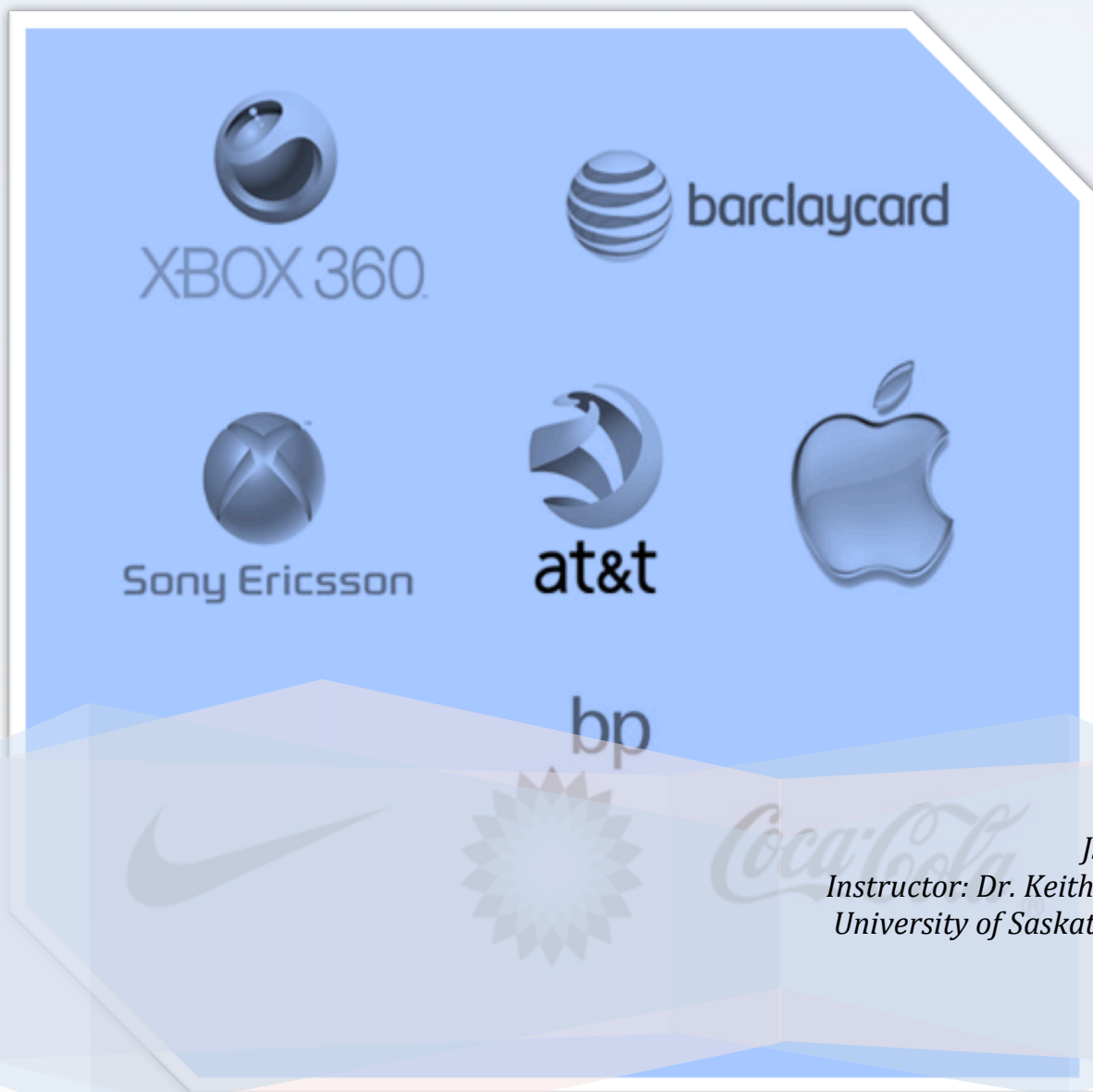


Branding Leadership

Executive Book Summary – “Leadership Brand”, by Norm Smallwood & Dave Ulrich

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"Rather than what we want to be known for, the brand emphasizes what we want customers to know us for"

The Authors Background and Perspective:

Norm Smallwood is a prolific pragmatic thinker, when it comes to developing leaders that increase value and results of a business. Many of his works are grounded in the notion of making previously intangible outcomes, tangible, through a measurable system of impact assessment and empirical scales of performance. What makes Smallwood different, is his unique conceptualization of ideas like "leadership brands", which his assessment tools can be built on. He is also the co-founder of the RBL Group, which is a collective that is well known for its experienced management educators and consultants. He has consulted with companies like Ford, Hallmark, Harley-Davidson, Intel, Nike, and others. Norm has also co-authored four amazing books. So you can imagine the level of insights that will come from his large-scale corporate perspective. He has also published more than 150 articles in leading journals and newspapers. Which means, he has a balance between being active in both the corporate and academic world. Lastly, he is on the faculty at the executive education center at the University of Michigan business school.



Dave Ulrich is a seasoned academic and professional that has written numerous works on leadership and management. He is also the co-founder of the RBL Group. He was ranked #1 Management Educator & Guru, by *BusinessWeek* and named the most influential person in HR, by *HR Magazine* in the last three years. Thus he writes from a very expert-guru'esque type of perspective. Additionally, he is a professor of business at the Ross School of Business, University of Michigan. He has authored or co-authored twenty-three books and shows no sign of slowing down. Both the authors are enormously qualified in the corporate and academic world and their provocative lessons in leadership demonstrate this dual perspective.



Smallwood & Ulrich “Leadership Brand” Mission Statement:



Since Smallwood & Ulrich are primarily focused on leadership within the business world, it is topical and insightful to provide a mission statement extracted from ideas in the book, “Leadership Brand”.

*Grandiose Ephemeral leadership has been all too common throughout the corporate world, as often companies are devastated at the loss of a single CEO. **Our purpose** is for “Leadership Brand” to be a response to this dismal reality, a book that will transform and develop customer-focused leaders to drive performance and build lasting value.*

“Leadership brand is a reputation for developing exceptional managers with a distinct set of talents that are uniquely geared to fulfill customers’ and investors’ expectations”.

***Our aim** is to revolutionize leadership within companies, non-profit organizations, and even individuals with the methods and tools to create, sustain, evaluate, and improve their leadership brand. **Our book is unique** in that it doesn’t focus on individual leaders but on how to foster a distinguishable system that builds and reproduces leaders according to your brand. The **summative goal behind leadership brand** is to increase customer and investor confidence through embodying their positive expectations through your leadership.*

Your company can – and should –
brand its leadership just as it does its
products.

“Leadership Brand” Summary:

From the onset, Smallwood & Ulrich’s book attempts to take the concept of a “brand” and apply it to leadership. Although seemingly simplistic in nature, the effects of such a perspective are profound. Since both authors are firmly grounded in both the corporate and academic world, they are able to develop the notion of “leadership brand” through significant personalized case studies and reflective statistical analysis of different



companies and their leadership structure. Through this process, Smallwood & Ulrich uncover that there is no coincidence that successful brands like Apple, known for their innovation and sleek design, have leaders that are recognized as being creative thinkers and cutting-edge innovators.

APPLE – BRAND VS LEADERSHIP BRAND:

- (Firm Identity – This firm is known for...) *“Innovation and Design”*
- (Leadership identity – leaders at this firm are known for...) *“Creating new products and services outside the industry norms.”*

A provocative question that the authors often asks the leadership within a company is:

“Do your leaders embody the promises your company makes to customers and investors?”

This question formulates the conceptualization of “Leadership Brand” as being the formulation of leaders that represent the positive expectations of a companies customers and stakeholders. The profound idea of leadership brand is in the method and process of developing it. A company does not construct its own understanding of what leadership should be, but instead goes to it’s customers and stakeholders, gathers their positive understanding of the brand, and builds the leadership “brand” around those expectations. A distinct strategy should be extracted from a customer-investor expectation perspective; a formalized brand needs a strategic approach. Subsequently, the company needs to identify desired outcomes for their leadership brand. The next step is to define a

leadership code that reflects the strategy and desired outcomes. Finally, the brand is formed when a combination of attributes and results, which are embodied into a leadership brand statement.



