

Creating Character

(Answering Who am I?)



We need to understand the company character before we make choices about where or how to brand it.

Character comes first because it drives all of the choices made by the organization.



When you know who you are,
it becomes far easier to make
decisions — about everything.

That's true for people and
for brands.

Defining Character

Who should be part of the process?



Who should be part of the process?

Ideally everyone in the company.

Sometimes that's not possible.

So you would survey small cross-sections & groups of individuals in the company.



For our class...

We won't be interviewing the company.

Instead we will split into our company groups and use our communal research, first hand experience and knowledge of the company to generate it's character.

Who should be part of the process?

Ideally everyone in the company.

Sometimes that's not possible.

So you would survey small cross-sections & groups of individuals in the company.

The *rule of three*

It is good to shoot for three traits... three character traits that together capture the evolving nature of the organization or company.

The three traits reflect the heritage, present and aspirations of the organization.

Why only three?

The three traits reflect the heritage, present and aspirations of the organization.

Why only three?

It forces you to make hard choices.

The three traits reflect the heritage, present and aspirations of the organization.



No endless lists that everyone
can agree to but no one uses.



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Three words are memorable and actionable.



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And three traits are enough to express a complex character.



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And three traits are enough to express a complex character.

Get them just right and everyone will see the true nature of the organization in an elegant triad.

Facilitating

Facilitating

Your job is to keep everyone honest.

You're not looking to mindlessly reproduce an existing value statement. The hardest part is to keep everyone focused on the character of the organization — not just on traits that they personally have or admire.

Imagine if the organization had a personality that you could describe to a friend — it does and you can...



How to start



Use a white board.

Provide everyone with colorful 3" x 3" Post-it Notes and bold black markers.

Give everyone sticky dots in two contrasting colors.

Have two contrasting color white board markers.

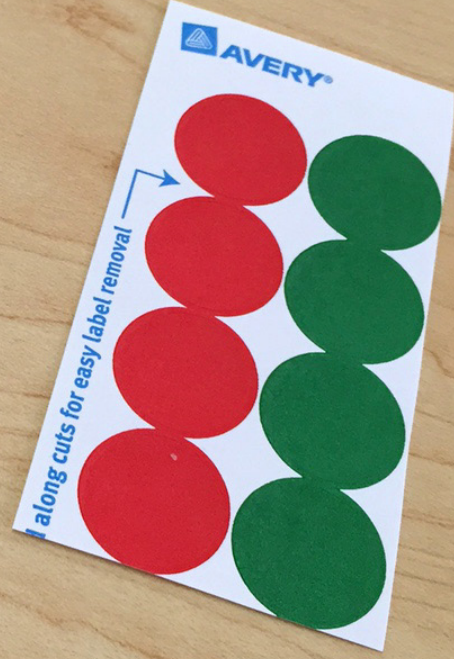
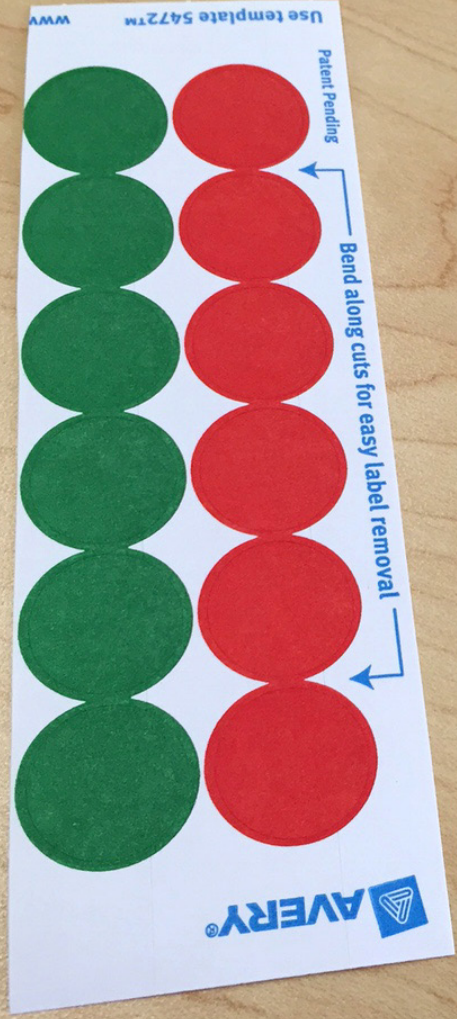
Take photos and type in all notes on the discussion of each group.

