

Diane Diaz

Maitland, Florida



The Brand Teacher

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Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Diane Diaz:

"People don't realize the power that's in who we are," said Diane Diaz, founder of The Brand Teacher. "Human nature is to blend in, but you absolutely have to stand out if you're trying to build your personal brand and your business or career. How do you come across when you meet people? How are you presenting yourself? Will your brand help you get a job or promotion or start your own business? I help my clients understand that their personal brand is their business or career. Your business or career is not separate from you and your personal brand. How you position yourself on Facebook, LinkedIn or wherever, will impact your ability to be seen as a thought leader and as someone with credibility."

Since March of 2016, Diaz has helped business owners and corporate

professionals throughout Central Florida perfect their personal brands.

Her credentials and background experience more than qualify Diaz to call herself The Brand Teacher. Originally from Pensacola, Diaz obtained a Bachelor's in Marketing from the University of West Florida. After graduation, she spent a few years in Virginia Beach working for a market research company. Her husband, at the time, was accepted to FSU Law School and they moved back to Florida. While living in Tallahassee, Diaz worked at the local CBS affiliate station as a Market Research Director.

In 1997 they relocated to Orlando, where Diaz enrolled in the MBA program at the University of Central Florida. After graduating from UCF, she accepted a position as Marketing Coordinator and was later promoted to Regional Marketing Director for a national land developer.

As Regional Marketing Director, Diaz managed marketing efforts for communities throughout Central Florida for 9 years. Then at the end of 2008, as a result of the real estate downturn and recession, she was laid off.

"Even before I was officially laid off, I was ready for a new challenge," she said. "When I started looking for a job, I really wanted something different. I discovered an opportunity at Full Sail University teaching branding and marketing classes as part of their Internet Marketing Degree programs. Full Sail is big on instructors having real world experience. Most of the instructors even have their own small businesses on the side. I wasn't planning on starting a business of my own, it just kind of accidentally happened."

While teaching at Full Sail, Diaz was asked to be a part of Athena PowerLink, an organization that supports women business owners. She served as the Marketing and Branding expert as part of a panel of

experts. She loved every minute of it. After doing a team personal branding workshop for one of the client companies, other similar requests and speaking engagements soon followed. Things took off from there.

"I had never started a business, so I really didn't know what I was doing," Diaz said. "Fortunately, I had good resources and I was surrounded by other entrepreneurs and business owners who provided insight, support, and resources and answered questions. In the beginning, I had to learn how to package what I did and how to talk about it. Establishing my value and figuring out what to charge was another early challenge. I did, and continue to do, a lot of speaking engagements to build my personal and business brand. I've found that this is the best way to get my name out there and to share with others what I can do for them."

The services that Diaz provides for individuals include Personal Brand Boost Strategy Sessions, LinkedIn Refresh, Building Your Personal Brand with Archetypes, and a Personal Brand Audit & Action Plan. For companies and organizations, Diaz offers workshops for employees around Personal Brand Building, Goal Setting and Crafting a Personal Mission Statement. She's also available for private speaking engagements and guest appearances on podcasts.

"I thoroughly enjoy helping and teaching my clients, most of whom are women, how they can use their experience, personality, and all that makes up their personal brand to stand-out and move up the ladder or build a business," Diaz said. "I also love when I help a client on LinkedIn make their profile great. It should be one that tells their story and positions them as a credible expert. More often than not, when I follow

up with clients to find out how their personal branding efforts are coming along, the feedback is great and they're thrilled with the results.

That's what inspires and motivates me."

Looking ahead, Diaz has big plans for the future of The Brand Teacher. She wants to create online personal brand building options that clients can access from anywhere. Even when the time comes to retire from Full Sail, or whoever she may be working for at the time, she wants to continue working with clients and helping them reach their personal branding goals. She can see herself doing this well into retirement and really enjoys learning, teaching and inspiring others about personal branding.

Diaz offers up some great advice for aspiring entrepreneurs looking to take the plunge into small business ownership. "Starting your own business is a good goal, but before you do that, a good first step is to work on building your personal brand," she said. "In truth, it can take years to build a personal brand, but when the time comes to go off on your own, you'll have a brand that's built up and trustworthy. You'll have an audience of people more likely to hire you or refer you to others. I also recommend reading Talk Like TED, Start With Why and Braving the Wilderness, which are so motivating and inspiring for anyone who is ready to make the leap and start their own thing."

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