

Your Leadership Brand Model

The world needs more great leaders, and you can be one. Start with setting your intention and making a commitment.

By Kathy Oneto



Introduction

Why aren't there more great leaders in the world? Do you want to be one? It's not easy. But, it's possible. And, it offers great rewards. For you, your team, your brand, and your business.

It begins with making an intention. You can be a great leader. You just have to commit to being one.

The exercises outlined on the next few pages will help you get focused and clear on your Leadership Brand. We recommend that you do these exercises over the course of 4 weeks. Each week follow the step-by-step guide and complete the weekly assignments to help you define who you are and who you want to be as a leader to elevate your leadership performance.

Here's a high-level summary of the journey you'll take over the 4-weeks:

- **Week #1** – Looking Back and Looking Forward: Do some investigation and introspection. This will help you in the following weeks to give you insights and fodder to fill in your Leadership Brand Model.
- **Week #2** – Your Purpose and Your Values: Explore what's important to you.
- **Week #3** – Your Beliefs and Leadership & Management Philosophy: Clarify what expertise, knowledge, and philosophies you've developed over the course of your career and life to date.
- **Week #4** – Your Traits and Bringing It to Life: Round it out with who you are and want to be, how you'll show up. We'll also talk about how you start to live this Leadership Brand off the paper.

Let's get started!

Get the worksheets to fill out [here](#), and use the password "leader" (without the quotes) to access. Included in the PDF version is a complete Leadership Brand example for reference. There is an editable Powerpoint version provided.

Week 1:

Looking Back and Looking Forward

In this first week, let's have you do some investigation, first searching back through your career history to unearth personal insights and second looking forward starting to frame a vision for the type of leader you want to become.

Assignment #1 – Looking Back

Identify three to five highlight career stories you can explore to uncover insights about your leadership brand to date. Pick stories where you felt successful, you were proud of your accomplishment, or you felt like you were in flow. Or, consider situations that taught you a lesson that has stuck with you, that were challenging and were a struggle, or were moments of crisis that were difficult but you made it through.

For each story, ask yourself:

- What were my motivations in these situations?
- What personal values do these stories reflect?
- How have these stories shaped my beliefs?
- What philosophies have I learned and formed based on these stories?
- What drove my behaviors and decision-making in these situations?
- What personal traits and characteristics were represented in these experiences?

Assignment #2 – Looking Forward

Then, look forward to your current leadership role. Ask yourself:

- What are the expectations of me in this role from different stakeholders?
- What do I need to achieve in this role?
- How do I need to behave and show up in this role to be my best self with the different stakeholders?
- How would I like my team to behave, and, thus, what do I need to model?
- What culture do I want to shape for my team?

Capture your learning insights on the worksheet and keep these handy as you move into the coming weeks' exercises.

Week 2: Your Purpose and Values

In this second week, we're going to have you start to frame out your Leadership Brand model. We'll do this over the course of the next 3 weeks to give you time to ponder and go back to your week 1 exercises, as needed, for content input.

We'll start with the first 2 of 5 topic areas to express your leadership brand around Your Purpose and Values.

1. Your Purpose

What is the higher purpose that drives your leadership? Why do you do what you do? What kind of impact do you want to make? What is the higher purpose of your team? What impact does your team need to make in your organization? Summarize in a short statement: "My purpose is to..., so that..." "My team's purpose is to..., so that..."

For example:

- My purpose is to unlock my clients' potential, so that they can make a positive impact on their business, brands, and the world.
- My purpose is to help my employees shine, so that they can deliver for our business and our customers so our business succeeds.
- My team's purpose is to champion the consumer in all we do, so that our organization will create a frictionless process that serves the consumer and ensures the business thrives.

When doing this exercise, look back to your Assignment #1 – Looking Back and think about what has motivated you in the past. Also, consider your Assignment #2 – Looking Forward and the expectations of the stakeholders for your current role and what you need to achieve or model.

2. Your Values

Next think about your leadership values. You can start by reflecting back to your Assignment #1 – Looking Back. What did you learn from your career stories?

Next, to further build on what you might have already uncovered, consider peak experiences you've had over your lifetime. What were the values being expressed in each of those peak experiences? What are the common themes? Which are most applicable to work situations? How does this tie back to your Stories exercise noted above? What work stories do you have as examples where each value was demonstrated? How would you simplify these down to a handful of values to communicate to others? As an added bonus, write a short personal story that ties to and demonstrates each of your core values.

You can find the Peak Experiences template in the worksheet document.

Find a list of values to reference [here](#), and use the password “leader” (without the quotes) to access.

As a final check, go back again to last week’s Assignment #2 – Looking Forward. Did you miss any values that might reflect how you need to show up in your current role or that you want reflected in the culture you want to establish with your team?

Take a break there and come back to the next exercise in a week.

Week 3:

Your Beliefs and Leadership & Management Philosophy

In this third week, we're going to continue to frame out your Leadership Brand model. Take what you started last week and build on it. Then we'll complete your model next week with the last section and get you into action. We hope by splitting the exercises up over a few weeks that it will give you more time to ponder and not feel overwhelmed in building your model all at once.

