

The background image shows a bright, modern office space. On the left, there is a wooden table with black chairs. In the center, a blue wall features a large yellow circle. To the right, a blue ping pong table is visible. The ceiling has exposed pipes and modern pendant lights. The overall atmosphere is clean and professional.

UNKNOWN TO *Industry Authority*

An in-depth guide to building your professional reputation so it's aligned to who you are as a human, builds a career legacy you're proud of, and helps you accelerate your career or grow your business.

Let's get the admin out of the way

Thank you for downloading this e-book!

If you have any questions, comments, feedback, suggestions or you'd like to work further with me, please email me at angela@pilotpr.com.au.

I hope this e-book helps you to get started with building your reputation.

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Welcome

Hello!

Welcome to **Unknown to Industry Authority**, a guide on how you can build your professional reputation so your profile becomes a tangible asset that helps you build a career legacy and grow your business (or accelerate your career).

This guide will take you through a proven process to find a space, so you know what to say and who to say it to. It will help you identify the platforms you can build your profile on - because TV isn't for everyone and you don't have to be on Instagram to build a reputation that gets results for you.

It's about giving you the support and processes to create the reputation that's right for you and your business. So it feels easy and aligned to your values and your priorities.

If you have any questions when you get to the end of this I'd love to hear from you. Please email me at angela@pilotpr.com.au anytime and hopefully I can help you in your specific situation.

Good luck!

Cheers,
Angela



Why you're here

Why you're here

You're probably reading this because you can see how other business leaders build their reputation to help them grow their business or add their voice to an important cause and you want to do it too.

But you want to do it so you add value. You want it to feel like it's aligned to who you are as a human. You want it to be sustainable.

You've spent years building your career and you're already visible to your network, decision-makers, senior level peers, customers and stakeholders, your friends and family. So making mistakes will be a step backwards and embarrassing.

You want to build your reputation but you might feel uncomfortable about being in the spotlight. Or you know you can build an audience that delivers value to your career and business, you just don't know where to find them or how to connect with them.

You don't need to create the process to build your reputation. You know it doesn't require a degree. You just need to get the foundations and your positioning right so you can do it with a level of authority from the start and make it easy.

I'm glad you're here.



How I started building leaders' reputations

In 2018 I was approached by a c-Suite executive who'd been named in negative media stories almost a decade earlier and they were still all over Google. He was a good person and talented executive who deserved to move on.

We built a strategy and over time we started rebuilding his online reputation. He'd been hiding from his online profile for almost 10 years but we overcame the negative stories and replaced them with new content. What we did was the opposite of everything he'd been doing ever since the stories were published.

Our work together made me realise there were other business leaders out there who weren't necessarily being held hostage by their Google profile, but who wanted to build their reputation so it had meaning for them and impact for their business.

So I built a bespoke process that ensures my clients build their reputation in alignment with the business they lead to help their business grow. We ensure they 'own a space' so they can cut through, build an engaged audience, and avoid shouting into a noisy room.

Most of my clients have already built successful careers, so we ensure they get it right from the start and avoid embarrassing mistakes.

I started working with more leaders and they got great results - national media coverage with media outlets they previously 'couldn't crack', regular columns with media outlets that have an audience of decision makers, new clients, guest spots on podcasts, thought leadership content and more.

Plus, they knew WHY they were building their reputation. They know how it was going to help them grow their business and be a better leader. The professional reputation they were building was aligned to their professional self as well as who they are as a human, so it felt comfortable, easy and sustainable.

Now, it's my purpose to help leaders build their reputations with purpose and authority while they get results that help them grow their business.

Why should you build your reputation?

- a checklist

- Do you think building your reputation will help your business grow faster?
.....
- Do you see your peers being professionally visible and think it gives them a competitive advantage?
.....
- Can you afford to make potentially embarrassing mistakes as you figure out what to do and say?
.....
- Is time one of your most valuable resources, so you need to use it wisely?
.....
- Do you want to build meaningful relationships with the media?
.....
- Does the idea of putting yourself out there on social media make you feel sick?
.....
- Do you know how to pitch yourself for an interview and talk to a journalist?
.....
- Do you only want to build your reputation if you can add value?
.....
- Is your business loved by its clients or customers?
.....
- Do you want to build a career legacy that you can look back on or tell your grandchildren about that you can be proud of?
.....