The Steps to Defining Brand Character

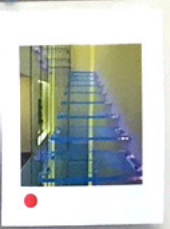


ATTRIBUTES CARDS









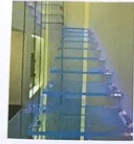
- Pedigree
NOT TRENDY



WHAT WE
ARE NOT
==

WHAT WE
ARE
==





- COLD
- STERILE
- ONE WAY TRAFFIC
- BORING !!
- PASSIVE
- I DON'T WANT TO BE IN T...

WHAT WE ARE NOT



WHAT WE ARE





- impractical
- useless
- lack value
- Excessive
- High Brow
- Style over substance
- COLD
- STERILE
- ONE AUTHORITY
- BORING
- PASSIVE - static
- I DON'T WANT TO BE IN THAT ROOM
- NO ENERGY
- MONOCROMATIC

- CORPORATE
- STOCK
- CONTRADICTORY
- IMMEDIATE
- NOT ABOUT THE DEAL
- BANK
- IMPRACTICAL

WHAT WE ARE NOT

- NOT AUTHENTIC
- LIMITED PUNCHES
- Destructive
- closed Not open
- Kiddie
- TRAPPED
- NO SPACE FOR CREATIVE THINKING
- NOTHING DISRUPTIVE
- FINE ART
- FLAT
- CLONE / LOFT
- ONE FACET
- CORNISH
- DIRTY



WHAT WE ARE

+ organized
+ CRAFT
+ BLUE COLOR

+ CI
+ S
+ '



- Imprecise
- Lack Value
- Excessive
- Hyperbole
- Scale over substance !!
- Flat
- Stagnant
- One art object
- Boring !!
- Passive - I don't want to be in that room
- No energy
- Innocent
- Corporate
- Stale
- Contentless
- Value dominant !!
- Not about the deal
- Bank
- Imprecise
WHAT WE ARE NOT

- Not artistic & overactive
- Limited palette
- Overactive
- Closed not open
- Kiddie
- Trapped
- No space for creative thinking
- Narrowing direction
- Fine art !!
- Flat
- One/loop
- Not a set
- Cornyish
- Dirt
- Underused
- Stale
- Envisio dominant
- One dimensional
- One
- Kinetic achieve by necessity !!

WHAT WE ARE
+ COMBINATION

+ Flow (and control)
Neutral
+ Descriptive
Fishes lamp

+ Site
+ Color
+ Quality
+ Energy
+ Exp

Handwritten notes on a whiteboard and a collage of images illustrating brand character concepts.

WHAT WE ARE NOT

- impractical
- insecurity,
- lacks value
- Excessive
- High Brow
- style over substance //
- COLD
- STERILE /
- ONE AUTHORITY
- BORING //
- PASSIVE - static
- I DON'T WANT TO BE IN THAT ROOM
- NO ENERGY
- MONOCHROMATIC
- CORPORATE
- STOCK
- CONTRIBUTOR
- MAE DOMINATE //
- NOT ABOUT THE DEAL
- Boring
- impractical

Additional notes:

- NOT AUTHENTIC &
- LIMITED PARTS
- Obstructive
- closed not open
- Kiddle
- TRAPPED
- NO SPACE FOR CREATIVE THINKING
- NOTHING DISRUPTIVE
- FINE ART //
- FLAT
- CLONE / LOFT
- ONE FACET
- CORNISH
- DIRTY
- UNDEFINED
- CLICHE /
- ENVIRO DOMINANT

less perfection

Collage images:

- A large conference room with a curved table.
- A modern, sleek coffee machine.
- A red Ferrari sports car.
- A green digital clock showing 11:10.
- Other smaller images of people and architectural details.

The Steps to Defining Brand Character

Brainstorm

Structure the groups so that quieter voices are also heard and that every idea, even the unpopular ones, have a chance to be listed.



WHAT WE ARE

MAXIMIZABLE

+ COLLABORATION

+ ORGANIZED MASS

+ SYMMETRY v ASYMMETRY

+ VARIETY + POP COLOR

+ ENTHUSIASM + FOCAL PT

+ EQUAL SEATS @ THE TABLE

~~*****~~

+ CREATIVE/EXPRESSIVE/COLLABORATIVE

+ FLOW!! (can't control)

+ DISCIPLINE

NATURAL

+ STUDIOUS

+ DISRUPTIVE +

+ NICE COMP.

