



Reputation and Image Management Foundation

A study guide to the Imagetude Body of Knowledge

FOUNDATION LEVEL

Companion to RIMBOK, the Reputation and Image Management Body of
Knowledge

The Imagetude Institute

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How to use this book

This book introduces the Imagetude approach in nine short chapters. It keeps the academic character of RIMBOK but explains each idea in simpler words, shows it in a drawing, and leaves the detail to RIMBOK.

Every chapter has Learning Objectives with a key idea and terms, the text with figures and cases (boxes marked Remember, Warning and Example point to what matters most), a one-page summary called Chapter at a glance, practice questions with answers and reasons, and Further reading.

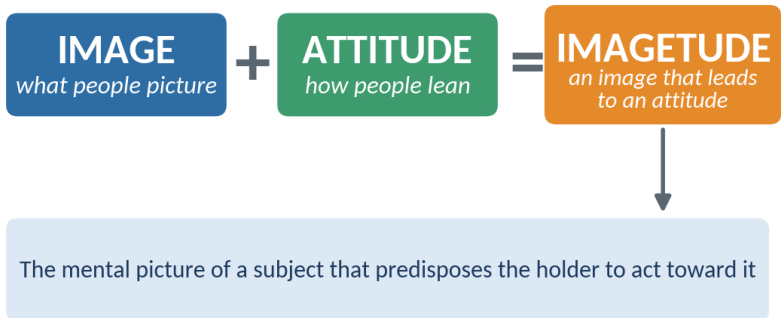
The chapters build on each other. Chapters 1 and 2 explain what an Imagetude is and why it matters. Chapters 3 and 4 explain messages. Chapters 5 and 6 explain the pyramid and the components. Chapter 7 places the Imagetude in strategy, and Chapters 8 and 9 introduce the method (CATASPACE) and the observatory (RAIO). Chapters 7 to 9 give the idea and the vocabulary only; the full treatment is in RIMBOK.

CHAPTER

1

What Is an Imagetude

The image that leads to an attitude



Learning Objectives

After studying this chapter you will be able to:

- Explain why the word "image" has many meanings and which one this book uses.
- Define the Imagetude and explain how the word is formed.
- Distinguish the Imagetude from corporate identity and from reputation.
- Name and describe the main parties: owner, subject, category, holder, developer, consultant and anti-image developer.
- Tell a positive Imagetude from a negative one, and explain the Imagetude-glue.
- List the kinds of subjects that can have an Imagetude and the main characteristics of any Imagetude.



Key idea

An Imagetude is not a decoration and not a prestige. It is the picture a person holds of a subject, and it decides how that person leans toward the subject. It always forms, whether or not the owner takes care of it.

Terms you will meet

Imagetude – an image that leads to an attitude.

Owner – who wants the image built. **Subject** – what the image is about. **Holder** – anyone who has formed the image. **Glue** – emotional messages that keep the image stable.

1.1 Many meanings of the word "image"

In everyday language the word image is used for many different things. In information technology it may be a picture file such as JPEG or GIF, or a disk image, which is a copy of everything stored on a device. In daily life it may mean appearance, etiquette, prestige, or the way a person presents himself or herself.

None of these meanings is the subject of this book. The image we study is the one that can lead to an attitude. We call it the Imagetude. When the words "image" or "mental image" appear in this book without further explanation, they refer only to the Imagetude.

Remember

An Imagetude is not prestige, etiquette or appearance. It is the complex perception that a person holds of a specific subject.

1.2 The Imagetude defined

Imagetude is a portmanteau word, a blend of Image and Attitude. People always form an image of a new subject. With time, evidence and experience the image grows in their feelings and in their way of thinking until it becomes an attitude. This is why the image leads to an attitude.

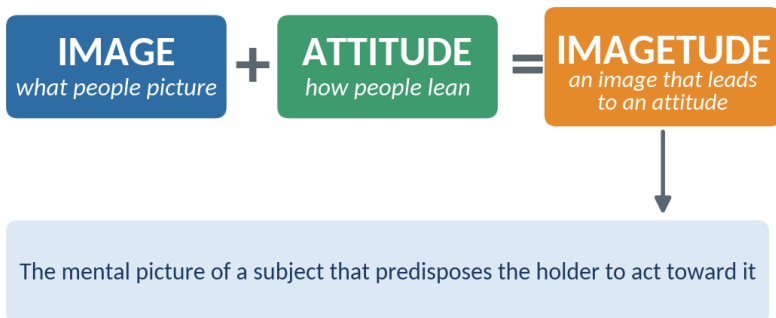


Figure 1.1 Imagetude: the blend of image and attitude

Definition

The Imagetude is the composite perception that a stakeholder holds of a subject (a product, service, organization, person or concept), formed through direct and indirect experience and communication, which predisposes that stakeholder toward a particular attitude and behavior toward the subject.

