

**HELP PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY TO BUILD MEANINGFUL
PERSONALIZED HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:
THE APPLICATION OF THE BRAND LEADERSHIP CIRCLE TOOL TO
OPTIMIZE AND INNOVATE ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN AS PART OF A
SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS MODEL**

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Abstract: Unlike the consumer industry, biopharma, medical technology, and wellness companies have struggled to build meaningful, personalized patient and healthcare professional (HCP) experiences. The increase in drug launches and growing competition across therapy areas has made it challenging for brands and organizations to stand out from the crowd, whether for new molecules vs. legacy brands in an established treatment area and their generic counter-parts or for new molecules in a rare disease where trust is not yet earned. The customers' needs and preferences are changing at lightning speed. The hierarchy of engagement has transformed, disrupting the dynamic between patients and healthcare professionals. Studies (1, 2) show that drug marketers too often turn various aspects of their product profile into signals – and may inadvertently “reinforce the habitual behavior the marketer is trying to change”. We encourage pharmaceutical companies to use a “data-driven approach to uncover new opportunities for growth” and improvement, and we’re committed to delivering results that make a difference for the patient, HCPs and for the system (value-based healthcare approach). Applying the Brand Leadership Circle, a new strategic tool, will help understand the patients’ journey and other stakeholders’ needs to implement successful approaches in marketing, communications and services using systematic research methods and techniques.

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Keywords: Pharmaceutical Industry, Brand Leadership Circle, Brand Communications, Pharma Marketing, patient journey, Healthcare Professional needs, Patient needs, Strategic Tool, Stakeholders, value-based healthcare

Introduction

It is an increasingly difficult task for pharma marketers to support healthcare professionals (HCPs) in their clinical practice to find the right product for individual patient profiles. This behavior is increasingly reinforced by “corporate medicine,” which encourages healthcare professionals to maximize profits by limiting patient interaction and treatment options. The Brand Leadership Circle study shows that drug marketers too often turn various aspects of their data-driven approach to uncover new opportunities for growth and improvement, and to deliver results that make a real difference for patients and consequently the healthcare ecosystem.

While patient profiles can be a powerful tool to represent certain types of patients, Pharmaceutical Industry must follow compliance and medical guidelines. Patient characteristics must be consistent with those of the patients for whom the treatment or therapy is approved; specifically, products studied in clinical trials and regulatory authorities-approved for labeling. Medical societies are increasingly limited in providing guidance or features to patient profiles. As with our customer-centric positioning approach, the Brand Leadership Circle framework tests patient profiles. The focus is to understand how healthcare professionals perceive the brand story and the boundaries of what is possible in the Pharmaceutical industry, and to always be on the lookout for new and innovative ways to ensure successful communication. This framework’s systematic and disciplined approach combines primary market research and data analytics to ensure that the brand team communication and business objectives are aligned with ecosystem. The emphasis on the patient journey not only highlights the unique experiences and challenges faced by each patient but also underscores the importance of



personalized care and tailored interventions.

The primary aim of this review is to provide a comprehensive overview of the Brand Leadership Circle framework, exploring its applicability and implications in the context of healthcare communication and combine perspectives and insights from different disciplines. Specifically, we will focus on identifying the ideal patient profiles for a given product, and strategies to positively influence the prescribing behavior of HCPs, aiming to improve access to treatments, optimize clinical outcomes, and promote patient-centered clinical practice.

Communication through platforms

Brand strategy and insight selling (a concept extensively covered by Matthew Dixon, in “The Challenger Sale”, 2019 and also author of “The Challenger Customer”, 2015) can be translated in a constant need to build opportunities to advance in the business by meeting customer needs. These needs are dependent on and identified by the customer journey, supported by omnichannel strategies. Having an in-depth view of this process, as well as the unmet needs, is fundamental to the brand’s success. However, this requires a deep understanding and adaptation of the objectives and strategies of both companies and its brands... in addition to the initiatives to be taken in this process of constant improvement and learning (closed-loop). Throughout this process, the main objective is to have customers aligned with the brand’s value, likewise, the brand values aligned with the customer needs. Whoever ensures this balance with this type of platform, will certainly build a meaningful, personalized experience for the customer. Macnamara and Zerfass (2012, p. 17) argued that in a digital environment, strategic communications contrast with traditional, non-digital approaches. The study further states that online social media is characterized by increased public participation and openness to share experiences, requiring governance and organizational planning that align with the networked characteristics of stakeholders. According to Bachmann & Ingenhoff (2016), the strategic treatment of corporate



communication by a company is mainly influenced by the community. In strategic communications, differences are demonstrated depending on a company's internal and external stakeholders (Cornelissen, 2014). The latter categorization is based on the intention of a corporate communication strategy and what the communication provokes in the recipients.

