**How to Create and Communicate Your Powerful Pharmacist Brand**

***A step-by-step guide for practitioners and students Response Sheets***

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**by Quentin Srnka, PharmD, MBA Marketing, FACA**

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p **Module 1 – Terms and Concepts**

You will define and differentiate the terms *personal brand*, *pharmacist brand*, *personal branding*, *pharmacy brand*, *mass marketing*, and *niche* *marketing*.

You will identify, compare, and contrast pharmacist brands that are *powerful*, *mediocre*, and *weak*.

**Question 1:** To what *niche market* is East Mesa Pharmacy likely to appeal?

**Question 2:** How will the “typical consumer” know that Philip Smith and Valerie Harris are pharmacists?

**Question 3:** What *pharmacist brands* are communicated by the business card?

**Question 4:** At what pharmacy does Valerie Harris practice?

**Question 5:** What products are available at Valerie Harris practice site?

**Question 6:** Having Philip Smith’s pharmacist card in hand, do you think a typical Mesa, Arizona resident would be able to locate the pharmacy where he practices?

**Questions 7, 8, 9, 10:** Regarding the six men’s health issues listed on Philip Smith’s card, does the pharmacist suggest that he makes *diagnoses*? . . .

that he sells *products*? . . .

that he may *refer* a patron to a *physician*? . . .

that he has *health issue expertise*?

**Question 11:** In what ways does this card communicate the *pharmacy* brand?

**Question 12:** In what ways does this card communicate the brand(s) of the three *pharmacists*?

**Questions 13, 14:** Are the brands of *The Chambers Rx Compounders* identical?

What is your reasoning?

**Question 15:** If pharmacist Ann Davis’ primary interest is women’s health issues, how would you modify *The Chambers Rx Compounders* card to reflect her brand?

**Questions 16, 17:** Scenario – Mary is a Certified Diabetes Educator.Her primary practice focus is assisting individuals who use insulin and insulin-like medications to control diabetes. Mary also serves as associate pastor for a local congregation and is a soccer coach for sixth and seventh grade youth.

How many personal brands does Mary have?

What is your reasoning?

**Question 18:** How would you rate the brand of a pharmacist who is perceived as being *hesitant*, *fragile*, and *uncertain*? p Powerful p Mediocre p Weak

**Question 19:** How would you rate the brand of a pharmacist who is perceived as being *forceful*, *influential,* and *persuasive*? p Powerful p Mediocre p Weak

**Question 20:** How would you rate the brand of a pharmacist who is perceived as being *decent*, *ordinary*, and *undistinguished*? p Powerful p Mediocre p Weak

***Scenario -*** Pharmacists and technicians were interviewed to obtain their perceptions of pharmacists with whom they work. Based on this limited information, how would you *rate the strength* of each pharmacist’s brand?

**Question 21:** “John often seems hesitant to make decisions when dispensing medicines. He is uncertain when answering patients’ questions, frequently saying ‘I think . . .’ and “Maybe . . .” And John repeatedly gets his feelings hurt by patients and workmates.” p Powerful p Mediocre p Weak

**Question 22:** “Joan is a decent pharmacist – pretty much like most of the other pharmacists who work here. She seems to get her job done in an OK manner. I don’t know much more to say about her.” p Powerful p Mediocre p Weak

**Question 23:** “Lilly is persuasive when dealing with prescribers who make potential errors, explaining *why* and always giving a *reference*. Her primary interest is smoking cessation, and many pharmacy patrons have come to her for assistance. Lilly is a very capable pharmacist.” p Powerful p Mediocre p Weak

**Questions 25, 25:** Consider two pharmacists who you have known reasonably well for at least 5 years and who you would rate as having powerful pharmacist brands. Which of the above-captioned six features do you associate with each pharmacist?

Pharmacist A: 1 2 3 4 5 6 Pharmacist B: 1 2 3 4 5 6

**Questions 26, 27:** What other features or characteristics do you associate with each of the pharmacists you have considered?

Pharmacist A:

Pharmacist B:

**Questions 28, 29:** In what ways – if any – do you think *personality* affects the creation of one’s pharmacist brand?

What is your reasoning?

