

Anna Wintour

Anna WINTOUR

Teaches Creativity and Leadership

MasterClass

Introduction

JOURNALISM IS IN ANNA WINTOUR'S BLOOD.

From the time she was a teenager in London, her father, Charles Wintour, longtime editor of the British newspaper *The Evening Standard*, would consult with her on how to make the paper more appealing to a younger demographic. She began her career in 1970 as an editorial assistant at *Harper's & Queen* then moved to New York in 1975 and worked for the American edition of *Harper's Bazaar* before becoming fashion editor of *New York* magazine in 1980.

In 1983, when she was only 33 years old, Anna was hired by Alexander Liberman, Artistic Director of Condé Nast, as Creative Director of American *Vogue* under then Editor-in-Chief, Grace Mirabella. Shortly after, Anna returned to England to become Editor-in-Chief of British *Vogue*, only to return to New York in 1987 to take over *House & Garden*. Less than a year later, she became Editor-in-Chief of American *Vogue*, a position she's now held for more than 30 years.

In 2013, Anna was appointed artistic director of Condé Nast, meaning she oversees the creative direction of all of the titles in the company's portfolio except for *The New Yorker* and is involved in corporate decision-making, such as shifts in digital strategies and brand expansions

or contractions. Most recently, in 2019, Anna was named Global Content Advisor—in this new role she assumes oversight of *Vogue* International, a central hub that creates digital content for *Vogue* titles around the world. She also will advise the executive leadership team on global content opportunities and act as a resource to Editors-in-Chief and editorial talent worldwide.

Anna received her Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 2008, and in 2017 she received her Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire. She also received the French Légion d'Honneur in 2011. Over the years Anna has lent her name, resources, and time to many philanthropic endeavors, including the CFDA/*Vogue* Fashion Fund, Youth Anxiety Center at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, and God's Love We Deliver. However, it's her enduring commitment to the Metropolitan Museum of Art that's sure to be a leading pillar of her legacy. In 2014, then First Lady Michelle Obama personally performed the ribbon cutting at the opening of the Anna Wintour Costume Center. Anna serves as a trustee of the museum, and she has raised more than \$231 million for the Costume Institute through her reinvention of its annual gala.

Welcome to Anna Wintour's MasterClass.

Getting the Work Done: Anna's Management Tips

ANNA'S TIPS

Hire and build a great team

Build a system for keeping track of your work

Give feedback quickly and be direct

Don't micromanage

Be thoughtful about how you run meetings and why

“NOT EVERYONE IS GOING TO AGREE WITH YOU.”

Anna believes that once you accept this and resolve to stay true to your own vision, you can be a better leader and manager. Having strength of conviction and communicating your point of view with clarity and decisiveness is the core component of Anna's leadership style. This applies both to what *Vogue* shares with its audience as well as to how Anna interacts with her team. Hiring team members who are self-reliant and diverse in their way of thinking and observing the world is key and allows Anna to delegate confidently and trust those working for her.

If you trust your team, you can avoid micro-managing. This doesn't mean Anna isn't detail-oriented—she reads every word that goes into the magazine and approves every look for fashion stories—but she also empowers her editors to make decisions on her and the brand's behalf.

In this chapter Anna advises on how to hire and how to communicate clearly and directly. She also explains her daily routine and how to be most efficient with your time. Anna is hyper-organized and scheduled, which allows her to remain responsive and available to her team.

HOW ANNA GETS IT DONE

MORNING PERSON

Anna wakes up between 4 a.m. and 5 a.m. and reads the British and American newspapers (*The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Guardian*), looks at Twitter and Instagram, exercises (usually tennis), responds to emails, and mentally maps out her day.

MEETING MINUTES

Arriving at the office between 8 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., Anna's day typically consists of various meetings ranging in size and intimacy, from one-on-ones with editors in her office to fashion and features meetings with up to 40 people. Anna prefers small meetings—they tend to be most efficient—but larger meetings are an important time for everyone to get on the same page.

OUT AND ABOUT

Throughout the day Anna will often have meetings outside of the office, at the Met or designers' studios. Even so, she makes a point of responding quickly to emails and queries from her entire *Vogue* team to keep things moving forward.

THE "TAKE HOME BAG"

You'll need a system for staying on top of things that works for you. Anna, for example, has the "take home bag": At the end of each day, the take home bag is filled with a variety of things that need Anna's feedback or approval, including "the book," a mock-up of the issue that is currently in production. Anna goes through the book every night and comments on it with Post-it notes. She then goes over her notes with the art department and editors the next morning. The take home bag will also include drafts of articles for upcoming issues, pitches for future stories, photographer or stylist portfolios, invitations, and scheduling questions.

BUILDING A STRONG TEAM

"You are nothing without a good team."

DIVERSIFY

When it comes to building your business, your team should be as diverse as possible—different backgrounds, experiences, ages, and opinions. Hire with the goal of covering your blind spots: Surround yourself with people who will inform the judgment calls you make and the content you put out.

FIND A TEAM YOU TRUST

Find a self-starter: someone who can make decisions on your behalf and who's going to be a good ambassador for you and your business. Groom them to be collaborators by empowering them to make leadership decisions on their own. You're investing time and resources in this person, so consider their potential for longevity at your company.

WEEKLY MEETINGS AT VOGUE

FASHION

Everyone who works in fashion (about 40 people across the title) meets to go over the fashion schedule and discuss general updates, recent collections, changes in the industry, trends, and any other fashion-related news.

SCHEDULING

A smaller group of fashion, features, and art editors meet weekly to discuss any upcoming fashion and feature stories for the next few issues. These stories go in the “well,” or middle of the magazine (where the longer articles and the multi-page fashion photoshoots reside). Scheduling is perhaps the most important meeting of the week: It confirms that everyone—print editors, digital editors, social media managers, video producers—is operating in sync. Whether they’re discussing a photographer’s availability for a story or who the best team would be for a cover shoot, this smaller meeting allows all topics to be discussed openly and resolved swiftly. When planning your own meetings, focus on what the goal of the gathering is, then plan the meeting’s size and schedule accordingly.

WEB

Each section editor (Fashion, Runway, Culture, Living, Beauty) goes over what stories they have slated for the coming week. Up to 200 stories are published on Vogue.com across all verticals each week, from hot takes on pop culture (“The First Trailer for Joaquin Phoenix’s *Joker* Is the Stuff of Nightmares”) to politics (“12 Things to Watch for During the Democratic Debates”) to makeup coverage (“The Best Cream Blushes to Wake Up Your Skin This Fall”). Less than 5 percent of those stories come from the magazine, and the remaining 95 percent are original content.

FEATURES

Features and web meetings are held back-to-back, which means that print and digital section leads are present for both. This allows for seamless integration and collaboration between the magazine, the website, the social team, and the video team, which has become increasingly important as more and more readers are consuming their media digitally. All teams work closely together and lean on one another heavily, with the web team publishing the print magazine’s articles—often before the print issue comes out in an effort to tease a high-profile story or cover—and the print editors considering which pieces will perform well online. The executive editor, Anna’s number two in the features department, leads the features meeting. This consists of going over the features schedule and addressing the timing of upcoming stories, reviewing where writers are with their deadlines, and discussing future story ideas.