The emergence of social media has had a critical impact on how businesses communicate with their internal and external stakeholders (Reyes-Menendez et al., 2020). Microblogging tools like Twitter (now called "X") and Instagram, social networks like Facebook, and sharing tools like YouTube all contribute to turning the internet into a platform partially dependent on user participation. In addition, these platforms support organizations and stakeholders in engaging in symmetrical communication, that helps build strong relationships (Darshika et al., 2021).

An initial strategy includes several different components, which are considered as (a) preparatory, (b) implementation and (c) evaluation. The preparatory components of a digital strategy involve researching and planning a digital campaign or an overall communication program for an organization. The components for implementing a digital communication campaign are the tactical elements available to stakeholders. The execution components of a digital strategy include the use of real-time data to inform decisions about the digital distribution of messages, and the evaluative components of a digital strategy include the use of analytics and metrics in a reflexive way to inform future campaigns or change ongoing communication programs (Overland, 2016).

Nevertheless, digital transformation and the use of technology are ingrained in today's lifestyles (Orekhov, 2020). This unexpected transition into the virtual world, which differs significantly from classic communication models, has brought with it new challenges and opportunities for companies (Navaridas-Nalda et al., 2020). New digital business models and user-generated content allow consumers to interact with others freely and openly in digital environments. In this context, globalization and changes in the technological and social sectors have altered conventional thinking about brands digitally (Saura et al., 2023). Branding is defined as a methodological discipline that deals with the process of



building, creating and managing the brand, with the main objective of communicating the brand's value to customers through digital communication channels that companies use to explain and promote their brand and value proposition (Avalos, 2013). According to Foroudi (2019), branding consists of creating value through different media, resulting in customer experiences that cause repeat purchases.

The application of the Brand Leadership Circle tool

The Brand Leadership Circle is a platform that involves institutions, universities, schools and companies with a high purchasing power, exerting a significant economic influence on the producers. Similarly, the Brand Leadership Circle primarily focuses on preparing leaders for the needs and challenges of this century, such as balancing short- and long-term profitability in a sustainable manner.

The Brand Leadership Circle profile is an important evolution between the more comprehensive 360-degree patient profiles and the different journeys, and the first to interconnect a set of skills that have been researched, underlying mental habits, and motivating factors. It also demonstrates the relationship between patterns of action and the assumptions that motivate behaviors for change.

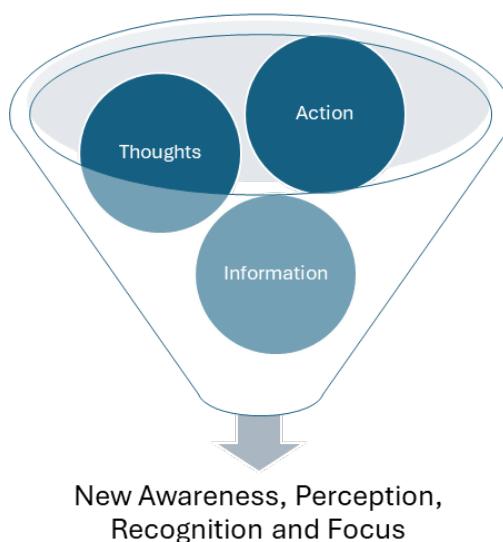


Figure 1 - Brand Leadership Circle



The Leadership Circle Profile (LCP) is a single tool that measures two main domains of leadership: creative skills and reactive tendencies. The first are the researched competencies that measure how the professional achieves the results, elevates the best, leads with vision, improves their own development, acts with integrity and courage and improves the organization's systems. The second relate to leadership styles that privilege care over results-giving, self-preservation over productive involvement, and aggression over alignment-building. Leadership circles are a type of professional learning community that is focused on building specific skill sets while also supporting other leaders facing the same challenges. A group of small to medium-sized leaders meets monthly to discuss a specific topic. Each circle has a different focus and is moderated by one or more participants (Chang & Ko, 2014).