The authors would postulate that the next functional step is assessing your current leadership against the leadership brand. The book provides a framework that can assess a leaders reflection of the leadership brand as well as the leadership brands efficacy in building customer-investor confidence and value. In

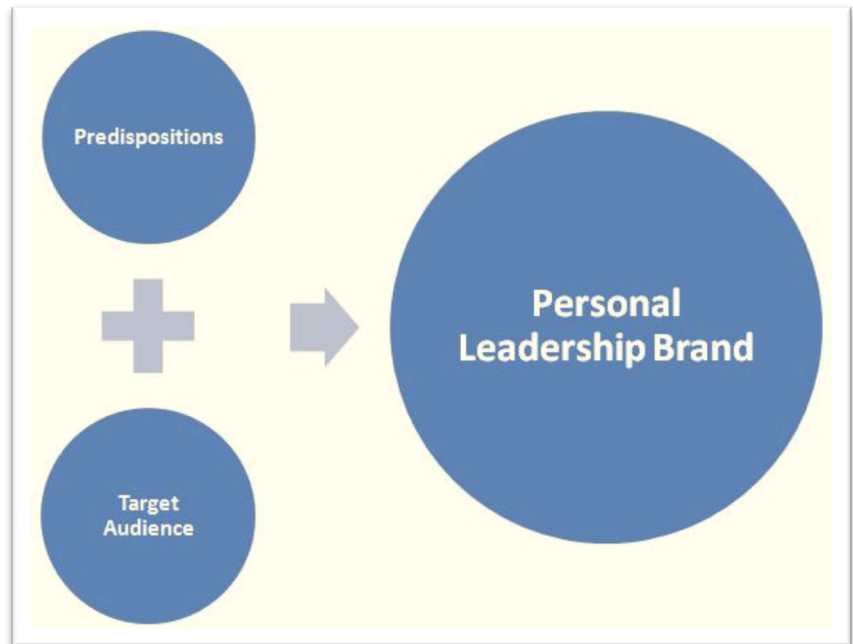
order to inspire leaders to embody this brand a 4-stage process is proposed to transform one from learning about the leadership brand, to demonstrating its efficacy, to building it in others, and finally into perpetuating the leadership brand in the organization.

Smallwood & Ulrich argue that once the leadership brand is articulated, investing in the leadership brand is crucially important. Effective Investment in the leadership brands occurs when it is present through all employee experiences. Consequently, the leadership brand needs to be demonstrated through on-the-job experiences, learning from others through shared feedback, and through formalized training.

The next step the authors propose is establishing a measurement scale and assessment tool that will provide feedback on the level to which branded leaders bridge external customer identity with internal employee behavior. Awareness of the leadership brand is important for its efficacy. Thus Smallwood & Ulrich advise that the company share leader profiles and demonstrate the direct relation of leaders to their expectations. In order to sustain the leadership brand, the company must consider how to preserve it systematically. The book describes leadership brand as a "team sport". In order to

preserve the leadership brand, board of directors create the brand, CEO's manage the brand, line-managers live the brand in day-to-day interactions, HR generalists coach and architect the development of the brand, and HR specialists offer specific learning insights into turning customer-investor expectations into leadership attributes and results.

What makes this book compelling and valuable to read on a personal level is that the core concepts can be applied to one's personal life. The implication of a personal brand is both intriguing and able to foster better social relationships. The authors outline that instead of customers and stakeholders, think of family and friends. Try and extract their positive views and expectations of you and then work to develop and embody those positive expectations more often.



Annotated Chapter Outline:

Chapter #1 Branding Leadership	The significance and importance of Brands. How brands are a great conceptualization that represents customer and stakeholder perspectives. Leaders matter but branded leaders matter more.
Chapter #2 The Case of Building a Leadership Brand	A comparative study of different corporations, and how the distinguishing quality of many successful companies is their leadership brand.
Chapter #3 Creating a Leadership Brand Statement	A statement of leadership brand offers a unifying framework that allows the development of leaders devoted to a common outcome.
Chapter #4 Assessing	Looking for the right stuff. Deciding what stage of leadership brand a Company is at. Is the company delivering the right results in the