**Question 30, 31:** In what ways – if any – do you think *view of self-worth* affects the creation of one’s pharmacist brand?

What is your reasoning?

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p **Module 2 – Creating Your Powerful Pharmacist Brand**

You will prepare a *concise written plan* to create a powerful brand in which you are likely to have an enduring interest and to accumulate the requisite knowledge, skills, and resources.

**Question 32:** In what way, if any, do the words of Henry David Thoreau regarding the “secret of achievement” relate to creating a powerful pharmacist brand?

**Questions 33, 34, and 35:** What are the *three criteria* that Richard Koch recommends as you *choose* a niche?

1.

2.

3.

**Question 36:** What is *one additional criterion* that you should consider when choosing a niche – when choosing a pharmacist brand?

**Questions 37, 38: In what ways are the terms *consultant* and *specialist* similar?**

**In what ways are the terms *consultant* and *specialist* different?**

**Questions 39, 40: If a pharmacist Nancy Harris indicates that she is a *Veterinary Medication Specialist*, is she implying lack of expertise or interest in medicines used by humans?**

**What is your reasoning?**

**Exercise 1:** Your Professional Interests

1. What pharmacy-related ACTIVITY do you enjoy MORE than all others?
2. What pharmacy-related ACTIVITY do you enjoy LESS than all others?
3. What class of MEDICATIONS do you *enjoy learning about* MORE than all others?
4. What HEALTH ISSUE do you *enjoy* *learning about* MORE than all others?
5. What is (or will be) your greatest STRENGTH as a pharmacist?
6. What is (or will be) your greatest WEAKNESS as a pharmacist?
7. On a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 representing “not at all” and 10 representing “very much,” to what extent do you enjoy interacting with other *health professionals*?
8. On a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 representing “not at all” and 10 representing “very much,” to what extent do you enjoy interacting with *patients and consumers*?
9. On a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 representing “not at all” and 10 representing “very much,” to what extent are you now interested in *creating a powerful pharmacist brand*?

**Question 41:** What powerful pharmacist brand have you already created, or do you now desire to create? (Your brand must be *specific* – *not* hospital pharmacist, *not* community pharmacy owner, *not* school of pharmacy faculty member.)

**Exercise 2:** Your Compatibility with Your Preliminary Pharmacist Brand

Circle the number by each of the following statements with which *agree*:

1. *No pharmacist* (or, in large communities, *few* pharmacists) in the vicinity of my potential practice location appears to have selected the pharmacist brand.
2. I am likely to have an *enduring interest* (meaning several years) in this brand as evidenced by my desire to *study almost every day* to develop a knowledge base that exceeds 98% of the pharmacists in the vicinity of my potential practice.
3. I have and am determined to commit *time* to perfect my brand.
4. I am determined to commit *financial resources* needed to perfect my brand.
5. The brand is consistent with my *gender*. (A brand that focuses on *breast feeding* or *women’s health issues* may not be ideal for a male pharmacist.)
6. The brand is consistent with my *lifestyle*. (A brand that focuses on *strength and endurance* may not be ideal for a pharmacist who does not exercise regularly.)
7. The brand is highly compatible with my *potential practice environment*. (Some pharmacist brands are more compatible with a community pharmacy practice versus an institutional pharmacy practice, and vice versa.)
8. The brand is highly compatible with my *other practice-related interests*. (A pharmacist who compounds might choose a brand that focuses on feline and/or canine health, women’s health issues, men’s health issues, or skin health, whereas a pharmacist who has completed a residency in psychiatry might select a brand that relates to psychiatric issues that affect a market niche.)

NOTE: If you did **not** *agree* with **all eight** statements, consider choosing a different brand – one that is more consistent with your interests, lifestyle, etc.

**Exercise 3:** Time, Costs, and Resources

1. **How many hours** will you need to study so that your knowledge base regarding your brand exceeds that of 50% of pharmacists in the vicinity of your potential practice site? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 70%? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 90%? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 98%? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. **Where** will you obtain the information needed to expand your knowledge base?
3. **How** will you obtain the information needed to expand your knowledge base?
4. **What resources** will you need to create your pharmacist brand?
5. **What will be the total cost** (if any) to acquire these resources?
6. **What additional education or training** will you need to create your brand?

