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HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE MODERN BEAUTY INDUSTRY

Student's Profile

Kwan Hong has achieved multiple PhDs, masters degrees and diplomas. He is the Strategy Director of a regional strategy consulting firm, and an International Speaker who has given talks to 420,000 people and 750 organizations in 35 countries.

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Introduction

The global 'prestige' beauty market – a broad category of overlapping premium products that includes make-up, fragrances and body-care – remains one of the most valuable consumer business segments (Deloitte, 2017). According to Danziger (2019), the global beauty industry is worth a massive \$532 billion worldwide. At the overall market level, rapid emergence of new brands, new geographic markets and new sub categories, all fueled by worldwide adoption of digital technologies, have contributed massively to rapid growth at the overall market level (Deloitte,2017).

Given that the beauty industry is a dominant global industry that is growing at an accelerated pace, this paper will be divided into three major segments:

1. Global Macro Perspective: Overview of the Beauty Industry. The segment will start off by providing a historical context of the significance of beauty to humans, followed by an overview of how traditional significance of beauty has contributed to the dominance of the global industry.
2. Micro Individual Perspective: Success Secrets of Industrial Professionals. This segment analyzes and summarizes the secrets of success used by industrial practitioners. A model of success – called the BEAUTY Formula – will be proposed to encapsulate the success secrets used by top guns in the industry. Key points from the article will be highlighted and expounded on.
3. Lessons Learned: Application of Knowledge for Studying Better in AIU. An extensive discussion on the insights and knowledge gained from the essay will be applied to the

betterment of Atlantic International University (AIU), and how the lessons gleamed can help one study better in AIU.

Throughout the essay, the lessons and reflections on the article will be expounded upon in comprehensive detail, in which specific details in the article will be highlighted for discussion.

