

Milton Hershey: More Than a Businessman

Sarah Macia
Period 7

Dear Reader,

I'm you know the famous name Hershey. When I hear it, I imagine a dark chocolate Hershey's Kiss, or a bar of their milk chocolate sandwiched between graham crackers and a toasted marshmallow. Everyone has their favorite Hershey's chocolate products, and I decided to write my paper on the man who created them, Milton Snavely Hershey.

When I first picked Hershey as my hero, it was half a joke. Everyone told me that he was obviously an excellent businessman, and that he was very successful, but that was it. He never did anything really selfless or brave, nothing that would make him heroic. At first, I agreed with them, but continued to use Hershey as my 'hero,' mostly because I didn't have any better ideas. But once I started researching and reading more about him, I learned he was both selfless and brave.

Hershey opened quite a few local sweet shops, all of them failures, before he finally found success. He was never educated, because his father never had a stable job and frequently moved his family across the United States following dreams that, unlike his son's, never came true. He was apprenticed to a printer at 14, but this turned out to be his first failure when it came to jobs. After he realized he hated journalism, he got into the candy business, but consistently went out of business in every city he worked in for more than 10 years. By the time he finally opened his last business, what is now known as The Hershey Company, his family had cut him off and refused to aid him, financially or even morally. It definitely took bravery and persistence for him to continue following his dreams after so many years of failure, especially without support from even his family.

After he finally did find success, Hershey showed great selflessness and generosity. He wanted to help children like him, who hadn't had educational opportunities, financial stability, or moral support. He founded the Milton Hershey School, a free private boarding school. He funded the school, and he frequently visited and mentored the children there. Hershey and his wife, Kitty, donated their entire fortune to the school, including their ownership of the company. This shows generosity and selfless sacrifice equal to that of conventional heroes.

As you read this project, I encourage you to think of how much enjoyment you get out of Hershey's chocolate when you eat it, and then think about how contrary to the usual stereotypical image of a successful businessman, Hershey built his chocolate empire with kindness and generosity. If everyone acted like Hershey did in their quests for success in business, the world would surely be a much better place.

Yours Truly,

Sarah Macia

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Milton Hershey stepped off the boat with a sigh. He'd expected majestic castles, with soaring spires and solemnly uniformed guards, but his first glimpses of London were instead of dark, ominous looking rainclouds and crowded, dirty streets. So much for the eloquent image of England's capital he'd built up in his head, based on the exaggerated luxury told of in books and the stories of his friends. With a forced smile, Hershey signaled for a taxi, and a carriage promptly came to pick him up.

"Where to?" asked the bored looking coachman, with a smile that looked as forced as Hershey's felt.

"A decent hotel please," came the tired response. "And afterwards, if you don't mind waiting for me to drop off my things, the best confectionary in London."

The coachman's response was lost in the noise of the horse's hoofs on the rocky road, but Hershey found him waiting after he'd settled into the hotel.

"The best shop is going to be expensive. In the imperial district. You sure you don't want to go someplace a little less extravagant? I mean, no offense, but you don't exactly look like you're an aristocrat."

"I'm here for work. I'm from America, you see, and I'm a confectioner myself. Or at least I'm trying to be one. I've opened up a few shops, but never with success. Tough times, and my family won't help me anymore. They tell me I should have stuck with my apprenticeship in journalism, so I could at least have a decent pay running the press. But my dream has always been to own a sweet shop, and I haven't given up yet. I spent the last of my savings coming here, to try to pick up some tricks. European chocolate always tastes so much better than ours, and I want to figure out why."

"We're here. I hope you'll find what you're looking for, but you'll have a hard time getting anything out of the old kook who owns the store. Rumor has it he's gone crazy from the chocolate fumes, but personally I think he was a nut to begin with. Then his wife Charlotte died a few years back, and the last shred of his sanity died with her, God bless her soul. Anyways, he's a basket case, but he still makes the best chocolate in town. I've heard the royal family itself orders from him. Good luck to you, I'm afraid I have to leave now."