Let's get started



Let's get started

The rest of this book will take you through the most common pain points leaders encounter when they set out to build their reputation. I match up the pain points with an easy to follow solution so you can move on and get started.

Then we'll move into the tools you can use to decide what to say and how to position yourself. You can pick and choose these depending on your priorities, values, personality, industry and your goals.

Your availability is also essential, so we follow with how you can create the most impact with the least time, how you can get support when you need it and some tips from people who've done this before about how you can work it into your routine and make it sustainable.

Building your reputation isn't complicated, but getting the beginning right is essential.

So, let's get started.

Common pain points

Common pain points

You may be thinking that you're the only one with a barrier to overcome when it comes to building your reputation.

- I don't know what to say....
- I'll embarrass myself....
- I don't have time....

I'm here to tell you that everyone has at least one barrier they need to overcome when they start building their reputation and your barrier will be more common than you think...

This section looks at the most common pain points people experience when they get started with easy to implement tips on how you can overcome them.



I don't have time



I don't have time

If you feel like you don't have time to build your reputation, you're not alone.

Most professionals, like you, who want to build their reputation are either already busy running and growing their own business or they have a busy job because they're already in the c-Suite or on their way there.

So, let's say you probably fit into one of these broad categories, and combine it with the fact you also need to have a life. You have a family or a partner, parents, friends, interest, causes you support, the list goes on...

But despite these barriers, you still want to do it.

Here are some tips on how you can find time to build your reputation and do it well:

Start small

Start sharing articles you're reading on social platforms.

Prioritise one platform

There is probably going to be one or two platforms where your audience is more than any other. Prioritise being visible there and leave the rest for later.

Get help

You don't have to do all the implementation yourself. Sure, the content and inspiration will come from you, but you can get help with almost anything - writing, scheduling posts, pitching you for speaking opportunities or podcast interviews.



I don't know what to say

I don't know what to say

This is another perceived barrier that comes up frequently.

When you start building your reputation, you have to have something to say and you'll get noticed if you're adding value and you're being genuine.

But most of us put too much pressure on ourselves to emerge as a thought leader from day one.

This isn't how it works!

Building your profile as a thought leader takes time.

The leaders you recognise as thought leaders have been building their profiles for decades, constantly refining their message, positioning and craft. And they will have a team of people supporting them.

You need to start saying something that has meaning to you, but you don't have to be a visionary from the beginning. This is a journey, not a destination. If you treat how you develop your thought leadership with this perspective you'll feel more comfortable about starting and tweaking your message as you and your reputation evolve.

To figure out what to say:

- Just figure out what you want to start saying as it will evolve over time.
- If you have too many ideas, start with up to three topics and analyse how they feel and the traction you get with them over time. If one doesn't feel right, ditch it. If another topic does, keep talking about it.
- Use your voice to amplify your company's voice. The more you talk about your business the better you'll know what your passions are and what you might want to start building your profile on alongside the business you're leading.

If you're really stuck on what to say, don't start with thought leadership content. Start sharing other people's thought leadership with an insight from you. By doing this, what you want to say in your own content will become clear over time. In the meantime, you're being visible while your peers or competitors aren't.

I'm worried I'll be
criticised

I'm worried I'll be criticised

If you're an egomaniac this pain point won't apply to you!

But if you're a genuine, normal person who leads a business and wants to do the right thing with their reputation, then this will definitely apply to you.

But once again, you're not alone!

It's completely normal to worry that the world's internet warriors will come out from behind their keyboards when you start to put yourself out there and tear you down for trying. We've all seen it happen to someone. It's ugly and it can be devastating for the person targeted because unfortunately Google never forgets.

