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Article published - Jan 15, 2007

CHUCK TALK: Exploring ourselves as a brand and discovering our promise

Do you have the logo, personal tagline and imagery you want?

BY CHUCK MACHE

Company branding is so much more than logos, tag lines, fonts, imagery and business cards.

It has everything to do with your company's unique value, personality traits and promise to the market. Then, it requires the discipline to live it by building the brand with employees, customers, partners, investors and prospects.

At the end of the day, it's about consistent execution and repetition. Savvy marketers know exactly what I'm talking about.

Step away with me from Company thinking as it relates to branding. Leave behind for now any formal marketing thinking for a moment and let's explore ourselves as a "Brand."

When was the last time you asked yourself these questions:

Σ What do I want to be?

Σ What is really important to me in business?

Σ What do I want to stand for?

Σ How can I make a difference?

These are not questions that are reserved for executives, managers or individuals in high-level positions. These are questions that are for everyone, regardless of their place on any org chart. In fact, set any org-chart thinking aside for the time being. These are questions we rarely spend enough time digging them because we're busy going through life, doing what we do.

Everyone has a unique value that they bring to this world. Everyone has certain personality traits that absolutely differentiate them from another human being. I believe most everyone has burning desires to do better, or something in addition to what they are currently doing. One of the real questions becomes "What is my real promise to the world?" It matters not what we do in life, but how we feel about what we're doing. Do we mentally "get off" on what we do?

I think of those people that I admire most in this world, and it has nothing to do with status or net worth.

Σ They're having fun.

Σ They think of others first.

Σ Honesty and integrity runs deep within them.

Σ They're driven to personally improve.

Σ They have high energy that gives me energy.

Σ They're mentally tough when adversity hits.

Σ They're complex problem solvers.

Σ They have humility.

Most of us don't think about tightly packaging ourselves through our own personal brand. It's a missed opportunity for personal improvement. If you think about it, we already are branding ourselves and probably aren't consciously focusing on it. Think quickly about people who come to mind and what you and others would say about them. Things like, "He's incredibly creative. She's got more energy than the Energizer Bunny. He's like watching paint dry. She's a problem solver. He's a victim of his own thinking. He's like General Patton."

Whether we like it or not, it's as if we already have our own logo, colors, taglines, fonts, imagery and consistent messaging. I mean all of us. We already have a brand personality, and we're busy every day positioning ourselves and telling our story. Some of us are consciously focusing on branding ourselves, while most of us are not. But the fact is we are already knee-deep in our personal brands by what we are putting out to the world.

A breakthrough opportunity to raise your game exists by tightening and improving your personal brand. At the very least, we should all be aware of our current brand. Here are four questions that will get you started in tightening up your personal brand. I suggest that in addition to your own thinking you solicit feedback from individuals that you are certain will be truthful:

Σ What exactly do I do?

Σ What are the key things that differentiate me from everyone else?

Σ How do people benefit from working or being associated with me?

Σ What are my most important traits that I give to those around me?

These are straight forward questions. For some, they will be difficult to answer. Take them to heart and you are on your way to tightening your personal brand and answering one of my original questions, "What is my promise to the world?"

Once that is answered, you have to live it. After all, you're giving the world your personal promise right now. It's coming through in your current brand. Are you satisfied with it? Here's a final tip, and you've heard me say this before. Only one thing really sells in this world – authenticity. Whatever you do, be real with your promise.

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