

# Personal brand of university teachers in the Arctic regions in the context of digitalization of education

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**Abstract.** The objective of this article is to study the possibilities of creating a personal brand of a higher education teacher, its peculiarities and values in the conditions of the region. A description of the national character, mentality of the Sakha people is given for a better understanding the peculiarities of the university teacher's brand creating in the region. The results of a sociological survey in three institutions of the republic have shown that today the understanding of the importance of developing a personal brand in the higher schools of the republic is superficial. The factors that contribute to the creation of a personal brand in the scientific and educational environment have been investigated. Recommendations for the step-by-step forming a personal brand are offered.

## 1. A problem statement

Today's innovative economics of education sets the task for teachers to be competent and competitive experts who are able to promote their knowledge in the information area. Accordingly, new requirements for a teacher have appeared: to pay attention to increasing their success and competitiveness. If, before the transition to market relations, the academic scientific environment had passively been waiting for the state to pay attention to its vocational findings, today in the educational services market the teacher should become an active subject, able to best manage his vocational capital and find the most profitable areas of its application - both in his educational institution, and in other ones as well.

The main competitive advantage for a university teacher is his personal brand, which was first mentioned in 1937 by Napoleon Hill, who came to the conclusion that most of the successful people he interviewed carefully monitored and created their reputation using the same rules as companies in developing brands [1]. The idea was taken up by modern researchers studying the phenomenon of success [2-5]. The topic of a personal brand was mainly of interest to public people - the commercial sector, where

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career growth directly depended on the ability to position oneself and sell, the so-called self-marketing [6].

Why is there a need to address the positioning of a personal brand in the teaching environment? The history of the development of teaching professions, unfortunately, is such that it is not in demand. A situation has developed that this profession is chosen by school graduates on a leftover principle as not prestigious, and accordingly, we get graduates who do not like their profession. The average age in the teaching environment, let's face it, is not young, being hardly adapted to changes and innovations.

We believe that teachers can radically change the current situation, increase the prestige of their vocational activities, give a new impetus, transmitting attractiveness and uniqueness of their profession to society, promoting their knowledge and experience. The teacher's personal brand will contribute to this.

### **1.1 The objective of the work**

The objective of this work is to study the possibilities of creating a personal brand of a higher education teacher, its peculiarities and values in the conditions of the region. Within the work, studying the factors contributing to the creating higher education teacher's personal brand has been considered to be necessary to study. And on the basis of the study we propose a functional model of a personal brand of a teacher.

The theoretical basis of the study was the work by foreign experts such as D. Aaker, T. Gad, G. Dowling, J. Trout, P. Doyle, B. Dignen, I. Rein, F. Kotler, M. Stoller, T. Peters, D. McNely, D. Clark. Among the Russians who are researching this phenomenon in various fields, one can highlight the works by E.S. Akopov, I. Alkiperov, A.K. Samokhina, E.S. Nechaeva, M. Ochkovskaya, A. Ryabykh, N. Zebra, V.A. Turkina, M. u. Samokhin, V. Kirillova and others.

If we turn to the content of the concept of "personal brand" from the standpoint of foreign researchers, the founder of the concept of "personal brand" noted that this is the idea of other people about a particular person (ideas and associations that a person evokes in the minds of society). In other words, an image in the minds of other people that generates additional value and creates benefits for the bearer of a personal brand [7]. We agree with the point of view of T. Malone and R. Laubacher, who believe that "the basic unit of the new economy has become not a corporation, but an individual" [8]. The definition and various aspects of personal branding are reflected in the works by modern scholars [9-13]. Personal branding is a phenomenon that occurs most often in the field of marketing, defined as a set of traits that are decisive to achieving success, distinguishing one person from others and used to form values for oneself and environment [14; 15].