Here are some tips so that you can move past this:

- Most of the time, the people criticised on the internet have a big following already, so millions of people witness their mistake. You haven't started yet, so you don't have a big following. The people who will see your initial content will probably know you, so they'll most likely be nice when you first start being visible
- When you first start being visible, people are either really supportive or don't say anything at all
- Initially, you might get so little response from your audience you'll wonder why you're doing it. Stick with it, it will come
- Get some of your closest colleagues and peers to support you. If you start publishing a blog, send them the link and ask them to share it on LinkedIn or Twitter. These influencers will influence opinion and your audience's response to your visibility
- If the sh*t really does hit the fan for you at some stage, see page XX of this book for what to do

Tell yourself, when you get started you'll either get a really positive response because most people are nice and want you to succeed or you'll get less response than you'd like (which is OK, getting people used to hearing from you and seeing you can take some time - but generally not too long!).



*Someone else can say it
better than me*

Someone else can say it better than me

This pain point can present in various ways:

1. Like the title says, someone else can say it better than me
2. Anything worth being said is already out there
3. I need a thought leadership topic but I'm not inspired
4. There are other people out there who are more expert on that topic than me

The response to this is that the above might be true. But they won't necessarily have your take on things or your specific experience. Plus, is it really realistic to compare why or why you shouldn't start building your reputation to someone who may be known worldwide and influence millions of people?

The way to put strategy up against this so you can move on is:

- Pay attention to what people who are known in your industry are talking about. Keep a list. Look for topics that aren't being talked about yet that you think should be
- Look at media reporting about these topics - who are the spokespeople? Are they a few people who keep being quoted regularly or is it someone different almost every time?
- If it's someone different each time this means journalists don't have a spokesperson on the topic who they consider as 'the' expert
- Plan out how you can start talking about something that's not being talked about. This way you can 'own a space' (more on this later)



A photograph of three people in a bright, modern office setting. A woman in the center, wearing a striped t-shirt and jeans, is laughing and high-fiving two other people. To her left, a woman in a blue denim shirt is also laughing and high-fiving. To her right, a man in a grey t-shirt is laughing and high-fiving. The background shows large windows and office furniture, creating a positive and energetic atmosphere.

*I'm not an entrepreneur
or I'm not in the
c-Suite yet...*

I'm not an entrepreneur or I'm not in the c-Suite yet...

When you think of mainstream influencers, the people you can think of by name are mostly wildly successful entrepreneurs and CEOs, right? Richard Branson. Elon Musk. Naomi Simson. Mike Cannon-Brookes. Arianna Huffington.

This adds to the pressure of starting and makes having an impactful and aligned reputation completely out of reach.

It also gives the impression that to have a professional reputation that is worth your time and effort, you have to be a CEO or entrepreneur. Not the case!

Building your reputation before you get to the c-Suite or start your own business is a way to accelerate your path there.

Your goals for your professional reputation may be to be known for your passion topic, be asked to speak at industry conferences on that topic, and have a profile with media that report on your industry.

In this way, you're adding value to the knowledge and discussion within your industry, you'll become known for your passion topic, and you'll get the results you want because your audience is the people who need to know you so you can achieve your career goals. That's all.



There are plenty of people who are known in their industry but they're not in the c-Suite or Boardroom yet. You just need to start contributing to the conversation and be clear on who needs to know of you so you can achieve your career plans or grow your business faster.

Now, let's
move on!



Now, let's move on!

I hope you had a few moments in the last section where the words solved a problem for you and you saw a way to overcome the barrier you had in front of you.

Even though it looks like it when you're comparing yourself to the big players when it comes to reputation, doing this (like most things) is a series of small steps. You do one thing, then another, and another, then, before you know it you've built a voice and an audience and you stand for something you believe in.

Building confidence to do it and finding your place takes time, so take the step, no matter how small you think it is, then take another step.

Our next section is all about how you can take those steps.

How to build your reputation

*Getting the foundations right so you can build your reputation
with ease and purpose.*

Getting the foundations right is essential to your success

One of the reasons I address the pain points you may be experiencing as you figure out how to build your reputation at the beginning is so that we can call out any excuses you might be making to yourself and call them what they are: self sabotage.

We all do it.