+ Refined

Peer to peer

Peer to faculty

Faculty to faculty

discipline:

community

individual

environment

+ ORGANIZED
+ CRAFT
+ BLUE COLLAR

+ CLASSIC
+ slow steady

+ Fix It Yourself
+ teach tools

+ Utilitarian

+ About individuals

+ illuminate

+ futuristic

+ SIMPLE

+ ~~amenable~~

+ good place to work

+ evolve

+ EXPERIMENTAL

+ PERSONAL

+ open

+ INTIMATE

+ AUTHENTIC

+ progressive

+ Real

+ Aspirational

individual

peer to peer

ENVIRON

+ FLUID

+ SYMBIOTIC

+ TECHNICAL

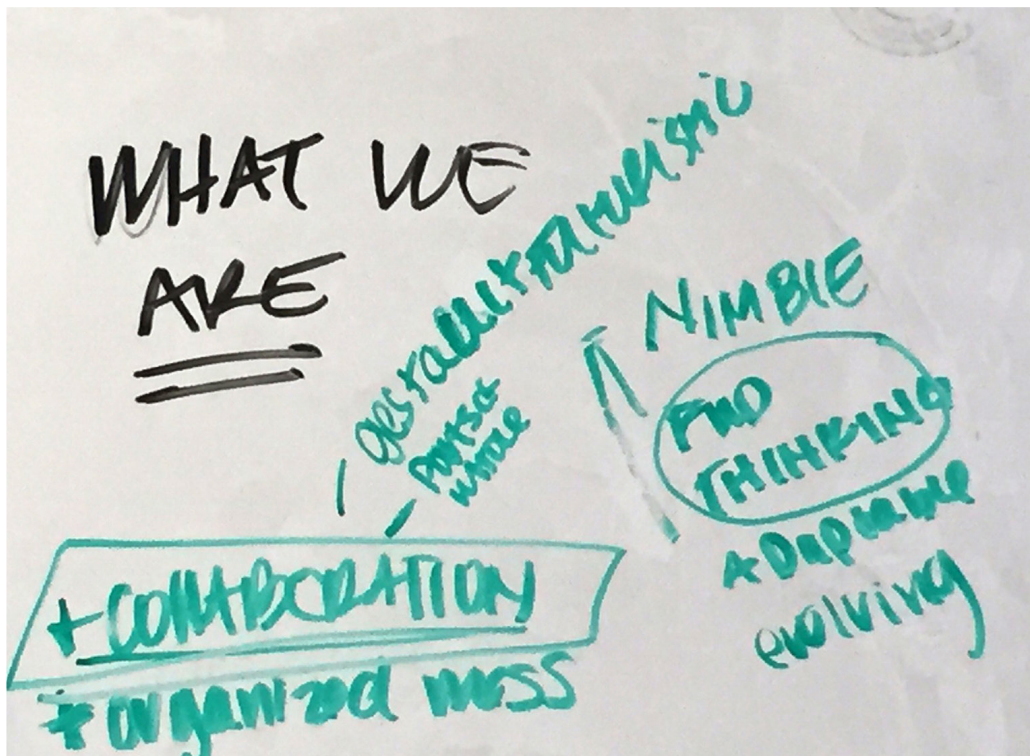
The Steps to Defining Brand Character

Characterize

Step back and the traits on the wall will begin to tell a story.

The groupings may start to cluster into ideas.

Label each group of traits with the word that best characterizes them as a whole. For example, a group of words like, “adaptable,” “flexible,” “nimble,” “flighty,” “fickle” might be labeled “adaptable.”