## **2 Results of the research**

The status of a teacher is certain to be highly dependent on public opinion. The results of the sociological survey organized by the Public Opinion Fund with a gap of 11 years are indicative. If in 2004 Russians believed that the number of competent teachers had decreased, then in the 2015 survey one can observe a partial, by one third, change in the opinions of Russians about the improvement of the situation [16]. In general, the respondents' opinion is that the quality of education is low. For 11 years, a radical change in the opinion of Russians for the better has not worked out. In our opinion the

reason for which is due to the low remuneration system for teachers. Comprehensive information about this can be found in the work by A.I. Parabuchev [17].

Teaching activity in the regions of the country has its own features. In this regard, the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is an indicative region from the standpoint of remoteness, climatic particularities, traditions, which imposes additional, if not complications, then the peculiarities unambiguously. This is primarily due to the mentality of the population itself, living in harsh climatic conditions that dictate their own rules. There are studies confirming the direct relationship of the Sakha people with nature, that is, the ecological worldview of the people [18]. This relationship also determines the characteristic features of the population, such as reticence, closeness. M.S. Nafanailova has studied the social and psychological characteristics of the Sakha self-concept. A number of interesting facts has been revealed: firstly, the following affective components are present in the Sakha self-concept: "closeness, inability or unwillingness to realize and to give out meaningful information about oneself, a tendency to self-blame against the background of a general positive attitude towards oneself" [19].

In order to have an idea on the opinion of the vocational and pedagogical staff of the Yakut higher schools, we have conducted a survey in four higher schools of the republic: the North-Eastern Federal University named after M.K. Ammosov, Arctic State Institute of Culture and Arts, Arctic State Agrotechnological University. The survey have involved 92 teachers, 75% of whom have been female. The average age of the respondents has been from 44 to 51 years. The teaching experience of the most respondents ranges from 9 to 26 years. The survey has been carried out using an electronic questionnaire (Google forms). The following results have been obtained:

66% of the teachers do not consider it to be necessary to develop a personal brand for a university teacher; only 30.5% of the teachers believe that a university teacher should have his own brand. Among the goals of the brand development, the following criteria were noted:

- successful career,
- increasing the authority,
- competitiveness,
- recognition,
- financial well-being.

Many teachers proved not to muse upon brand promotion (63%), not to see an example among colleagues (64%). The main reason that hinders the promoting a personal brand is the lack of confidence that this tool is suitable for them. The respondents have also indicated: "difficult", "no quick return", "long" among the reasons stopping the development of the brand.

25% of those interested in promoting their brand do not have a clear idea of how to do this. There are teachers working on their brand, if they have the opportunity. For most, knowledge on this issue is purely theoretical, so the teachers need being helped by experts in promoting a personal brand.

Within the study, it has been interesting to know whether teachers have their own pages and what functions they perform. 63% of the respondents are using social networks mainly for personal aims. The leader among social networks is Instagram - 81% of users among the teachers; the second place is occupied by Facebook - 35.4%; further, in decreasing order, they give preference to VK, Telegram, Twitter.

The survey showed that the scientific community today rather superficially evaluates the capabilities of a personal brand as an effective tool in vocational activity. Understanding theoretically the opportunities offered by brand promotion, higher school teachers do not associate it with the university environment. On the one hand, such an

attitude is quite natural, the university area has always been distinguished by devotion to traditions; on the other hand, isolation and deliberate refusal to accept the changes taking place in the contemporary society will not contribute to the development of the university system as a whole.

Despite some slow awareness of the fact that education as an element of the digital economy has become an integral part of the service market, Arctic higher schools understand the need of creating competitive advantages, first of all, of the teachers' staff, which the rating of a higher school depends on.

Undoubtedly, the creation of a brand, in particular the brand of a university teacher, is a laborious and complex process. It implies a competitive advantage in educational, scientific activities, in addition, distinguished personal characteristics. The teacher should position his brand as a trademark, along with the brand of an eminent athlete, genius programmer, businessman, this applies to both vocational and personal brands.

A review of the opinions of experts and personal experience show that in order to develop a brand, it is equally necessary to promote vocational knowledge and experience, and personal qualities. Determining high skills in teaching activities, the ability to position them, so-called tone of voice, which implies a visual style of communication with an audience, open broadcasting oneself – without this one cannot create a successful brand.

