Branding Guide

Introduction

Branding is how we present Brand's identity and story to the world. It's not just a logo or name – it's the whole experience people have with our platform, from visuals to tone. A clear branding helps people understand what Brand stands for and why it's different. In fact, branding helps customers *pick* us out of many options and guides their choices. Good branding also builds trust and recognition. For an online platform, every touchpoint (website, app, social media) should reinforce our mission and values. Strong branding makes our Brand stand out in the crowded hiring market, helping users remember us and feel confident about using our platform.

Question:

What are the core values or mission? How would you describe our brand story or promise in a sentence?
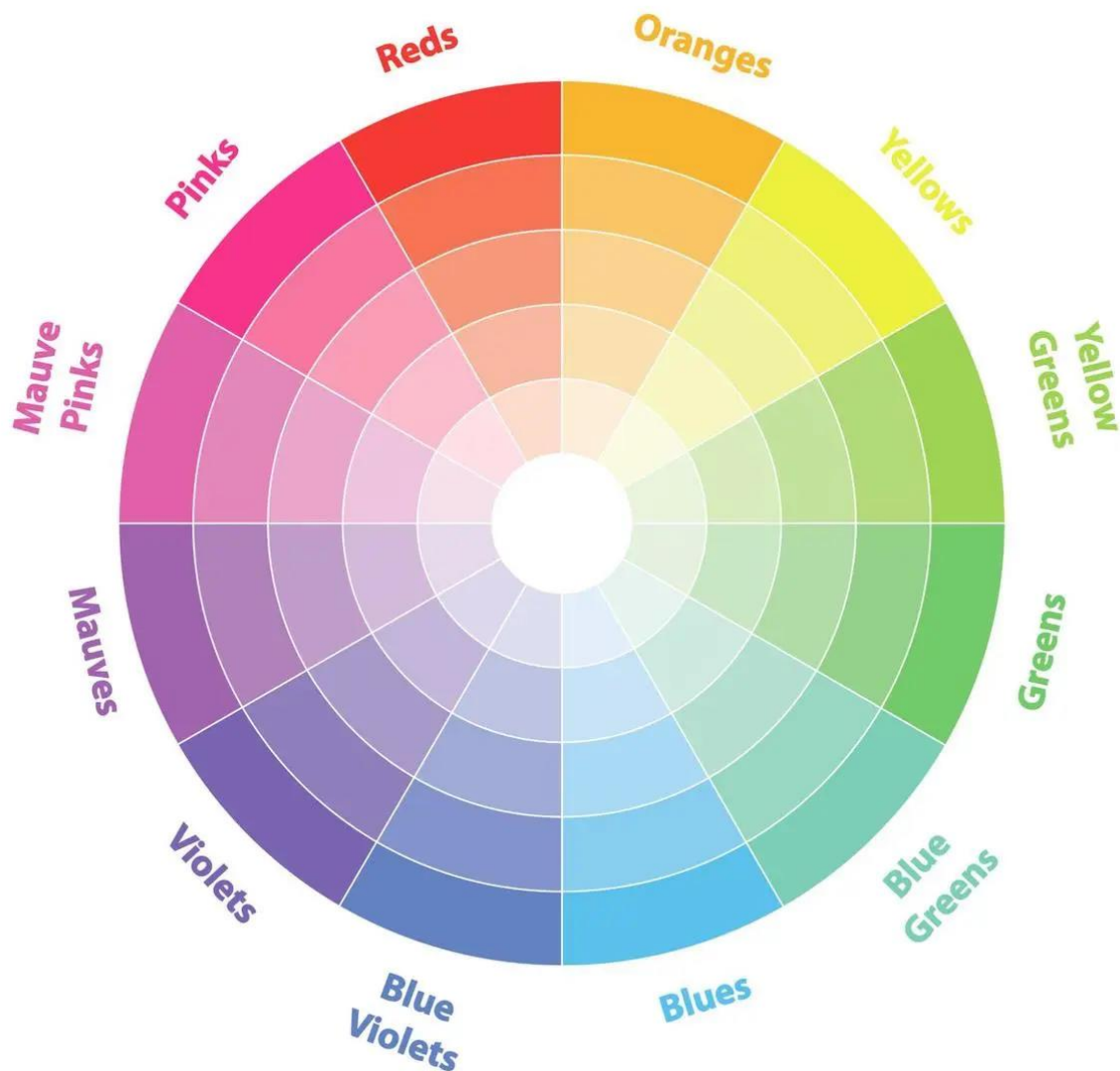
Color Basics

What colors convey: Colors naturally trigger feelings. For example, warm colors like red, orange, and yellow tend to feel energetic, joyful, or passionate, while cool colors like blue and green feel calm, trustworthy, and growth-oriented. Black can feel powerful or formal, and white/gray feel clean and neutral. (Note: color meanings can vary by culture and context.)

- **Red:** Passion, energy, or urgency (but can also signal caution)

- **Orange:** Warmth, creativity, enthusiasm

- **Yellow:** Happiness, optimism, friendliness

- **Green:** Growth, nature, freshness (also health, stability)

- **Blue:** Calm, trust, reliability (often used by tech/finance)

- **Purple:** Creativity, luxury, imagination (lighter purples feel romantic)

- **Black:** Power, elegance, seriousness

- **White/Gray:** Simplicity, clarity, neutrality (often a clean backdrop).