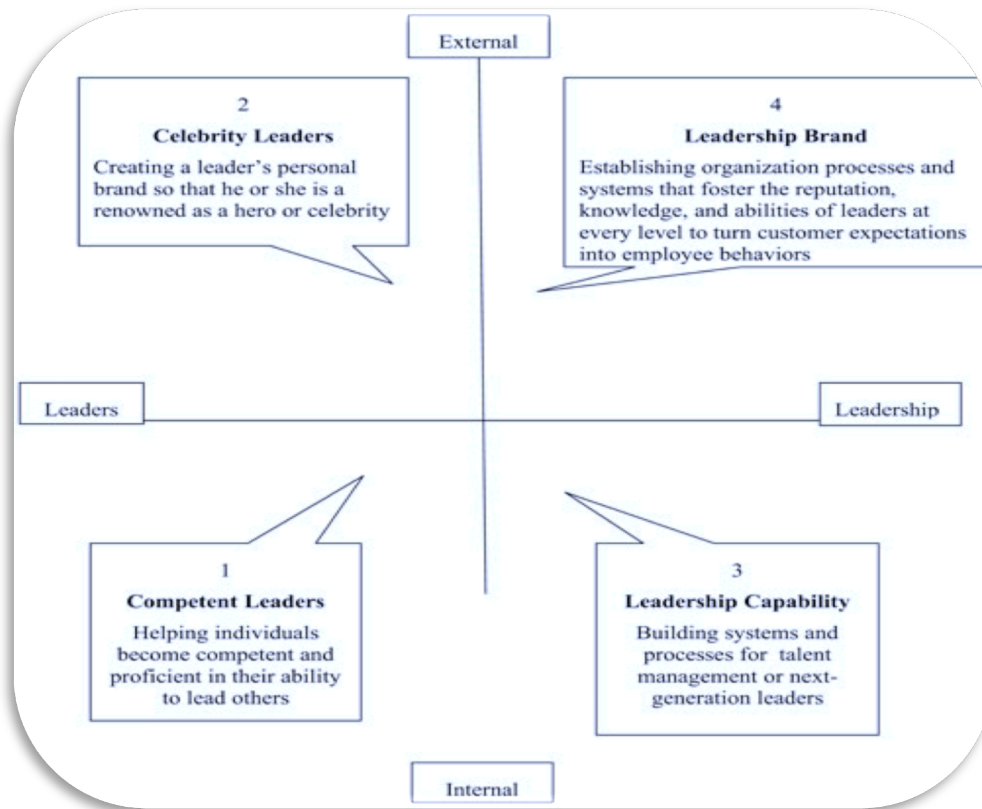
Leadership Against the Brand	right way through their leadership brand.
Chapter #5 Investing in Leadership Brand	Training design and methods are important. Offer an integrated model for the experience. Use a host of training pedagogies. Design modules to follow the concept-illustration-action (CIA) rationale. Build self-recursive lessons into the training.
Chapter #6 Measuring Return on Leadership Brand	Establish a method of measuring intangibles. Learn from the best. Compare stakeholder perspectives. Match capability and delivery. Don't confuse result with activities.
Chapter #7 Building Awareness for Leadership Brand	If you build it, they will come. The impact of spreading awareness of the leadership brand, and the methods to do it efficiently and effectively.
Chapter #8 Preserving Leadership Brand	Making leadership brand a team sport. Getting all levels of a company to embody the leadership brand according to the level in the company that their at.
Chapter #9 Implications for Personal Brand	Instilling the leadership brand in your own personal life. Your social relationship can be assessed, and improvements measured when a leadership brand is implemented on a personal level.

Additional Key Concepts:

Evolution of Leadership:



Evolution Leadership Brand – Diagram:



“Any good HR department is going to look for 4 types of leaders for balance and effectiveness. Each leader still must have core proficiencies that make them suitable leaders to begin with”



ASSESS YOUR LEADERSHIP BRAND!

Leadership Brand Assessment

How does your organization rate on the following statements, on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high)?

We know how we want to be viewed by our target customers, and we have articulated a clear company identity based on this.

We have articulated a clear statement of leadership brand that is connected to our firm's identity.

We have translated our statement of leadership brand into a set of desired leadership actions.

We have a process to identify development gaps in our next generation of leaders.

Our individual leadership development plans include acquiring skills, knowledge, and perspective that matter to our target customers.

