Ann Stone
Marketing 488/MBA 534: *Branding*

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The Creative Brief Exercise

Teaching Challenge: teach students how to both write and present well-crafted creative briefs grounded in the branding techniques they have learned it the course.

Elements that must be taken into account:
1) I'm (meaning me, the instructor) not a creative person as a career, nor am I the average age of many creatives. Student peer evaluation at least removes age as a barrier.
2) This isn't an individual task ever, so it must be conducted in groups
3) The written creative brief is a critical and much used marketing tool so I must be the one to assess this part of the exercise
4) Given that presenting to creatives is part of marketing professionals lives, I need to also impart and encourage self-reflection since gaining feedback from bosses or agency partners may or may not prove useful in the future.
5) Students today live in the moment, online, all the time

Solution: create an exercise with 3 distinct graded elements. Create teams; task them with the creation of a branded promotion in alignment with the brand.

Task #1: have the teams write a creative brief for the promotion. I assess this to insure the basics have been internalized. This is a more traditional solution for a traditional piece of the marketing equation.

Task #2: Do a multi-faceted creative brief presentation exercise
1) Student teams are coached to develop a presentation based on their creative brief to present to their fellow students who will be "in persona" as creatives
2) All students the class before presentation day are reminded to bring their laptops or sign one out if they do not have one.
3) Teacher prep:
    a. Create the "persona of a creative brief" to assist the students to get in character. Photocopy to hand out.

b. Create through Google Docs the team by team evaluation:

Creative Brief Presentations Evaluation

*Required

Which team are you evaluating? *

Team 1

What number, from 1 lowest to 100 highest, would you give this team on how you feel they presented their creative brief to you as a creative? *

Did they understand how to talk to YOU - a creative? *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
not very well at all	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	nailed it! they talked directly to me

Do you feel they were passionate and compelling about their brand and the work they were assigning to you? *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I didn't see them connected at all	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	totally connected on both fronts

Are you clear about how this work will build the brand here locally? *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I really don't see the connection	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	the "real brand" should do this its so great

Coaching for this team: what rocked!!! *
It is incredibly helpful to get your insights in your own words. In this question tell the team what they did that connected with you, impressed you, or in any way was "the good stuff".

Coaching for this team: what didn't go so well? *
Assist this team to learn what could have been improved. Remember that candor and gentleness combined together is an art form - practice good art!

Submit

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c. Create in Google Docs the final "ranking" form. Screenshot below:

Final Creative Brief evaluation

I just want to know...now that you've seen them all, who knocked you out?
* Required

Which team was #1, the best, the top of the heap, whatever you call it? *

[team 1 ⬍]

Which team was almost as good, just within an inch or so from the top? *

[team 1 ⬍]

Is there another team that you think was "right up there? Sometimes there aren't just two that did really well. If there is, note them here
this is not a required question and you may simply skip this and hit submit if you like

[team 1 ⬍]

(Submit)

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Note on using Google Docs – students do not identify themselves, and the teams are only referred to by number. In this way student privacy is protected.

d. Create time sensitive links for the evaluation by team and final assessment on the front page of Blackboard. Since every input into Google spreadsheets are time stamped you can always simply eliminate a student trying to submit another form. Set up the final ranking form for access only during the last 20 minutes of class to insure no early votes.

e. Create a list of "how to graciously evaluate other people" for use in class

f. Previously have created a creative brief and an assignment template and post to Blackboard

4) Day of class – insure everyone can log on, teach how to give feedback, pass out and discuss the creative person's persona (this exercise itself is incredibly helpful to students to learn for their future careers).

5) First presentation begins. Students in audience select team presenting to complete assessment. What struck me was IMMEDIATELY students began typing – they are used to multi-tasking such as listening and taking notes or driving and texting (yes, they do!) so listening and evaluating was just another normal activity. Students hit submit at the end – and then Google Docs asks them if they want to return to the form. They say yes, it gives them a "fresh form" they select the next team number, and we're ready to go.

6) All teams present. I ask them then to click from Blackboard to the Final Creative sheet and rank the top 2 or 3 teams.

7) Assessment:

a. I open the spreadsheet and copy/paste the scores and feedback into separate spreadsheets by team name. I do this in Excel.

b. I go to the forced ranking and award 3 points for 1st, 2 points for 2nd, 1 point for 3rd.
c. This guides grading of the teams. Post grades to Blackboard, attach the spreadsheet of peer feedback. This entire activity took about 40 minutes for a class of 40 and 9 teams.

Task #3 Self-Awareness
Within 24 hours of the exercise students are to have posted "into the assignment box" of a different submission in Blackboard their self-reflection on what they learned. These were incredible in their depth, insight, and coaching to me on how to improve the exercise.

In this exercise students learn not only how to create and present great creative briefs, they learn a bit about who a creative is and why they matter to a marketer. They learn how to provide and accept peer feedback and evaluation. They learn to create their own learning, and both guided and captured through the reflection assignment. They in the end learn how to be better Brand Stewards in many ways – which is why this course exists.