NPC FACULTY

FIELD MANUAL / 01

# BUILD YOUR BRAND

Eight missions from a half-formed idea to a one-page brand brief.

CHAD MILES



BRAND FOUNDATIONS

# BUILD YOUR BRAND

## Eight missions from a half-formed idea to a one-page brand brief.

AN ILLUSTRATED WORKBOOK FOR YOUR AFTER-HOURS PROJECT

CHAD MILES

REVISED EDITION / 2026

# Thanks for buying this book.

### PULL UP A CHAIR

I know what it costs to give an evening to a half-formed idea. Thank you for spending yours here. I wrote this for the person who already has something in mind and keeps getting stuck when a friend asks, “Why would someone choose yours?”

### THIS IS FOR YOU IF…

You have a day job and a rough idea for a product, a service or something people can watch, read or use. You have a free evening, not a free year. Bring the version you have today, even if it fits in one sentence.

### WHAT YOU WILL TAKE AWAY

A one-page brand brief, a reason a particular person might choose you, a voice and a visual cue you can repeat, and one next move you can afford to try. Work one mission at a time. If nobody is free to help, send an invitation, mark your guess and come back with their actual words.

### CHAD MILES

### THE IDEA I BROUGHT TO THE TABLE (TODAY’S VERSION, ONE SENTENCE)

# About this edition

### THE WORLD

NPC Faculty is a fictional school for side hustles. Sidequest Studios, the name printed on Chad's tee, is the studio that makes the short videos about it. They follow a recurring cast through the first steps of building something after work. "Escape the Script" names the feeling behind it.

### THE CAST

Chad founded the Faculty, is its Dean and occasionally teaches. Miles is the friend who actually invited the first student. Mom asks the question an outsider would ask. A kid at the end of the table says nothing and misses nothing. The mansion shows the freedom Chad wants. The dinner table shows why it matters.

### TWO CASES, ON PURPOSE

Two projects run through every mission. The Faculty is the digital case: videos first, then merch. The olive oil is Chad's first idea, kept as the physical case: a small product, a dinner, a shipping box. Follow the one closest to your own project and ignore the other.

### WHAT IS REAL

The studio and its videos are real. The school inside them is fiction, and so are the kitchen conversations. Prices, counts and results in the worked examples are simulations and marked as such. The ranges behind them come from seller blogs and single accounts, not audited data. Chad Miles is the pen name for this edition.

### NOT YET TESTED

This revised edition has not been tested with readers yet. The time estimates, the eight-evening plan and the worked examples are untested. If you try it, your results are the evidence this book still lacks.

# One mission, seven pages

### THE SEVEN PAGES

**Palm Point**: a scene to read. **The Lesson**: three steps. **Two Applications**: the Faculty and the oil, side by side. **At the Editing Desk**: a weak draft and a better one. **Working Canvas**: fill it in with your project. **Field Assignment**: do one thing with a real person. **After the Test**: write what you learned, then challenge it with a partner or an AI.

### THREE WAYS TO WORK

**Alone**, with an AI as sparring partner (page 9). **In a pair**, trading drafts after each mission. **In a small group**, one mission a week. The field assignments need real people in every case.

### WHAT YOU NEED

A pen or a PDF viewer. One idea. One free evening per mission. About eight to ten short conversations over the whole book, most of them ten minutes long.

### HOW TO FILL IT IN

This book comes as two files: a fillable PDF and a print version with ruled lines. In the fillable file, click a box, type, and save the file to keep your answers. If your PDF viewer cannot fill forms, use the print version.

### HOW LONG IT TAKES

About eleven hours of your own work, plus waiting for people to answer. The course map (page 6) lists a time per mission. Planning estimates, not yet measured with readers.

### A WORD ON WORDS

This book is a **field manual**, its lessons are **missions**, and the extra section at the back is the **Merch Lab**.