Feeling dejected once more, Hershey stepped out of the carriage and walked into the store, called 'Henry's Royal Chocolate and More.' A bell chimed as the door opened, and the enticing smell of fresh chocolate being made hit him in a wave. It wasn't busy, but that was probably because it was the middle of the afternoon, and almost everyone was at work.

"How may I help you?" the young woman standing behind the counter, probably the shop owner's daughter, inquired.

"I'm looking for Henry, the one who owns this shop." Hershey replied.

"Mr. Benson is busy. What do you require?"

"To speak with him."

"You can try, but I'd be surprised if he even hears you while he's working."

"The chance to try is all I ask for."

"Very well. He's that way," she said, waving her hand towards the door Hershey could only assume led to the kitchen. He obediently walked in the direction of her arm, the chocolatey smell becoming overwhelmingly strong as he moved closer to the door.

"Sir?" he called out tentatively as he entered into the messiest, most crowded kitchen he had ever seen. "May I speak to you?"

"Charlotte? Is that you?"

"No, sir. My name is Milton Hershey. I'm from the US and I wanted to talk to you about how you make chocolate."

"Charlotte's from the US. Come in, come in. Excuse the mess, I'm afraid Charlotte hasn't been around to clean up recently. She's ill, you know. But she's going to get better. She has to get better."

"I'm sure she will, Mr. Benson sir. Do you mind if I talk to you while you work?"

Hershey rounded the corner, doing his best not to knock down one of the many stacks of dishes precariously piled up on the corner of a worktable, and finally found the owner of the loud but sad voice. He was a large man, fat like any good cook from taste-testing his goods, but that's where any semblance of normalness ended. His face was creased his beard and hair were both thin and white, and looked as if they hadn't been trimmed in years, and wispy strands stuck out in a halo around his head. His eyes had a crazed glaze that finished off the mad scientist look, but he was surrounded by bowls and batter and whisks and measuring cups rather than chemicals and test tubes.

"Certainly, certainly. Sit, sit," he said, gesturing to a patch of table only slightly less messy than the rest of his workspace.

"I think I'll stand, if you don't mind."

"Whatever suits you best. Charlotte always sits in that spot when she comes to watch me work, you know."

Hershey shifted uncomfortably and repeated what he'd told the coachman earlier to the crazy Henry.

"That's too bad about your family, kid. My family wanted me to take a job as a stable boy, but that was not the job for me, no sir. They regret it now though, I can tell you that. They disowned me, but then I got good. It slapped them right back in the face, it did. Charlotte always believed in me though."

"I'm glad you found success, sir."

"Yes, me too, boy. Here, try this," he said, handing Hershey a small piece of chocolate about the size of a quarter. "I don't usually give away freebies, but it's your lucky day."

Hershey took the treat, suddenly a little wary of the man's abilities to produce anything even safe to eat, let alone taste good. Henry seemed to sense his hesitation, and was beginning to look hurt. Weighing his options, Hershey decided to trust fate, and put the morsel in his mouth.

A symphony of tastes exploded in his mouth, and he instantly forgot about the odd setting in which the chocolate was made. The chocolate was unbelievably creamy, and seemed to somehow be rich and light and velvety smooth all at the same time. He closed his eyes, savoring the last tiny traces until Henry's loud voice interrupted his bliss.

"I always love to see people taste it for the first time. It really is something, isn't it? The best chocolate in England, or so they tell me. That's the stuff the Queen always gets when she's entertaining other royalty. It really is something, isn't it?"

Henry's eyes seem clear for the first time, no longer a mad scientist but a person proud of his life's work, waiting for the applause to come from his spellbound audience. He didn't have to wait long.

"It's amazing. Wonderful. Spectacular. I make chocolate for a living, but I've never tasted anything that comes close to compare with this."

"Thank you, thank you. Would you like to learn how to make it yourself?"

"You'd teach me?" Hershey wondered.