We invest in training experiences that include customer perspectives.

We create job experiences that develop customer perspectives within our leaders.

We encourage our leaders to invest in life experiences that help them build relevant customer knowledge and skills.

We gauge the effectiveness of leadership investments by our business results.

We rigorously communicate to all stakeholders the degree to which we invest in building a leadership brand.

Total:

Overall Leadership Brand Cycle:



Evaluation of “Leadership Brand”:

Leadership Brand is a marvelous book in depicting the importance of listening to your customers and stakeholders in an informative and functional way. The overall perspective of the book focusing on leadership rather than leaders is a more sustainable as leaders may come and go but a leadership brand remains forever. The analytical assessment measures and rubrics are beneficial but don't seem that they are generalizable to non-profit organizations. Additionally one major flaw in the book is that it doesn't address the resistance that a companies executives or employees will express to the idea of a leadership brand. Many executives have a certain way of doing things, and thus the notion of fundamentally changing that according to the perspective of customers and stakeholders may not be received well. Adding a behavioral-psychological perspective as to how people will actually react and enact the “leadership brand” would definitely be a good complimentary chapter to add to the book.

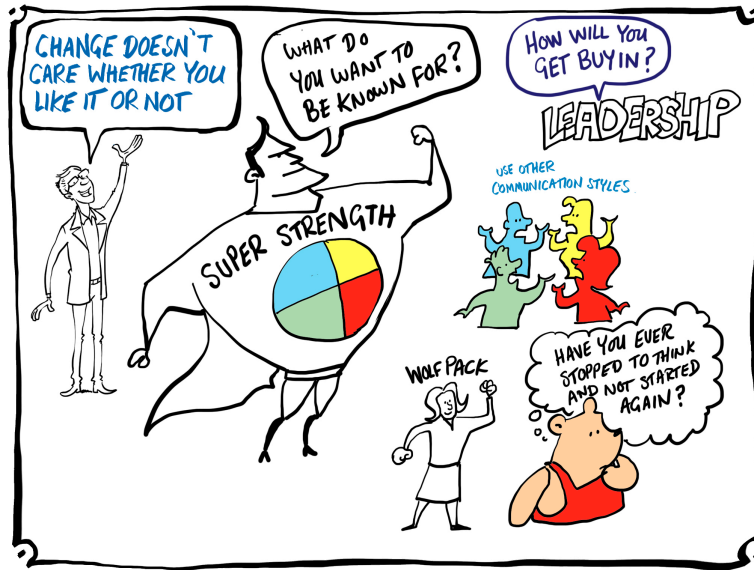


Another aspect that may be a bit controversial is the personal brand. This concept is basically denies a person's own identity by focusing their persona on the positive expectations others have of them. Although there is still merit in trying to embody what your friends and family like most about you, in my opinion you should still be more concerned with how you view yourself. Sometimes when you're just doing something to please others, you lose your authenticity and the effects may in turn be adverse. Subsequently, relating this back to a company level, by focusing only on a customer-stakeholder perspective it may make executives feel less creative in demonstrating their own perspective that is outside the brand. Additionally, the company may lose authenticity as it may seem that they don't possess any novel directions that may shock customers-investors at the beginning but in time they would learn to love about the company. Apple followed this perspective early on by not necessarily following a customer-investor perspective but instead inspiring the customers and investors to follow their own perspective and vision of the company. Thus the leadership brand may be a concept that is Machiavellian in nature in terms of representing yourself as the good qualities people expect you to be, whether you are them or not.

Lastly, the leadership brand doesn't seem to be responsive to major change or diversions within its customers and stakeholder. The concept assumes that all customer and stakeholders will have positive expectations that are complimentary. However many customers may like a company for opposite reasons and thus the leadership brand doesn't seem to be a useful concept in such a situation.

Overall, the book conveys the concept of "leadership brand" in an effective way. There are some deficiencies in the concept, however this doesn't mean that the concept itself is void. Any company that takes this concept into consideration when formulating and developing its leadership will definitely benefit. Lastly, leadership brand is most

ideal for newer companies, as they won't need to deal with transitioning from a traditional system of leadership to the branded leadership system.



"The journey with leadership brand begins with self"