



Adapted from the Nine Minutes a Day

Continuous Career Management

DOCTRINE

Prepared for LinkedIn® by William Arruda



Continuous Career Management 9 Minutes a Day

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1. What Is Deliberate Career Management?

Over the past decade, I have had the opportunity to work with thousands of professionals all over the world on building their personal brand in support of their career goals. Some want to be promoted, others want to find their ideal job and others just want to become better at what they do. Although each person I work with is different - with different skills, experience and aspirations - there are a few career management beliefs that ring true with most of the professionals with whom I interact.

Here's some of what I hear every day. These beliefs transcend company size, geography, job function, seniority and job level:

- I know that it's up to me, not my employer, to manage my career.
- The number one reason I don't actively manage my career is time.
- Work has invaded my personal life, thanks to globalization and technology, and my personal satisfaction is intrinsically linked with my professional fulfillment.
- Networking is hard, sometimes uncomfortable and often time-consuming.
- Social media is great, but knowing which tools to use and committing time to social media is a challenge.
- When I do work on my career, I feel more empowered, engaged and in control.

Do these statements resonate with you?

As my co-author Deb Dib and I say in our new book, *Ditch Dare Do!*, there are mindsets that you need to ditch, dares you must be willing to take and tasks you must accomplish to ensure success in the new world of work. A mindset you need to DITCH: *Managing your career is not part of your job; it's something extra*. One essential DARE: *Pen time in your calendar every single business day to focus exclusively on your career – even if it means ignoring your inbox or leaving a meeting early*. And the DO: *Do it!*

I share with you in this document my learnings and my guidance for continuous career management – **in just 9 Minutes a day**. 9 Minutes a day translates into *three hours a month*. Can you imagine the impact on your career if you focused on the brand called you for three full hours every month?

But don't save it up for a month. Here's why you need to embark on deliberate, daily career management and why 9 Minutes a day is all you need.

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First, the importance of deliberate career management:

- **Relationships require care.** Building and maintaining relationships is a major component of successful career management. Relationships are built over time and require regular contact. Think of a relationship as a plant: It needs regular care and attention. You cannot give a plant a year's worth of water all at once, then ignore it for months and expect it to live. Relationships are much the same.
- **Daily habits are important.** You wouldn't think of leaving for work without having brushed your teeth, and you don't wake up each morning and ask yourself if you are going to brush your teeth that day - you just do it. Research suggests that it takes somewhere between 21 and 66 days to create a new habit (Dr. Maxwell Katz's research shows 21 days, and Philippa Lally at Cancer Research UK says it takes an average of 66 days). Focusing on your career every business day for a few weeks or a couple of months will make it a habit – and yield you value.
- **Career-minded professionals say it works.** When I speak with the most successful, overachieving executives I know, they all agree that taking action to manage their brand every day has the greatest impact and supports a steadfast focus on career success and advancement.

2. Why 9 is the Magic Number:

In today's work environment, there are so many demands on our time and constant distractions and interruptions. The thought of adding career management to the do-list fills many people with stress, dread and even guilt. There's also the perception that career management takes a lot of time – too much time to make it feasible.

What I have learned from the most successful and fulfilled executives I have met is that incremental actions have a major impact without adding more weight on your shoulders. Here's why nine minutes is all you need:

- **Why stress yourself out?** The goal of 9 Minutes a day is to fit career management into your daily schedule *without* adding stress or pressure. Nine minutes translates into a perfect 45 minutes a week and 33 hours a year (if you assume eight weeks of vacation – the average in France and Italy, according to the World Tourism Organization).
- **Complete focus is critical.** Confucius once said, “If you chase two rabbits, you catch none.” Many educators and psychologists agree that the ability to focus one's attention on a task is crucial for the achievement of one's goals. Although we seem to live in a world where complete focus is a utopian idea that just isn't realistic or achievable, you likely can focus for brief spurts of time. And I have learned in delivering my workshops and keynotes that nine to ten minutes is about the maximum time I can spend on one topic in one format. If I change the topic every nine or so minutes, the feedback I receive is much more positive.
- **You have 9 Minutes.** This eliminates the “I don't have time for career management” excuse. If your career is important to you, I'm sure you can find 9 Minutes in your day to shift your focus from *what* you do to *where* you want to take your career.
- **Think of what you can do in 9 Minutes.** When I look at the thousands of brand-building activities you can complete (and I'll share many of them with you later in this document), all of them can be completed - or broken into logical milestones that can be accomplished - in nine-minute increments.

