



COURSE DESIGN DOCUMENT:
Online Brand Camp

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Course Definition

Title

Online Brand Camp (OBC): Fulfilling the DIY Promise

Delivery Method

Co-Instructors (the designer/developer and subject matter experts from Clarity) will lead this mostly asynchronous course delivered via Moodle. There will be one orientation and monthly optional Learning Community meetings, with opportunities for continued participation in an online Community of Practice.

Schedule

1. Registration: Early Bird (9/1-9/15), Full (9/16-9/27), Promo (Smith attendees only: 9/28-30).
2. F2F Orientation: Scheduled via Doodle poll among registrants at end of Camp.
3. Term: October 1 - December 31, 2016.

Course Tools

Core Tools

1. Google Apps: all students and teachers will use pre-existing or new accounts.
 - a. Standard: Drive, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Groups, Hangouts, Contacts
 - b. Marketplace: LucidChart, Toggl Timer
2. Moodle 3.0: for the first course iteration
 - a. Server Setup & Same-Day Response Retainer: \$500
 - b. Monthly fee to Linode: \$20/month

Note: when assignments are tools students will use in their performance contexts (e.g. Action Plan or Creative Brief) these will be Google Docs, submitted as share links in Moodle assignments. When assignments are course related only and clearly time-sensitive based on course calendar (like a questionnaire about readiness), these will be built in Moodle for easy instructor review.

Special Tools

Moving to an online format makes a host of business tools available that are key to real-life brand development but could not be a part of DIYBC. Some similar tools are offered within Learning Management Systems, but wherever possible learners should be directed to use tools they will have access to after the course.

Tools like Google Forms or Survey Monkey create surveys, and spreadsheets, charts, and other visualization tools help analyze results. Project management tools like Asana organize non-urgent tasks, and knowledge management tools like Google Drive or Microsoft Onenote maintain a structured storage of information so that it can be applied as needed.

While an online course has an advantage because these tools can be used for more impactful application, tool options must include free, easy choices (like Survey Monkey or Google Sheets) and training references for

participants who need to learn to use them. Tool categories and free options for participants who create Google Accounts include:

1. Thinking Tools: Google Forms, Google Sheets
2. Planning Tools: Smartsheet, Google Tasks, Asana.
3. Presentation Tools: Google Slides
4. Information Management Tools: Google Docs, Google Drive
5. Communication Tools: Google Groups, LinkedIn

Goals and Strategies

Online Brand Camp is designed to help learners take appropriate next steps after DIY Brand Camp: to sustain the learning community, to overcome personal barriers, and to deliver on the promise that successful brand development can be done in-house. It should also take Clarity to the next business step as a scalable offering that provides a direct revenue stream and nurtures consulting leads.

What is the DIY promise? At the end of the day divining brand essence is a talent and some - typically those who think in a very linear fashion - will not likely ever be able to do it. But it benefits everyone to learn the steps to get there and why they matter. Those who are not natural branders will be a much more sophisticated clients, making more effective and sustained use of the results of consulting from firms like Clarity.

Preparation Goals

The course presumes 12 or more members of a recent or previous DIY Brand camp are eager to keep working together, using the approaches and materials of the course, to continue their brand development work. At a minimum, they will expect the course to:

- Provide online access to materials distributed at camp.
- Continue to connect them fellow campers (including those who did not sign up for the course).
- Better understand what's required for successful application of materials to their businesses.

The online course presumes that the camp will set learners up for this application:

- Prompting learners to build checklists and task lists as raw material for an action plan.
- Leading learners to develop action plans from these lists, which become goals for continued work.
- Invite learners to take a course where they can support each other to follow and refine these plans.

I. Learning Goals

To be an aligned follow-up between a F2F Brand Camp and an ongoing online learning community, the course needs to bridge new knowledge, skills, and attitudes between workshop and online learning contexts. To do this, the course needs to:

1. Parlay Brand Camp peer learning into online learning community interactions.
2. Parlay live instructor (Mitch, Todd) presences into online presence.
3. Maintain learner experience of self-efficacy as they adopt online tools and workflows.
4. Help learners overcome personal learning barriers to success identified in post-camp surveys.

II. Performance Goals

To help learners apply brand development to work, the course needs to coach learners to develop action plans that identify and succeed with targets appropriate to course learning tasks. Strategies include:

1. Direct and aid learners to apply the three phases of brand development to evolving action plans.
2. Help learners establish productive supervisor and co-worker engagement in brand development.
3. Prompt and scaffold outreach to clients and peers for market research and practice support.