"I'm getting old, boy, and I've no sons to pass on my secrets to. You live in America, you won't take away my sales. You've been kind to me, you're the first in a long time who's bothered to take the time to talk to a crazy old man. So yes, I'll teach you."

Hershey wondered at the sudden change that had come over the strange man before him, but said nothing. For the next few months, he learned Henry's secret tricks and recipes. Henry also seemed to learn something, because as the time passed, he became less and less crazy, and more like a real person than a mad scientist of chocolate. The crazed look left his eyes, though the sadness remained, and while he never seemed to forget about his dead wife, he made fewer remarks about her, and then one day stopped entirely. The young woman, who Hershey had been correct in assuming was his daughter, also noticed the changes in her dad, and went from treating Hershey brusquely to with a warmth usually only given to family.

Too soon, Hershey had to return to the US. After tearful goodbyes to both Bensons, he summoned a taxi.

"Where to?" asked a vaguely familiar voice.

"The docks, please," Hershey replied, trying to place where he'd heard it before.

"Hey, aren't you that guy who wanted to learn how to make good chocolate from that crazy guy Henry?" asked the coachman, the same one who had originally brought Hershey to Henry's store.

"Yeah, that was me."

"Do you think you're going to be successful this time?"

"I think will. I learned how to make something Henry called 'milk chocolate'."

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Milton Hershey's Struggle for Success

Everyone knows Hershey's famous chocolate bars for their creamy texture, uniquely delicious flavor, and widespread popularity. Milton Snavely Hershey is well known as a successful confectioner and businessman, but few realize that he built his chocolate empire from the ground up, starting with almost nothing. Hershey's story is one of persistence through failure, and one altruism and generosity after he finally found success.

Hershey was born in 1857 in Hokersville, a small rural town in Pennsylvania. His father moved the family frequently in search of success, taking up professions ranging from cough-drop manufacturing to farming. As a result of this, his education came in patches, and he dropped out of school before graduating from even elementary school. His father apprenticed him to a printer in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, but he was fired within months when it became clear he had no talent for or interest in journalism.

His career in candy started when he became apprenticed to Joseph Royer, who owned Lancaster's confectionery and ice cream parlor. After working with Royer for four years, Hershey decided to move to Philadelphia to open his own candy business: M.S. Hershey, Wholesale and Retail Confectioner. His uncle loaned him the money to start, and his mother and sister moved to Philadelphia to help, but despite years of struggling to keep the business open Hershey was forced to sell it in 1882.

After a short stint working for a candy manufacturer in Denver, Hershey opened a father-son candy business in Chicago, but it quickly fell through. Hershey continued to search for business opportunities, first in New Orleans and later in New York. He opened a candy shop, Hershey's Fine Candies, in New York City, but high sugar prices caused the business to falter, and he lost his candy-making machine after failing to meet payments on a \$10,000 loan.

Hershey returned to Lancaster, but his relatives refused to loan him money because of his history of failures. In order to scrape up enough cash, he joined forces with William Lebkicher, a former employee of his first business, to found Lancaster Caramel Company. In Denver, he had learned that using fresh milk improves the quality of candy, and Hershey used this knowledge to create 'Crystal A' caramels. His persistence paid off for the first time when an English importer made a large order of these caramels, allowing him to obtain a large loan from the bank. His business expanded from there, and The Portrait and Bibliographical Record of Lancaster County (1894) declared that "no man stands higher in business and social circles in the city of Lancaster."

After a trip to Europe, Hershey discovered adding milk to chocolate made it sweeter and smoother, and experimented with milk chocolate as coatings for his caramels. In 1894, he founded Hershey Chocolate Company, and he recorded his first chocolate sale in 1895. In 1900

he decided to focus solely on his chocolate business, and sold Lancaster Caramel Company for \$1 million.

Hershey was the first to sell milk chocolate in the US, and his business quickly grew. He returned to his birthplace to build a chocolate plant, an ideal location because of the abundant supply of fresh milk, and broke ground in 1903. Realizing his employees would require a place to live, he also built the community that is now the town of Hershey, Pennsylvania.