One of the big reasons I got into PR was so that I could be behind the scenes telling other people what to do in front of a camera.

I'm an introvert. Posting something on LinkedIn, let alone pitching an idea of my own to a journalist, had my anxiety peaking and I'd edit and re-edit anything I wrote (it still does sometimes). So I know a little about self-sabotage.

But if I want to build a business and advise leaders how they can build their reputation with authority, I need to do it too. So I faced the fear (over several years I might add) and pushed through my barriers.

Now that we've addressed the most common pain points and given you some actions to get past them, we can talk about building out the foundations of your reputation and giving you an action plan to make it easy, enjoyable and sustainable. From a strategy level, we'll also get your positioning right and get you started with something meaningful to say so whatever you do feels aligned to who you are as a human and a leader and enables you to evolve your focus on topics over time.

It's time to take action.

Action 1:

Finding your purpose

When I first start working with leaders, the most common thing they say to me is, 'I know I need to do this, I just don't know where to start.'

Most leaders today know they should build their profile to set their business apart, define themselves and the value they deliver as a leader, and tell their brand's story both to their people and stakeholders.

It's probably a key reason you're reading this book, right?

But like anything, unless you know your purpose for doing it, you'll either start and then let it fall away or you'll always mean to, but never get around to it.

It doesn't take some people long to know their purpose for building their reputation. For others, it can take some digging.

If you don't already know what it is, how can you find your purpose if it's eluding you at the start?

This is why knowing your purpose for building your reputation is essential. It will sustain you during busy times. You'll be more consistent and create more impact. You'll know what to say and who your audience is.

Knowing your purpose for building your reputation starts with knowing your values and aligning them with your priorities as a leader. When you know your values and your goals, it's easy to identify your purpose for building your reputation. From your purpose flows your content, your messaging and keywords, your sources of information and insights, and your position on relevant topics and issues.

How to find your purpose

Here are some things I work through with clients who find it hard to ID their purpose at the start:

1. **Career legacy:** when you imagine your career or business in 5, 10, 20 years' time, what do you see? What do you want to be able to tell your children or grandchildren you achieved with your career? What did you do to get there?
2. **Your values:** most of us know largely what we value. But if you're struggling to find your purpose, it can be linked to a lack of clarity on your values. Or you might be clear on your personal or professional values, but not both. Give time to being clear on your personal and professional values. They largely stay the same throughout our lives, but time, major life events or upheavals can all impact our values. If you're clear on what they are, your values can help steer you to why you want to build your reputation and how you'll do it.
3. **Your business:** many business leaders I work with are building a business they want to sell one day. While you might not tell everyone you meet this information, it's nothing to shy away from. Building a business to sell is a great reason to build your profile and for many leaders it's the reason that keeps them going when they feel a busy and being visible would fall down the list for other leaders
4. **Your people:** you might be an inhouse leader who wants to make a difference for the people you lead.
5. **Being an advocate:** You might have started your business because you want to create change for the industry you're in or the people you serve. If you want to build your profile to bring attention to a cause or issue you're passionate alongside growing your business, this is a great purpose that will make building your reputation sustainable and purposeful.

Action 2: Finding your career legacy

When you're relaxed and retired and sitting in a comfortable chair by a sunny window drinking a green tea one day, what do you want to tell people you accomplished with your career?

This one is closely aligned to purpose but it's often overlooked when leaders feel pressured to start building their reputation. If your reputation is going to be an asset that performs for the long-term, and is therefore worth the investment, you need to be clear on what you want your career legacy to be. This becomes the undercurrent of your reputation strategy – or your strategic vision – and will keep you on track over the long term.

Do you have a burning desire to be a CEO of a fintech that you lead to an IPO? Do you want to own and grow your own business in X industry, which you build and sell? Do you want to build a social-purpose business that makes a measurable difference to the environment, supports diversity or any of the many worthy social issues? Do you want to be an advocate for an issue or topic you're passionate about?