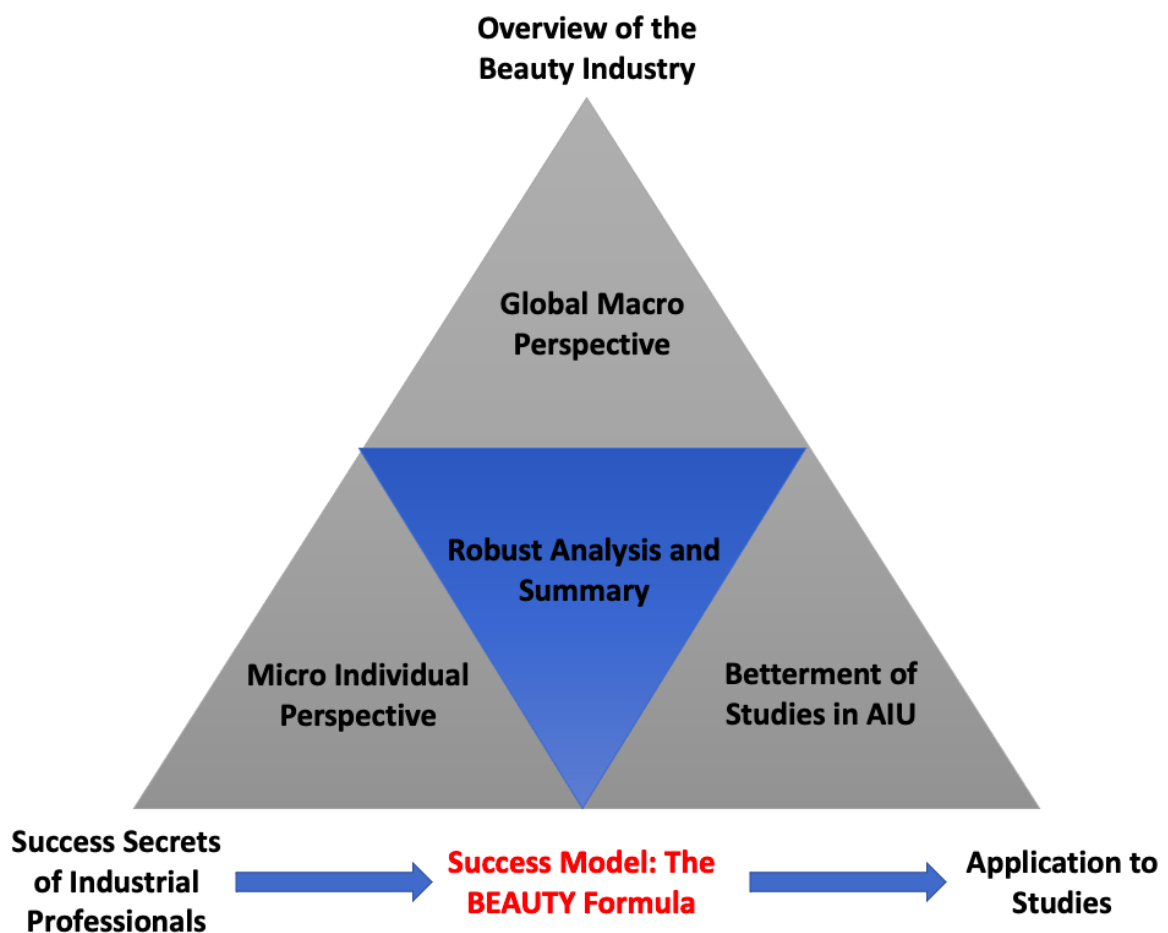


Figure 1: Triangulated Approach for a Robust Analysis and Summary

Global Macro Perspective: Overview of the Beauty Industry

“Nature is beautiful because it looks like Art; and Art can only be called beautiful if we are conscious of it as Art while yet it looks like Nature.”

Immanuel Kant, Critique of Judgment

Having evolved to become highly visual and social creatures, humans have been collectively preoccupied with beauty as a species. A person’s appearance is oftentimes, the first thing that others would notice. As a result of such fervent preoccupation with beauty throughout human existence, the topic of beauty has been the focus of Aesthetics, a dominant field of inquiry in Western Philosophy, and has engaged the minds of numerous scholars, from Plato, to Aristotle, and even Immanuel Kant.

Since the beginning of civilization, people have been using make-ups and cosmetics to beautify themselves and workshop their deities. The Egyptians’ use of dark eyeliner is present in their painting and deities. Taking beauty and cosmetics to the extreme, Victorian women often fainted not because of their demureness, but because of the widespread use of lead-based creams to “improve complexion” together with constricting girdles.

Through a large part of history, these rituals of beauty were practiced by women in a relatively secretive fashion so as to uphold the notion that beauty was natural and effortless, and not an artifice.

Hence, it is bewildering that the modern beauty industry stands in stark contrast to the historical context of beauty; beauty, which was once practiced secretly for the most part of history, has now become a global phenomenal, has gone mainstream, and is also lauded as one of the best sectors to launch a company (Ketabchi, 2020). The global beauty industry is worth a staggering \$532 billion business, with the United States the leading player in the world with about 20% share, followed by China (13%) and Japan (8%) (Danziger, 2019). The global cosmetics market – a major segment of the global beauty industry – is poised to garner \$429.8 billion in 2022, registering a CAGR of 4.3% (Allied Market Research, 2016). Citing high profile exists, from Unilever’s \$500M purchase of J Beauty company Tatcha to Shiseido’s highly anticipated \$845M acquisition of clean beauty upstart Drunk Elephant, acquisitions of big businesses in the beauty industry is also common, signaling the robustness of economic activities in the space (CB Insights, 2019).

While the explosive growth of the beauty industry has been attributed to many factors, for example, consumers’ journey of self-exploration, brand factors and business acquisitions (Kestenbaum, 2018); consumer factors, hero products, and digital trends (Simons, 2020), scholars researching the field of beauty has often failed to clarify the role of individual leaders in driving the growth and expansion of the global beauty industry. Hence, this essay seeks to complement the existing literature by providing a comprehensive representation of the individual success factors that not only contributed to the success of the individual, but also contributed to the growth of their companies and the industry. Through these individual success factors, a success model, called The BEAUTY Formula, will be created to conceptualize these success factors as a collective strategy that anyone can adopt.