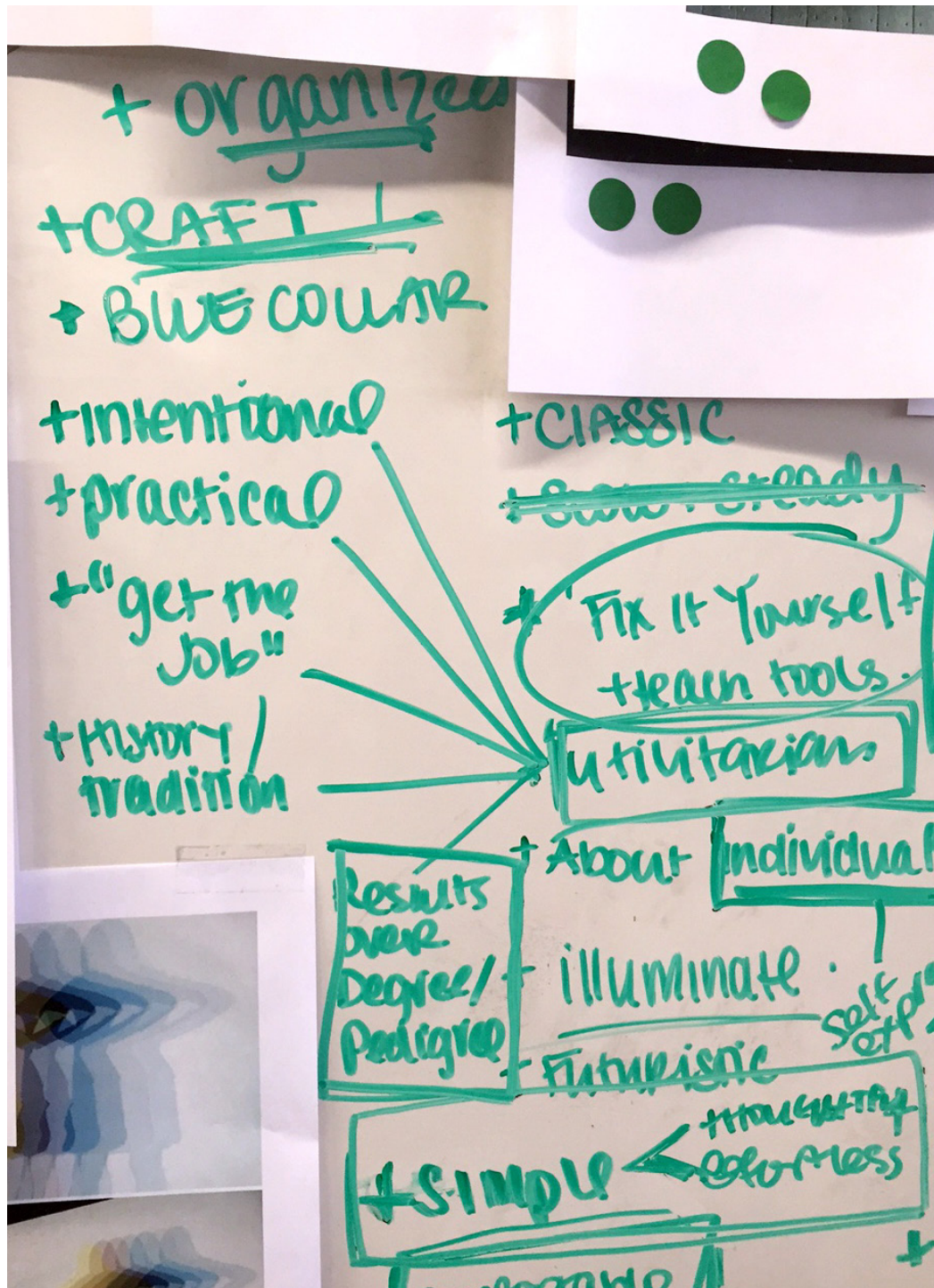


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 - CORNISH
 - DIRTY
 - UNDEFINED
 - CLICHE !
 - ENVRO DOMINANT
- less protection

WHAT WE ARE NOT



- WHAT WE ARE
- ORGANICALLY FORMING
 - NIMBLE
 - PRO THINKING
 - ADAPTIVE
 - COLLABORATION
 - ORGANIZED MESS
 - Symmetry v Asymmetry
 - Variety
 - ENTHUSIASM
 - EQUAL SEATS @ THE TABLE
 - CREATIVE/expressive/collaborative
 - Flow !! (time+control)
 - discipline
 - studios
 - personal
 - open
 - intimate
 - Authentic
 - progressive
 - Real
 - Aspirational
 - Natural
 - Individual
 - Referencing ENVRO
 - Disruptive
 - NICE COMP.
 - Refined
 - Peer to peer
 - Peer to faculty
 - Faculty to Faculty
 - disciplines
 - Community
 - Individual
 - ENVRO
 - Fluid
 - Symbiotic
 - Evolve
 - Experimental
 - Feely



For character traits:

Use clear and singular traits.

