



— SUMMER EDITION · FIELD NOTES

Professional *Reputation*

*What exceptional women do intentionally to build trust,
recognition and opportunity.*

Conversations by **Raya Drenski**

One question, seven answers.

We asked seven women — founders, leaders, creators — a single question: not how they became visible, but what they do *on purpose* to be seen the way they intend.

None of them answered with tactics first. Every one of them began with a decision — what they stand for, what they refuse to hide, and who they are willing to scare off: the people who were never their tribe.

Reputation is usually treated as something that happens to you: a by-product of good work, noticed eventually, by someone else, on their timeline. These conversations describe the opposite. Each woman treats her reputation as something built — chosen, shaped, and maintained deliberately.

So personal branding here is not decoration, and it is not vanity. It is a discipline. Visibility is not a personality some people are lucky to be born with. It is a skill, and it is practised.

What follows is seven methods and, underneath them, one shared logic. Read it as a set of moves you can borrow.

METHOD

Seven practitioners across founding, communications, agribusiness, finance, hospitality and organisational design. Each was asked the same opening question and answered in her own words. Quotes are lightly edited for clarity. Part of the Brand Like Me Summer Edition conversation series.

THE CORE · THE FOCUS



01

MARKET-ENTRY ADVISOR · CEE → DACH · VIENNA

Decide what you stand for.

Tsveta Kapatsinova

Before posting anything, she sat with a harder question: what do I actually stand for, and what do I want to be known for. She treated it as a creative process — asking people how they saw her, seeking expert input, refusing to rush the answer. Content came after the core was clear, never in place of it.

“First you decide what you want to be known for. That's the first question.”



02

FOUNDER · SELF-MANAGEMENT ADVOCATE

Focus — then go narrow on purpose.

Svetla Parmakova

She had five public subjects and cut them to three, then to a two-project core. The space she owns is deliberately narrow: few people think about self-management and distributing authority inside organisations. Instead of reading that as “no audience,” she read it as everyone who hasn't heard yet — and posting the niche sharpened her own thinking while drawing a global community.

“Instead of thinking nobody cares — imagine everyone who doesn't know yet.”

THE EDGES · THE HONESTY



03

FRACTIONAL CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Give your brand edges.

Elena Peneva

She writes only what she alone can write — no AI ghost voice — and sorts every post by purpose: recognition, client value, or genuine interest. She comments rather than scrolls past what matters. And she keeps her opinions unpolished on purpose, because a brand sanded down into sweetness moves no one.

• — •
“No haters, no brand.”



04

FOUNDER · BOOK TALKS, SOFIA

Show the work, including the hard parts.

Tanya Terziyska

She relies on her personal brand to fill a monthly event, and she does it by showing the construction, not only the result. She shares the difficulties and the problems openly, because that is what authenticity means to her. The unglamorous, behind-the-scenes moments are the ones that actually connect.

• — •
“Vulnerability connects far better than the glamour.”

THE PERSON · THE PRACTICE



05

CEO · HOT FARM

Put the person in front of the product.

Slavena Rangelova

The family had built everything from seed to finished product — and almost no one knew. What was missing wasn't quality; it was the story and the people behind it. When she began showing the process and the faces, a hobby started in 2011 became a business selling across the US and Europe.

“People want to see who is behind the brand.”



06

FINANCIAL EDUCATOR & PROTECTION ADVISOR

Build consistency on your own terms.

Mira Krusteff

She works across two worlds — financial literacy for children, financial protection for adults — held together by one thread: helping people make better decisions with money. On building her own reputation, she tried the standard advice — batch your content, plan ahead, systematise — and it simply didn't work for her. What did: two mornings a week, a running list of ideas, thirty minutes, and room to improvise. Consistency, built her way.

“What if consistency isn't the perfect system, but the one that works for you?”

THE LEGACY



07

SERIAL ENTREPRENEUR · HOSPITALITY & DESIGN

Treat visibility as legacy.

Genoveva Christova

Raised on “don’t show off, stay quiet,” she did the opposite — deliberately. She makes herself visible to leave a legacy and to be a role model for other women, mentoring founders on a pay-it-forward basis. Competence transfers, she points out: she knew nothing about furniture before building a company that has furnished 500+ hotels, and nothing about music before co-producing a national Eurovision entry.

“My mother said stay quiet. I did the opposite.”

You don't build a memorable reputation by trying to appeal to everyone. *You build it by becoming impossible to ignore for the right people.*

What they share.

Seven different businesses, seven different methods. Strip the specifics away and the same moves appear in almost every conversation.

It begins with a stance, not a schedule.

Every woman started with a decision about what she stands for. The posting cadence, the format, the platform — all of it came second.

Edges beat edges sanded off.

A brand smoothed into agreeableness attracts no one. A clear point of view sends away the people who were never your tribe — and that is the mechanism, not the risk.

The person is the product's proof.

Before the metrics exist, the face and the story carry the trust. People buy who is behind the work.

There is no single system.

What works is what you'll actually repeat. A rhythm you design for yourself outlasts any borrowed method — and a best practice that doesn't serve you is worth ignoring.

Authenticity means showing the difficulty.

Not the polished win, but the construction behind it. The behind-the-scenes and the honest problem are what earn belief.

Focus is leverage; the niche is an audience.

Narrowing the subject didn't shrink the reach. It clarified the thinking and drew exactly the people who were looking for it.

Done right, visibility is service.

Mentoring, community, showing others it's possible. None of them framed it as self-promotion; they framed it as leaving something behind.

A reputation you build *on purpose* compounds.

It brings the right clients, the right rooms, the right collaborators — often before your metrics can vouch for you. For a founder pre-revenue, or a professional between titles, that is not a luxury. It is the difference between being chosen and being overlooked.

None of these seven did it the same way — and that is the point. There is no single system to copy, only the decision to be known, on purpose, for something true. They built their reputations in public. So can you.



If someone described your work tomorrow, would they use your words — or their guess?



PHOTOGRAPH · KALINA SERAFIMOVA

Raya Drenski

BRAND STRATEGIST · LECTURER · FOUNDER OF BRAND LIKE ME

Raya Drenski is a brand strategist, lecturer, and founder of Brand Like Me. She helps founders, executives, and organisations build brands that are trusted, memorable, and easy to recommend. With experience spanning startups, academia, and international business, Raya specialises in personal branding, brand strategy, and thought leadership. She regularly lectures at leading business schools, speaks at international conferences, and is passionate about helping more women become visible for the expertise they already have.

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Every successful founder,
executive and entrepreneur has
made *hundreds of intentional*
decisions that shaped how the
world sees them.