Starting Out: Finding Your Voice and Succeeding

ANNA'S TIPS

Learn. Watch. Work hard.

Get off your phone and be inspired by the world

Be daring and take risks

Be thoughtful when you ask for help

WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR CAREER, it's important to know what you want and have a strong sense of your goals. But that shouldn't prevent you from experimenting. Sometimes the best way to discover what you want to do is by doing things you don't want to do. Anna started out as an editorial assistant at *Harper's & Queen* in London, where she was exposed to every facet of the editorial process due to the publication's small staff and tight budgets. This range of experience helped her discover the roles she was passionate about and well-suited for as well as the ones she wasn't inclined toward (such as styling fashion shoots).

The freedom and flexibility that came with working for an understaffed publication made Anna feel empowered to make bold editorial

“Try different things—it's almost more important to find out what you don't like rather than what you do like.”

decisions. Her confidence to push limits was born out of never having anyone tell her “no” in those early years, and she recommends that you approach decision-making with that same sensibility. If you are at the beginning of your career, think about how you can use your early jobs to diversify your skill set, build the confidence to take creative risks, learn as much as possible, and, bottom line, try everything.

Anna emphasizes the importance of working for others at the beginning of your career rather than trying to make it on your own. Finding a leader whom you admire and, ideally, look to as a mentor is as important as finding a job that appeals to you. Do your research, and try to work for someone who will push you and help you develop into a future leader in your field.

You may not be able to choose who you work for, but you can keep your wants in mind when you are interviewing and applying. Look for jobs in which you'll be under someone you respect—you may not want to be an assistant, but the opportunity to support an industry leader

whose career you hope to emulate may lead to other opportunities. And even if your boss does not become your mentor, glean as much insight and knowledge from them as you can and take that information with you into your next position.

FINDING YOUR VOICE

HEADS-UP

Don't keep your head buried in your phone or computer. Listen to others, and explore the real world.

OVERTIME

Your work and life interests should intersect enough so that they begin to inform each other: When you're out of the office, be thinking about the ways the book you're reading or the film you're watching can inform your work; conversely, when you're at work, try drawing on inspirations from the other areas of your life.

SEARCH PARTY

Always be on the lookout for things that interest you and know that these things can come in the most unexpected places—from an Off Broadway show to an exhibition at a gallery you wandered into.

INTERVIEWING FOR A JOB

TELL THE TRUTH

Let's say you know that your interviewer loves the theater. Unless you *really* love the theater and can rattle off your favorite shows, don't try to impress him or her by discussing subjects that you're not actually interested in. Chances are you'll end up sounding disingenuous.

BE PREPARED

Do your research about the job you are applying for and the person you are interviewing with. Know what your goal for the interview is and what you think you would contribute to the position you are interviewing for.

BE ON TIME

In fact, be early—it's the best way to make a good impression.

BE YOURSELF

Authenticity is key— whoever is interviewing you will know if you are posturing. Be direct and very clear about what it is you want to do with your life.

LEARN MORE: AHEAD OF HER TIME

Katharine Graham was one of the first female publishers of a national daily newspaper. She led her family's newspaper, *The Washington Post*, for more than two decades, fearlessly overseeing the publication as it broke the news of the Pentagon Papers and the Watergate scandal. She was the first female CEO of a Fortune 500 company. In addition to being a formidable business leader, Graham was a leader of Washington society and a renowned hostess.

Recommended Reading and Viewing

.....

Personal History, by Katharine Graham

The Post, directed by Steven Spielberg

All the President's Men, by

Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein

All the President's Men, directed by

Alan J. Pakula

Inside *Vogue*: Leading With a Vision

ANNA'S TIPS

Own and be clear about your vision

Lead your team with a strong point of view

Study the world and absorb what is happening culturally

Be open to hearing others' perspectives

Give your team members projects they are passionate about

IN ADDITION TO GENERATING \$1.9 TRILLION in revenue annually, the global fashion industry is a vital reflection of our culture and has the ability to capture the zeitgeist in a unique way. It is up to *Vogue* to place fashion within the context of the wider world. This chapter outlines the trajectory of a fashion editorial at *Vogue*, from a collection's debut on the runway to the fashion meeting in which editors discuss how best to interpret the themes of the collection to the final clothing choices for both digital and print shoots.

Anna and her team focus on the intersection of fashion and culture, but no matter your industry, it's important to encourage the people who

“Watch the world, study shifts in culture, and listen so you can make choices that speak to what is happening in a wider context. That, to me, is what a leader does.”

work for you to approach the world with a critical eye. For Anna, this means sending her writers and editors out into the world, where they can do boots-on-the-ground reporting and observe

and react to what they see. They then bring those experiences and sensibilities back to their work and decide if and how something should be covered in the magazine. *Vogue* focuses on the world of fashion, but the lessons for

a creative leader are the same no matter what your business' focus is. Keeping your eyes and ears open to the world around you and encouraging your deputies to do the same is an essential quality for a leader in any industry.

FROM RUNWAY TO RUN-THROUGH: THE EVOLUTION OF A FASHION STORY

FASHION FEEDBACK

A fashion meeting is held weekly at *Vogue*, but the most important fashion meetings take place immediately following the September and February month-long line-up of fashion shows across the globe. In addition to New York, London, Milan, and Paris, *Vogue* now sends editors to emerging fashion capitals such as Lagos, Nigeria, Tbilisi, Georgia, and Tokyo, Japan. When Anna and the editors return from the various shows, she asks everyone to send ideas for future *Vogue* fashion stories inspired by what they have seen on the runways (beauty trends that have emerged, up-and-coming designers, particularly visible models, etc.). The team will have seen over 150 collections between all of the shows, so this is a way to distill a surfeit of information and make sure nothing important is lost. If you're having to manage many creative outputs as part of your job, it's essential to find a system for keeping track of all the information you gather and then finding the best way to digest that information.

“It’s very important that I lead my team with a point of view and that we absorb and reflect what is happening in fashion and the larger culture. But it’s also very, very important to listen to other perspectives. I think one’s final direction and point of view is always stronger when you have listened to your team and to those around you.”

POINT OF VIEW

Anna goes over all the ideas with her team. Together they decide which stories make sense for which platform—whether a story should go on the website or into a video, whether it’s framed as social-first, whether it should be held for forthcoming issues, or whether it merits a combination of these approaches. Scheduling is also discussed, as well as which editor is handling what. This is when Anna and her team decide how *Vogue* will digest and reflect what was seen on the runways and what their point of view will be in their depiction. The general story ideas are chosen based on the ideas previously sent to Anna by each editor, then the details are fleshed out based on the feedback from this meeting. It is a lively, collaborative effort that encourages discussion and creative thinking. No matter what industry you’re a leader in, it’s crucial that you don’t just regurgitate what you see, hear, or read. Rather, take in that information, cogitate on and process it, and then decide what it means. This will result in projecting a unique point of view.