# Your route through the Faculty


| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 01 | **The bottle on the table**<br>Find the conviction inside your idea | 90 MIN | p. 10 |
| 02 | **The person at the bus stop**<br>Find the occasion that makes you relevant | 2 H + 1 TALK | p. 17 |
| 03 | **What else is on?**<br>Write and defend your positioning and USP | 90 MIN + 1 SHOWING | p. 26 |
| 04 | **Why Chad?**<br>Choose a personality people can identify with | 60 MIN + 1 SHOWING | p. 33 |
| 05 | **Mom reads the crest**<br>Choose a name, a voice and a visual cue | 90 MIN + 1 SHOWING | p. 40 |
| 06 | **Two minutes to orientation**<br>Turn values into a customer experience | 60 MIN | p. 47 |
| 07 | **The wrong first impression**<br>Check what people think your brand is | 60 MIN + 3 TO 5 SHOWINGS | p. 54 |
| 08 | **One folding chair**<br>Make the identity usable by someone else | 90 MIN + 1 HANDOVER | p. 61 |


Then: Graduation (page 68), your one-page brief. Merch Lab (page 74), a first sample, a price and a rule. Tear-out plan (page 80), one dated commitment.

*Times are planning estimates, not yet measured with readers. Most of the waiting is people: allow a few days for replies.*

# Which promise are we making?

**BRAND IDENTITY**

The choices you make about what your brand stands for, how it behaves and how people recognize it. Brand image is the impression people actually form.
*The Faculty intends to signal freedom to experiment. Mission 7 shows what a stranger saw instead.*

**POSITIONING**

The context that helps a particular person understand what you offer and why it matters compared with their usual alternative.
*A dinner guest compares a bottle of oil with wine. A home cook compares it with the oil already in the cupboard.*

**UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION (USP)**

One sentence that names the specific reason someone in that situation would choose your offer: a difference you can deliver and the benefit it creates. Positioning is the comparison you build in Mission 3. The USP is the sentence you pull out of it. The term comes from 1960s advertising and is used loosely today. Here it means exactly this sentence.
*Working USP: a dinner gift the host can put on the table in five minutes, with one pairing sized for four. Time it in a real kitchen before making that claim.*

**TAGLINE**

A short public phrase that helps a person recall the idea. It can leave details to the offer or its packaging.
*“Escape the Script” is the Faculty tagline. The school, its teaching and its characters have to give those words meaning.*

# From an idea to evidence

### AUDIENCE AND OCCASION

Your audience is the group you aim to serve. An occasion is the particular moment your project becomes relevant to someone in that group.
*A dinner guest is the person. A last-minute invitation is the occasion.*

### FEATURE, BENEFIT AND PROOF

A feature is something you provide. A benefit is what it lets the customer do. Proof is evidence that supports the particular claim.
*Feature: a serving card. Benefit: the host can serve the gift immediately. Possible proof: a first-time host follows the card in five minutes.*

### TOUCHPOINT AND RECOGNITION CUE

A touchpoint is a place where someone encounters the brand. A cue is a detail they can learn to associate with it over time.
*The bottle label and checkout email are touchpoints. A terracotta band repeated on both is a candidate cue.*

### HYPOTHESIS AND DECISION RULE

A hypothesis is a claim still to be tested. A decision rule sets out, before the test, what result would make you keep, change or drop a choice.
*Before testing the Faculty introduction, Miles decides that if two of five people independently expect driving lessons, he will rework the opening line.*

# Use AI as a sparring partner

### WHERE IT HELPS

Sharpening a draft, finding the strongest objection, producing alternatives to choose from, preparing interview questions. Every “After the Test” page ends with a prompt for exactly this.

### WHERE IT CANNOT HELP

It cannot tell you what real people think, and it tends to agree with you. It knows nothing about your situation until you paste it in. Treat its answers as a second opinion, never as evidence.

### FOUR HABITS

**1.** Paste your own words, not a topic. **2.** Ask it to challenge, not to praise. **3.** Ask it to label what it had to assume. **4.** Take the sharpest point to a real person before you change anything.

