

We are all great brands, but only in the future

As a species, “all of us are going to be better people in the future”.

In our minds, we are 5 am people, disciplined, righteous, committed to good causes, truthful, and incorruptible.

However, in the ‘now’, we are full of impulses. We give in to many temptations now. In the future, we will be good people.

Succumbing to the present

Examples of this abound all around us. Do we want to kill ourselves earlier and harm our lungs intentionally? Absolutely not. But many people smoke. The problem is, the pleasure of smoking is now, and the benefit of not smoking seems to be in the future.

The pleasure of sleeping is now, and the benefit of 5 am seems to be in the future.

The pleasure of ice-cream is now, and the benefit of a green diet seems to be in the future.

We discount the future and succumb to the present. In the words of Dan Ariely, author of *Predictably Irrational*, “Resisting temptation and instilling self-control are general human goals, and repeatedly failing to achieve them is a source of much of our misery.”

The value of consistency

What about the few people who have deliberate intent?

When these people claim that they wake at 5 am, they mean it. Their body, their energy and their confidence give out signals we cannot miss.

These people are brands. They have a unique and differentiated identity that is consistent and authentic. However, it can be consistent only if it is authentic.

How to build a brand ‘now’

In the marketplace too, some products are brands. A brand is defined by consistency. But being a brand means remembering what you are, in the ‘now’, even when the temptation to violate that is overpowering.

In a world that represents chaos and change, ‘sameness’ is a pillar that we all can lean on. Observe yourself in the mall, as you ignore names that you have not heard of, and pick names that you know.

Consistency, discipline and having a strong ‘check-framework’ that reiterates who you are builds brands—for people and products. Because this ‘check-framework’ determines your ‘now’. When a product or a person hits you

repeatedly with the same authentic, deliberate intent, they become a brand.

It’s science, folks.



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