RUN-THROUGH

After the fashion stories have been assigned to fashion editors, the fashion market team will collaborate to put together “boards,” which feature images of select looks from the collections. Not unlike a mood board, these also feature visual inspirations for the story, including reference images from other shoots, photos of the location, and pictures of the model. The last step before the shoot is the “run-through.” In the days leading up to the shoot, after the concept and boards have been approved, the fashion editor will come into Anna’s office with a rack of the selected clothing pieces and photos of the models or celebrities in each look (if their schedule permits, most models or celebrities will come in to the *Vogue* offices for a fitting ahead of the shoot to make sure the clothes fit and look the way the editors and Anna want them to). The attendees typically include the fashion editor (in this scene, Alex Harrington), creative Director, Raúl Martínez, sometimes a fashion assistant or market editor, and, of course, Anna. Anna is unerringly direct and clear in feedback. That is always in balance with the creative decisions she empowers her team to make. Similarly, it’s important to be clear with yourself and your team on which decisions need your final call. Clarity, straight-forwardness, and honesty are traits that are of critical importance for any leader.

LEARN MORE: FASHION EDITOR VS. STYLIST —————

These terms can be interchangeable, but that isn't always the case. A fashion editor is responsible for the look and mood of the shoot, be it for *Vogue* or *Vogue.com*; he or she chooses a photographer, the clothing, the location, and the models. A stylist will sometimes do all of this, but the term can also refer to someone who is choosing the clothing for a digital or print shoot, or possibly a public appearance.

Recommended Reading and Viewing

-
- In Vogue: The Editor's Eye,***
directed by Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato
- Vogue: The Editor's Eye,***
by Eve MacSweeney and Hamish Bowles
- Grace: A Memoir,***
by Grace Coddington
- Grace: Thirty Years of Fashion at Vogue,***
by Grace Coddington
- Stoppers: Photographs From My Life at Vogue,***
by Phyllis Posnick
- Point of View: Four Decades of Fashion,***
by Tonne Goodman

Editorial Decision-Making

ANNA'S TIPS

Always try to create something original that has meaning

Provoke a conversation

Make mistakes (they're inevitable) and then learn from them

Let data inform you, not lead you

DURING HER EARLY YEARS AT VOGUE, Anna was seated next to a businessman on a transatlantic flight who explained how much he loved the magazine because of its elegance and stylishness—for example, he said, you would never see Madonna on the cover of *Vogue*. (Madonna was seen as edgy and risqué, not elegant and well-behaved like the typical “*Vogue* girl.”) His comment stayed with Anna; a few years later, it was one of the things that pushed her to do away with the rule book and instead respond to a cultural moment: In May 1989, Madonna got a cover.

The same would be true 25 years later with Kim Kardashian and Kanye West, who graced the cover in April 2014. *Vogue*, and specifically Anna, endured a lot of criticism for that decision.

The shoot featured Kim in various wedding dresses and hit newsstands a few weeks before the pair’s Tuscan wedding. The cover was a reaction to a specific moment in the zeitgeist, thus keeping *Vogue* at the center of a larger cultural conversation.

Conversely, Anna admits that some bold choices may lead to critiques that are warranted. In August 2017, she made the decision to put model Gigi Hadid and her then boyfriend, Zayn Malik, on the cover, with Gigi in menswear and Zayn in what some would consider more traditionally women’s clothing. The Internet took umbrage with the fact that Anna chose a heterosexual couple—rather than a gender-fluid couple—for such a shoot. Anna noted the criticism, and *Vogue* apologized. It is of vital importance to own your mistakes.

Over the course of your career, you'll inevitably have to decide if and when to make bold creative choices. Anna outlines her strategies on when to break the rules and do the unexpected.

There is a Goldilocks element to toeing the line between risk and reward, conversation-starting controversy, and blatant offense. For example, putting runway images on a cover in 1993 was a major risk that Anna later admitted was a mistake. By understanding the larger implications of certain decisions, you can

evaluate whether those decisions are the right call for your brand. Anna recalls something Ralph Lauren once said to her about his company: "I don't want to be too hot, and I don't want to be too cold," he said. "I just want to be part of the conversation." Anna has always worked hard to make sure *Vogue* remains an integral topic of discussion. If you want to be an influential creative leader who makes their mark on the world, you will have to do the same in your own work.

TAKING SHAPE: FROM PITCH TO PRESS ---

INSPIRATION AND IDEAS

Anna shows how important it is to be both generative and reactive by inviting you into the *Vogue* features meeting as the team is planning for the March 2019 issue. After observing the runways overseas, the team returns from Europe inspired to focus on the power of the West Coast, and specifically California. The editors then synthesize fashion trends they saw on the runway with much bigger themes and cultural currents: Seeing a rush of neoprene and tie-dye on the runway, for example, evoked thoughts about the importance of surf culture, seaweed foraging, sustainability, and the emergency crews who responded to the California wildfires. With all these subjects being considered, the issue's focus and digital coverage turns to California's impact in a number of realms, from art and politics to tech and fashion.

PIECING THE PUZZLE TOGETHER

After story pitches have been approved by Anna, she discusses with the rest of her team whom the best person would be to write, photograph, and style each story and whether the story should debut in the magazine or run immediately online. The editors will then work with the individual writers, and Anna will give her feedback on the edits; the same goes for the fashion editors and photographers. Once the images and the articles come in, they are laid out in miniature on a four-by-six-foot magnetic board so Anna can see how all the images and articles look together. Getting the right mix of information is as important as the individual stories. If something feels off in any way, a story might be held for a later issue, or an image will be swapped for a different one. There will always be data and numbers to help inform how best to appeal to your target demographic, but Anna believes that trusting your instincts and having a passion for your audience is vital. It's better to be engaged in the world around you and digest what you see than bury your head in spreadsheets. Both can be valuable, but it's your intuition and unique perspective that will distinguish you as a leader in your field. The *Vogue* features meeting is a great example of how your work needs to always reflect a bigger picture. As a creative leader, how does your work connect to the culture? Are you leading the conversation or playing catch-up?

LEARN MORE: KOURTING KONTROVERSY —————

Anna knew that *Vogue*'s cover featuring Kim Kardashian and Kanye West would ruffle feathers, so she took precautions to keep it a secret until publication (often the identity of an upcoming cover subject can be leaked to the press before the issue's official publication date).

The Kardashian-West cover was divisive for a number of reasons: First, many loyal readers didn't feel as though it reflected the elegance for which *Vogue* has come to be known. (Think of it as a nouveau-Madonna cover.) In fact, many felt it was a betrayal by a title

they admired. Anna had to defend the magazine against criticism that it had devolved into *US Weekly*, going as far as publishing letters to the editor in the following issue with claims of readers being "speechless" and "disappointed." The media reaction was vicious: Magazines like *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* published snarky web posts about the choice, even though they would all go on to feature Kardashians on their covers. However, Anna and *Vogue* weathered the noise, and it has since become one of the most memorable issues in the magazine's recent history.

Executing a Vision: Transforming the Met Gala

ANNA'S TIPS

Build a vision others can believe in

Nothing extraordinary happens overnight. Great things take time.