The outer circle displays the results of each dimension measured by the LCP, while the inner circle dimension summarizes these dimensions in 8 summarized scores. Similarly, the dimensions that are on opposite sides represent the opposite behavior patterns that are inversely correlated. The top half of the circle indicates the Creative Competencies that contribute to a leader's effectiveness, and measure



the key behaviors and assumptions of leadership that lead to the high level of satisfaction and leadership of great achievements.

According to Andersen (2018), the LCP has proven to be reliable and correlates as predicted by the theoretical basis of the profile. His study also demonstrated that all the data support the main theoretical foundations of the LCP, with the inner part consisting of dimensions of the Inner Circle include the expected directions.

The 4C Leadership Capability model suggests that there are four main capabilities that are important for an effective leader: connection, trust, knowledge, and persuasion. In this context, leaders have a circle of connections and a brand image between those connections, pose issues to solve, and use various styles to influence their connections (Baek & King, 2011).

The notion of brand leadership was also introduced by Aaker (1996) and was later defined as the process of supporting the brand as well as the brand's ability to achieve excellence continuously (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000). The authors proposed a strategic brand management system employing a brand leadership model to explain market dynamics. They also discussed the main methods for developing and maintaining a competitive position of a given brand in a highly competitive market environment.

Although there are few studies on this topic, some studies have used a one-dimensional approach and the use of numerous items and measures to identify brand leadership (Aaker, 1996; Cheng et al, 2007; Miller and Mills, 2011), ignoring the conceptual richness of brand leadership. As a result, there was no common agreement on the conceptual framework.

In the realm of brand management, the concept of brand leadership, according to Aaker & Joachimsthaler (1999), uses organizational structures, processes, and cultures to distribute brand-building resources globally, to create synergies, and to develop a global brand strategy that can coordinate and leverage the country's brand strategies.

More recently, Miller & Mills (2011) defined brand leadership as a consumer evaluation factor



in which the brand is successful, visionary and up to date with the latest trends, and in this case, the concept of brand leadership helps to understand market dynamics and develops strategic perspectives on the business environment and competitive perceptions in a given industry segment. In this sense, it can be said that the concept of brand leadership reflects the competitive advantage of a company over other brands and is dependent on the specific actions of the company.

In this context, researchers have defined brand leadership as consumers' perception of a brand's distinctive ability to continuously achieve excellence through the association of sufficient trends and brand positioning in the industry segment (Chang & Ko, 2014). Several traditional theories of leadership, such as situational, contingent and charismatic trait theory, provide a comprehensive conceptual basis for understanding brand leadership, namely, trait theory assumed that leaders have the right to combine certain characteristics if consumers have those same characteristics (Yukl, 2006). In this context, the leading position of the brand also requires a brand to have the right combinations of positioning and effectiveness of brand communication. Finally, contingency theory assumes that the leader's action depends on situational factors.

Brand Leadership Circle in Healthcare

Branding is a cost-effective way to reproduce yourself as an entrepreneur as well as a leader, an efficient and simpler method of leading. The biggest problem with leadership today is that there is a great divide between corporate intentions and corporate branding, personalities of individual leaders and personal brands. Thus, to bridge the management communication gap between the business strategies initiated by the managers, people and processes in the organization, the brand can be used as a highly efficient tool

Brand strategy is how, what, where, when, and to whom you plan to communicate to deliver brand messages. Thus, to build a brand story, companies must develop a brand-specific strategy,



including its positioning, personality, values, appearance, and perceived qualities that are based on product specificities such as reliability (Budac & Bultador, 2013). In this context, value is recognized as one of the most vital arts of branding, and it has three types of values: functional, expressive, and central.

In today's competitive environment, a good brand that represents the identity, credibility and rememberability of all functions of the company's interaction with its customers plays an important role. In this context, branding is currently one of the main approaches in healthcare industry organizations (Hosseini et al., 2013). The transparency of the organization's brand leads to a specific type of change in the behavior of its employees. And, if a particular organization is willing to make a name for itself, branding provides a transparent definition, leading to a better understanding of the organization's identity and goals, facilitates recognition, and makes the organization better known

In the medical field, patients' perception of their treating physician's knowledge and experience increases their confidence, and this confidence allows for greater satisfaction and a favorable image in their mind (Dalaki et al., 2019). Most pharmaceutical organizations consider targeted branding as a competitive strategy and aligns with their specific purpose or social issue (Mirzaei et al., 2021). In this context, a pharmaceutical organization can increase its market share and ensure greater profitability by creating personal identity through brand image (Zhan & Meng, 2015).