Here are some ways you can identify what you want your career legacy to be and apply it easily to your reputation activity:

- **Actually do the chair activity.** Take some time (as much as you need, it may take a few goes to work through) to think about the career you want to look back on. Are you there yet? What do you need to do to get there? Are you heading in the wrong direction?
- **Identify the gaps between where you are now and where you want to be.** What are the steps you need to get there? How long will it take?
- **What can you do to build your reputation that will help you get there?** Remember, starting small counts
- **Who do you need to get there?**

Keeping your career legacy accessible and top of mind will help you stay on track if things get hard or busy. Also keep in mind it's perfectly fine to change or tweak your projected career legacy over time.

Action 3: Getting help from influencers

At the beginning of your reputation journey, looking at influencers can be overwhelming. Often, we choose the most obvious (and popular) influencers to compare ourselves too. Which is understandable, they're ubiquitous and good at what they do. They also have teams of people helping them to be visible (on almost every platform) so it's not realistic or kind to yourself if you're comparing yourself to them when you're starting out.

So, they're great for inspiration, but unrealistic for comparison.

If you're reading this book, chances are you don't want to be internet famous but you do want your reputation to have an impact. For your career, your business, your industry, your peers and the people who will follow you in years to come.

Finding influencers in your industry or people who are known in their industry, relevant media, decision makers and stakeholders will give you a more attainable example to follow. These are people who are respected and regularly visible within their industry, but they're not necessarily a household name.

Allowing yourself some time to observe on these industry influencers and analyse elements of their work that you may want to incorporate into what you do will help you start more comfortably. Allow yourself 6-weeks for this period and if you have someone who can do this research for you and present it back so it happens and you keep moving with this work, you can do that too.

I recommend finding influencers like this because:

- There are plenty of people who are influential in their industry, have a strategic media and social media profile and are business leaders just like you. They have built a reputation with the right audience and their reputation is getting them results
- There will be people like this you already know in your industry, but it can help to ask a few people in your network who they rate as someone who is known and influential
- Watching and analysing people like this gives you good inspiration for the style, tone and type of content that will and won't work for you. It also shows you what opportunities are out there for you, ie. speaking or interview opps
- Like someone who makes a lot of video content? Note that as something you'd like to use. See someone who uses LinkedIn or Medium as a publishing platform? Watch how they use it and take note of what you can incorporate into your own approach.

Action 4: Google yourself

Google yourself.

Then ask a couple of other people close to you to Google you too. What comes up?

You might be a case of mistaken identity. You share the name of someone more famous than you and they own all of page one and it's probably page two before a link appears that actually belongs to you. Or, you're a ghost and nothing relevant about you comes up on LinkedIn at all.

Another frequent result is that what's there is you, but it does nothing for you.

These days, what Google says about you counts. So make it work for you.

If LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook or any of the other social networks rank highly for you, make sure they're up to date and capture you how you want to be positioned. Update your profile photos so they represent who you are now. It might sound obvious, but they need to be of you dressed like you do for work.

If you have links that are about you but are out of date or embarrassing, ask the host to update them or take them down.

If you have negative links (ie. negative media stories from a past event) you'll need to create new content that gets eyes on it to bump down the old stuff (which has probably been clicked on a lot because that's how negative media stories generally work).

When I work with clients, we save screenshots of their Google results when we first start working together and then we check in on them every six months to see what's moved. It's really effective at evaluating the impact your reputation work is having on your online profile.

Google is the background check of our time. It's the first thing a journalist will do if they're going to consider interviewing you. Your stakeholders do it. Potential investors do it.

Get it right and make it work for you.

Action 5:

Deciding on your messaging

Brands have key messages.

The purpose of key messages in business is that communicating consistently and regularly using the same words and phrases is educating your audience on what the business does and what the brand offers.

When it comes to your reputation, it's time to think like a business does and create key messages for yourself.

Key messages enable you to:

- Utilise the same words and phrases when you're talking about your work, knowledge and skills
- Using them consistently means no matter who you're talking to, this is what you become known for
- Set you apart from your peers or competitors
- Whether someone is reading your profile on LinkedIn, your speaker bio at a conference or meeting you in person, what they learn about you is the same'

To create key messages for yourself, you can:

Look at your career legacy. What skills and experience do you need to have to achieve it? What is the next role you want? Write your bios and messaging as though you already have that role

Have someone interview people you know and trust. You can use the words and phrases they use to describe you and your skills in your materials

Brainstorm the words and phrases you want to be known for and use them when you talk about your work and in the materials you write.

