

Integrating Character, Leadership for Powerful Message

“Chiseling A Leader” is an incredible combination of achievable best practices with inspiring success stories.”

— John T. Armstrong, First Bankers Trust Company NA

Bank executive and author Brian Townley, and Emmy Award-winning journalist Brandon Rudat have joined forces to create *Chiseling a Leader*, a powerful new message that integrates character and leadership to inspire personal and professional excellence. The program focuses on how two industry leaders chiseled down to the core values and characteristics that have set them apart.

“We all have epiphany moments in our life,” said Townley, author of *Inspiring Leadership: Unleashing Motivation in the Workplace*. “Through *Chiseling a Leader*, we want to inspire these life-changing moments and give people a whole new perspective on their leadership journey.”

“Character” comes from a Greek word meaning ‘chisel’. Perhaps a leader who has character is one who has chiseled away the pretenses to reveal those inner traits that are worthy of respect and admiration. The program identifies six characteristics that demonstrate leadership: communicator, credible, competent, counselor, creative and courageous.

Participants in the program are invited to complete a self-evaluation to reveal their own skills and behaviors by understanding the value of each character trait and how to implement it fully in their personal and professional life.

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Rudat, former anchor on CBS' Better Morning Atlanta, brings his life experiences to the message and what he has learned about leadership.

"You've got to believe in yourself," said Rudat. "If you find that fire and that passion inside of you, you can accomplish anything."

Rudat found his calling at an early age, when he discovered he wanted to pursue a career in broadcast journalism. "In junior high, I remember watching Tom Brokaw doing the Nightly News on NBC," he said. "I always took public speaking classes and knew what I wanted to do. I had this fire inside of me, this news bug. I couldn't get rid of it, so I pursued it."

Rudat won an Emmy in 2007, and has been nominated for nine others during his career. He credits courage and determination for advancing him in his profession. Townley said that Rudat is a living example of applying the principles of leadership.

"It's a winning combination," said Townley. "My collaboration with Brandon started a few years ago when he contacted me about my book. He told me that he related to my journey and was interested in knowing more about what I did, and shared his desire to inspire and motivate people."

Together, Townley and Rudat developed a program that they have since presented to professional organizations

interested in applying leadership in a personal way. "My portion of the program is focused on the characteristics of a leader, and Brandon's amazing story shows that when you combine these with something you are passionate about, you can do anything," said Townley. "What I appreciate the most about our collaboration is the fact that we both believe in the other's message, and when you combine them, the singular story becomes even more powerful."

Townley has been a motivational speaker to professional organizations since 2005, delivering messages to inspire successful sales campaigns, industry-related programs and professional development.

"I wanted this program to be different than my *Inspiring Leadership* program, which is based on my book," said Townley. "I wanted it to be interactive, so I created the self-assessment as a critical part of the 'chiseling' experience.

Audience members can begin the process within the first 10 minutes of our time together. By the end, they will have a tool that will enable them to go back to their workplace and know exactly what their strengths and weaknesses are."

Townley says that Rudat taught him that leadership is about passion and not a position. "You would think with as much research as I have done on the subject that would have been obvious to me. But it was through him that I got it and saw it in his story. To me, that's the heart of our message," said Townley.

Despite being told he that he was too young, or that he didn't have the right look or voice, Rudat said his passion fueled his fire to persevere.

"I have always just shared my story and what worked for me," said Rudat. "What I love most about talking to a large group of people is telling that person in the corner of the room, 'There may be people out there telling you that you're not qualified, you're too young, you're too old, or you don't have the look. But you've got to believe in yourself. If you find that passion and fire inside of you, you can accomplish anything.'"

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Rudat began his career as an unpaid intern for The Today Show, where he came in each morning at 2:00 a.m. “I was running scripts to Ann Curry and Katie Couric on the set. There was no greater experience than being there and having the goal of making it someday,” said Rudat.

As he moved forward in his career, he learned the importance of finding balance between work and personal time. “I look at my life as a pie chart,” he said. “My work is only a portion of that pie. You have to draw from something from the outside to complete your life. You have to put something else in the fuel tank to give something back at work.”

Rudat is also an accomplished artist who uses his paintings as an outlet for his creativity. He also does kickboxing five days a week to stay in shape. “The discipline I learn in kickboxing gives me discipline at work,” he said. “That’s an important dimension to developing leadership traits to apply to all areas of life. He added, “If you want something you have never had before, you have to be willing to do something that you have never done before to get it. You won’t get it by being complacent. You can’t go in to work and punch in at 8:00 a.m., go to lunch and then punch out at 5:00 p.m. and expect to get something different from your life.”

Rudat tells his audience that having the courage to let go of negativity and be willing to take criticism in order to grow and chase bigger dreams is essential.

“If we chisel past that barrier that people like to put up and get down to what it is they truly want and are passion about, some people discover that they may not even be in the right job or field,” said Rudat.

“I think many people are in a profession they don’t want to do. They’re doing it to collect a paycheck out of fear of what their next move might be. They get comfortable. They’re not seeking what *could* be. You have to be willing to seek what is around that corner. You have to get past that fear.”

That is where having faith in what one can accomplish, and considering the characteristics of a leader can truly make a difference.