The human mind holds an Imagetude of every subject it knows. It is recalled simply by bringing the subject to mind. When you remember a famous actor, you recall the Imagetude you formed of that person. The same happens when you think of a product, when you read the phrase "made in France", or even when you recall a feeling such as love.

An Imagetude is more than a mental picture. It is shaped by three kinds of messages, rational, psychological and behavioral. For this reason it is not a purely rational perception, and for this reason it leads to an attitude.

The image grows day by day until it becomes an Imagetude

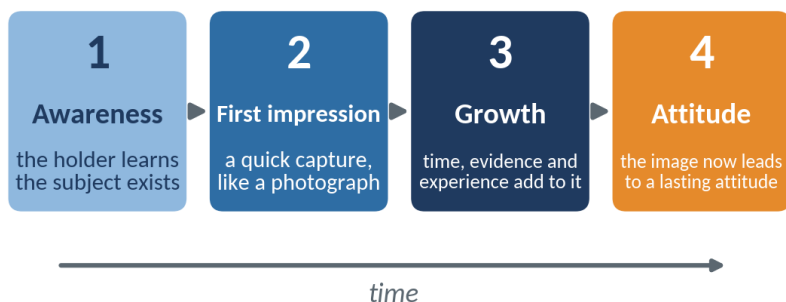


Figure 1.2 How an image grows into an Imagetude

1.3 The Imagetude and its neighbors

Two neighboring ideas are often confused with the Imagetude.

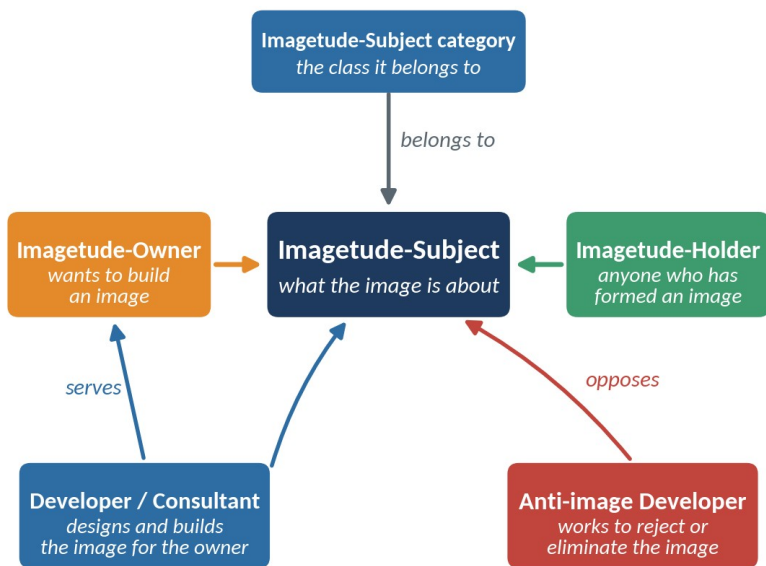
- **Corporate identity** concerns what an organization is and how it presents itself, through its name, logo and statements (Balmer & Greyser, 2006). The organization controls it.
- **Reputation** is the cumulative evaluation of an organization, built up over time.

The Imagetude, in contrast, is held by the audience, so it is not under the direct control of the organization. Many writers separate the immediate image from the cumulative reputation. This book treats them as one framework, because in practice the first impression and the long-term evaluation cannot

be separated, particularly in a crisis (Elshorbagy, 2026). The Imagetude is the Institute's term for this integrated perception, with stress on its result: an image that leads to an attitude.

1.4 The parties and the key terms

Every Imagetude involves the same parties. Learning their names makes the rest of the book easy, because the same terms are used in every chapter.