Action 6: Choosing the right platforms

Something that comparing yourself to business leaders with mainstream profiles does is that it implies that because they're active on multiple platforms, you need to be too.

You don't.

To build your reputation and get results, especially at the start, you need to start with the right platform. That's right, one platform if that is what's right and manageable for you at the start.

The right platform for you will be the one that:

- Is where your audience spends time. Not the people who know you now, but the people who need to know you so you can build the reputation that will have value for you and them
- Is where your competitors aren't. When I'm first working with a client I look at their industry peers and rank them on how proactive they are with their reputation. This includes reviewing where they are active: editorial media, social media, events etc. as this informs where I recommend my client is first active and how they position themselves to set them apart from these peers
- For most professionals, this first platform is LinkedIn. It's where you can network, publish content, engage with other people's content to support their visibility
- But if your audience is millennial future employees or high school graduates, LinkedIn won't be your first priority

If your ideal platform is the media or speaking at events, you'll need to build an online profile first. This is because journalists and event organisers check your online profile before they decide to consider you as a guest.

Being active online, with work that supports your positioning as an expert worth talking to, will act as proof that you're worth talking to. Gaining a profile on these platforms will be much harder without a body of work online somewhere first.

Action 7: Choosing the right content

By now, if you've spent time paying attention to influencers you admire and considering what content they use may work well for you, you know who your audience is and where they spend time, and you know why you want to build your reputation, as well as the results you seek, you'll have a good idea of the kind of content you'll utilise as you get started.

Some ideas on the content you can start to build your profile with are:

- **Content curation:** sharing the articles you're reading and the webinars and events you're attending together with an insight is a great way to get started. It shows your expertise and passion for your topic and you get to share your thoughts on those topics. It's also fairly easy and doesn't take long to do
- **Speaking:** speaking is a great avenue to building an industry profile, but I'd recommend building a body of work online first or at the same time as you approach event organisers to pitch yourself as a speaker. If you want to be on the speaking circuit, video is a great complementary form of content
- **Writing:** this can be a blog, articles for LinkedIn, short-form posts for LinkedIn, photos and insights for Instagram or op eds for the media. If you enjoy writing, have someone who can support you to do it (there are many writers who will interview you and write articles on your behalf, often several at a time), or you're doing it anyway in your role, writing is a great place to start. Be patient, it can take a few goes to find your rhythm and your voice, but it will happen. Just get started
- **Media profile:** similar to speaking, you'll build a profile with editorial media if you create a body of work online first or in conjunction with your media efforts. Journalists today want to see proof of your expertise before they book an interview or take one of your op eds. Another tip is that journalists have never been more time poor, so as you build relationships with them, be useful and insightful and think about how you can make their working lives easier.
- **Video:** if you're happy to talk to a camera about something you're thinking about or working on, start with video. They can be short and are a great way for your audience to get to know you

The right content to get started with will be different for everyone. The important thing is to make it easy for yourself so it's sustainable and don't try to do everything at once. Get comfortable with one or two forms of content then add something else.

Just start.

Just start

While the goal of this book is to provide you with insights and tips on how to overcome your barrier and start building your reputation, there is a limit to how much research, thinking and planning you can do before you just have to get started.

By getting started you'll learn:

- The platform you like and where you get the most engagement with your ideal audience
- The content you feel comfortable sharing and the content you don't have as much time for
- The content your audience likes and the content that might miss the mark
- The topics or topic within your pillar topics you feel most aligned to. You'll really only know this once you start talking on your topics
- Being recognised as a leader passionate about a particular topic or topics doesn't happen overnight, so the sooner you start the sooner you'll be on your way to being recognised as an authority
- If one of your goals is to build a media or speaking profile, the sooner you start building your body of work online the sooner you'll achieve these things.