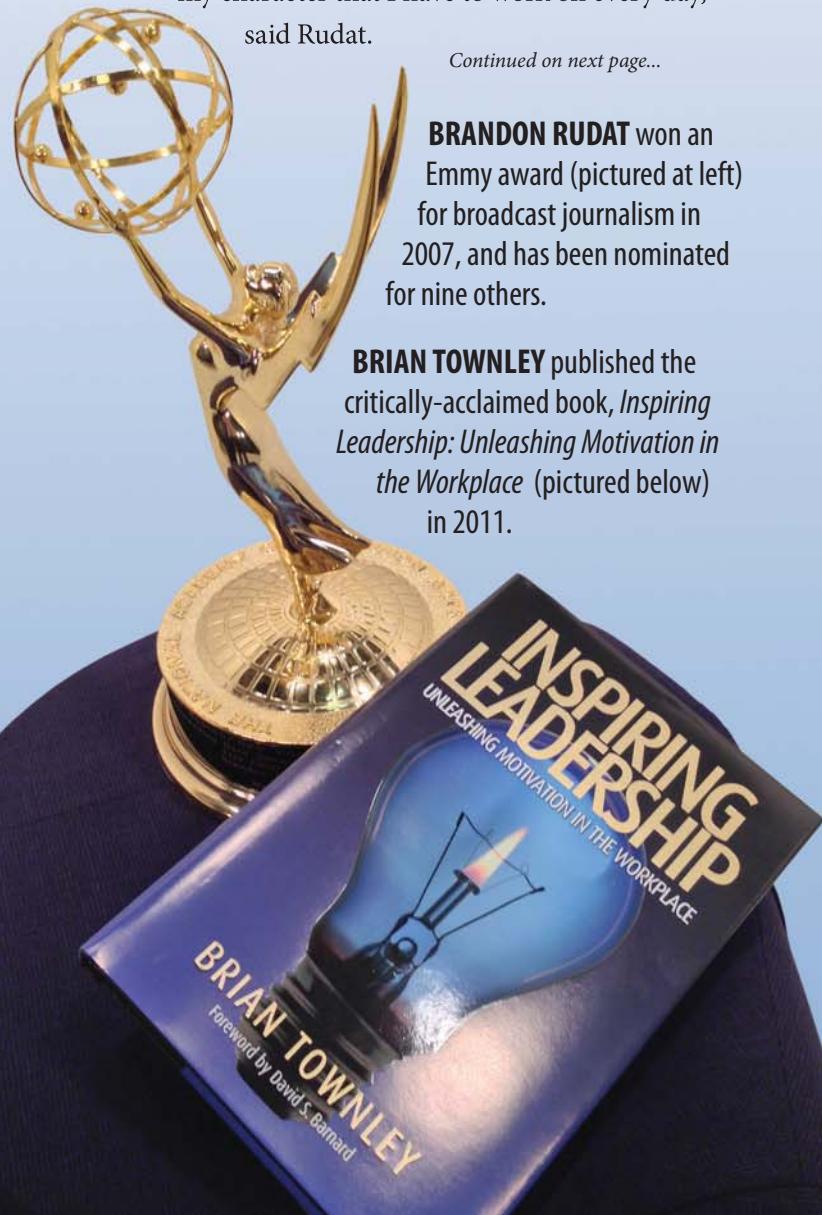
“There’s not a single person out there who has never dreamed big at one point in their life, and you have to tap into that,” said Rudat. “What I love about the metaphor and symbolism of chiseling is that throughout the day many of us have a fear of rejection. We are constantly trying to protect ourselves from getting hurt and being subject to criticism.”

While the more comprehensive self-assessment of leadership characteristics is important, so is the ongoing chiseling process that allows true character to develop, he said. “I call it chiseling down those character defects that creep up daily—ego, fear, insecurity. They are all defects of my character that I have to work on every day,” said Rudat.

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BRANDON RUDAT won an Emmy award (pictured at left) for broadcast journalism in 2007, and has been nominated for nine others.

BRIAN TOWNLEY published the critically-acclaimed book, *Inspiring Leadership: Unleashing Motivation in the Workplace* (pictured below) in 2011.



Taking the leap from broadcast journalist to public speaker was a recent move that Rudat finds both challenging and rewarding. “I knew I could use my life experiences to inspire other people,” he said. The real-life scenarios that are presented in the program are intended to resonate with the audience, added Townley. “I think it’s important to understand that we are all in leadership roles, regardless of what our title is,” said Townley, “People always ask me what the backbone of leadership is, and I think it’s one of the six characteristics—which is courage. A leader is someone who demonstrates the willingness to improve and to learn.”

The dynamic collaboration of Rudat and Townley are planning many appearances across the U.S. in support of the release of their “Chiseling A Leader” program on DVD, scheduled to be released in 2014.

Meet the Speakers



Speaker: Brandon Rudat

Emmy Award-winning journalist, Motivational Speaker

Speaker: Brian Townley

Bank Executive, Author, International Speaker

Brandon Rudat is an American journalist and motivational speaker who started his professional career as an intern on the Today show in New York City, and as a producer for WNBC’s Today in New York—where he covered the 9/11 terrorist attacks and their aftermath. In May 2007, Rudat won an Emmy award, and has been nominated for 9 others, including 2013 Best News Anchor and Best Investigative Reporting for his work at the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Torino, Italy. He was the co-host of CBS Atlanta’s morning show, *Better Mornings Atlanta* for three years.

Brian Townley is an author and international speaker who started his professional career in the banking industry, where he has developed critically-acclaimed employee development strategies. Townley has spoken at conferences and schools internationally since 2005. In July 2011, he released his first book, *Inspiring Leadership: Unleashing Motivation in the Workplace*, which shares his trademark leadership tactics that have played a major role in his personal achievements, as well as the success of The National Banks of Central Texas, where he currently serves as Senior Vice President.