Because the branding of Pharmaceutical Industry services is different, especially in healthcare centers and hospitals, as well as due to the importance of brand management and related value extraction, Pharmaceutical Industry should be directed towards branding initiatives based on Gao perseverance (Elrod & Fortenberry, 2018).

Studies have shown that product damage to a particular brand reduces consumer valuation of competing brands in the same industry, referred to as negative effects (Zhang et al., 2021), and in this case, medical group branding can be an effective way to create a competitive advantage and provide opportunities to attract more patients.



However, because they are unfamiliar with the science of marketing and do not address the related topics, they do not have the power to become a brand (Gao & Lan, 2020). A strong brand can help an organization achieve its goals, which often include lower costs, higher patient satisfaction, and higher return on investment and profitability (Kalinska-Kula & Staniec, 2021).

The study by Bastug et al. (2020) demonstrated that for branding, geographic location plays a significant role in brand image. Similarly, the study by Odon et al. (2021) also introduced four dimensions of the health brand, and included the brand elements, tangible elements, quality of medical personnel, and critical services effective in brand promotion. Poor branding can lead to a mismatch between the patient who expects it and what reality presents (Yadav et al., 2020).

Regarding the “purpose of the brand”, the author Sinek (2009) created the golden circle structure, which consists of three circles with three distinct terms: “what, how and why”, with the outermost circle being “what” one of the easiest to identify and refers to what the brand does or sells specifically in the sector. the “how” refers to the following circle that describes the brand’s strategies that differentiate it in the market and includes the purpose and reasons for its existence. According to Mainwaring, et al. (2020), this communication strategy allows consumers to be inspired not by what brands do, but by the purpose and reason that drives them to do so.

In this context, the various healthcare companies that are purpose-driven reveal the power of this purpose in the minds of patients, resulting in more loyal patients who are more willing to pay higher prices for services (Narayanan & Das, 2021). Thus, brands feel the need to explain the reasons that motivate their actions and the commitment they have to society, with the aim of improving the quality of services (Gros, 2019).

Methodology

The current study aims to, access, analyze and synthetize the Brand Circle Leadership



framework. During deep interview process with Pharmaceutical companies, we have found that teams have often dedicated time to collecting data and implementing technology to facilitate omnichannel experiences. However, they struggle to develop the processes and internal structures needed to optimize and innovate across the value chain as part of a successful strategy.

Understanding the patient journey is crucial in enhancing customer experience and promoting value-based healthcare. By mapping out the various touchpoints and interactions a patient has with the healthcare system, providers can identify areas for improvement and implement strategies to streamline the process, reduce wait times, and enhance communication. A well-designed patient journey not only leads to higher patient satisfaction and loyalty but also contributes to better health outcomes and cost-effective care delivery. By focusing on the patient experience throughout their healthcare journey, providers can create a more patient-centered approach that ultimately leads to improved quality of care and overall value in healthcare delivery.

Step 1: Decision Architecture and Ecosystem Chart Review

The first step in developing effective lasting relations is to create a comprehensive analysis of current HCP behaviors, typically conducted by market research and data analysis teams. Taking this first step creates an opportunity to significantly advance the brand team's understanding of how HCPs think about therapeutic approaches through the market research project. To support its strategic goal of becoming more Patient-centric, the client needed to better understand the information channel preferences of HCPS and Payer customers.

Communications shouldn't just get your message out there. To make a lasting difference, communications need to bring a change in beliefs and behaviors. Our passion for stories that change behaviors is what sets us apart.

In order to change these long-held beliefs, we need to understand the current and desired



behaviors, potential barriers and facilitating factors to determine the steps that will bring about desirable change – something we identify through the Brand Circle approach.

Changing beliefs isn't easy, but employing a theory-based perspective that's informed by behavioral science increases your chances of success – and that's what we're passionate about.