In 1929 Hershey was faced with another challenge: The Great Depression. Intent on keeping all of his employees, he started large building projects in the town, including a hotel, high school, and a sports arena. When the Great Depression ended, Hershey was one of few who could claim that nobody working for him had been laid off.

During WWII, his innovation paid off again. The US military came to Hershey and asked him to develop a chocolate bar that wouldn't melt, so that it could be carried in a soldier's pocket. As one of his last acts, Hershey developed the 'Field Ration D' chocolate bar, which formed an essential part of each soldier's personal kit. "Not only was it a great favorite of the U.S. personnel, but with the stationing of U.S. troops in England and the subsequent D-Day invasion of Europe, it became part of World War II folklore." (Bloomsbury Business Library - Business Thinkers & Management Giants).

Perhaps because of his harsh childhood and struggles for success, Milton Hershey decided to share his wealth in order to provide opportunities to others. He and his wife founded the Hershey Industrial School, now the Milton Hershey School, in 1909. Their goal was to provide kids with opportunities they would not otherwise have access to because of their family's socioeconomic status. Today, Milton Hershey School is a "cost-free, private, coeducational school [...] [offering] state-of-the-art facilities, advanced technology and hundreds of extracurricular activities [...] [with] nearly 2,000 students across the US" (Milton Hershey School: About). In 1918, Hershey donated his entire fortune to the school, including his shares of his company, and was involved with the school and its students until his death in 1945.

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MOUTHWATERING

INDULGENCE
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NOSTALGIA
SUCCESS
INDULGENCE
EDUCATION
SOOTHING
AROMATIC
GOOD
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HEAVENLY
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HELPING
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BROWN
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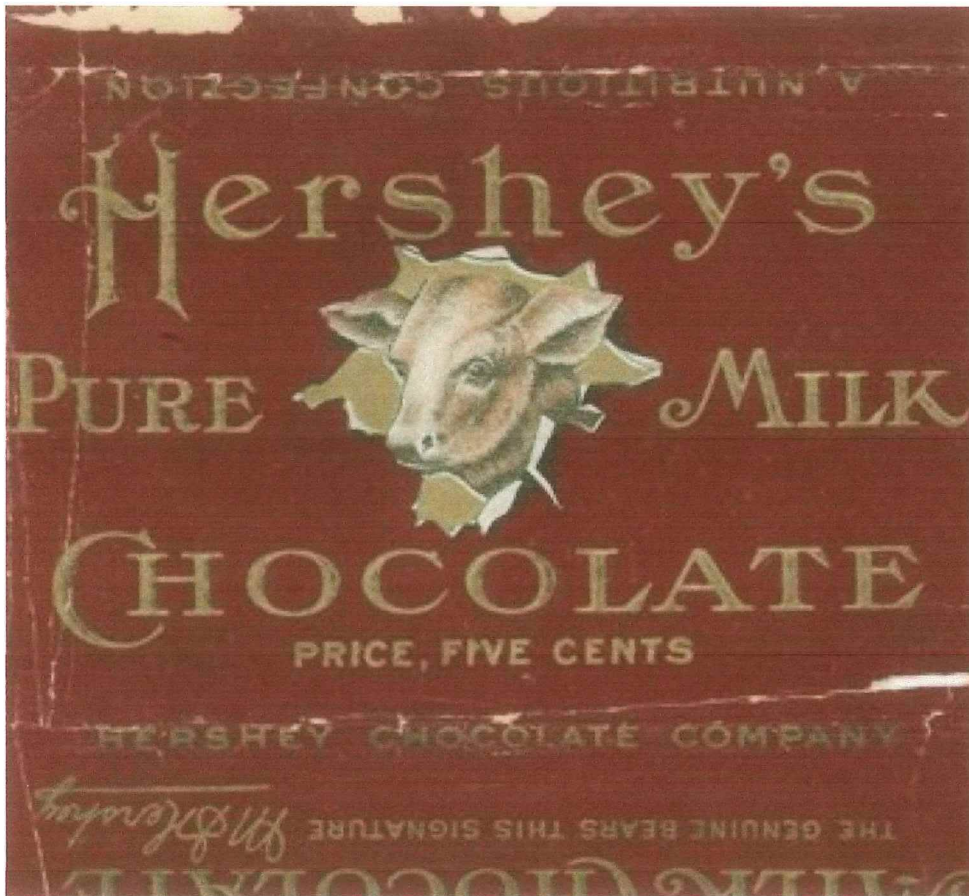
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The shiny wrapper sits temptingly, a vague promise of waiting delight. It opens crinkly, with small snaps and tears and rustling sounds. The treasure within melts against the faint heat of my skin, liquid pools of creamy brown on my fingers. The first bite. Velvety smooth and light, rich and dark, all at once. A symphony of tastes and colors, melodies that are music to the mouth. The orchestra tingles across my taste buds, bringing explosions of enchanting exhilaration. Then a swallow, and the sweet song fades away. An encore. A second bite comes, another exquisite tune, but without the note of spectacular surprise. The same strikingly resplendent harmony plays once again. Too soon, the perfect performance is over, the sugary musicians gone. My eyes close, savoring the final few morsels of the bliss. Finally, the last resounding chords fade into memory.