I hope this content will inspire you to take charge of your career and integrate career-growth actions into your daily do-list. I know you will increase your success and fulfillment when you commit to continuous career management - spending 9 Minutes a day – every day - working *on* your career instead of *in* it!

3. What Is Continuous Career Management?

Change is the only constant

The pace of change is accelerating.

According to renowned futurist Ray Kurzweil, an analysis of history shows that technological change is exponential, contrary to the common-sense, intuitive, linear view. That means that we won't experience 100 years of progress in the 21st century — it will be more like 20,000 years of progress. Since the industrial age, technology has had a huge impact on how we work, and the rapidly accelerating changes in technology have significant impacts on our careers.

The 30-year career is history

In the mid twentieth century, it was realistic to join a company at the entry level and progress in the same department or while working on the same product for your entire career. But today, rapid changes in the world of work have steadily decreased job tenure, increased fluidity in the job market and drastically changed the types of jobs that are available throughout the world. Consider these facts:

- In Germany, according to the *Journal of Economic Research*, the average job tenure is now 7 years.
- In the U.K., the average job tenure is 5.4 years, according to a study done by IZA.
- Job tenure for CIOs is now averaging 4.6 years (Society for Information Management) and the average tenure is only 23 months for CMOs (Spencer Stuart).
- Every year, 18% of the Australian workforce starts work with a new employer according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that today's learner will have 10-14 jobs by the age of 38.
- According to research compiled by Karl Fisch, Scott McLeod and Jeff Brenman, the top ten in-demand jobs of 2010 did not exist in 2004.

Graduating from University is no guarantee of a great career

There was a time where a university degree was your ticket to enter the workforce. Now, a degree alone is no longer enough. Starting your career is challenging – regardless of where you are in the world. There are numerous qualified candidates for each entry-level position:

- According to the *Guardian*, the unemployment rate for UK youth is 21.9%.
- The Graduate Careers Australia report shows that nearly 25% of University graduates did not have a job upon graduation.
- At 148 out of 205 South Korean universities surveyed by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, a majority of graduates were unable to find proper jobs.
- According to an article in the *Huffington Post* in May 2012, nearly half of recent college grads in the United States are under-employed or unemployed. Only 51% have a full-time job, according to a recently released study from Rutgers University.

This means that regardless of your level, you need to manage your career – even if you are still in school. In the future, you will change roles and/or companies more regularly. If you are not managing your career, you will miss opportunities and be unprepared for inevitable changes.

Although this manifesto is focused primarily on career development, not job search, let's take a brief look at how jobs are filled:

- Global HR Firm Drake Beam Morin indicated that 64% of the almost 7,500 people surveyed said they found their new jobs through networking.
- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 70% of jobs in the U.S. are found through networking.
- Chinese professionals often talk about the importance of *guanxi* or connections. And 93% of Internet users in China use social media to connect, according to Forrester Research.
- According to the NACE Student Survey, 38% of students who had a job offer cited networking as being extremely useful.
- ZDNet Australia research shows that 28% of Australian bosses use social networks to screen and/or find potential job candidates.

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- According to a 2011 Jobvite study, one in six workers use social media to get hired, almost 90% of job seekers have a profile on a social media site and 54% of all job hunters use professional networking sites like LinkedIn to find jobs.
- The Kelly Global Workforce Index found that 21% of survey respondents in Singapore are scouring social media sites seeking job openings or promotions.
- The 2011 Randstad Work Monitor indicates 50% of French employees and 83% of Chinese employees believe social media can help them get a job.

4. What Does This Mean for You?

Networking – and social networking – are critical career management skills

I predict that by 2018, the job centre as we know it will cease to exist. There will be no job postings. Recruiters and hiring managers will reach out to their real and virtual networks, scour social media sites and perform Google searches to find the ideal candidate. And career-minded professionals will use the Web to stay on top of potential opportunities – even at their current employer! If you are not actively managing your career and making your professional value visible, you'll miss out on opportunities.