There are three main characteristics of a personal brand:

- Firstly, competencies: creating a personal brand, a person must prove his qualifications to the target audience and demonstrate skills that can satisfy its needs;
- Secondly, the standards, the way of action demonstrated to the target audience (reliability, independence, flexibility and other characteristics that are attractive to the audience);
- Thirdly, a style designed to create an emotional connection between a personal brand and a target audience [20].

The work on a personal brand should start with setting a goal, and with a SMART goal. At the next, research stage:

- the position is revealed at the start;
- SWOT analysis of channels audit and profiles in social networks is carried out;
- one or more brand identity models are assessed: Brand Platform Model, Brand Wheel Concept, Brand Pyramid Model, Brand Key Model, Brand Identity Prism Model and others [6, 21];
- the target audience is determined, segmented and described;
- the reasons for the attractiveness of the brand for a target audience, the benefits from interaction with the brand, the needs of a target audience that the brand satisfies are identified;
- analysis of competitors is carried out.

Then a specific goal and objectives are formulated, parameters for evaluating effectiveness. Expected results (money, status, position, professional awards, positions in ratings) are laid. The key broadcast social channels are thought out, a story is composed, a biography of a person is written. There is a choice of channels and sites on which the person will be present and promote himself.

Next comes the implementation stage: promoting a personal brand using the selected channels and tools. And, finally, work is constantly being carried out to analyze / maintain / develop the brand.

Despite the fact that the mentality of the northern region and the harsh living conditions are reflected on the self-consciousness of a university teacher, one must learn to recognize the potential for the development of a personal brand that contributes to solving a wide range of problems.

First of all, we are talking about increasing the authority - goodwill, intangible good, publicity, which will help the further capitalization of the brand.

A specialist with a successful personal brand gets a kind of insurance, he is less susceptible to external crisis changes, the brand works for him, there will be relatively more offers on the labor market than an expert with similar achievements, but closed and unknown to a wide audience.

Working to promote your own brand serves as a motivator for self-development, and the trajectory can be very broad and not connected with related areas of knowledge. Communication with the public, openness presupposes knowledge of a healthy lifestyle, design, culture of speech, style, etc. Competence in information technology, education skills, psychology, management, marketing is going without saying.

And finally, a successful personal brand allows a teacher to be free: in choice, in preferences, in audience - clearly, a branded teacher who has made a capital, tangible and intangible, a huge advantage, the balance of personal space with vocational activities contributes to the preservation and enhancement of basic values.

In accordance with the results of this study and based on the analysis of scientific papers, a functional model of the personal brand of a university teacher was designed (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Model of the personal brand of a university teacher.

<b>SMART</b>				
<b>Specific</b>	<b>Measurable</b>	<b>Assignable</b>	<b>Realistic</b>	<b>Time related</b>
<b>Success criteria</b>				
Development of general special abilities, motivation and personal qualities	Development of professional competencies	Development of innovative activities	Creative approach in educational activities	Self-discipline, the ability to apply time management
<b>Stages of brand creating</b>				
Stage 1. Positioning the teacher and his work in the intellectual property market	Stage 2. Developing (process formulation) teacher's brand strategy	Stage 3. Developing contents, brand ideas	Stage 4. Identifying analysis and creation of a trademark	Stage 5. Studying and analyzing the attitude to the teacher's personal brand (brand testing)
<b>Promotion mechanisms</b>				
Self-identification	Expertise	Originality	Image	History
<b>Mission</b>				

The brand's goal is to strive, in principle, to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

At the first stage, attention is paid to the positioning of the teacher and to his work in the intellectual property market. Here we are looking for our own niche, in which it is most profitable to conduct scientific activities. That is, it is determined whether there is an opportunity and potential for the development of the field of scientific activities outside a university, basing on the creation of a teacher's personal website, registration on scientific portals and vocational communities, work with databases of scientific citation on a national and international scale. Or there is no need for this activity and is limited to the daily work plan and work responsibilities. The process of determining the position of the teacher's brand is underway - the place that takes in the minds of the target audience the name and personality of the teacher, his scientific works and

achievements when comparing him with other representatives engaged in similar activities (competitors).

