

The Importance of Developing a Personal Brand (Lesson 1)

SUBMITTED BY: Knowledge@Wharton Summer
Educator

SUBJECT(S): Management

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10

≡ OVERVIEW:

Using the Knowledge@Wharton article: “You are Your Brand: Defining a Personal Leadership Style,” students will learn how accomplished businesswomen have orchestrated their successful climb up the highly competitive corporate ladder. This lesson focuses on Janet Hanson’s notion of the importance of developing a “personal brand,” which she suggests shapes one’s leadership style. Students will experiment with this concept by speculating on the personal brands of well-known celebrities.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Management, IV. Personal Management Skills

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- [“Working for the Family Business: Are You Ready?”](#)
- [“What Does That Selfie Say About You?”](#)
- [“The Business Behind the Swagger: A Look at the ‘3 Kings’ of Hip-Hop”](#)
- [“Part II: Hip Hop Artist Kayvon Asemani on Building His Brand and Controlling His Destiny”](#)
- [“Mo’Nique Bridges Is Bringing Dapper Back”](#)
- [“Lessons from the ‘Board’ Room: A Watercraft Maker Talks Beaches and Business”](#)

- “Great Leaders Recognize and Value the Power of Emotions”
- “Following Trends at the Intersection of Fashion and Business”
- “Family Influence: Choosing to Follow Your Parent’s Career Path”
- “Educator Toolkit: Building Your Brand”
- “Building a ‘Work Brand’ that People Will Brag About”

Common Core Standards:

- CCR Reading Standard for Informational Text: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- CCR Reading Standard for Informational Text: Determine the central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
- CCR Reading Standard for Informational Text: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.
- CCR Speaking and Listening: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- CCR Speaking and Listening: Present information, findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely and logically in such a way that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, and the organization, development, substance and style are appropriate to the purpose, audience and task.

Objectives/Purposes:

- Students will learn the importance of managing their own career development.
- Students will become aware of the competitiveness of the business world and learn the importance of managing their reputation.
- Students will learn how to analyze their personal strengths and create a personal brand based on those attributes.
- Students will learn about goal setting and how to chart a course for achieving their dreams.

Knowledge@Wharton Article: “You Are your Brand: Defining a Personal Leadership Style”

Other Resources/Materials:

- Internet Access
- Projector

Activity:

- 1) Inform students that they will be learning about personal management and how to prepare themselves to achieve their goals in life.
- 2) Distribute the article: “You Are your Brand: Defining a Personal Leadership Style.” Have students read closely the section titled: Brand You: Does it Change the Way you Work? Then let them read the rest of the article, as it provides good insight about the ways in which women have navigated their path to senior positions in the highly competitive business environment. *(5 mins)*
- 3) Then, engage the students in a discussion about their understanding of Janet Hanson’s concept of developing a personal brand. *(5 mins)*
 - a. What does she mean exactly? (students will likely bring up terms such as image and reputation)
 - b. Have them discuss how a personal brand influences leadership style and vice versa. Which one comes first (identity or behavior)?
 - c. Do the students relate to this notion of a personal brand? How? Why?
- 4) Inform students that they will take up the personal brand concept by looking at a few well-known celebrities and speculating about their brand.
 - a. You can create your own selection of celebrities, but I experimented with Barack Obama, Paris Hilton, Usher, Justin Bieber and Oprah Winfrey.
- 5) Put students into small groups and allow them to work together in defining each celebrity’s personal brand. Tell students that they must also back their claims with some convincing evidence to support their branding speculations. They should also attempt to describe this person’s leadership style, to the degree that they are able (e.g., interviews, published accomplishments, etc.). Provide each group with a sheet of newspaper print and a marker so that they can record their ideas (including any symbols or illustrations they want to use). These will be used during the show-and-tell portion, which comes next. *(10 mins)*

6) Reconvene the whole class to share the results. Allow students to crosstalk about and challenge one another's celebrity branding profiles. (10 mins)

Practice Outside of the Classroom: Have students get feedback from others about themselves (survey family and friends). This information can be really helpful to students in shaping themselves into the kind of people they want to be. Encourage students to read a biography or autobiography to learn more about someone they admire and would like to emulate.

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