

Building your brand

Model Answer

Please note that the purpose of the model answer is to provide you with a suggested response that prompts your critical thinking skills. Your answer will be personal to you, as you will have chosen three professional people that you relate to. Similarly, the personal brand attributes that you have chosen will be personal to you, reflecting your values, your personal style and your career path. Use the information below to help you continue to define your personal brand.

Some questions to consider when reflecting on your own answers:

- Why did you choose the people you did?
- Are there consistent attributes that each person demonstrates that you are drawn to?
- Do these attributes reflect who you are or who you would like to be? Would they be a stretch for you to demonstrate or are they similar to your attributes? What does this tell you?
- Are all of these people in the public eye? If so, why did you find it difficult to identify people you know?
- How much attention are you paying to the positive professional attributes of those around you?
- What could you learn from being more observant and aware?
- Are the personal brand attributes you identified for yourself, realistic or are they the ones that you thought you should include?
- Have you created SMART goals to achieve your actions? How committed are you to truly living your personal brand?

Please answer the following questions based on the research you have conducted:

1. Identify three professional people (either that you know personally or in the public eye) and the brand characters/traits you admire about them.

The examples below are all people in the public domain. It would be beneficial if yours included at least one person that you know personally.

Narendra Modi

He is the Prime Minister of India. He is the second most followed political leader on Twitter due to his brand character and traits, which adds to his popularity. He is a very captivating speaker and always dresses the part – so is always well turned out for every occasion. He is very self-confident and believes in his 'mission' for life (to amplify India). He is playful in his communication style which endears and engages people. He is not concerned with the material world, more completing his mission and cause. He is charismatic and radiates power and authority. He is a very practiced and strong communicator, which he spent a lot of time training himself to do. He also speaks in simplistic terms to engage people on his wavelength. He balances his personal traits well by being kind yet aggressive, and humble yet fierce. He is a friend to his country and supports the youth of the country as well. He is a man full of humility and he respects everyone around him. He manages his time really well to maximise his productivity (for example travelling at night, so as not to lose working time the next day). He is also a family man and is often seen playing with children, which gives him a

genuine and authentic appeal to others. Above all, he is very inspirational and inspires and encourages everyone with his speeches.

To find out more about Narendra Modi's personal brand and traits, have a read of this article: <https://medium.com/@ashutentaran/pm-narendra-damodardas-modi-personality-traits-of-narendra-modi-49cab4b2b1dc>

Michelle Obama

She is most known as the wife of the former president of the USA however, she was an accomplished and respected lawyer prior to that. She has always been driven and ambitious. She is smart, confident, articulate and fearless. She has always supported diversity. She is committed to social issues. She is very determined to make a difference to other people, by using her power to influence positive outcomes. She is very passionate about what she believes in and inspires others through her warmth, humility, humour and authentic behaviour. She is decisive, determined and fearless in the pursuit of what matters to her. She focuses on the positive opportunities, whilst still acknowledging the difficulties. She is very personable. She acts with integrity.

To find out more about Michelle Obama's personal brand, have a read of this article: <https://www.sarifayounes.com/post/michelle-obama-the-former-first-lady-s-rise-to-personal-branding-expert>

Li Ka-shing

He is the chairman of CK Hutchinson Holdings. He is a peacemaker by nature as he intuitively knows what people want or feel, and can be extremely diplomatic and tactful. He is patient and cooperative and works well with groups and creates harmony among diverse opinions. He directs difficult situations towards his own goal. He is sensitive and perceptive. He is also a successful entrepreneur which is a skill he learnt very early on in his life. He has donated billions of US Dollars to charity due to his upbringing and sense of wanting to give back. His generosity is inspiring. He is very motivated and focused. He is a successful leader who plans for the future. He creates a fine balance of optimism and pessimism whilst remaining humble.

To find out more about Li Ka-shing's personal brand, have a read of this article:
<https://richtopia.com/inspirational-people/li-ka-shing>

2. From the list of characteristics you admire, identify the personal brand attributes that you want to develop for yourself.

Ideally you would have identified between five and eight. These are the attributes you want to be known for – that others will recognise and use to describe you. These will form your reputation in the workplace. Your personal brand will also help those assessing you, to determine if they should hire you, promote you, work with you or do business with you.

Some of these attributes may include those that you already naturally have, and some that you want to develop further.

Your values can be your guiding principles for identifying the personal brand attributes you consider important – things like; authenticity, being the best in the field, agility, calmness, challenge, decisiveness, perseverance, drive, honesty, integrity, pragmatism, sensitivity, innovative, team-oriented, collaborative, passionate.

Consult a thesaurus to nail the exact words. For example, your brand attributes may include attributes such as these; collaborative, resilient, forward-focused, risk-taking, connected, international, visionary, diplomatic, intuitive, precise, enterprising, ethical, genuine, accessible.

Most importantly, ensure that the personal brand attributes that you land on, you can realistically and authentically demonstrate.

3. Identify what actions you need to take to live your brand attributes from the list you created.

Here are some suggested actions to build and live your Personal Brand.

- Use the SMART goals framework covered in an earlier task and commit to specific actions to develop and demonstrate your personal brand attributes. For example, if being collaborative is an attribute you want to develop, commit to a SMART goal such as 'By the end of next week I will research 'how to be more collaborative at work' and commit to practising four actions during the next fortnight'.
- Say yes to opportunities where you can demonstrate your brand in action
- Network to increase your visibility and build your personal brand
- Share your voice with influencers
- Ensure your look and style (both in person and in print) reflects your personal brand
- Ensure your online presence reflects the personal brand attributes you want to be known for. Make adjustments where necessary. For example, consider the style, tone, words, images reflected in your:
 - CV
 - LinkedIn profile – see some tips below and use this tool to guide you in getting the most out of LinkedIn
 - Social media presence
 - Personal blogs

Building your brand on LinkedIn:

Here are some key points to consider to get the most out of LinkedIn:

- It is a business tool, so always be professional
- It has 500 million members – so that's a lot of potential opportunity
- When you build your profile, check your privacy settings to share openly what you post/update as this will keep people up to date with your changes posts
- Make sure you add a photo to your profile, as you get 9 x more connection requests, 21 x more profile view and 36 x more messages (just make sure it is a professional photo that reflects your personal brand)
- Ensure you add your industry, as you will get 9 x more profile views (more than 300,000 people search by industry in LinkedIn every week)
- Draft a compelling summary – focus on your career accomplishments and aspirations, make it more than 40 words
- Detail your work experience and keep it up to date, as you will get 8 x more profile views, this can also include volunteer experiences
- Add photos, presentations and video of examples of your work, as this makes it dynamic and visually appealing and represents your professional story
- Add at least 5 skills (soft skills and technical) and get endorsed for them

- Follow companies and influencers that you are interested in to keep up to date with them
- Post regular updates – share links, article, images, quotes or anything else your followers might be interested in
- Deeply explore topics that matter to you, then watch the comments to see you impact
- Include links and images in your posts to keep engagement and interest high
- When you publish a post create a catchy headline, add images that stand out, be authentic and remember your audience

Additional resources to build a LinkedIn profile that gets noticed:

1. Use this helpful guide '[20 steps to a better LinkedIn profile in 2020](#)'
2. Read our Microsoft blog '[How to build a LinkedIn profile that gets noticed](#)'.
3. There is an additional document provided with this model answer, with further detail to support you building your personal profile and brand on LinkedIn.