If you're someone putting off starting, you can:

- Set yourself a deadline to get started
- Pre-plan or write what you're going to start with ahead of this date and have it ready to post or publish or send
- Do the same thing for at least a few weeks so it starts to become a habit and re-evaluate at the end of the period
- Start with the content or action that is the easiest for you to implement and continue with.

Building relationships with the media

If you're starting to build your reputation because one of your goals is to have a profile in editorial media, these tips will be useful for you. If one day you think you'd like to be considered a thought leader or a someone who created positive change for your industry, then a profile in media will be one platform you need to be visible in to achieve that.

If you already have relationships with some journalists then you'll want to continue to cultivate them as you build your profile on other platforms.

Here are some tips for someone without any media relationships or if you're wanting to expand your network of media relationships:

- Be targeted with the journalists you want to build a relationship with. Relationships with a few journalists who know you well and report on your area of expertise will be much more productive for you and them than shallow visibility with a larger group of reporters
- Connect with them on social media. Many journalists will be on LinkedIn and all of them will be on Twitter. Follow or connect with them on these platforms. When you ask them to connect on LinkedIn, include a friendly message with an honest reason why you'd like to connect
- Engage with their stories. Most journalists will share their stories on social media. If you have a viewpoint on their content then comment and share it. This builds visibility with the journalist before you pitch anything to them
- Follow their posts to see when they put out requests for experts on certain topics. Offering yourself up (especially if you have a body of work online that supports your expertise) is a great way to get a first interview with a journalist
- Offer up value. If you have an idea for an opinion piece or commentary on a topic you know they cover, suggest it to them. Even if they say no at the time, they will keep you in mind for future stories that may fit. And if the first pitch doesn't stick, don't give up.

Like any relationship, building connection with the media can take time. But if you're persistent, helpful and insightful you'll get there.

What if something goes wrong

One common barrier is that if you start building your reputation the trolls will come out of hiding and tear you down.

This rarely (almost never) happens at the beginning (unless you do something horrendous, which you won't).

But, as you progress and gain some profile, you may say something you wish you hadn't said to a journalist or they misconstrue what you said. Or you publish an article that people disagree with. Or your business is involved in a media issue or crisis and your name is in the media and all over Google.

What do you do when this happens?

First, you create a plan for how you will respond if this happens.

The plan can account for (rational) scenarios you think or fear may happen as you build your profile. Those scenarios can be someone posting a negative comment on an article you publish. Or lots of people posting negative comments.

You may worry about giving the wrong quote to a journalist. So plan out how you will respond to that. Or have parameters for how you will communicate with journalists - will you only ever provide written responses (this may mean you miss out on some opportunities, especially ones with mainstream business media, but if you need to create this rule as you start out then do it), or you'll only agree to interviews if you can see some questions or topics first so you can prepare well

You also create baseline messages that you will utilise and build on if an issue happens. You can build out frameworks for Twitter, LinkedIn, your blog, company updates. Whatever makes you comfortable.

Another thing you can do is tell yourself that if something bad happens you'll get professional support to help you manage it well. You may only need a small amount of advice to prevent something small becoming bigger and more damaging.

Where to from here - a checklist

Hopefully the advice in this e-book has resonated with you and you feel empowered to start building your reputation.

So, now it's time to use those learnings and start. Here is a checklist to document your decisions on a couple of pages and help you take action to get started.

- The reason I am building my reputation is to:

- My audience is:

- My number one barrier is:

- I'm going to overcome it by:

- My goals for my reputation are:

- This month:

- Three months:

- Two years:

- I am going to start building my reputation by doing:

- My priority platform is:

- I am going to start being visible on (date):

Thank you!

If you've gotten this far, thank you!

I hope you've found this book insightful and made taking action to build your reputation seem attainable and simple.

I love hearing how people implement the advice we discuss when we meet or if I'm giving a webinar or masterclass. If you'd like to share your successes or have any questions after reading this book, please feel free to email me at angela@pilotpr.com.au

I'd love to hear from you and respond to your questions.



Contact me

I share insights and commentary on reputational trends on my blog and social media.



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