



Brand Character Template

What is a Brand Character?

A brand's character is the set of human attributes associated with a brand that gives it a unique personality within the market that is recognized by consumers.

What to Consider in Creating a Strong Brand Character

- **Your positioning and your brand character are not the same thing.** A brand position is the WHY of your existence. Your brand's character is the HOW your brand exists in the marketplace and in the hearts and minds of consumers. Yes, your brand positioning should be translated into a Character that utilizes consumer-friendly language, BUT it communicates the WHY, not the way in which you communicate. Your brand character is the humanization of your brand - it dimensionalizes your brand in a way that allows people to FEEL the experience of you in a holistic manner.
 - **Your brand character should be described the same way you would describe a person.** You wouldn't describe your best friend by saying, "she is a mom, an engineer and a runner." You would use human characteristics like, "she is warm, funny, charismatic and stubborn." Your brand's character should ALWAYS use human characteristics as its foundation.
 - **Your brand character MUST be multi-dimensional.** People are complicated. They play different roles in different situations, they show and share different parts of their personality given what they are experiencing. A brand has to be the same. You must be able to put the right message out in the right way at the right time to meet your consumer where they are in a way that they would expect of you. And it is important not to go TOO FAR with your brand character. Ideally, the rule of thumb is about 4 brand characteristics. Yes, there may be other ones that are secondary, but again with the people reference - most people often describe themselves with 3-4 key characteristics. It allows for flexibility and focus at the same time.
 - **Your brand character must be consistently authentic.** It can be tricky to find the balance between multi-dimensional and consistent, but it is a MUST. The best brand character examples we have seen become intuitive to consumers in a way that they know what to expect from a brand and that strengthens the relationship in the most authentic way possible.
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Develop Your Brand Character

Now, take a stab at your own brand Character! Remember, **1. Your positioning and your brand character are not the same thing. 2. Your brand character should be described the same way you would describe a person. 3. Your brand character MUST be multi-dimensional, and 4. Your brand character must be consistently authentic.**

List Your Brand Positioning

First, let's start by listing your brand positioning. This will be a good point of reference, and help separate your brand character (the HOW you show up) from your brand positioning (the WHY you show up).

Brainstorm Your Brand Character

Now, let's get to work on your brand character. First, list all of the personality attributes that you think apply (or could apply) to your brand. Remember, human characteristics ONLY. Nothing that is at all functional or role-based. Don't hold back, get them all out, we will wait:

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Decide On Your Brand Character

Now, take a look at the list above. Think about which ones are 1. The most **ownable** to you in the space (vs. your competition), 2. The most **authentic** to you (as a brand and what you represent), 3. Matches up with what your **consumer expects** from you (based on the relationship you strive to have with your consumer on your best day). 4. You can execute against them with **consistency**.

List the top 4 (or 3-5, if you must) brand characteristics that will build the foundation of your brand character.

Define Your Brand Character

Take some time to reflect on the brand characteristics that you have chosen, and then define what each one means for you. For example, you can be “funny” but not “crass” in your humor. So maybe your version of “funny” is “witty without offending”, as an example. Build the definition and parameters of each of the characteristics, and make sure that they can work together in harmony. Another example to prove this point: if you are “funny” in an “irreverent” sort of way, you are likely also “unapologetically who you are”. You wouldn’t say that you are “irreverent” and also “serious” at the same time. Those characteristics are at odds with each other.

Evaluate Your Brand Character

After writing a brand Character, it is imperative to go back and evaluate it. Remember the criteria we established at the beginning, and ensure that you have delivered on each component. Take 3-5 recent examples of messaging you have put in market (i.e. social posts, digital ads, email newsletter, printed postcard, written article, blog), and the reactions you received. If all things don't hit exactly how you intended, don't be discouraged. These things take work and just like human character, things evolve as you mature, age, and make changes based on your environment. Our rule of thumb is to "check-in" with your brand character every 2-4 weeks and keep your pulse on whether it is **ownable, authentic, and meeting consumer expectations**.

Date of review: _____ Brand Characteristic: _____

Application (where was the message) _____

Message: (what was communicated) _____

Evaluation of Message: (what were the reactions) _____

Date of review: _____ Brand Characteristic: _____

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Still not sure if you have defined and/or are executing your brand character just right? No problem. We are here for you. Reach out anytime at Forthright-People.com and we will get back to you as soon as we can! We promise, your brand character is worth the time to develop deep relationships with your consumers.