Everyone who knows the subject becomes a holder, whether the owner plans it or not

Figure 1.3 The parties of an Imagetude

Imagetude-Owner	Whoever wants to build an image: the owner of an organization, of an idea, or the author of a book.
Imagetude-Subject	What the image is about: an organization, a concept such as health, a habit such as smoking, or the manufacturing of a country.
Subject category	The class the subject belongs to. For a company it is a business category; for a religion it is religion; for "plug and play" it may be hardware technology.
Imagetude-Holder	You, me or anyone who has formed an image of the subject. An image starts with awareness that the subject exists.
Imagetude-Developer	The person or organization that works to build the image: it measures the current image, joins in building the strategy, applies CATASPACE and supervises the messages.
Imagetude Consultant	The person or organization that designs the Imagetude and its strategy, and supervises the application of CATASPACE.
Anti-image Developer	The person or organization that opposes the subject and works to eliminate its image, using the same tools as the developer.

The category of the subject should not be confused with the audience category. The first is the class of the subject; the second is the group of receivers to whom the messages are sent.

Case: the deli in the clinic

Residents refuse to buy sandwiches from a deli inside a clinic, although the food is good. The deli is the subject, the residents are the holders, and the image comes from the place, not from the food: they link hospitals with sickness. The Imagetude does not always need a rational reason.

1.5 Positive and negative Imagetudes

An image can be positive or negative, and the negative one is still an Imagetude. The Imagetude-type tells us whether the pyramid is built in the normal way, toward adoption, or as an overturned pyramid, toward rejection. A ministry of health that wants people to reject smoking builds an overturned pyramid for the subject "smoking", which belongs to the category of bad habits. Chapter 5 explains both pyramids.

Whatever its type, a strong Imagetude needs emotional messages. These form the Imagetude-glue:

the emotional messages that make the image stronger and more stable, so that rational messages alone cannot easily change it. Research on memory points the same way, because emotional memories tend to last longer than memories of ordinary details (Kuriyama et al., 2010). Marketers who send only rational messages seldom reach a strong image.

Finally, the owner should not leave the Imagetude to chance. If the owner does not form it, the image is still built, by inheritance, by competitors, by opponents or by anyone else.

Warning

Three mistakes damage an Imagetude: over-polishing, which means sending messages that do not match the reality of the product; hiding defects until the customer finds them; and not measuring, because what is not measured cannot be improved.

1.6 What can have an Imagetude?

Any subject, object, person or topic can have an Imagetude.



Figure 1.4 Kinds of Imagetude-subjects

Example: democracy

For many people the Imagetude of democracy means justice, while the original meaning of the word is that people govern themselves. Both meanings are good, but they are not identical. The holder's image can differ from the dictionary meaning.

1.7 Characteristics of an Imagetude

Seven characteristics should be kept in mind whenever an Imagetude is formed.

Characteristic	What it means
Influenced by the environment	Culture, knowledge and religion affect how an image forms.
Needs no justification	It may be psychological, even unreasonable, as in the deli in the clinic.
The first impression lasts	The first encounter colors how later information is read (Asch, 1946).
Serious and influential	It has a strong effect on the behavior of the audience.
Partial and biased	The closer one is to the subject, the less clearly one sees it. Owners and holders therefore see different images.
A quick capture	It starts like a photograph, because people do not wait to analyze the subject.
Has components	It is not only rational. Rational, psychological and behavioral factors all shape it.

Chapter 1 at a glance

Imagetude	Image + attitude: an image that leads to an attitude.
Not	Prestige, etiquette, appearance, a picture file or a disk image.
Parties	Owner, subject (and its category), holder, developer, consultant, anti-image developer.
Types	Positive (normal pyramid) or negative (overturned pyramid).
Glue	Emotional messages that make the image stable.
Subjects	Persons, organizations, concepts, governments, habits, countries and more.
Features	Environment-driven, needs no justification, lasting first impression, influential, partial, quick, has components.

Practice questions

Choose the best answer. The answers are on the next page.

1. The term “Imagetude” is a blended word.

Which two words does it combine?

- A) Image and Attitude
- B) Image and Attribute
- C) Impression and Attitude
- D) Image and Latitude

2. When the words 'image' or 'mental image' appear in this book, what do they refer to?

- A) Any visual representation of the subject
- B) Only the Imagetude
- C) The appearance and presentation of the organization
- D) The immediate impression as opposed to the cumulative evaluation

3. A manager describes what her company is and how it presents itself through its name, logo and statements. Which concept is she describing?