Attention to detail is critical

Build excitement and think about how you can engage the widest possible audience

FOUNDED IN 1870, THE METROPOLITAN Museum of Art is one of the most famous museums in the world. Its Costume Institute, which focuses on fashion history and artistry, often finds itself in the spotlight thanks to its annual Costume Institute Benefit (you might know it as the Met Gala). What started as a midnight supper in 1948 has since turned into a massive fundraiser for the Institute's exhibitions and acquisitions; over the years, the gala has boasted co-chairs as famous as Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and socialite Patricia Buckley. In 1995, Oscar de la Renta and his wife, Annette, a trustee at the museum, approached Anna to ask if

she and *Vogue* would consider helping with the event. She accepted.

A quarter-century later, Anna has turned the Met Gala into the biggest event of the year, with celebrities and power brokers eager to attend.

Anna emphasizes that the event's growth did not happen overnight, noting that two of the most important qualities a leader can have are patience and diplomacy. Anna had her own ideas for the event, but

she knew she had to be patient and respectful in bringing those to fruition. If you're in the position to spearhead a branded event, Anna would encourage you to start by taking the long view, being patient with your partners, and proving the value you bring to the project.

“Sometimes a big vision and bold initiatives take time. Things do not happen overnight.”

GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO PERSEVERE —

OPPORTUNITIES COME IN UNEXPECTED WAYS

When Anna received the call from the de la Rentas, she never anticipated what she would be taking on or what it would become.

BEING A LEADER IS ABOUT RESPECTING OTHER LEADERS

The Met is a historic institution with a long history and a strong point of view. In order to bring about change in the way the Met Gala was produced, Anna had to be diplomatic: She brought partners together, listened to and understood everyone's goals, and collaboratively found a path forward.

Recommended Reading and Viewing

• • • • •

The First Monday in May, directed by Andrew Rossi
Vogue and the Metropolitan Museum of Art Costume Institute: Parties, Exhibitions, People, by Hamish Bowles
Diana Vreeland: The Eye Has to Travel, directed by Lisa Immordino Vreeland

The Power of an Image: Photographers and Models

ANNA'S TIPS

Gather references to communicate your vision

Take your audience on a journey

Don't be afraid to rise to a challenge

Choose models who have personality and presence

Be thoughtful about what your choices say about the message you want to communicate

Don't be cookie-cutter

GREAT PHOTOGRAPHERS HAVE THE POWER TO lend transcendent meaning to an image. As Anna says, “One looks to the great photographers—and to the great models who work with them—to give even more impact to the art of the fashion photograph, whether it’s through a narrative or through a still life or through a portrait.” Although Anna is specifically referring to the process of working with photographers who shoot for *Vogue*, the lessons apply to any creative leader: Identify and engage strong talent who understand you and your vision, and create work that has relevance and speaks to a moment.

Every issue of *Vogue* and every video, article, or visual portfolio that appears on *Vogue.com* is a study in creating the right mix of images, from political portraits to more whimsical fashion narratives shot abroad. The most important element of that mix is working with a variety of

photographers, each of whom brings their own point of view and aesthetic to the magazine. It’s also important to Anna to find photographers who are invested in representing the *Vogue* brand and who tell a story through their images: Their work should reflect a tangible cultural moment, but the best photographers know how to create an image that will still feel relevant years later.

The models who appear on the cover of *Vogue* and inside its pages symbolize the values of the magazine and the brand. They have to represent the current cultural moment but also be timeless arbiters of style. Anna explains that a model is not just a face and a figure; there has to be a soul and a spirit that shines through, and that is what makes someone a “*Vogue* girl.” Think hard about the sensibility and identity of your brand and the best person who can convey that to your audience through an image.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT FASHION PHOTOGRAPHER?

“USE EVERY SINGLE OPPORTUNITY TO HONE YOUR EYE”

Anna uses the young photographer Tyler Mitchell as an example of someone who used every opportunity to understand his own point of view and fashion’s point of view. When he was coming up, he’d photograph everything from events for Vogue.com to the line outside the Supreme store.

WORK YOUR WAY UP TO THE BIG LEAGUES

No assignment is too small when you are learning and building your portfolio. At 24 years old, and after working on smaller assignments for Vogue.com, Mitchell was asked to

photograph Beyoncé for the cover of Vogue’s September 2018 issue. Don’t write off a job just because you think it’s too small (or too big)—you never know what it may lead to.

KNOW WHAT YOU LIKE

Assemble a collection of images that speak to and move you. Once you have a sizable collection, you’ll start to identify themes and a shared sensibility, which will help hone your own aesthetic behind the lens.

BE BOLD

“We’re looking for somebody that takes pictures in a different kind of way,” says Anna, who looks for strength in an image as well as a quality that will allow it to resonate over time. As you

are refining your eye and point of view, try different types of photography and be as bold as possible. The more extreme your experimentation, the easier it is to identify the DNA of your imagery.

BE PREPARED

Annie Leibovitz, like Irving Penn before her, scrupulously prepares for photo shoots before she ever picks up her camera. She will always study her subjects beforehand, which could mean seeing the play they’re in or reading their latest book. Penn was the same: He’d spend time getting to know the subjects on set so that the atmosphere felt personal and intimate before the shooting began.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT CREATIVE LEADER?

“As a creative leader, the visual medium is so powerful, and photographs are often the most powerful tool to express your creativity, to help define your title, and reflect a moment in time.”

KNOW WHAT YOU’RE LOOKING FOR

When you’re looking for a photographer, it’s important to keep a collection of photos that inspire you. Reference those images when looking at photographers’ portfolios.

BALANCING ACT

There is a delicate balance between trusting the photographer’s vision but also impressing upon them the specific needs of your business. Stand firm in your creative convictions, lead boldly, and believe in the talent you hire.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT MODEL?

MORE THAN JUST A FACE

Models should convey the spirit of your brand. Their approach to the world should mirror yours. There are many ways to decide whether a model has the right sensibility for your content, be it print, video, or digital, but meeting them in person is one important step. A casual conversation face-to-face (or via FaceTime) can go a long way toward figuring out whether someone is the right fit. Ask them questions, and see for yourself whether they have strength of conviction and strong points of view.

STANDING FOR SOMETHING

Models often reflect the pulse of a certain time (think Kendall Jenner or Gigi Hadid today). It's important to find the person who encapsulates the current moment and who has a passion for what they do. It's also good if they have outside interests, hobbies, and opinions. You want someone whose spirit jumps off the page.

BE OPEN TO SOMEONE BREAKING THE MOLD

Some of the best models—Iman, Naomi Campbell, Ashley Graham—were the first of their kind in one way or another. Prescient editors saw the value in those models' uniqueness and highlighted it.

Recommended Reading

• • • • •

Irving Penn: A Career in Photography, by Colin Westerbeck, Colin Eisler, et al.

Horst P. Horst, by Susanna Brown

Richard Avedon: Photographs 1946–2004, by Michael Holm et al.

A Photographer's Life 1990–2005, by Annie Leibovitz

Evolving a Brand: A Look Back at Iconic *Vogue* Covers

ANNA'S TIPS

Make your mark, especially when starting a new role

Always keep your antennae attuned to cultural shifts

Trust your team and be open to surprises

Channel the cultural conversation around your work

Believe in your instincts and execute on them

People expect change

ANNA WALKS THROUGH SOME OF HER COVER

decisions from the past 30 years to illustrate how to make strong creative decisions and maintain the vitality of a historic brand without alienating your core audience.

