

# DR. RACHEL TALTON

Dr. Talton is founder and CEO of Synergy Marketing Strategy & Research, Inc. (Synergy). She is an award-winning expert and scholar in the areas of brand trust and employee loyalty. Synergy's practice areas include **Strategic Brand Positioning, Marketing Research, Leadership Effectiveness, and Diversity and Inclusion Consulting**. Additionally, the **Thought Leadership** practice provides workshops, keynote speakers, white papers and research from experts across numerous industry sectors.

As a premier boutique strategic marketing firm, Synergy understands that trust and loyalty drive organizational performance. Helping firms build, leverage and sustain trust is at the core of everything they do.

In early 2009 Talton co-founded TRUST LLC with several award-winning CEOs from Northeast Ohio with expertise in public and media relations, design, strategy, marketing research and leadership development. A core philosophy of TRUST LLC is the support of women in business. Talton designed "Women in Business Pay It Forward," a award program whereby TRUST LLC donates \$30,000 in strategic marketing/communications services to the contestant who writes the most compelling narrative about *using their professional and personal resources to give back to women in business* within the following twelve months.

Talton also designed the Synergy Trust Index™ (STI), which measures consumer trust and distrust in the largest corporations in the U.S., and TrustTrends™, which ranks the most trusted brands in the U.S. These tools provide executives critical information to drive consumer loyalty in varying industry environments.

Talton serves on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of Positively Cleveland (The Convention and Visitors Bureau of Greater Cleveland), where she chairs the Marketing Committee. In addition, she serves on the Board of Directors for the Council for Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland, TeamNEO, and the Cleveland Zoological Society. Talton is a graduate of the Leadership Cleveland Class of 2005 and the Cleveland Bridge Builders Class of 2002.

A proud member of the Links, Inc., Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and the PhD Project, Talton also belongs to the several professional organizations including the Market Research Association, the American Marketing Association, and the Academy of Management.

Talton earned her Doctor of Management from Case Western Reserve University's Weatherhead School of Management in 2010. Her research is focused on the impact of trust and distrust in dynamic industry environments on brand trust, satisfaction and loyalty. She holds an M.B.A. from the James Nance College of Business Administration at the Cleveland State University and a B.A. in Psychology. Talton is a lifetime member of Beta Gamma Sigma International Business Honor Society, has received the Blue Key Oratory Award, Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Minority Business of the Year, and numerous professional and speaking commendations.

Recognized for excellence by several organizations, Talton was selected as a finalist for the 2010 Northeast Ohio ATHENA® International Award. Additionally, she has received the 2010 NAWBO Top 10 Women Business Owners of Northeast Ohio Award, *Crain's Cleveland Business* Top Forty under 40, *Kaleidoscope Magazine* Top 40-Under-Forty leaders in Northeastern Ohio, *Who's Who in Black Cleveland*, and the 2007 "Most Influential Business Leaders in Northeast Ohio" of the *Call & Post*. She has been featured in numerous business publications, including being touted as one of the premier business bloggers among African Americans with her company's blog, TrustBranding. Talton's interests include international travel, community service, public speaking, writing, art, and music.



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