**Question 42:** Based on your analysis of Exercises 1, 2, and 3, what is or what will be your pharmacist brand?

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p **Module 3 – Communicating Your Powerful Pharmacist Brand**

You will prepare a *concise written plan* to communicate your brand to **patients, the public, workmates, other healthcare professionals, managers/administrators, and current/future employers**.

**Exercise 4:** Sketch your pharmacist card so that it communicates features of your pharmacist brand, including who you are, what you do, how you help people, and how you can be contacted.

**Exercise 5:** Sketch your name badge to communicate who you are and what you do.

**Question 43:** What features of Audrey Harris’ biographical sketch do you *like*?

**Question 44:** What features of Audrey Harris’ biographical sketch do you *dislike*?

**Exercise 6:** Prepare a biographical sketch that communicates where you are in your career now ***or*** where you will be in the future (the brand that you intend to create).

**(Prepare your biographical sketch via word processing, print, and attach.)**

**Exercise 7:** Construct a consultation form that is relevant to your pharmacist brand.

**(Prepare your consultation form via word processing, print, and attach.)**

**Exercise 8:** Identify and list the steps required to insert your email signature in *your* personal email account.

**Exercise 9:** If you were to prepare an email signature, list the information items that you would exhibit. (Note: Your email signature may be identical to your pharmacist card or your biographical sketch.)

**Exercise 10:** Review your personal email account and estimate the number of individuals you could add to a list to receive your health messages.

**Questions 45, 46:** What are the *pros* and *cons* of asking the patients in your pharmacy practice if they would like to be added to your email contact list to receive your health messages? (Assume that you are an employee **or** a practice owner.)

Pros:

Cons:

**Exercise 11:** Prepare a brief health message that is related to your area of expertise, that would have broad appeal to consumers and other health professionals, and that is based on an authoritative source or sources.

**(Prepare your health message via word processing, print, and attach.)**

**Exercise 12:** Sketch the content for the reverse side of your pharmacist card to let people know that you are available to speak on two or more specific topics.

**Exercise 13:** State the title of a 20-minute consumer-oriented presentation and three points that you will make.

Title:

1.

2.

3.

**Exercise 14:** You are preparing a 20-minute presentation for consumers on a topic related to your area of expertise (your pharmacist brand). State the title of your presentation and three points that you will make.

Title:

1.

2.

3.

**Exercise 15:** Contact two television stations in your community by phone. Introduce yourself to the telephone attendant and request the names and titles of the individuals who produce the morning, afternoon, and late evening news programs.

Ask the telephone attendant how you could reach the individual or individuals with a “news story.” (For purposes of completing this exercise, it will not be necessary for you to actually contact the television news producer.)

**Summarize your experience here:**

**Exercise 16:** You will detail a physician regarding a product or service related to your pharmacist brand. What three points will you make during your discussion?

1.

2.

3.

**Exercise 17:** You will detail another pharmacist regarding a product or service related to your pharmacist brand. What three points will you make during your discussion?

1.

2.

3.

**Exercise 18:** Identify two consumer-oriented health advocacy organizations in your community (or the community in which you intend to practice) in which you should become involved based on your education, your specialty, and your interests.

1.

2.

**Exercise 19:** List three state and/or national professional organizations of pharmacists and/or health professionals in which you should become involved based on your education, your specialty, and your interests.

1.

2.

3.

**Exercise 20:** Identify two support and/or special health interest groups that you might have interest in establishing and coordinating based on your education, specialty, and personal interests.

1.

2.

**Exercise 21**: Consider one or more potential domain names for your personal website. Google “weebly domain search” (this is NOT a weebly endorsement). Enter potential domain names. Keep trying names until you find one that is available with a dot.com (.com) suffix.

**Exercise 22:** You are likely to have viewed hundreds (thousands?) of websites. Therefore, you should have a good idea of how a homepage might be arranged. Make a list of items to place on your homepage, including headings, photos, and graphics.

**Exercise 23:** List and expound on two ways **not** cited in this *guide* in which you could communicate your pharmacist brand.

1.

2.