At the second stage of the process of creating the brand of a university teacher, the strategy of the scientist brand is developed. At the request of the instructor, a strategic program can be created that conveys the value of the personal brand and its benefits to the consumer. At this stage, not only segmentation and selection of the target audience takes place, for which the teacher's brand will be important, but also the consumer receives reliable data, relevant information and knowledge when using products protected by copyright. You can pay attention to the creation of a personal mission, which is a means of communication with the target audience and contributes to the development of the brand. It is here that the target audience forms an idea of the teacher's activities and gets an impression of him.

In addition, strategic planning should reflect by what means and how feedback will be provided to the author-scientist: using electronic resources, business, vocational communities, through surveys and consumer surveys.

At the third stage, attention is paid to the development of content, brand ideas. The idea of creating a brand for a university teacher directly reflects the fact that the personality of the teacher deserves this status and has unique capabilities that distinguish him from competitors. A teacher's brand cannot only raise interest, but also capture the target audience by attracting a person and his intellectual products. The potential attention of buyers can be attracted by disseminating the information about master classes, trainings, scientific games, posted on the Internet, when the teacher is engaged in independent development and popularization of his brand.

The fourth step is to analyze personal benefits. Academic titles and degrees, educational level, professional experience and specialization, personal qualities of a teacher acquire a certain level of importance at the positioning stage, since they create positive thinking and perception, and also form associations with the target audience.

All scientific works of an author, literary works are protected by a special sign "copyright". If a name has been known to a wide audience, it can easily get a brand. The symbolic designation of the teacher's name can be a means of individualization, be registered and act as a trademark.

At the fifth stage, research and analysis of the attitude to the teacher's personal brand is carried out. Here, the degree of popularization of intelligent products is taken into account when studying sales statistics, the opinion of the author and his works is used, as well as the effectiveness of brand analysis and communication with the target audience. He evaluates and understands the benefits that users receive from the use of copyrighted intellectual property. At this stage, the possibility of testing intellectual products created according to the individual brand of the teacher is realized. Thus, if no reviews were written before the publication of the author's manual, it becomes possible to conduct a unique study, noting the importance of the practical application of the manual, analyzing the availability of similar published intellectual products and identifying the attitude of future users to the developed product design.

Designation of a mission for a teacher on the way to creating his own brand can be crucial as a guiding vector, a true guideline in drawing up the major strategic plan of activities with subsequent systemic changes, vocational growth and personal development. The teacher's personal mission can be taken not only for his or her own task performing, but also directly for the surrounding vocational environment, which accepts the direction of further progressive steps towards the main goal.

The mission allows to determine the key priorities of a teacher, thereby facilitating effective communication with the target audience, colleagues who are moving in the

same direction, partners who are looking for effective and productive long-term collaboration.

Goal setting is essential to designing a successful personal brand. In this case, the goals should be determined both for implementation and for their achievement in the short term (for example, for participation in a conference), and in the long term (professional development, getting a scientific degree).

### 3 Conclusions

As an effective tool for gaining competitive advantage and monetizing human skills, personal branding is becoming increasingly popular among educational professionals. Most of the teachers are aware of the need for further development, achieving new vocational goals, using their capabilities to the full extent. Few people manage to implement this idea, most often this happens because of a lack of understanding where to start, or chosen methods do not bring quick results.

In the course of the research work, the authors have studied how to create a personal brand of a teacher, what opportunities it opens up for the educational sphere, as well as what its value and features are. Some factors contributing to the creation of a personal brand in the context of higher education, theoretical prerequisites of the indicated problem have been considered. Social status of a teacher in Russia for over the past 19 years has been analyzed, a study of the attitude of Russian society to branding in the education system has been carried out, the possibilities of a personal brand have been determined and a model of a teacher's personal brand has been developed. This model shows which attributes of the image are of great importance for a teacher and scientist and in which direction it is possible to form and promote a personal brand in an information society and an actively developing digital economy.

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