Color harmony: The color wheel shows how colors relate. Using neighbors on the wheel (analogous colors) gives a harmonious, gentle look, while opposites (complementary colors)

create strong contrast. For example, blue and orange stand out together, whereas blue, teal, and green give a calm palette. We can choose one dominant brand color and then pick one or two accent colors that work well (harmony is key). In general, balanced color combinations are pleasing to the eye

- Use similar hues for a **calm, cohesive** feel.

- Use complementary/opposite colors for **vibrant contrast**.

- Aim for a palette that feels balanced so the design isn't too chaotic or too dull

Questions:

- How do you want users to feel when they see your Brand? (e.g. energized, confident, relaxed, excited)

- Does our current color palette match that feeling? If not, what would you change?

- Are there any colors you especially like or dislike for our Brand?

Typography Basics

What fonts communicate: Fonts are like "visual voices" – the style of letters gives a tone. For instance, **serif fonts** (with little "feet" on letters, like Times New Roman) often feel classic, reliable, and authoritative. In contrast, **sans-serif fonts** (no feet, like Arial or Helvetica) feel modern, clean, and approachable. Sans-serifs are generally easier to read on screens, which is useful for web and mobile. Script or handwritten fonts feel creative or personal (think of cursive writing), but they're harder to read in large blocks. Monospace fonts (like code text) feel technical or retro, so they're used for code snippets or tech-style branding. **Display fonts** (very decorative styles) can add character but are best for logos or big headlines only.

Choosing fonts: Usually a brand picks 1–2 font families. A common approach is:

- One font for headings and one for body text, so the design is cohesive.

- Pair a clean, modern font with a more decorative one for contrast. For example, a bold sans-serif heading with a simple serif body, or vice versa.

- Use different **weights** (light vs. bold) of the same font to vary emphasis. This keeps things simple and readable.

Think about usage: on our website and app, readability is key. Many digital brands use clear, sans-serif fonts for text and perhaps a more unique font for logos or headlines. (Legendary designer Massimo Vignelli suggested that just a handful of well-chosen fonts can cover most needs)

Questions:

- Should our text feel **modern** or **traditional**, **bold** or **soft**?

- What impression should our fonts give? (e.g. high-tech, friendly, serious, playful)

- Can you name any fonts or brand examples whose text style you like? (Think of websites or apps you admire.)

Brand Personality

What it is: Brand personality is like the "human traits" of Brand – if Brand were a person, what kind of character would it be? For example, is it energetic and adventurous, or calm

and professional? Setting a clear personality helps shape our tone of voice and visual style. Research shows brands build loyalty by connecting on values and emotion. In other words, people tend to buy from brands that feel *like* people they relate to.

A common framework lists traits such as **sincere** (honest, friendly), **exciting** (daring, youthful), **competent** (reliable, smart), **sophisticated** (elegant, high-end), and **rugged** (tough, outdoorsy). For example, a sincere brand might feel comforting and trustworthy, while an exciting brand feels bold and energetic. Our brand could be a mix: maybe we want Brand to feel **helpful and uplifting** (like a caring guide) yet also **innovative and confident** (like an inspiring coach).

Think of simple adjectives: some options might be **bold, reliable, creative, friendly, energetic, supportive, quirky**, etc. These words guide all our branding choices.

Questions:

- Which words best describe Brand's personality? (Pick a few from the list above or add your own)

- If Brand were a person, how would you describe them? (e.g. **supportive mentor**, **innovative techie**, **friendly advisor**…)

- Are there any brands or public figures whose personality or communication style you admire and would want Brand to emulate?

Logo & Imagery (Contextual Prep)

Logos & icons: A logo is often the first visual cue people see, so it needs to match our personality and values. Every shape and symbol carries meaning. For example, **circles and curves** feel friendly, inclusive, and stable, while **squares and straight lines** feel strong, organized, and reliable. **Triangles** can feel dynamic and directional (often used for tech or forward movement). When deciding on a logo shape or icon style, think "What qualities do we want to suggest?" (e.g. a circular logo suggests community and openness, a square suggests structure and trust.)

Imagery & style: Beyond the logo, all images and graphics contribute to perception. For instance, if we use photography, are they bright and energetic, or moody and focused? Using our brand colors in photos or graphics makes them feel cohesive. Illustrations vs. photos set different moods: hand-drawn art can feel playful or personal, while clean vector graphics feel modern and techy. Decide whether Brand's visuals should be **realistic** (showing actual people at work, for example) or **stylized** (icons, abstract shapes, flat illustrations). Also consider: do our visuals include people? If so, what should their expressions or activities communicate?

Questions:

- What overall visual tone do you prefer for Brand? (e.g. *clean/modern*, *warm/friendly*, *techy/innovative*, *fun/playful*, etc.)

- For photography or illustrations, do you lean toward real people (authentic, diverse) or more abstract/artistic graphics?

- Do you have any favorite logo styles or examples of icons and images that capture the vibe you want? (Describe what you like about them, e.g. simple lines, bright colors, professional photo.)