If you are looking for a job, you need to have a strong network and everything that goes with it. You need a constant in this world of change, and that constant is your personal brand. Your brand is built and nurtured through regular, deliberate and focused career management.

If you're not managing your brand, you're not doing your job

Continuous Career Management is not just about *finding* a job. It's about *doing* your job. Managing your brand means spending time building relationships that will deliver value for your career and for the work you do every day. It helps you:

Increase Your Value

A major consequence of the rapid and increasing rate of change is that the answers to your most vexing challenges are no longer entirely available inside your company. Building your brand externally means having a network of resources who can help you solve problems that you may not be able to solve with the people in your company. It means being able to benchmark processes and innovate internally through the perspective and knowledge you gain from those working outside your company.

Expand Your Thought-Leadership

Sharpen your expertise and share that externally. As you make people aware of your expertise and your position on pertinent topics, you start to build a community of people who share your views and provide complementary perspectives. This external community of people becomes a valuable asset as you progress in your career – mentors, coaches, sounding boards.

Source Staff

One of the greatest challenges managers face is finding the right resources to build a high-performing team. Whether you have direct reports or not, you need to be able to source staff that will add value to your company. If you are an individual contributor and you help your manager find the ideal addition to the team, you become more valuable in his/her eyes. And if you are a manager, it is your responsibility to identify the ideal employees who can support your vision. By building a brand community through the consistent expression of your thought-leadership, you build a fan club of people who want to come work for you. You have the confidence that when you reach out to your network for staff, you'll be presented with a group of potential candidates who meet or exceed your needs.

Develop Business

If your job involves building business, establishing partnerships or selling to clients (and most jobs do in some form or another), take a look at these statistics:

- In a 2011 Hubspot Internet study of financial services professionals who use social media for business, 61% acquired a client through LinkedIn and 40% acquired a client through Twitter.
- According to data from [MDG Advertising](#), 72% of the marketers researched said social media helped with closing business deals, and 45% said it helped with developing new partnerships.

Managing your career means opening doors to clients and partners.

5. The New Model of Career Management

Before we move on to the specific actions you can take to grow your career, let's throw away a mindset – another DITCH – that will slow your career growth rather than accelerate it.

Career management is not a series of sprints. Successful careers are not managed in periodic bursts. Yet many of us manage our careers as if they were running speedily – from our current position to our next.

Ditch the Sprint; Sign Up for the Marathon

The problem with a sprint is that you use a lot of energy in a short interval, then turn it off just as quickly. It's binary – all on or all off. Effective career management requires a steady effort. You must think about – and act on – managing your career every day, not just when you are looking for a job or pursuing a promotion or pay rise. The sprint is valuable for the projects you are working on; you need to deliver them on time and within budget. But that same caffeine-infused approach will work against you as you advance your career.

When it comes to managing your career, consider it a marathon – slow, steady, focused efforts will have the greatest impact. With each step you take you are advancing your career and preparing yourself for the next step. This approach will keep you focused and moving forward, and it will ensure you're there at the finish line and don't fizzle out.

To truly manifest the benefits of this metaphor, you need to make a mindset shift. You must:

- Position career management as part of your job, not something you do in addition to it.
- Develop a strategy for career management that works for you and that you can integrate into your professional life.
- Schedule regular, daily activities focused on expanding your career success.

With this new mindset taking hold, let's take a look at ways you can integrate career management into your daily workload.

6. Making It Happen in 9 Minutes a Day

There are many actions you can take every day to advance your career; since each of us has unique skills and goals, you must develop an action plan that works for you.

When you commit to 9 Minutes a day, which activities will be most fruitful?

I posed this question to the Reach Personal Branding Strategists – hundreds of coaches in 30 countries who have been certified to deliver the Reach personal branding process to their clients. They spoke with their clients about potent career management activities that they complete in about 9 Minutes a day, every day. I reviewed and consolidated their feedback, added my thoughts and organized these ideas into these four categories:

- Being Current and Remaining Relevant
- Building Relationships
- Performing Research
- Personal Branding.

1. Being Current and Remaining Relevant

Document Your Wins

If you're like most people, you probably think about your past year's accomplishments just about the time you're preparing for your annual review. That is, documenting successes never is a priority until there's a date in your diary for the meeting with your manager. That performance review would be more effective and more powerful if you maintain a success journal and keep your network up to date.