“As a leader for your company, you will be tasked with making larger strategic creative choices that help evolve how the audience understands your brand. Your brand has to be at the core of all your creative decisions. What is it? What does it stand for? How do you move it forward?”

HOW TO MAKE BOLD CREATIVE DECISIONS

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

Anna's first American *Vogue* cover was very different from those that preceded it: The photo crop was wider; the model was not looking directly at the camera; the clothing had a casual sensibility, mixing a Christian Lacroix couture top with Guess jeans. In other words, it made a statement and spoke to what Anna wanted to convey, which was that fashion can be accessible, spontaneous, and fun. Ironically, that particular photo was never intended to be a cover. But as soon as Anna saw the image, she realized its potential and pivoted accordingly. When you are in a new position, it's important to find opportunities to communicate to others what your vision is and what type of leader you are going to be.

"YOU JUST HAVE TO LEAD FROM THE HEART." FOLLOW YOUR INSTINCTS.

For Anna's first September issue cover, in 1989, she featured Naomi Campbell in a sequined pantsuit because Anna felt Campbell "represented everything that was happening in fashion at that time." Some at Condé Nast questioned her decision—there was concern that an African American model would not sell well on newsstands—but Anna ignored them and followed her instincts.

BE GENERATIVE AND REACTIVE

In addition to creating new ideas and concepts that will set the cultural barometer, it is equally important to take stock of what is happening around you and react to it (as Anna did with an issue featuring items under \$500 when the economy was suffering in the '90s). Sometimes it's about working with the trends you are seeing culturally: Take, for instance, Anna's choice in the early aughts to start featuring celebrities rather than models on *Vogue*'s covers. At that time, actresses were starting to engage with fashion more and more, which is why Anna and her team felt they made sense as cover subjects. It then became cyclical. As celebrities saw their peers getting attention in a positive way from the fashion press, they themselves became more engaged with fashion and designers. It might be hard to imagine today, but back then it was considered somewhat radical to put Hollywood stars on the cover. Anna and the magazine received a lot of criticism and pushback, but she knew it was the right decision based on the wider influence celebrities were starting to have in popular culture.

"WHEN YOU COME ACROSS GREAT TALENT, LET THE MASTER LEAD." FIND GOOD COLLABORATORS.

Good collaborators can come in any form. For Anna, it is important to feature a cover subject who is eager and engaged with the process. She uses Sienna Miller and Lupita Nyong'o as examples of perfect subjects: Miller was game to traipse all over Rome in the fall collections despite a heat wave, and Nyong'o arrived to her fitting with mood boards and suggestions for featuring African designers. A fashion editor or photographer can also surprise you with their vision, as was the case when Irving Penn shot Nicole Kidman or Tonne Goodman turned Rihanna into a modern-day mermaid. Collaborating effectively can also mean accepting advice from people you trust, as was the case when Oscar de la Renta called Anna to suggest that she put then First Lady Hillary Clinton on the cover of the December 1998 issue.

DON'T GET STUCK IN YOUR OWN WAYS

Challenge yourself to consider whether there is a smarter way to be doing something. When *Vogue* began posting its cover stories online in 2010, there was concern that the website might "scoop" the print edition (and thus rob the magazine of newsstand sales). By experimenting with different timing, though, Anna and her team learned that there was great benefit in posting the cover online early because it created hype around the forthcoming issue and appealed to a wider audience.

LEARN MORE: HOW A VOGUE COVER IS SELECTED



Recommended Reading

.....

Vogue: The Covers, by Dodie Kazanjian

Anna and the editors discuss cover choices up to six months in advance and decide what each cover should be based on a variety of factors and questions:

- Who represents the culture right now, or who do you think *should* represent the culture right now?
- Who encapsulates this moment? Who is the person everyone is talking about or will be talking about?
- Who has interesting projects coming up that we are excited about and want to highlight?
- Who will be a good collaborator on both the shoot and for the interview?
- Who is a good representation of the *Vogue* woman today?

22

U.S. VOGUE COVERS BY THE NUMBERS: MOST FREQUENT COVER STARS

LAUREN HUTTON

25

CLAUDIA SCHIFFER

15

GISELE BÜNDCHEN

12

NICOLE KIDMAN

8

RIHANNA

5

BEYONCÉ

4

Designers: What It Takes to Succeed

ANNA'S TIPS

Have a strong point of view

Think outside the box

Have a consistent message

Find the right partner

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO BE A SUCCESSFUL fashion designer. Anna outlines how you can succeed in that business, whether it's by starting your own brand, working under another designer, or taking the reins at a historic fashion house.

“Try something that is the most extreme, that is the most creative, because when you're doing that, you get to the true heart of who you are.”

EVOLVING AS A DESIGNER AND BUILDING YOUR BRAND

KNOW WHAT YOU WANT

Not everyone has the same goals. Know yours, and stay true to them as you pursue success. Perhaps you want to be the next Ralph Lauren, and have stores in every city, and expand into home goods and even restaurants. Or maybe you want to make beautiful, unique clothes on an intimate scale, such as sisters Kate and Laura Mulleavy of Rodarte, whose ethereal, delicate dresses are prized as heirlooms because they are not mass-produced. Either way, pursue the avenues that will get you closer to your goals.

WORK FOR OTHERS

It may be appealing to launch your own brand immediately because you have a large social media following or have seen examples of others who have done it successfully. But most people will struggle without having the experience interning or apprenticing under an established designer or fashion industry leader.

GO BIG OR GO HOME

It is important to go as big and bold as possible, especially at the beginning of your career. Channel Anna during her *Harper's & Queen* days: Be fearless and extreme, because it will help you hone in on what's at the core of your brand. That passion and sensibility are what people will keep coming back to you for and identify as the heart of your brand.

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

Don't hold a fashion show just because everyone else is doing it. Hosting an intimate presentation in your home or filming a video of the collection might make more sense for your brand. Anna points out that video, rather than runway photos, is a great way to show how the clothes move and convey the personality of the pieces. Do what is right for you and your vision.

BREAK THE MOLD

When considering replacing a designer at a historic fashion house, either as the designer coming in or as the one hiring them, make sure you are not hiring a shadow of the departing designer. Instead of trying to find someone who will rigorously uphold the codes of the house, find the most brilliant designer available and allow them to break those codes and create new ones.

SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS

Many creatives are also business people. Identify your weaknesses, then hire people who excel in those areas. Make a five-year plan for the business, then use that as a blueprint as you tackle each step going forward.