Micro Individual Perspective: Success Secrets of Industrial Professionals

Individual success factors and how they relate to industrial growth is seldom cited in the academic literature examining the growth of the beauty industry. This section of the essay therefore collates, analyzes and summarizes the individual success factors gleaned from the article “100 Things You Need To Know To Succeed In The Modern Beauty Industry”, published in *Entrepreneur Asia Pacific* by Hemmings (2020).

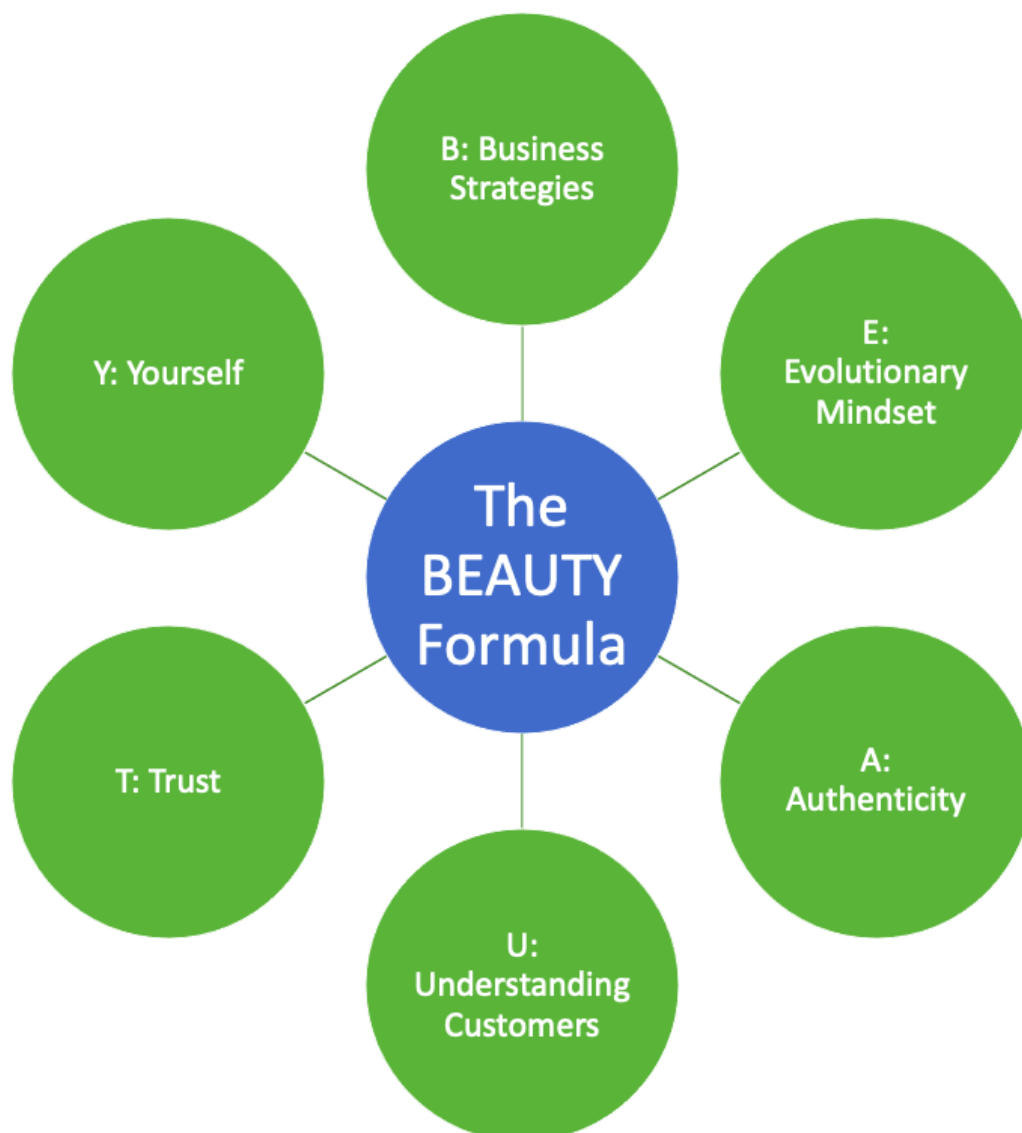


Figure 2: The BEAUTY Formula for success

From the article, a generalizable model, titled The BEAUTY Formula, that consists of six success factors for consistent success in the beauty industry, can thus be formulated.