- A) Corporate identity
- B) The Imagetude
- C) A unique selling proposition
- D) A perceptual map

4. Nadia, the author of a new management book, is working to build an image for that book. In the book's terminology, what is Nadia?

- A) Imagetude-Subject
- B) Imagetude-Holder
- C) Imagetude-Owner
- D) Imagetude Consultant

5. A road-safety agency runs a campaign to build a negative image of texting while driving. Which element is the Imagetude-Subject?

- A) The road-safety agency running the campaign
- B) The segment of young drivers the agency targets
- C) The habit of texting while driving
- D) The drivers who receive the campaign messages

6. Who is an Imagetude-Holder?

- A) Only the person who owns the Imagetude-Subject
- B) The person who works to eliminate the Imagetude-Subject
- C) The person who designs the Imagetude strategy
- D) Anyone who has formed an image of some Imagetude-Subject

7. What does the Imagetude-Type indicate?

- A) Whether the messages used are internal or external to the organization
- B) Whether the image pyramid is normal (positive) or overturned (negative)
- C) Whether the owner is a for-profit company or a nonprofit organization
- D) Whether the holder is aware or unaware of the subject's existence

8. A new fintech app has a glitchy launch week. Months later it is flawless, yet users still read its new features as unreliable. Which characteristic does this illustrate?

- A) Imagetude has components that can be rational, psychological or behavioral, as the book notes.
- B) Imagetude is partial and biased, since holders know the subject only in part.
- C) Imagetude does not always need a justification and may even be irrational in origin.
- D) The first impression is long-lasting and colors the interpretation of later information.

9. A speaker claims that Imagetude concerns only commercial products. Which reply matches the book?

- A) It concerns only persons and organizations, because only these can act and so be judged by holders in the market.
- B) It concerns only subjects that have a physical form, because holders cannot form a mental image of anything abstract.
- C) It concerns only products and organizations, because only these have owners able to plan messages and measure results.
- D) An Imagetude can concern any subject, object, person or topic, including organizations, governments, habits and countries.

10. The owner of a family bakery chain decides not to manage the chain's Imagetude at all. What does the book say will happen to the image?

- A) It will be formed only by customers' own direct experience of the bakeries' products and service
- B) It will still be built, whether by inheritance, competitors, opponents or anyone else
- C) It will stop forming until customers have gathered rational evidence about the chain
- D) It will remain blank and unformed until the owner starts a deliberate image strategy

Answers to the practice questions

- 1. A** The book defines Imagetude as a blend of Image and Attitude: an image that grows with time, evidence and experience until it becomes an attitude. The other options are not the book's derivation.
- 2. B** The book states that these words do not carry their general meaning but refer only to the Imagetude.
- 3. A** The book says corporate identity concerns what an organization is and how it presents itself.
- 4. C** The Imagetude-Owner can be the owner of an idea or the author of a book who is building an image for it; the book itself is the Imagetude-Subject.
- 5. C** When a negative image of a habit is being built, the habit itself is the Imagetude-Subject; the agency is the owner and the drivers are holders or audience segments.
- 6. D** The book defines the holder as you, me or anybody else who has formed an image of some subject. The owner, consultant and anti-image developer are other roles.
- 7. B** The Imagetude-Type distinguishes positive images (normal pyramid) from negative images (overturned pyramid).
- 8. D** Impressions formed at first encounter tend to persist and color how later information is interpreted.
- 9. D** The book states that an Imagetude can concern any subject, object, person or topic, and lists several types.
- 10. B** The book states that the process of image formation will not stop if the owner neglects it; the owner should not leave the Imagetude to chance.

These questions are drawn from the Imagetude question bank (Foundation level). Each is answered in the text of this chapter.

Further reading

- Asch, S. E. (1946). Forming impressions of personality. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 41(3), 258–290.
- Balmer, J. M. T., & Greyser, S. A. (2006). Corporate marketing: Integrating corporate identity, corporate branding, corporate communications, corporate image and corporate reputation. *European Journal of Marketing*, 40(7/8), 730–741.
- Kuriyama, K., Soshi, T., Fujii, T., & Kim, Y. (2010). Emotional memory persists longer than event memory. *Learning & Memory*, 17(3), 130–133.

End of free sample

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The full edition is available from the Imagetude Institute.

imagetude.com/books