A LOOK AT SOME OF FASHION'S BIGGEST NAMES

- Designer **TOM FORD** and business executive **DOMENICO DE SOLE** began their partnership when Ford was creative director of Gucci and De Sole was president and CEO of the brand. Together they launched Ford's eponymous brand in 2006.
- On a flight from Florida to New York, Lazaro Hernandez slipped Anna an airline napkin scribbled with his phone number and a message. She was so struck by his fearlessness that she helped arrange an internship for him at Michael Kors. When he partnered with his Parsons classmate Jack McCollough to create **PROENZA SCHOULER** (the maiden names of both designers' mothers), Anna supported them from the beginning, and they were the first winners of the CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund (CVFF) in 2004.
- **JOHN GALLIANO** is a British fashion designer who was creative director for Givenchy, Christian Dior, and his eponymous label. He now holds that title with Maison Margiela. Known for his opulent, narrative-rich collections, he was named British Designer of the Year four times and received an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 2001.
- When Frida Giannini left Gucci abruptly in 2015, speculation ran rampant on who would replace her. The industry was shocked when a little-known designer on the Gucci accessories team, **ALESSANDRO MICHELE**, was awarded the post. Even more shocking was how he completely turned the brand on its head, both subverting the codes of the fashion house but also reviving them in unique and unexpected ways.
- The Los Angeles-based design house **RODARTE** was founded by sisters Kate and Laura Mulleavy. The pair specialize in delicate, otherworldly dresses that evoke a beautiful shipwrecked mermaid.
- At only 24 years old, **ALEXANDER WANG** launched his eponymous label and became known for hipster basics—artfully cut T-shirts that models wore off duty, sexy-but-unfussy dresses. In 2012, Wang took over as creative director of Balenciaga. He stayed in that role for three years before turning his focus back to his own label full-time.

Spotting Designer Talent: CFDA/*Vogue* Fashion Fund

ANNA'S TIPS

When things feel dark, don't retreat. Engage and lead with a purpose.

Investing in your industry pays dividends

Nurture young talent, but don't be afraid to be honest with your advice

THROUGH ENGAGEMENT AND EMPATHY you can learn from tragedy and find unexpected ways of supporting the people in your community. September 11, 2001, fell at the start of New York Fashion Week. Naturally, all shows were canceled in the wake of the attacks. For many young designers, the cancellation of their show had drastic ramifications on their businesses, as many had spent all their money securing venues, production, and models. It was a situation that made Anna and her team realize the precariousness of many fledgling designers' businesses. As a result, Carolina Herrera opened her showroom to 10 young designers so they could present their collections. Herrera's gesture

“It was important to me to create the fund, because as a leader in the fashion industry, I felt that it was my responsibility to ensure the future of American fashion.”

inspired Anna to go to the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) and ask for its partnership in creating a fund to support emerging American designers in perpetuity.

As a leader in the fashion industry, Anna felt she had a responsibility to help buoy the next generation of designers. Discovering, advising, and bolstering emerging talent not only helps ensure the future of whatever industry you are in, but it can also inspire you and inform your own work.

The CFDA/*Vogue* Fashion Fund is both monetary—winners receive anything between \$150,000 and \$400,000—and advisory, with each winner being assigned an industry leader as a mentor. Each year there are 10 finalists

chosen from hundreds of applicants. The finalists go through a six-month period of site visits and challenges as well as presentations to a selection committee composed of industry leaders. The winner and two runners-up are announced at an awards gala in November.

Vogue helps to prepare the finalists for each of the challenges (creating a look inspired by, say, a favorite film or location) and then aids them in presenting their portfolio. All of the finalists are featured in the November issue of the magazine. The program has granted \$5.9 million to more than 35 fashion brands, including Rodarte, Proenza Schouler, Alexander

Wang, Altuzarra, Brock Collection, Tabitha Simmons, Prabal Gurung, Thom Browne, Derek Lam, 3.1 Phillip Lim, Thakoon, Jennifer Meyer, and Monique Péan, and its success has even inspired a number of similar global initiatives.

The CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund is an important example of how crucial it is to think beyond yourself in order to be an influential leader and create a lasting legacy. How are you helping support your industry and your professional community? How are you helping foster the next generation? Consider what your responsibilities are beyond your specific role.

ANNA'S ADVICE FOR FUTURE CFDA APPLICANTS ———

BE CLEAR

It never helps you to obfuscate or exaggerate the state of your business. The CFDA fund is an opportunity to help you grow, but applicants should be clear and honest about their situation. Do you have funding? Are you profitable? Do you have a scalable business plan? What is your marketing strategy? Have an honest answer to these questions and know where you need to improve.

BE CONFIDENT

When meeting the selection committee, it is essential that you project confidence and conviction that your business can succeed among hundreds—if not thousands—of competing fashion brands. Be prepared to convince the judges that you have a unique selling proposition and know it inside out.

BE YOU

Especially in the video submission, be sure to convey who you are and the essence of your brand. This is your opportunity to distinguish yourself from other applicants, and the stronger your personal and brand identity is, the better. So much of selling a brand today is about personal branding, and your comfort and ability to sell yourself behind a camera will prove indispensable.

HAVE A POWERFUL PORTFOLIO

Consistency is key when putting together a fashion portfolio. Make sure there is a unifying spirit among everything you're presenting, from the images to the font to the fabrics. Attention to detail pays off because it will help you stand out from the crowd; be thorough and painstaking, but don't be too complicated or overly clever. At the end of the day, clarity of vision is what's most important. Show your passion.

LEARN MORE: THE COUNCIL OF FASHION DESIGNERS OF AMERICA

“It’s fascinating to see that there is no single path to success in fashion.”
—Emily Bode

The Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) is a nonprofit trade organization founded in 1962. Its mission is to bolster the American fashion industry and support American designers. Its membership includes more than 500 of the industry’s preeminent fashion designers, and, in addition

to hosting the CFDA Awards every June (think of them as fashion’s Oscars), it manages the New York Fashion Week calendar. Diane von Furstenberg was the longtime president and then chairwoman, a tenure that lasted from 2006 to 2019. In January 2020, Tom Ford will replace her.

LEARNING FROM THE 2018 CVFF FINALISTS

Winner: PYER MOSS

The takeaway: Respond to your surroundings

The six-year-old label founded by Kerby Jean-Raymond seeks to address issues of social justice through fashion. Jean-Raymond uses provocative images and messages on his clothing, creative approaches to presentation, and diverse casting to model his designs. “It’s about giving a voice to the silenced,” he says, and his line pushes the boundaries between fashion and politics.

Runner-Up: BODE

The takeaway: Have a unifying spirit in all that you do

Emily Bode’s namesake menswear brand refashions vintage fabrics into modern-day heirlooms. Anna and the members of the selection committee were impressed with the harmony that flowed through Bode’s work, from the aesthetic of her studio to her portfolio to, of course, her designs.

Runner-Up: JONATHAN COHEN

The takeaway: Find a business partner who shares your vision

Cohen’s eight-year-old line of polished-but-cool dresses and separates has become beloved by sophisticated women. Anna was particularly struck by the synchronicity of his partnership with Sarah Leff, the CEO of his company.

Finalist: CHRISTIAN COWAN

The takeaway: Be a little extra, especially at the beginning

Only two years out of Central Saint Martins (the prestigious British art school known for its fashion department), Cowan’s line of over-the-top glitter suits and metallic dresses with princess sleeves have found fans in celebrities such as Cardi B and Lady Gaga. Like Anna said, being bold can pay off—especially early on, when you’re still identifying the core of your brand. It will only help you zero in on a strong point of view.