Step 2: Strategy testing on an interactive digital platform

Taking this first step creates an opportunity to significantly advance the brand team's understanding of how stakeholders think about therapeutic approaches through the market research project. In addition to their own data, market research groups commission research market studies or rely on expert panels to understand these decision-making factors and dynamics in more detail. A patient mapping study is also an effective way to learn more about actual treatment decision-making behavior. Patient profiles created for testing are typically given a name and a picture to convey a sense of authenticity, personalization and empathy. These include the patient's medical history, laboratory and/or imaging results, non-medical information about their personal life, and even their hobbies or other preferences. Healthcare professionals may also consider nonclinical characteristics such as the patient's family situation, caregiver support, personal preferences, lifestyle, and insurance coverage when deciding on treatment. Co-morbidities and co-medications also affect how the HCP considers a patient's eligibility for a particular medication. For example, when considering whether a patient is likely to adhere to an oral medication, an HCP may be more willing to prescribe it if he or she realizes that the patient regularly takes other oral medications for another condition and that the other condition is good - checked from there, the team creates a series of prototype patient profiles to test initial market research and validate critical decision criteria. We recommend that teams include a variety of potential patient types, from more obvious cases where the HCP may use their brand, to contact cases where the HCP may not use the brand but still want to. extent of labeling or clinical trials. This allows customer



facing to select the profiles most relevant to the HCP's performance and tailor the conversation to the treatment the HCP approves, in line with the strategy.

Step 3: Applying Brand Leadership Circle Framework to “Crack the Case”

This framework is often iterative, especially as the team learns which features are important to the strategic decision.

The team must also consider how these profiles will ultimately be used to drive targeted HCPs in a multi-channel campaign. While sales representatives have historically presented patient profiles in personal selling, more and more advertising are shifting to impersonal and digital advertising. It emphasizes that the suggestions and tips presented in the patient case must be realistic and unmistakably clear.

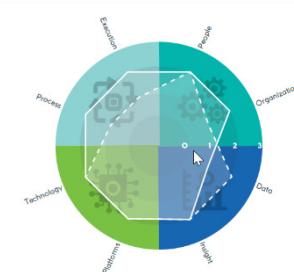


Fig 3. Representing a possible outcome from the framework analysis

Conclusion

The main goal of the Brand Leadership Circle framework is to support the Pharmaceutical industry, regardless of the size, in understanding their stakeholders and implement successful strategic approaches through systematic research methods and techniques. To help ensure that the cues embedded in the profiles are addressed strategically and purposefully. Our research shows that every company



has a unique value chain with its particular strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. That is why it is critical to take a highly customized approach to every project, using this framework to uncover new opportunities for optimization and growth.

Overall, the Brand Leadership Circle provides the pharmaceutical business model with a structured framework for assessing the strength of their brand portfolio across different patient profiles, identifying areas for improvement, and formulating strategy enhancements to maintain a competitive advantage in an evolving market.

In the context of patient-centered care and value-based healthcare, it is imperative to explore the intricate nuances of the individual's journey through the healthcare system. The emphasis on the patient journey not only highlights the unique experiences and challenges faced by each patient but also underscores the importance of personalized care and tailored interventions. Value-based healthcare, with its focus on maximizing the outcomes that matter most to patients while minimizing costs, further accentuates the significance of understanding and optimizing the patient journey. By aligning healthcare delivery with patient preferences and outcomes, value-based care aims to enhance the overall quality and efficiency of healthcare services. Therefore, in the realm of value-based healthcare, a comprehensive understanding of the patient journey serves as a cornerstone for improving patient outcomes, enhancing patient satisfaction, and ultimately driving value in healthcare delivery. By acknowledging the individuality of each patient's journey and tailoring care to meet their specific needs, healthcare providers can truly deliver patient-centered care that is both effective and efficient.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

The present study offers a number of contributions to both theory and practice. This study suggests several meaningful implications for managers that can help improve their strategic decisions. Managers, therefore, can incorporate the Brand Leadership Circle model with other methods such as



SWOT, the PESTEL framework and the five forces model, by which more accurate and beneficial results can be obtained. Besides, the results obtained from different contexts suggests that Brand Leadership Circle is an important source of information. Hence, businesses may regularly Brand Leadership Circle analysis, providing a continuous flow of information or strategic planning.

Limitations and Future Research

Even though this review provided an integrative, comprehensive, and synthesized view of the Brand Leadership Circle model, it has its limitations. As the aim of this study was to provide an overview of the framework knowledge base and combine insights and perspectives from different fields, an integrative review approach was considered appropriate and was accordingly adopted. Future studies may employ other approaches to assessing the Brand Leadership Circle, for instance, with systematic and semi-systematic review approaches. Also, the concern of this study was the use of Brand Leadership Circle in various major fields of healthcare Industry. However, other contexts are no less important; therefore, future research might choose to investigate the use of Brand Leadership Circle models in other contexts and industries. Finally, future research might also examine the inclusion of other variables and techniques with the Brand Leadership Circle model.

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