Don't Toot. Let others Tout

Visibility is important. Credibility is critical. Validate your success by getting others to speak for you. Ask for feedback, request LinkedIn recommendations and endorsements and document feedback you received from colleagues and others. Update your social media profiles to include all relevant feedback.

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Update your Profiles, Status and Headshots

Update your profiles. If you regularly document your wins (see above), you have the material you need to update your profiles in your social media accounts like LinkedIn. When people google you, they want up-to-date information about who you are and what you are doing. Don't let your profile keep you stuck in the past.

Update your status. Let your network know what you're working on. Update your profiles on social networking sites every day. And use tools like Ping.fm and Hootsuite to update your LinkedIn and Twitter accounts simultaneously. When you let people know what you are working on, you attract those who are interested and remain an active member of your brand community.

Update your headshot. In a world that's becoming more and more virtual, people want to connect a face with a name/content/profile. In fact, they are more likely to click on profiles or connect with people if there is a photo associated with the content. Update your headshot at least every couple of years and ensure that it expresses your brand.

Update your company pages, too. In addition to updating your own profile, you can contribute to your company's brand on the Web. This moves your brand forward while enhancing the brand of your organization.

"Every week I update the pages of the company on LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook with news specific to our business so I can keep my team motivated and informed."

Alexandre Moreira, Director of Marketing and Business Development, Green Team, Brazil

2. Building Relationships

We all know that networking is important, yet most of us don't focus much time on it. We achieve the greatest success when we are connected to others. I look at networking as a two-step activity:

Step 1: Build Your Network

Add people to your network regularly.

Perform a network gap analysis to see who is in your network and, more importantly, who you need to have in your network.

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"I used the Inmaps app for LinkedIn to visualise my network and learned that most of the people in my network were from my prior life. I realised that I have a major hole in my network and have put a plan in place to get the right people in my network."

Nancy Preston, Social Media Consultant, Jancis Robinson, UK

Here are some other ways to grow your network in 9 Minutes a day:

- Get out of your office or cubicle and connect with others in different departments.
- Research corporate training programs you can attend where you can meet people from other parts of the organisation.
- Grow your LinkedIn connections. Accept requests and actively seek out those whom you would like to add into your network.
- Research professional associations you can join.
- Research philanthropic organisations where you can volunteer.
- Join relevant groups/communities in the virtual world – like LinkedIn groups and online associations.
- Subscribe to blogs related to your expertise and start commenting and connecting with others who comment on those blogs.

Step 2: Maintain Relationships

Network connections are valuable only if you maintain them. That means you must actively reach out to members of your network and give them something of value, regularly. Here are some ideas for maintaining your network:

"Every week I get in touch with at least one person in my network and invite them for lunch or coffee. It is a great way to re-connect and keep that business contact alive. I strive to add value to my network in every way I can, by connecting people, giving career advice or sharing interesting articles and job offers."

Joao Rocco, Director, Internal Branding & Service Culture

- Starwood Hotels & Resorts EAME, Belgium

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Acknowledge and Endorse

Set up Google Alerts for the most important members of your network so you are aware of when they are promoted or quoted or when they receive an award or accolades. Then you can reach out to them and acknowledge their success.

Use the recommendations/endorsement features of your social media accounts like LinkedIn to acknowledge those with whom you have worked. Everyone enjoys being recognised, and you're making their online profiles more valuable. You can write a great endorsement in just 9 Minutes!

"I make acknowledging others a priority – and I do it publicly. It is a great way to strengthen relationships with members of my network while demonstrating my value of positive reinforcement."

Hans Nystrom, IBM, Sweden

Make note of important dates (like birthdays and days they start a new job) so you can reach out to them and acknowledge their special day. You can send four greetings with thoughtful messages to people in your network in 9 Minutes.

One of the most valuable things you can do that will build and maintain your network is to connect existing members of your network with new members as you invite them in. This instantly adds value to a new network member while enabling you to maintain your relationship with an existing member.

"Networking is an ongoing exercise. I do it strategically while making decisions towards my career path. I make an effort every week to get back in touch with people I met during the course of my career and connect them with others when it makes sense."