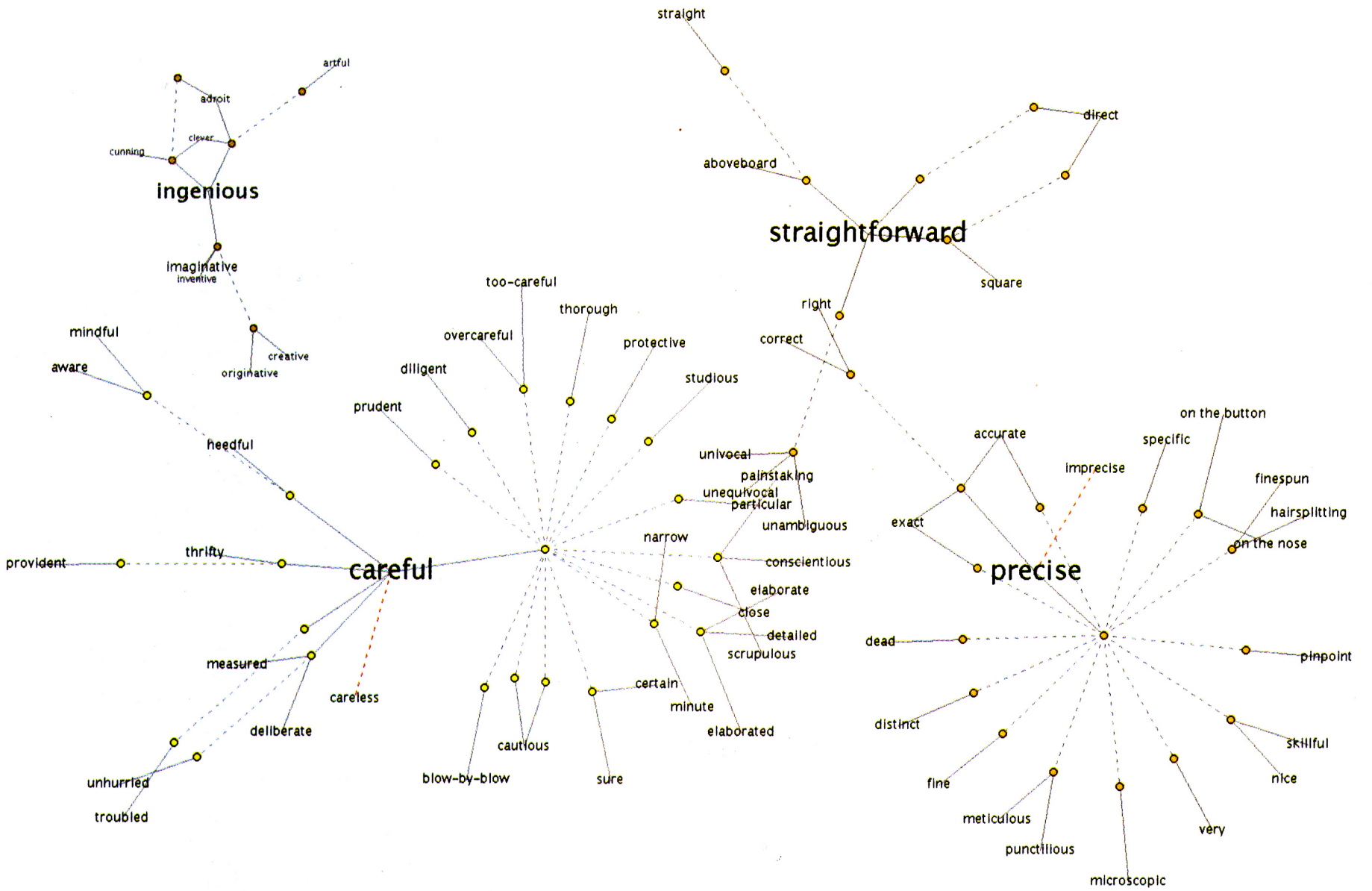
Words like "integrity" represent bundles of traits like, "honest," "steadfast," "dependable," "selfless," etc. Create Post-Its for each of the bundled traits: e.g. "integrity" (with the root traits which make up that bundled trait in paranthesis)



The Steps to Defining Brand Character

Organize

It is likely that five or so groupings will emerge from dozens, even hundreds of traits. If there are too many, enlist the best wordsmiths from the teams to pack them more tightly.



