

BRAND YOU: The Archetypes

Archetypes are a powerful tool for building a personal brand. The Greek root of the word *archetype* means *first-moulded*. The psychologist Carl Jung believed that we have a universal shared unconscious out of which archetypes emerge as forms or images that everyone recognises. These forms or images have the same meaning for people around the world. We instinctively recognise archetypes in ourselves, other people, objects, situations and organisations, whether or not we are aware that we are doing so.

Below is a brief outline of the archetypes we have identified for the purposes of personal branding. The new edition of *Brand You* provides a full explanation and will be published by Pearson Education / FT Publishing in August 2012. Further information is at www.brandyou.info.

As you read the paragraphs below, you may recognise one or two archetypes in yourself. Others may remind you of people you know. Please note that we do not expect you to fit into a box or *become* any of the archetypes. Instead, you tend to evoke the archetype in your life and work. The verb *to evoke* is derived from the Latin verb *evocare*, meaning *to call forth*. When you evoke an archetype, your behaviour and the way you present yourself will call it forth in the minds of other people and yourself.

The Caregiver

The Caregiver archetype is altruistic – motivated by a desire to help others and protect them from harm. Examples include Mother Teresa, Florence Nightingale and a caring mother or father. Doctors, nurses and social workers often evoke the Caregiver. So do outplacement consultants who help unemployed executives to find a new job. Within a large company, a learning & development director could evoke this archetype.

The Creator

The Creator archetype is often seen in writers, artists, composers, inventors and entrepreneurs. He or she has daydreams and flashes of inspiration which they translate into reality. Examples include Leonardo da Vinci and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. More recent Creators include the American artist Georgia O’Keeffe, Steve Jobs, the co-founder of Apple and James Dyson, the entrepreneur and inventor of the bagless vacuum cleaner.

The Explorer

The Explorer – unsurprisingly – wants to explore. Explorers want to maintain independence. They are naturally curious about everything. There is an underlying feeling of dissatisfaction and restlessness. The exploration can be geographical, as it was for Christopher Columbus, Marco Polo and *Star Trek*. It can also be internal, such as when someone learns more about him- or herself. Francis Crick and James Watson, the molecular biologists, evoked the Explorer when they discovered the structure of DNA.

The Hero

The Hero acts courageously to improve a situation. He or she is attracted to chaos because it provides an opportunity for heroism. Heroes stand up for what they believe in. The police, ambulance drivers and firefighters can evoke the Hero. Some executives do so when they turn a company around and prevent it from going into liquidation. They may even describe potential disasters in detail to those around them. It adds to the thrill of pulling through and making everything right.

The Innocent

The Innocent is about fostering purity and goodness. The Latin and Old French root of the word *innocent* means ‘no harm’. The primary aim is happiness, perhaps even the experience of paradise. Examples from Hollywood include Tom Hanks in the role of Forrest Gump. Disney evokes the Innocent in films such as *Bambi* and *Snow White*. A dietician or someone who helps you stop smoking could also evoke this archetype. Monks, nuns and holy people in many cultures evoke the Innocent.

The Jester

On the surface the Jester usually has a good time, enjoying the moment. However, he or she often has something important to say. Jesters say things that others dare not say, and can be highly influential. Personal assistants sometimes play this role. Jesters also provoke other people, exposing their prejudices. Sacha Baron Cohen did this when he played the role of Borat in the film *Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan*.

The Lover

The Lover wants to find and give love, and experience sensual pleasure. This archetype is concerned with staying close to the people, surroundings and activities you love. There is an archetypal yearning for true love in many Hollywood stars. It is also seen in products such as perfume, chocolate and ice cream. Fashion models, pop stars and writers of popular fiction often evoke the Lover.

The Magician

The role of the Magician is to *transform*. One of the underlying themes is discovering the laws of the universe in order to make things happen. The Magician pays attention to hunches and meaningful coincidences. Harry Potter, the star of the eponymous novels, is one example. A plastic surgeon could evoke the Magician, as could a finance director who specialises in floating companies on the stock market, transforming them from private companies into public ones.

The Ordinary Guy/Girl

Ordinary Guys and Girls are OK as they are. They want to fit in and connect with others. Entertainers such as Bruce Springsteen in the USA and Robbie Williams in the UK both evoke this archetype. In the corporate world it is seen in executives who have *the common touch*. Ordinary Guys and Girls enjoy self-deprecating humour, demonstrating that they do not take themselves too seriously.

The Ruler

The Ruler takes control, creating order out of chaos. Rulers *have* to organise things. Alexander the Great evoked this archetype, as did Margaret Thatcher when she was Britain's Prime Minister. The Ruler wants to create a successful and prosperous family, company or other organisation, but fears being overthrown. Accountants, finance directors and chief financial officers often evoke the Ruler. They help to keep business empires under control.

The Outlaw

The Outlaw is a maverick who rebels and breaks the rules. He or she disrupts the status quo. Outlaw brands include The Rolling Stones, Madonna and Jack Nicholson. Entrepreneurs often evoke the Outlaw. They break with convention in order to start something new. One example is Niklas Zennström, co-founder of Kazaa and Skype.

The Sage

The Sage helps people to understand their world. Plato and Confucius both evoked the Sage. Some universities do so too. They project the message that by studying there you will gain a deeper understanding. One example of the Sage is Edward de Bono, the author of 62 books including *Lateral Thinking*. The Sage archetype is also known as the Wise Man/Woman.

The new edition of *Brand You* explains in detail how the archetypes work and how you can use them to build a powerful personal brand. You can order your copy from <http://www.amazon.co.uk>.