B: Business Strategies

From the article (Hemmings, 2020), successful industrial professionals applied various forms of business strategies to drive growth and enhance profitability.

Lia Dias of *Girl Cave LA* and *Married To Medicine LA* heavily invested in marketing and promotional campaigns, a notion supported by Summer Latino of *Chi Works*, who mentioned that “branding is a MEGA huge deal”. Celebrity Makeup Artist Jerome Alexander and Summer Latino of *Chi Works* proposed the use of attractive packaging as a strategy for customer acquisition, while Tina Fobbs of *pHyre Hair Co.* added that visual appeal of the products is important. Perry Petit-Beau of *Wave Glyder* and Shia Joyner of *Zen & Boujee* both cited the importance of maintaining good business credit. Maryam Ghafarinia of *The Modern Beauty Industry* used outsourcing as a business strategy so that she can do what she does best. Dionne Phillips of *D’Lashes* mentioned that information is essential to planning, plotting, strategizing, executing, and running businesses, while Shia Joyner of *Zen & Boujee* build on this logic by using analytics as a powerful tool for understanding tons of information about a brand’s consumer base.

From the article, it can be concluded that proper business strategizing and planning is highly adopted by successful industrial professionals; anyone who wants to succeed in the competitive industry of beauty will do well to understand business, marketing and strategy.

E: Evolutionary Mindset (Through Learning, Mastery and Innovation)

Successful industrial professionals have a mindset of continuous evolution in their DNA. In the article, the need for continuous learning and growth, for greater mastery, and the desire for continuous improvement and innovation, is often cited.

Monica Arnaudo of *Ulta Beauty* recommended that professionals stay educated, Lia Dias of *Girl Cave LA* and *Married To Medicine LA* believed in investing in the development of staff and learning from mistakes quickly. Maryam Ghafarinia of *The Modern Beauty Industry* recommended readers to “don’t ever stop learning”.

Mastery, as a result of effective learning, was also often cited in the article. Perry Petit-Beau of *Wave Glyder* mentioned the importance of being “a master of one”. Dionne Phillips of *D’Lashes* told readers to constantly evolve by learning about the latest trends and staying ahead of the competition.

Teneya Gholston of *Creme of Nature/Revlon* and Celebrity Makeup Artist Jerome Alexander cited the importance of innovation. Chinecherem Eze of *Adaora.com* believes that modern beauty industry is evolving and one should be open to innovation and technology.

In conclusion, learning and innovating both play huge role in helping one to succeed in a complex and fast-paced beauty industry.

A: Authenticity

Authenticity as a virtue seemed to feature heavily among industrial leaders. Having an authentic brand representation, having an authentic message of what your brand stands for, and authentic engagement with the audience all contribute to success in the beauty industry. Jasmin Manner of *The Honest Company* cited the importance of being humble and authentic in leaders. Teneya Gholston of *Creme of Nature/Revlon* spoke about being authentic and consistent with your messaging. Ashley Peterson of *Elizabella Cosmetics* believes in showing authenticity through a vision for the company, while Erica Hackett of *Dreamstar Cosmetics* spoke about authenticity by being uniquely you: “Don’t try to be another brand or do what someone else is doing”. Authenticity can also be achieved if people “stop looking at what other people are doing”, an advice by Amanda Broadus of *Cosmetic Crazed*. Maryam Ghafarinia of *The Modern Beauty Industry* mentioned about being authentic and using your own voice. Tina Fobbs of *pHyre Hair Co.* believed in using authentic stories.