Ana Beatriz Dixon, Director, Legal Affairs - Yahoo! Brazil

3. Performing Research

Information is power and being informed is an important part of continuous career management. You can do a lot of valuable research in just 9 Minutes a day! So, be a sleuth. Understand what members of your brand community are up to and find the people you need to do your job better.

Research Staff

Regardless of your role, your job is to identify and evaluate the ideal staff for your organisation and your company. If you're a leader, having the skills to use social media and the Web to research and make decisions about potential employees is one of the most important jobs you have. Hiring is expensive. You want to make informed decisions about staff. Don't rely solely on HR. You know exactly who you need and should be prepared to research and assess them.

"Every week, I search LinkedIn and specialised job sites to keep me informed of the latest job opportunities, experts and thought-leaders and trends in my area."

Geoff J. Peret, Economist, Asteres Consultancy, France

Research Clients and Partners

Make an effort to get to know more about your clients or partners. Google them and check out their LinkedIn profiles and Twitter handles.

Perform Competitive Analysis

Check out what your competition is doing. Understand how that will impact your role and your career. Did you know you can change your setting in LinkedIn so you can perform your research anonymously?

Find New Contacts to Add to Your Network

Research popular blogs, use keyword searches at social networking sites and perform Web searches to find other like-minded professionals. Look through the networks of your colleagues to find others with whom you should connect. Then, reach out to those you'd like to add to your professional network.

4. Personal Branding

Your personal brand has value when it's visible and credible. That means you need to establish and validate your area of thought-leadership and demonstrate your authenticity and differentiation. Here are some activities you can pursue in 9 Minutes a day that will help you enhance your personal brand value.

Participate In or Lead a Forum

Join groups and take a leadership role, or start a group that connects to your expertise and passions and invite others to join. This is an excellent way to showcase your expertise while expanding your network and knowledge.

Publish an Article

Commit to writing an article related to your expertise. First, spend your 9 Minutes researching appropriate places that will accept your article. Then, you can write a paragraph or so each day until you complete it. Then publish it. In one week, you can create and publish your articles – with your 9 Minutes a day.

Build Your Brand in Bits and Bytes - Start a Blog

Blogging is a great way to have regular discussions with members of your brand community. And most blog posts can be written in nine or fewer minutes a day. To make sure you are maximizing your audience, use your social media accounts to syndicate and point to your blog entries.

Speak publicly

Volunteer to speak internally or at a professional association meeting about a subject that is core to your personal brand. You can spend your 9 Minutes researching opportunities, then focusing on developing the content in modules. Remember to have the presentation recorded so you can use video clips to enhance your brand on the Web (see below).

Be YOU in 3-D

One of the best tools for demonstrating your thought-leadership and building your brand is with the power of video. Using video in addition to a standard bio in your social media profiles, for example, will give you the opportunity to stand out from others with similar credentials and experience.

Through his studies of communication, acclaimed psychologist and Professor Albert Mehrabian determined that words account for only 7% of communication and tone of voice and body language make up the remaining 93%. From that, you can see how valuable video can be as a tool for expressing your brand. It's the next best thing to being there. As virtual networking becomes the norm, it will become an indispensable tool; it's the future of personal branding. According to Cisco, by the end of 2013, 90% of Internet traffic will be driven by video, and by 2015 one million minutes of video will cross the Internet every second. I predict that video email will overtake text-based email in 2015. Are you ready for it?

When I talk about video, I include both real-time video and asynchronous video.

Real-time video is an excellent tool for reinforcing relationships with members of your network. Instead of calling contacts, use a video Skype call or FaceTime. Incorporating video into your regular team conference calls is a great way to reinforce relationships with your colleagues.

Asynchronous video is perfect for sharing your expertise with members of your network. Start with your video bio – letting people know who you are and what value you deliver. Then consider a series of videos to share your expertise. There are numerous video-sharing sites like YouTube, Vimeo and videoBIO that will host your videos. And you can embed a video in your LinkedIn profile through the GoogleDocs or Box.net app. Having video in your LinkedIn profile will enable you to stand out from myriad others who seemingly do what you do.

Watch these videos to learn how: youtube.com/watch?v=0rTTbDzGnuw; videobio.com/linkedin_activation/

“Every week, I spend a few minutes preparing a video for my team, letting them know what happened the previous week, what’s on my agenda for this week and what our team’s area of focus needs to be.”