The Steps to Defining Brand Character

Craft

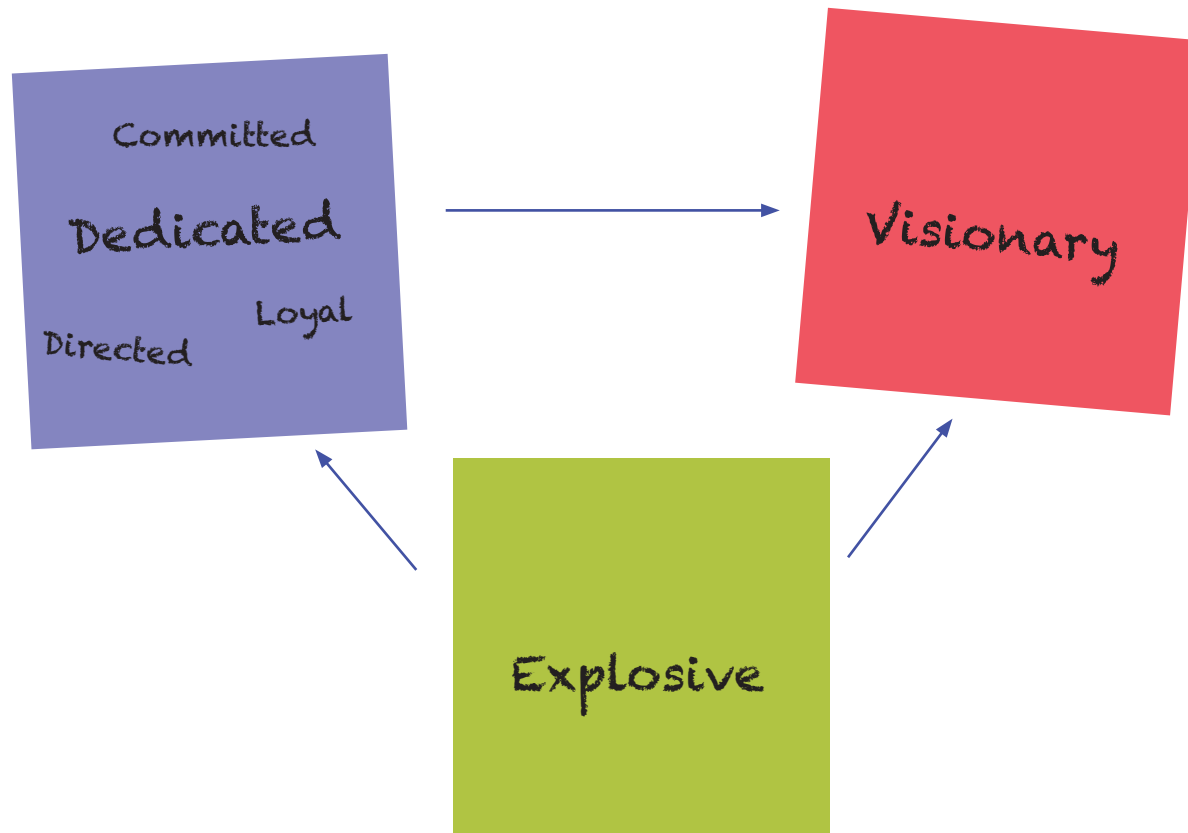
In this step, the group will decide on the three traits that capture the character traits of the organization.

The Steps to Defining Brand Character

Craft

Find a new space and select three traits. Put them close together in a triangle. Consider their interaction. They should not duplicate or overlap in meaning. They should affect each other. For example, “ambitious” could be seen as selfish, but add “supportive” and you begin to see it as “ambitious for others.”

This group felt they had gotten the first two traits right but were still finding the right word for the third trait.



The Explosive nature of the company is what fueled its innovative spirit. Their Visionary spirit helped to brainstorm many varied solutions quickly = Explosive.

The Steps to Defining Brand Character

Craft

Try different combinations of key traits. You may tweak the words themselves. A synonym with a slightly different emphasis might be what is needed.

The Steps to Defining
Brand Character



Craft

*Try out: <http://www.visualthesaurus.com>
to experiment with synonyms.*

Try different combinations of key traits. You may tweak the words themselves. A synonym with a slightly different emphasis might be what is needed.

Some hints to find the right

three traits: There is almost always a trait that spurs action or provides energy. The nature of that energy depends on the organization. For example, the traits “bold” or “fearful” both lead to action.

Some hints to find the right

three traits: A balanced character profile should make sense from all points of view. Consider whether the traits lean too much toward what is relevant inside the organization or outside of the organization.

Some hints to find the right

three traits: The final traits are meant to guide and inspire action. Choose strong words. If the words are watered-down, the brand will be watered-down.

Be genuine.

The Steps to Defining Brand Character

● Validate

The best test of character traits is to imagine putting them to use.

Discuss what the organization would do and say if it fully embraced the three traits you have chosen. What would the organization look like, sound like? How would it affect the development of products and services, recruitment and career paths?