U: Understanding Customers

Being customer-focused and having a deep understanding of the customer is also essential for success in the beauty industry. Monica Arnaudo of *Ulta Beauty* asserted that “the customer always comes first.” Jasmin Manner of *The Honest Company* mentioned “Have your ear on the ground and understand the consumer”. Celebrity Makeup Artist Jerome Alexander proposed that practitioners must be able “to understand what your customer wants and needs”. Maryam Ghafarinia of *The Modern Beauty Industry* mentioned that in order to be successful, one has to provide value to his/her customers. Afolami Oyenuga of *MAKARI* went

one step further to “always prioritize your customers”. Ashley Peterson of *Elizabethella Cosmetics* coined the rule of knowing your customer, an assertion supported by Erica Hackett of *Dreamstar Cosmetics*. Tina Fobbs of *pHyre Hair Co.* mentioned that “the key is to know and show customers what they need”.

Hence, there exist enough evidence to prove that customer-centricity is crucial in continued success in the beauty industry.

T: Trust

Additionally, a high level of trust (in oneself, in the journey, in the process, and in the team) also contributed to the success of the featured industrial professionals.

Jasmin Manner of The Honest Company believed in trusting your gut when making decisions. Afolami Oyenuga of *MAKARI* recounted that trusting his teams and hiring the best talent has been key to their success and expansion. Chinecherem Eze of *Adaora.com* reminded readers to trust the process in order to get results. Monica Arnaudo of *Ulta Beauty* spoke about trusting in the endless possibilities and paths in the beauty industry.

Additionally, customers also need to trust the brand, the business, and the product. Tina Fobbs of *pHyre Hair Co.* asserted that people must see you using and trusting your product before they will. Lia Dias of *Girl Cave LA* and *Married To Medicine LA* believes in integrity as a function of cultivating trust.

Y: Yourself

Finally, understanding yourself, your brand identity, and what you truly want is a must-have for sustainable success.

Teneya Gholston of *Creme of Nature/Revlon* spoke about being consistent with your messaging and personal brand. Summer Latino of *Chi Works* mentioned the importance of connecting with your intention, while Maryam Ghafarinia of *The Modern Beauty Industry* cautioned against copying others, and proposed that readers “use your own voice” to build a personal brand. Anthara Patrice of *MyBeautyFill* asked deep questions to deepen understanding of the self, including “Why beauty is important to you” and “What you bring to the industry”. Afolami Oyenuga of *MAKARI* suggested that practitioners find their niche and understand their point of differentiation. Chinecherem Eze of *Adaora.com* was straightforward, encapsulating the message as “Be yourself” to avoid being lost trying to follow others’ standards of beauty or even success. Ashley Peterson of *Elizabella Cosmetics* mentioned about setting your vision and knowing what differentiates you from the competition, while Erica Hackett of *Dreamstar Cosmetics* gave the following advice: “You have to be uniquely you. Don’t try to be another brand or do what someone else is doing.” Amanda Broadus of *Cosmetic Crazed* advised that we can know what we want by writing down our goals.

In conclusion, success in the highly competitive beauty industry also involves deep personal understanding of self, so as to guide one’s intrapersonal compass as a navigation tool in the jungle of competition.

Lessons Learned: Application of Knowledge for Studying Better in AIU

Since the BEAUTY formula is a model of success, the model out to be generalizable to different fields in order to be considered a successful and replicable model. Hence, this model will be applied in the context of academic studies, higher learning, and one's experience in the andragogic environment of Atlantic International University (AIU).

B: Business Strategies

Deep learning in AIU can help students develop their own strategies for their business, organisational, or personal use. This is done through a self-developed curriculum based on andragogic principles, allowing students to synthesize knowledge across fields and modules to formulate new strategic models.

Additionally, strategies like just-in-time learning and in-demand online learning can be adopted easily in an online environment. Adult learners can learn new knowledge in a strategic manner – at the right time, in the right manner, and under the right circumstances underpinning their own strategic imperative. Just-in-time learning allows adult learners to learn a new skill, just when they needed it most to formulate a new policy to attain a business objective.

Finally, case studies can also be captured to encapsulate strategic business learning and extend academic knowledge that informs strategy.

E: Evolutionary Mindset (Through Learning, Mastery and Innovation)

As learners, having an evolutionary mindset that embraces continuous learning, growth, progress, innovation and mastery is essential for an effective education. The empowerment of the human spirit for growth, transformation and transcendence requires one to understand that learning is a lifelong endeavour, much like eating and sleeping. Learning can occur through an intentional context - through self-directed, auto-didactic learning, or outside-directed learning, such as an impetus from mentors or through an institution. Learning can also occur through non-intentional occurrence (learning en passant), for example, through spontaneous events, life-routines, or through planned events such as traveling and exploration (even when learning is not the main goal).