Luanne Tierney, Juniper, USA

Other ways to demonstrate your thought-leadership:

- Let others know what you are reading. Use the Amazon.com app at LinkedIn to let your professional network know what books are important to you.
- Review a book at Amazon.com related to your area of expertise.
- Comment on a popular blog connected to your area of expertise.
- Syndicate your blog – your personal media outlet – to your LinkedIn profile and other places where you exist on the Web.

Above, I shared with you numerous ways you can use your 9 Minutes a day to advance your career – and there are hundreds of others. One extremely valuable way to determine which are best for you is to use your 9 Minutes sharing ideas with other career-minded colleagues – either in person or via the Web. You can create nine-minute brainstorming sessions using Skype – to identify the best, most effective and most relevant ways for you. And, you can join the ‘9 Minutes a day’ group in LinkedIn to connect with other career-minded professionals and stay energized so you can commit to 9 Minutes every business day!

7. Are You Ready?

Regardless of what actions you choose, remember to commit to doing them every day. To make it easier for you, here are nine tips and tricks for making 9 Minutes a day work for you:

1. Set a specific time of the day when you will devote your 9 Minutes, if you think it will make it more likely that you'll develop the habit. Use calendar invites and iPhone reminders to help turn intention into action.
2. Set your iPhone alarm or computer alarm for 9 Minutes when you begin the task so you can stay focused and don't have to keep checking the clock. You can also use an app like Bang Boom Buzzer as your timer.
3. Turn off your phone and email chimes, and close your door to ensure complete focus during these brief but fruitful minutes.
4. Know that things you do outside of work have value to your career. For example, the charity work you do can be extremely valuable. We know that hiring managers and recruiters look for this in your LinkedIn profile.
5. Consider using your 9 Minutes during non-traditional work periods throughout the day, like during your lunch break, while commuting or while you're drinking that morning tea or coffee.
6. Prioritise the actions you will take and choose the ones that will bolster your brand. For example, if your brand is all about being global, consider incorporating the Tripit app in your LinkedIn profile so people can see how international you are.
7. Challenge your team to adopt the 9 Minutes a day mindset, or be the sponsor of a corporate-wide initiative. Remember, career management is part of your job.
8. Blog, Tweet and update your LinkedIn status with the actions you are taking to advance your career. It's a good way to let your colleagues know you are serious about your career.
9. Build a calendar each month with your 9 Minutes actions and put them in your do-list. If you aren't ready to create yours, start with this one:

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	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Google myself Update my status	Have coffee break with someone from another dept.	Write the script for my video bio	Research the Web – identify 5 people I should know	Create my list of wins for the week
Week 2	Update my LinkedIn and social media profiles	Join online group – introduce myself	Connect with 3 new people in my field	Talk to my mentor about my next career move	Create my list of wins for the week
Week 3	Research blogs related to my area of expertise	Write and post a recommendation for a peer	Shoot my video bio	Request recommendations from my former manager	Create my list of wins for the week
Week 4	Create a shortlist of mentors outside the company	Connect 2 members of my network with each other	Read a chapter in a relevant book	Join online alumni groups for previous companies	Create my list of wins for the week



About the Author – William Arruda

Dubbed the Personal Branding Guru by *Entrepreneur* magazine, William Arruda is the founder and president of Reach, the world's leading personal branding consultancy, with representatives in 30 countries. He is credited with turning the concept of personal branding into a global industry. One of the most sought-after speakers on personal branding, talent development and executive success, he has delivered hundreds of keynotes to audiences of five to five thousand on six continents. His corporate clients include Adobe, BP, British Telecom, IBM, L'Oréal, JPMorgan, Microsoft, Morgan Stanley and Starwood Hotels. His private clients include some of the world's most influential leaders. As a thought-leader, William is a spokesperson on personal branding and social media. He has appeared on BBC TV, the Discovery Channel, Sky News and Fox News Live, and he has been featured in countless publications, including *Forbes*, *Strategies* (France), *Time* magazine, *Veja* (Brazil), *The Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*. William is the author of the bestselling book, [*Career Distinction*](#), and *Ditch. Dare. Do!* He has lived in Boston, London and Paris and now calls New York City home.