A reminder to keep your Week 1 assignments near for reference.

3. Your Beliefs

What are your beliefs about the world, your industry, your category, your function, and how your people should operate in your organization? Simplify down to 5 to 10 core beliefs you can reference to guide your decision making, behaviors, and choices. Consider sharing these with your team, so they can have a better understanding of why you do what you do and align better with your way of thinking. Your beliefs are often learned through experience, so sharing them also offers you a moment to teach, train, and mentor your team.

When doing this exercise, look back to your Assignment #1 – Looking Back and the beliefs you have demonstrated from your career stories.

4. Your Leadership & Management Philosophy

What are your leadership and management philosophies? How do you inspire and motivate people around you to be the best versions of themselves? What are expectations you have for your team? What can they expect of you? How do you serve your team members? How do you like to make decisions? How do you want your team to engage you in decision-making and project management? Be clear with yourself and your team to set expectations and help them work best with you.

For example, you could cover topics such as preferring to manage by strengths or knowing that you use a Servant Leader model or manage by Situational Leadership. You may have expectations that your team get really clear with you on project objectives and key results before kicking off an initiative. You may value active debate on key decisions but that people support the decision and each other after the decision is made.

You may want to set expectations of how you want your team to work with other functions, how collaborative you want them to be, how you want them to keep your company's purpose and values in mind. There are a multitude of answers to how you want to engage, motivate, and specifically lead and manage your team. Get clear on what's most important to you.

In crafting this, you can reference Week 1's Assignment #1 – Looking Back. How did your stories reveal your philosophies and how you like to make decisions? How do you like to engage your team to help them be their best? From Assignment #2 – Looking Forward, consider the expectations of stakeholders, both those you lead and your leaders. Then consider the behaviors you want your team to demonstrate, and thus the behaviors you may need to model? How do you need to manage to elicit great performance? What kind of culture do you want to build, and how does that help define your leadership and management philosophy?

Take another break, and we'll complete this next week!

Week 4: Your Traits and Bringing You to Life

We're at the close. Just a few more topics to wrap your Leadership Brand up and get you into action. In this final week, we conclude with Your Traits, which should be centered around your current role and objectives. We'll then kickstart you into being and acting in your leadership brand.

To get started this week, pull out your work from the prior weeks, including your Week 1 assignments.

5. Your Traits

Get clear on how you want to show up to meet the expectations of your current role. What do you want to be known for? What are a handful of adjectives you'd want people to say about you after an interaction? How would you be behaving to elicit those responses?

When doing this exercise, look back to your Assignment #1 – Looking Back and think about the personal traits and characteristics you demonstrated in your top experiences and stories from the past. Also, consider your Assignment #2 – Looking Forward and revisit how you think you need to behave and show up to be your best self in your current role and for different stakeholders. When finalizing this, reflect back on the expectations of you in the role from different stakeholders and what you need to achieve.

Finalize by identifying about 5 to 7 traits you want to express and then select real work examples for you to envision “ways of being,” if you will, to bring those traits to life. This can serve as an inspiring vision to help you step into the leadership brand you want to live.

Bringing You to Life

With this summary, you'll have a good sense of yourself as a leader and who you want to become as a leader in your current role. It will allow you to step into the intention you hold for yourself as a leader and help shape the kind of voice you want to create and own and the kind of culture you want to nurture in the workplace. With your leadership brand in hand, you can become your best self as a leader and one who can make a positive impact in your organization.

To bring some discipline to this work, as a best practice consider putting a block on your calendar for an end of week reflection. Ask yourself:

- How have I lived my leadership brand this week?
- Where might I be off?
- How can I get back into alignment?
- How do I need to be next week to be on my leadership brand?
- What specific opportunities do I have next week to live my leadership brand?

Then, Monday morning craft into your morning ritual just 5-10 minutes to refresh your memory on your leadership opportunities for the coming week. Setting these habits can help you really embody your leadership brand.

Close

You've demonstrated your intention to be a great leader by completing this exercise. Excellent! Now's it's time to make a commitment to lead well and make the positive impact you want to make for yourself, your team, and your organization. Your business and brand will benefit from the investment you've made in yourself to be the leader you know you can be.

Go forth! Lead well.

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Leadership is not magnetic personality, that can just as well be a glib tongue. It is not 'making friends and influencing people,' that is flattery. Leadership is lifting a person's vision to higher sights, the raising of a person's performance to a higher standard, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations.”

— *Peter F. Drucker*

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If you have feedback on how we can make this better, please contact [Kathy](#) at [Sustainable Ambition](#). We like constructive feedback and always feel like we can continuously improve and take things up a notch. Let us know how we can make this better for you and others.



**SUSTAINABLE
AMBITION**

Sustainable Ambition is about crafting a fulfilling career to support your life from decade to decade. It was founded by Kathy Oneto, an executive and leadership coach and career strategist, as well as a strategy and marketing professional.

At Sustainable Ambition, you can find content, tools, and resources complemented with coaching and workshops.

Find us at <http://www.sustainableambition.com/>.