Hence, an individual must recognise the multi-faceted nature of learning, and in doing so, capture the rich contextualised experiences presented via these multi-modal learning opportunities for continuous self-evolution.

A: Authenticity

Authenticity is about being real and honest. It can be manifested at different levels: uncovering the truth of a phenomenon, and having authenticity in the treatment of knowledge so as to make sure the knowledge is used for pure and beneficial intentions.

In order to achieve authenticity, epistemology, ontology, ethical and moral philosophies help learners develop a more all-rounded understanding of being authentic when dealing with

academic material. Epistemology deals with the theory of knowledge (Stroll, 2020), ontology deals with questions of *existence* (Stanford, 2004), and ethical and moral philosophies guide authentic decision-making.

U: Understanding Customers

Knowledge, when learned and mastered, must also be applied. There is little use of having so much knowledge, but not being able to apply the knowledge to serve customers, benefit the community, or worldly conditions. Hence, learning must be connected with the end in mind; learning with the purpose to use the knowledge to serve your end-customers, a demographic group, or an industry.

T: Trust

Having academic integrity when representing and conveying knowledge builds trust between self, the readers and the knowledge. Trust promotes overall progress in learning. If institutions are not trustworthy, and students are not trustworthy in citing knowledge, then the academic system will falter.

Y: Yourself

Finally, learners must also understand themselves. One of the ways of gaining deeper insights into the vision, mission and values of oneself is through the field of social-emotional development. The underpinnings of my understanding of social-emotion development were

first derived from the field of pedagogy (instead of andragogy), where research into this area is more expansive. Social-emotional learning is recognized as essential in the holistic development of children in the field of pedagogy (Clark, 2020).

There are five essentials of social and emotional learning in the framework that students can utilize:

- 1) Self-Management: Managing emotions and behaviors to achieve one's goals
- 2) Self-Awareness: Recognizing one's emotions and values, as well as one's strengths and limitations
- 3) Responsible Decision-Making: Making ethical, constructive choices about personal and social behavior
- 4) Relationship Skills: Forming positive relationships, working in teams, dealing effectively with conflict
- 5) Social Awareness: Showing understanding and empathy for others

As can be seen, these five essentials of social and emotional learning are relevant even in the adult working world. Our performance to meet the demands of our careers will be greatly enhanced or affected by the performance of these five essentials. These are also lifelong skills that one can develop over the course of a lifetime.

To develop these social-emotional skills, students utilize a wide range of tips, tricks and techniques, including the use of profiling tools: for example, DISC, MBTI, Enneagram, Strong Interest Inventory and more.



Figure 3: The Social-Emotional Learning System

Conclusion

In conclusion, the article “100 Things You Need To Know To Succeed In The Modern Beauty Industry”, published in *Entrepreneur Asia Pacific* by Hemmings (2020) elucidated the key success factors of succeeding in the beauty industry. Yet, on deeper analysis, the very same success factors used by top-notch industrial professions in the beauty industry can also be used for the betterment of one’s studies in AIU. This is achieved through the fulfillment of The Beauty MODEL, a model that encapsulated 6 principles of success.

Two More Sources of Information

How To Succeed As Entrepreneur In The Beauty Industry

This tutorial on “How To Succeed As Entrepreneur In The Beauty Industry” shares about strategies on joint ventures and uncovering market trends.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2q42IEoDF0>

Leslie Blodgett: How to Succeed in the Beauty Business

Leslie Blodgett shares the advice that helped her grow a small cosmetics maker into a thriving public company that was acquired by Shiseido in 2010 for \$1.7 billion. She is executive chairman of Bare Essentials and the creator of the Bare Minerals make-up line. Blodgett appeared at the Stanford Graduate School of Business as a guest speaker for professor Jennifer Aaker's class "The Power of Story in Business" on January 29, 2013.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EaHNmTN6Whk>

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