning.

Ultimately, your value proposition should detail the problems you solve for your freelance clients, the unique benefits they get when they choose you as the solution, and exactly how you differ from the competition.

After you've created a value proposition, the last step is creating a marketing strategy.

4. Create a Solid Marketing Strategy

A solid marketing strategy can help you with brand positioning, and vice versa. So, know who you are, how you differ from other freelancers, and the value you provide.

Clients aren't going to magically appear waving checks in the air. You need to have a professional presence online: through LinkedIn, social networks, and work connections that you can continue to network with. You need to let others know you're doing freelance and by maintaining connections.

You'll need to have a **website**—even if it's just one page. By branding yourself, researching your competition, and setting yourself apart, clients will reach out to you rather than the other way around.

Testimonials and referrals are a great way for others to see why they should hire you over the competition. After a project ends, don't be shy to ask for a referral and include this on your site and LinkedIn. This helps build more trust when others look to hire you over time.

LinkedIn is a part of it. Networking with peers is a part of it. Your website, testimonials, being a guest online, or social networking is a part of it. Together all these things help you firmly establish yourself as a freelancer.

You'll want to connect with your ideal client through the most productive channels. Then, you can begin to position your brand in their mind as the go-to freelancer in your industry.

And remember, consistency is key! I recommend marking at least 30 minutes per week in your calendar to connect to others in your industry if you're not already doing so.

5. Practicing Mindfulness

Simply taking time for yourself every day is a huge part of being less stressed as a freelancer as looking after yourself can sometimes take a backseat.

To avoid burnout, try taking ten minutes out of your day to focus on mindfulness through breathing or awareness exercises. You'll feel calmer and more ready to tackle the day ahead. Benefits include boosting creativity and focus, reducing stress and anxiety, and improving client relationships.

Mindfulness is a tool that helps us to focus on the present moment, the "here and now", by removing thoughts related to the past or future. Through mindfulness, it is possible to train the mind to block out external stimuli, which can increase focus on work and bring various effective results to productivity.

It helps us accept the past, appreciate what we have, and let go of the future-related anxiety. As we all know from personal experience, our minds tend to wander constantly. Therefore, it's crucial to have an anchor back to the present moment.

One of the easiest forms of mindfulness is through focusing on one's breath to help anchor oneself back to the here and now.

A Simple Breathing Mindfulness Exercise:

Breathe in deep for 2 seconds, hold for 2 seconds, and release for 2 seconds, and hold for 2 seconds. Repeat 10x times.

Other Helpful Practices:

- Avoiding social media before bed or first thing in the morning.
- Read and remember positive affirmations when you're feeling down.
- Re-reading positive client testimonials in-between projects.

6. Conclusion

To better position your brand in your industry, first, establish who you are. Next, do extensive research on your competitors and ideal client. Then, develop a clear value proposition. And finally, create a solid marketing strategy to grow your brand positioning.

All of this adds up to you being the “go-to” person in your industry. With solid personal branding in place, your name will pop into heads as the one with the solution. That’s the ultimate way of standing out amongst the crowd. There’s no quick way of standing out. The work needs to be put in. It’s not going to happen overnight.

If you want to stand out, look at the reason why you started freelancing in the first place. One reason could be wanting to be your own boss and controlling when and where you choose to work. Other times, it could be a deeper reason like being closer to family, or focusing on a specific service with a non-profit or interest group.

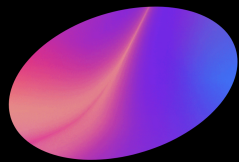
Whatever your reasons for freelancing, continue on, and don’t give up. Sometimes it’s assumed that when we get that client, that gig, or make that much money, that we’ve found we’ve made it as freelancers. As tempting as this outlook may seem, it misses the point that freelancing isn’t a destination; it’s a journey in which you arrive at your destination every day you show up.

Rather than living for the future, try mindfully engaging with the present moment through removing barriers to success. Practicing a daily mind/body/spiritual practice through mindfulness helps to maintain balance by slowing the mind down and staying present. By keeping healthy boundaries in all areas of work and mental health, you’ll be able to sustain a successful freelance career for the long-haul.

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Design Life Well

10% helps an organization in need



What's included

PLUS Meditations, Sample Contracts, Videos, Workbooks, Audio Versions

1 Purpose

This week's all about getting clear on your purpose, bio + positioning statement.

2 Pricing

Worth-based pricing, developing a healthy money mentality mindset, pricing hacks, and negotiation strategy.

3 Presence

Everything it takes to have a killer portfolio site, get hired and convert more clients.

4 Positioning

How to market yourself in person and online, as 80% of what it takes these days to get noticed is marketing.

5 Process

Contracts, creating boundaries with clients, legal and taxes.

6 People

How to best connect to others, and get repeat work from clients.