a life
Outdoors
← ISA →
LIFE WELL LIVED™





outfit

COMMUNITY





outfit



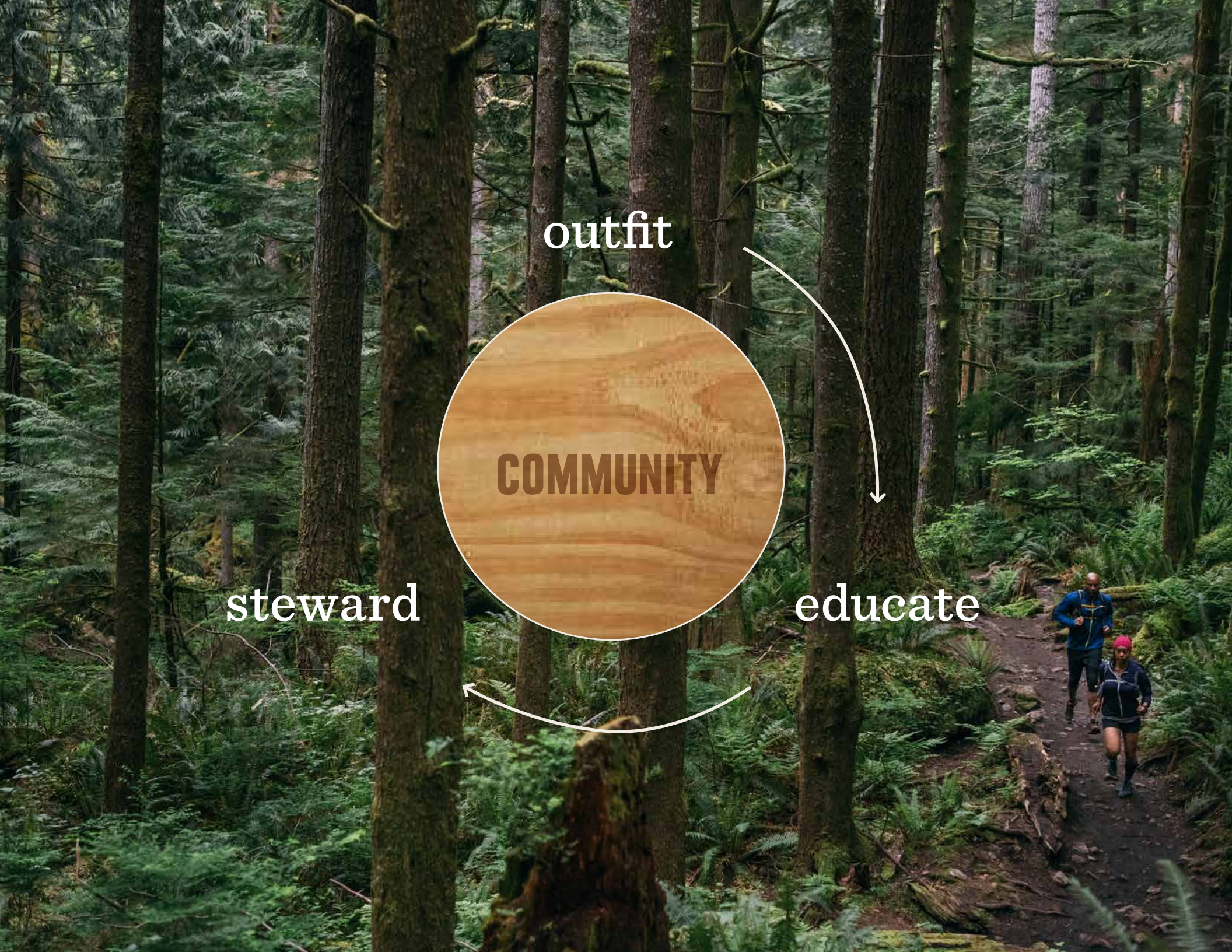
educate





59

Blue object

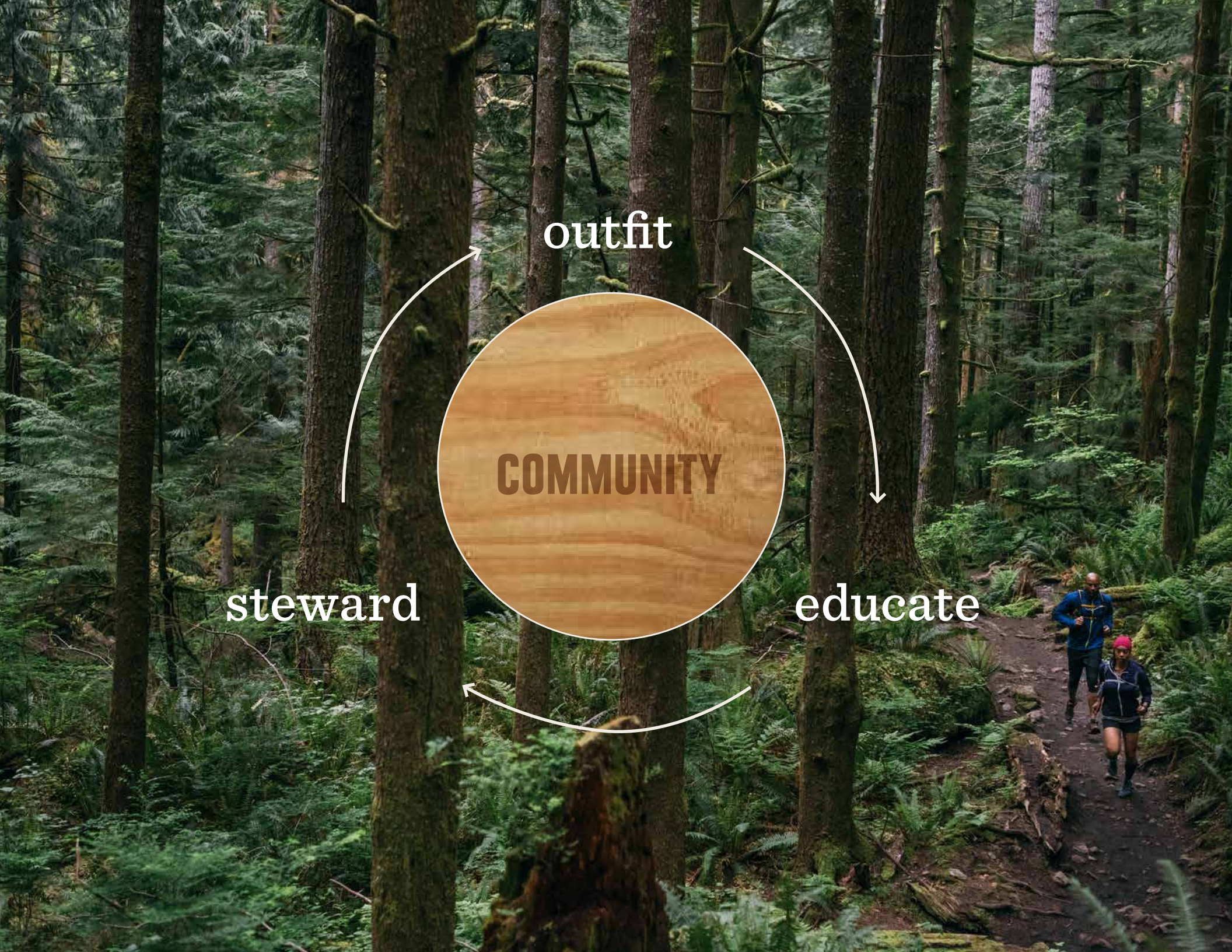


outfit



steward

educate



outfit

COMMUNITY

steward

educate

The Steps to Defining
Brand Character

● Validate

What would the organization *stop* doing? What would the organization *start* doing? What would the organization *do more* of?

The Steps to Defining Brand Character

● Finalize: Creating Purpose/Mission Statement (What Do I Do?)

Once you've chosen your three essential character traits, draft a short statement that captures the words and ideas.

The core character statement need not be long. But include as much detail as necessary for others to understand the choices you've made.

The Steps to Defining
Brand Character



Finalize:

Creating

Purpose/Mission

Statement (What Do I Do?)

*This character statement is
called your brand purpose.*

For example:

We are *driven, ingenious, and grounded* — relentlessly advancing the industry and our customer's businesses in surprising but practical ways.

University of California Berkeley:
Curious, Socially Conscious, and Influential.
Berkeley is passion and conviction: the passion to
teach, learn & explore coupled with the conviction
to go forth and give back, to lead and inspire.

Ford:

Dependable, Contemporary, Driving, Quality.

Ford is known for consistently delivering products with strong rational appeal — well engineered, great to drive, and affordable.

Ford's products deliver “style with substance.”

Dove:

Real, Uncomplicated, Optimistic, Timeless.

Dove will constantly elevate and therefore redefine the standard of care in every category it enters.

Dove seeks real meaning: Real relevance. Dove won't make a product unless Dove understands the deeper meaning and relevance in a consumer's life.

Walmart:

We are straightforward, optimistic, and caring. Walmart is the friendly neighborhood store customers have come to trust and depend on. Our goal is saving people money so they can live better.

Facebook:

At Facebook we build tools that help people to connect with one another and tools that make sharing what they want — ideas, stories, and photos — much easier. By doing this, we are extending people's capacity to build and maintain relationships.

Simplify.
Simplify.
Simplify!

Positioning Opportunities

To be a best of breed tool provider and still have plenty of room for growth

BRAND PROMISE:

THESE PRODUCTS WORK AS SMART AS I DO.

Springsoft should be positioned as the master brand.

SpringSoft is the smart choice for smart engineers

Positioning Opportunities
To be the engineer's company

Brand Vision
We accelerate engineers for business success.

Brand Differentiation
Our specialized automation tools save engineers time at key pain points in chip design and verification

Brand Personality:

SMART

EFFICIENT

EXPERT

PARTNERS

Your partner.

Positioning Opportunities to Simplify brand architecture

Laker is less recognized but building its awareness.

Presentation information taken directly from the following sources:

Building Better Brands by Scott Lerman