Finalist: REBECCA DE RAVENEL

The takeaway: Don’t be overly complicated

The ready-to-wear expansion from the designer of the beloved fabric-corded BonBon earrings specializes in unabashedly pretty, feminine designs. De Ravenel is a good example of someone who is their own best customer; these dresses and earrings look like ensembles she would wear at home in Los Angeles or her native Bahamas. Trust that what is true to you is enough.

Finalist: SCOSHA

The takeaway: Stay true to your values

Australian designer Scosha Woolridge’s eco-friendly jewelry line is created with old-school metalsmith techniques and inspired by her world travels. Building a sustainable brand using outdated mechanisms presents many more challenges, but Woolridge’s loyalty to her values made her stand out among other emerging jewelry brands.

Finalist: HUNTING SEASON**The takeaway: Forging your own path can give you an advantage**

The Bogotá-based accessories line designed by Danielle Corona is hand-made in Colombia by local artisans. The sophisticated straw and leather purses draw on that country's spirit. Yes, there are pitfalls to not being based in New York or another fashion capital, but building a brand that's authentic to where it was conceived and created can be invaluable.

Finalist: LUAR**The takeaway: Try something new**

Raul Lopez's two-year-old brand caters to everyone: men, women, and those who identify as gender binary. Luar's vibrant spirit of inclusion is similar to one introduced a few years earlier at Hood by Air, the transgressive haute streetwear brand cofounded by Lopez with Shayne Oliver. Though Lopez didn't stick around at Hood by Air, he pivoted and started over again with his own line.

Finalist: MATTHEW ADAMS DOLAN**The takeaway: Don't be afraid to reinvent the wheel**

Classic American sportswear with a 21st-century twist—oversize blazers, hipster-cut denim—has set Adams Dolan apart even though he only launched his brand in 2016. His fearlessness in taking on simple classics shows that they were ripe for reinvention.

Finalist: BATSHEVA**The takeaway: Embrace the unexpected**

Batsheva Hay's story is an example of life surprising you: After the Georgetown-educated lawyer put her career on hold to raise her two young children, she started looking for vintage Laura Ashley children's clothes on Etsy and found herself wishing there were adult versions of the prairie-style dresses. So she started making her own in Manhattan's garment district based on patterns she designed and using vintage fabrics. The demand from friends and people who saw the dresses posted on her Instagram was so high that she started to sell the pieces. Opportunities sometimes present themselves when you least expect it.

Recommended Viewing

.....

The Fashion Fund

(web series, available on Amazon)

Seamless,

directed by Douglas Keeve

Case Studies: Lessons From Creative Leaders

ANNA'S TIPS

Have a broad range of experience

Know and love your audience

Stay engaged with the wider world beyond your own industry

Times will be tough. Stay true to your vision.

EVERY SUCCESS STORY IS DIFFERENT, but Anna highlights three fashion designers who have inspired her and whose careers she feels serve as great examples of different paths to success: Christopher Bailey, Michael Kors, and Miuccia Prada.

“Even though they are designers specifically, each has a lesson that is relevant for you to know and understand as a creative leader, no matter the type of work that you are engaged in.”

HOW TO LEARN FROM INDUSTRY LEADERS

CHRISTOPHER BAILEY AT BURBERRY:

Understand your brand and leverage that to the hilt.



Bailey spent more than a decade working at other design houses—including Donna Karan and Gucci—before taking over as creative director at Burberry in 2004. He is credited with transforming the fortunes of the historic British brand and evolving it from a 150-year-old trench coat company into a global power player in the luxury market.

Bailey did this by identifying what was key to the DNA of the brand—its Britishness, among other things—and embracing them as core tenets. In 2009, he successfully fought to move the brand's fashion show from Milan to London. That move helped turn London Fashion Week, previously a sleepy weekend on the calendar that most editors and buyers skipped, into an essential stop between New York and Milan. Showing in London made Burberry Burberry, but it also made London Fashion Week what it is today. Bailey also tapped young, on-the-verge British models and actors such as Cara Delevingne and Emma Watson to star in his campaigns.

Bailey has also stayed true to his own personal brand—he is married to British actor Simon Woods and was the first openly gay executive of an FTSE 100 company (the U.K. equivalent of the Dow Jones Industrial Average). In 2017, Bailey announced he was stepping down from Burberry, following his instincts that it was time to take a sabbatical. In a March 2018 interview with Vogue.com, Bailey said he was planning to use his newfound freedom to spend time with his husband and their two daughters, Iris and Nell, at their home in north London. Riccardo Tisci succeeded him that same year.

MIUCCIA PRADA AT PRADA:

Don't be afraid of reinvention.



Miuccia Prada took over her family's staid luggage brand in 1978, and, through her bold, creative point of view, she was able to transform Prada into one of the world's most recognizable brands. She began by making handbags out of black nylon (until then, an overlooked material) and turning them into a covetable accessory. After launching handbags in 1985, she introduced her first womenswear collection in 1989. Not only was Prada able to inject new life into an old idea, but she's always had a knack for isolating key cultural and political moments and infusing those into her collections. When Prada saw the trends moving toward casual (but still sophisticated) clothing, she launched her Miu Miu line—her nickname—which was inspired by her own wardrobe.

Prada designs clothes for the thinking woman (and man) because she is thinking when designing them. Not only does she design the brand's men's and women's lines as well as Miu Miu, she also oversees the Fondazione Prada, a contemporary art institution that opened in Milan in 2015 and was designed by Rem Koolhaas' OMA. Bar Luce, the gallery's Milanese-style cafe, was designed by beloved director Wes Anderson (*Isle of Dogs*, *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, *The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou*). An exhibition curated by Anderson and his wife will be on display at the Fondazione from September 20 of this year through January 13 of 2020.

MICHAEL KORS:

Stay true to yourself and your customer, no matter what.



Throughout his long and sometimes bumpy career, Kors has neither strayed far from his brand values nor the tastes of his customers. He is designing for them because he loves them. After launching his line at Bergdorf Goodman in 1981, Kors was forced to shutter his KORS brand in 1993 due to his licensing partner filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. It took him a few years to get back on his feet, which he achieved by launching a more affordable line and by taking the design helm at Celine. His success there bolstered his credentials for his own brand, and he left Celine in 2003 to focus on Michael Kors full-time.

Kors' trajectory is proof that unexpected pivots are sometimes necessary. But it is essential to keep your eye on your end goal. Kors always engaged with his customer with panache, meaning women wearing Michael Kors felt they had their own personal connection to the designer. (His five-season tenure as a judge on *Project Runway* also helped with that impression.)

Like Bailey and Prada, Kors does not wear fashion blinders. He is open to and inspired by the world around him. Kors is a theater lover who has been known to attend Broadway shows up to three times a week, and that seeps into his work: Tony nominees are often outfitted in his designs, and in some of his more recent fashion shows, he has included a performance to amplify the themes of the collections (Sara Bareilles sang "Dock of the Bay" as he showcased his beach-themed Spring/Summer 2018 collection).