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NOW HIRING

Hershey Chocolate Co.



Are you looking for a fun, family friendly job? Hershey's Chocolate Co. is the place for you! Our brand new factory is located in a brand new town - Hershey, Pennsylvania. Hershey is the perfect place for both you and your family, with comfortable family homes, schools, inexpensive public transportation, and many recreational opportunities. Come be a part of the family that makes our amazingly delicious chocolate products possible! No special skills, education or experience required. Don't miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! Mail your application by April 12, 1905, to be considered.

Hershey Chocolate Co

251 Park Boulevard
Hershey, PA 17033

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Unifying Elements

- ❖ **Brown Color Scheme-** Every piece in this project was printed in brown ink. I chose the color brown because it is the color of chocolate. It is also the color scheme used on all Hershey products and advertisements, and I already automatically associate the color brown with chocolate and Hershey.
- ❖ **Emphasis on the Sense Taste-** Taste is usually not commonly used in writing, compared to the other five senses, but it is a fitting sense to be used in this project, since Hershey is famous because he was able to appeal to people's sense of taste. In my image, Hershey's face is composed of words relating to him, and many of them are words used to describe the taste of chocolate or the emotions felt when tasting it. The poetry does not ever clearly state that chocolate is the subject being talked about, but is written in the form of pure description appealing to the sense of taste, illustrating the tastes and emotions felt while enjoying a piece of Hershey's chocolate. The essay itself starts out by describing how everyone knows Hershey's name for the taste of his chocolate. In the narrative, special emphasis is put on Hershey's thoughts the moment he tastes milk chocolate for the first time. Finally, in the ad, readers are told that they can be part of the process that makes Hershey's delicious chocolate possible, appealing to the sense of taste as an advertising strategy.
- ❖ **Portrayal of Hershey as a Human, Rather than an Idea-** When many write essays about heroes, they tend to idolize and idealize their hero as someone above normal humans, someone who was born better than everyone else and will always be above average. While creating my project, I tried to stay away from the impulse to do so. This is best seen in the narrative, where Hershey has emotions like any other human. He feels disappointed, scared, frustrated at different points in the story, and he forgets things and becomes attached to people just like any other human.
- ❖ **Emphasis on his Generosity-** Almost every piece in my project, excluding only the poetry, illustrates his generosity and kind spirit. The essay spends time talking about how he started the Milton Hershey School and created chocolate bars for soldiers in WWII. The ad is sure to tell potential workers of the already built community waiting for them, with many more commodities than most employers would ever provide to unskilled workers. The narrative tells a story in which Hershey's gentle patience and caring helped an old man gone mad from grief. Many of the words in the image characterizing Hershey make references to his altruism and generosity.