### KEEP PEOPLE OUT

Leave names and contact details of the people you interviewed out of the prompt. Check your tool’s data settings before you paste anything you would not post publicly.

### A PROMPT TO START FROM

*You are a skeptical customer who recently faced this situation. Here is my draft: [paste]. Give me the strongest objection, list what you had to assume, and suggest one test I can run with a real person this week. Do not rewrite my draft.*

# The bottle on the table



Mom put the olive oil back on the table. “If you’re going to sell that online, how am I supposed to finish dinner?” Chad had been home from work eleven minutes. It was his third business idea since he took his shoes off. The kid at the end of the table kept eating.

“How much oil do you have?” Mom asked. “This much.” Chad held the bottle up to the light. “You showed Miles where to put the desk lamp,” she said. “He tried it. I saw the photo.” Chad sat down. “What if that was the business?” Mom slid him the empty plates. “Your first class is fully booked.”

# Find the part worth keeping

01 Start with the idea you brought. A service, a physical product and a creative project can all become brands. Write down what you plan to make, who asked for something like it and why the thought has stayed with you. Those are three different clues.

02 Look for a choice you care about even when nobody sees it. Chad likes seeing what people can do with the tools already in the room. He would happily show Miles where the lamp goes, even if the photograph never gets posted. That conviction could guide a school, a workbook or a workshop.

03 Give the idea a boundary that fits life after work. What can you credibly deliver this month? Separate your enduring conviction from the first thing you build to express it. The first product can change while people still recognize what you stand for.

# What the two founders care about



**THE FACULTY / THE DIGITAL CASE**

NPC Faculty puts ordinary people in situations where they can choose their own mission. That belief explains why the fictional Dean teaches only occasionally and spends much of his time out trying things. A school that punished every detour would undermine its own premise. It also decides what the channel makes: short episodes that follow one person through a first step, not polished lectures.

**THE OLIVE-OIL PROJECT / THE PHYSICAL CASE**

An oil founder might believe that bringing something to dinner should make the host's evening easier. That conviction favors an easy-to-open bottle and a pairing people can serve immediately. It rules out elaborate preparation, even if an elaborate gift would photograph beautifully.

# Find the conviction

**FIRST DRAFT**

I want to sell olive oil online.

**SECOND DRAFT**

I want dinner guests to bring something the host can use the moment they arrive.

The first sentence gives you a category. The second helps you choose a bottle size, a sales occasion and a standard for packaging.

# Rescue one thing from the kitchen

Mom needs her table back. Chad can carry one idea out with him. Give your project the same constraint. Sort what you have, then choose one thing that survives a change of product.

**Keep: one belief**

**Change: the first product**

**Borrow: an existing resource**

**Drop: a costly distraction**

## This week I can express the same belief by...

# The lost-product test

Imagine that your first product disappears. The Faculty loses access to its animation files. The oil maker loses the gift box. What could each still do that would make the same people glad the brand exists?

Try it on your own project. Write a second way of delivering the same benefit within the hours you have. If the two ideas share only a color or a name, look again for the conviction behind them.

**WHERE AND WHEN I WILL TRY THIS**

# Your founding decision

### I started with this idea

### I want people to be able to do or feel this

### One decision I can already make because I believe that

**CHALLENGE MY DRAFT / PARTNER OR AI**

Here are my four choices from the canvas. Find a case where my belief is just a description of my product. Give me a different product that could express it. Ask which choice I would actually make.

**AI SHARPENS THE QUESTION. A PERSON ANSWERS IT.**

# That was Mission 1.

The full book has the other seven missions, the one-page brand brief, the Merch Lab with a worked tee example and a tear-out plan. 82 pages, as a fillable PDF and a print version with ruled lines.

Missions 2 to 8: the occasion that makes you relevant, your positioning and USP, a personality, a name and a visual cue, values as customer experience, what people think your brand is, and a brief someone else can use.

**GET THE FULL BOOK: https://npc-faculty.com/#enroll**

*Page numbers in the course map and in the cross-references refer to the full book.*