Leading With Impact

IT IS IMPORTANT TO ALWAYS BE THINKING about how you can have the biggest impact on your industry and lend the most support to those in need. You should always try to use your platform to do the most good. Perhaps this means raising awareness or funds for a particular cause, as Anna did on behalf of the AIDS crisis with the 7th on Sale initiative, which raised much-needed funds, or as she continues to do with the CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund. Perhaps it means thinking on a global scale: When the economy faltered in 2009, Anna—along with the CFDA and Mayor Michael Bloomberg—created Fashion’s Night Out, an event intended to bring recession-stung consumers into more than 800 stores across New York’s five boroughs. By 2010, the event had expanded into 500 cities nationwide and 30 cities internationally and continues to this day around the world in cities like Sydney, Madrid, and London.

Or perhaps impacting your industry means responding to an especially divisive cultural moment, as Anna did by highlighting narratives surrounding activism, hope, and change after the 2016 presidential election. “Whatever you’re doing—whatever path you choose or what

career you decide to take,” Anna says, “there is an innate sense of responsibility, of giving back to the world, of understanding what you care about and what you can do.... Engage with whatever is happening in the world in a thoughtful way, and stand up for what you believe is right. Take a point of view, and be thoughtful about it, and stand by your convictions.”

Another mark of a successful leader is fostering transparency with your audience. *The September Issue*, R.J. Cutler’s 2009 documentary charting the production of *Vogue*’s annual September issue (the largest of the year), was an important moment for Anna and *Vogue* because it revealed the inner workings of one of the most prestigious magazines in the world. It was especially important following the release of *The*

Devil Wears Prada three years earlier, which many people understood to be an accurate depiction of life at *Vogue* (it was not). In this age of social media and reality television, it can be especially beneficial to provide insight to both your team and your audience about your process. As a leader, think creatively about different ways to do this and which method makes the most sense for you, your role, and your brand. Since

“I think about how we can use *Vogue* as a platform for change, a platform for activism, a platform, very importantly, for the fashion industry.”

granting unprecedented access to Cutler during *The September Issue*, Anna has continued to open up to audiences through the 2016 documentary *The First Monday in May* and more recently in Vogue.com videos like her *Go Ask Anna* series (which gives viewers the chance to ask her their questions). This openness can help your audience and your team feel more connected to both you and your work.

The Forces of Fashion conference, founded in 2017 and recurring annually in October, plays a similar role as *The September Issue* did for those interested in fashion and media. Over two

days, editors, designers, executives, photographers, models, and celebrities share their stories through in-depth conversations in front of a live audience. The conference draws attendees as disparate as 60-something industry veterans and 18-year-old students from Parsons School of Design and demonstrates how important it is to look for opportunities to engage your audience in new and unexpected ways. Always try to be thinking ahead and anticipating the different ways people may want to engage with your brand, then deliver that to them while remaining true to your brand’s DNA.

CONCLUSION

The media world has changed drastically in the nearly 50 years since Anna began working in publishing. But the lessons she imparts in this class go beyond fashion and journalism. They can be applied to any industry to help creative leaders identify what is most important to them, what their brand is, and how they can best execute on their mission. Creativity is a wonderful gift, but without the tools to harness and apply that creativity, it can easily be lost or squandered. Use what you’ve learned from Anna to become the best leader, learner, and visionary you can be.

Recommended Viewing

• • • • •

- The September Issue*, directed by R.J. Cutler
- The First Monday in May*, directed by Andrew Rossi

CREDITS

CHAPTER ONE | INTRODUCTION *Art and Music by*

Annie Leibovitz	Eric Boman	Horst P. Horst	Steven Klein
Arthur Elgort	George Hoyningen-Huene	Jonathan Becker	
Charlotte Wales	Gordon Von Steiner	Monty Coles	

CHAPTER TWO | GETTING THE WORK DONE: ANNA'S MANAGEMENT TIPS *Art and Music by*

Mario Testino

CHAPTER THREE | FINDING YOUR VOICE AND SUCCEEDING *Art and Music by*

Annie Leibovitz

CHAPTER FOUR | LEADING WITH A VISION *Art and Music by*

Angelo Pennetta	Mikael Jansson	Steven Meisel	Zoe Ghertner
Martin Parr	Patrick Demarchelier	Van Lamsweerde Inez & Matadin Vinoodh	

CHAPTER FIVE | EDITORIAL DECISION-MAKING *Art and Music by*

Patrick Demarchelier	Short White Wedding "Director: Ujin Lin	Stefan Ruiz	Van Lamsweerde Inez & Matadin Vinoodh
Angelo Pennetta	Fashion Editor: Jorden Bickham "	Stephen Shore	
Annie Leibovitz	Patrick Demarchelier	Steven Klein	
Becky Kolsrud	Pierre Scherman	Tierney Gearon	

CHAPTER SIX | EXECUTING A VISION: TRANSFORMING THE MET GALA *Art and Music by*

Paolo Roversii	Heavenly Bodies invitation images courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art	Camp invitation courtesy of the Library of Congress
----------------	--	---

CHAPTER SEVEN | PHOTOGRAPHY THE POWER OF AN IMAGE *Art and Music by*

Alas Mert & Piggott Marcus	David Luraschi	Nigel Shafran	Tierney Gearon
Annie Leibovitz	Deborah Turbeville	Oliver Hadlee Pearch	Toni Frissell
Anton Corbijn	Ethan James Green	Patrick Demarchelier	Tyler Mitchell
Arthur Elgort	Herb Ritts	Patrick Lichfield	Van Lamsweerde Inez & Matadin Vinoodh
Bert Stern	Horst P. Horst	Peter Lindbergh	William Klein
Bibi Cornejo Borthwick	Jackie Nickerson	Richard Avedon	Zoe Ghertner
Charlie Engman	Jamie Hawkesworth	Steven Klein	
Craig McDean	Mikael Jansson	Steven Meisel	

CHAPTER EIGHT | EVOLVING A BRAND: A LOOK BACK AT ICONIC VOGUE COVERS *Art and Music by*

Annie Leibovitz	Mario Testino	Richard Avedon	Tyler Mitchell
Herb Ritts	Patrick Demarchelier	Sean Thomas	Van Lamsweerde Inez & Matadin Vinoodh
Irving Penn	Peter Lindbergh	Steven Meisel	

CHAPTER NINE | DESIGNERS: WHAT IT TAKES TO SUCCEED *Art and Music by*

Alas Mert & Piggott Marcus	Alex Dolan	Gordon Von Steiner	Norman Jean Roy
Alasdair McLellan	Alex Webb	Mikael Jansson	Tierney Gearon

CHAPTER TEN | SPOTTING DESIGNER TALENT: CFDA/VOGUE FASHION FUND *Art and Music by*

Andrew Jacobs	Casey Kelbaugh	Christopher Garcia Valle	Jackie Kursel
---------------	----------------	--------------------------	---------------

CHAPTER ELEVEN | CASE STUDIES: LESSONS FROM CREATIVE LEADERS *Art and Music by*

Alas Mert & Piggott Marcus	Bruce Weber	Mario Testino
Annie Liebovitz	Hannah Thomson	Patrick Demarchelier

CHAPTER TWELVE | LEADING WITH IMPACT *Art and Music by*

Gordon Von Steiner	Lee Miller	The Selby Studio
Keith Harring	Patrick Demarchelier	Van Lamsweerde Inez & Matadin Vinoodh