



If You Were a Car, What Would You Be?



by Ky Joseph

Do you ever wonder why some people, like cars, are so memorable and seem to keep priority placement in our minds while others leave no impression at all, or worse, a negative one? If you've never given it much thought, I suggest you start because mastering the art of branding yourself in business and in life can mean the difference between being ordinary, like a *Chevy Cavalier*, or extraordinary like a *Porsche Carrera S4*. This lesson is a valuable one for entrepreneurs, business professionals, individuals just entering the workforce and people in general who care about the impression they leave behind once they walk out of a room.

At first glance, the question above might seem like a relatively easy one to answer but when you really think about it, it takes some honest soul searching to come up with something both accurate and honest.

As a starting point, create a list of your personality traits and then match them as closely as possible to those of the vehicle that best mirrors your characteristics. This is the first step in realizing what your current personal brand says about you in the eyes of others. Don't feel bad if your image says something entirely different from what you were hoping. Realization is a big first step and positive move towards making personal development changes for the better.

Here are a few examples of the car you might be, based on your current personality and lifestyle traits:

If you're generally slow to react to things, seem to be consistently late for scheduled appointments, broke more times than not and don't give too much thought to your daily appearance, you could be a standard blue 1998 Chevy Cavalier that's in need of a good car wash.

On the other end of the spectrum, if you are a single executive living in a chic downtown condo, always impeccably dressed, with a weekly dry cleaning bill that exceeds most people's discretionary income for a month, it's safe to say you qualify to be a brand new, metallic silver Porsche Boxter - 2-seater of course.

Or, if you are a middle aged career woman who juggles work and family life, holds reliability and value in high priority, with all your spare time spent jockeying kids to and from various activities, you could very well be a 2006 red Volvo station wagon.

This is a very important exercise because it can teach us a valuable lesson in self-awareness. It also helps set the stage toward creating a visual of who we are now and who we want to become, so that we can formulate a plan to close the gap between the two.

Some of the world's most successful business people understand the necessity of self-branding strategies and use these strategies to get ahead in life. You have to start with a foundation and a good product, which means you have to be reflective of what you do and then strive to be the best at personifying that image.

A great way to establishing a vision of the brand and person you want to become is to find someone you admire and most want to emulate. Then dissect their characteristics as in-depth as possible and model them to the best of your ability, keeping in mind that consistency and authenticity are paramount to creating a lasting personal brand.

In upcoming issues of *The Driver*, I look forward to sharing with you more strategies on how you can achieve the highest levels of success in your particular field of business by building your personal brand. Feel free to contact me if you have a question on the subject.