III. Business Goals

To be a sustainable venture, the course must recover expenses and turn a profit. Aside from direct revenue from registrations, the course should also generate consulting income. This means that the Brand Camps that feed the course need to be rich in appropriate targets: business owners and leaders of large and mid-size nonprofits who could hire Clarity. Strategies include:

1. Market Brand Camp to the target audience, excluding others via participation requirements.
2. Obtain evidence of the pilot's success that can be used to market high ROI for future course fees.
3. Lay in-course groundwork for learners to hire Clarity consultants for post-course engagements.

The first two goals above will be met if a majority of learners demonstrate attainment of associated learning objectives (observed by evaluating learner activity and performance within the course environment) and performance objectives (reported on by learners as they apply activities and content to their workplaces).

The third goal will be met if a majority of learners meet the first two, and if the course is part of a business design that balances labor costs and participation requirements from equity partners against pricing levels. Taking the validity of the Clarity curriculum and the effectiveness of Clarity staff as given, whether learners attain learning and performance objectives depends on three factors:

1. The initial effectiveness of the design and development of the course pilot (and the evaluation of the pilot for later more effective iterations)
2. The engagement of course instructors (via course material preparation, weekly preview/reflection videos, and feedback on student work)
3. The impact of conditions that support or block continued learner participation when personal, situational and technical barriers arise (balanced by commitment to course, goals and community).

Intended Audience

Demographics

Course registrants will have attended a one-day, \$400 DIY Brand Camp in the past. These are usually Pioneer Valley business owners and nonprofit / social impact leading organizations. (Note: organizations may need to translate "brand" as "core identity" when sharing back with teams).

Brand camp attendees fall into one of the following four groups:

1. Small Nonprofit CEOs and staff whose budgets preclude outside help. (6)
2. Small business owners who only buy outside help when an ROI application exists. (5)
3. Marketing directors [unschooled] whose value grows with what they can do well. (4)
4. Web and media developers who don't want to be marketing firm subcontractors. (1)

Some learners will be isolated sole proprietors who do not have opportunities to connect with others at work, while others are executive directors and staff in very busy shops that seem to afford no time for thinking deeply. Some activities may segment owners / executive directors apart from staff.

Involving Teammates

Ideally, more than one team member from each organization and business will be taking the course, even if they did not attend Brand Camp. Some activities will require engagement with team members who are not taking the course.

It should be noted that when course learners are prompted to reach out to involve team members, particularly when they are not owners / EDs, they will need to decide when it is best to do so and specifically who to engage. It can be a great risk to bring what they're doing to back to their team for support and collaboration. If this is done poorly not only do they lose the initiative but can also damage their reputations.

Because teammate response to outreach can be a risk, learners who feel this is an issue for them should be prompted to reach beyond their peer coaches and use some of the (2?) hours of free coaching with Clarity staff that are included in the course fee.

Environmental Conditions

Attendees commit to the activity because of one or more core issues. They are:

1. Confused about their branding (more likely businesses)
2. Vague in their current messaging (more likely nonprofits)
3. Treading water: business is not in crisis, but not growing either.
4. In a Holding Pattern: facing a need for massive change, but resisting.
5. Barraged by urgent work needs, challenged to find set-aside time for brand development.
6. Isolated at their workplace from teammates or peers for sharing creative or strategic thinking.
7. Not yet in the habit of consulting clients and prospects for market analysis.
8. Not yet in the habit of conducting external or internal research to inform marketing efforts.

Psychographics

Although the course will not explicitly cite these conditions, learners are likely to be subject to one or more psychological barriers, given the profiles of past Brand Camp attendees. They are:

1. Event-driven: Always and only reacting to the urgent (even the unimportant).
2. Change-resistant: S/he is not losing ground, so wants to keep doing business as usual.
3. Blocked by fear: New levels of success involve new levels of risk and responsibility.
4. Shy: S/he won't ask questions of clients or peers that might make him appear less savvy.
5. Reward-driven: S/he sees no monetary costs of inaction or benefits of action re: branding.

However, depending on how recently they attended DIY Brand Camp, learners will also present positive attitudes that lead them to enroll in the course:

1. They feel and/or appreciate the value of brand clarity.
2. They experience themselves talking easily about their brand to other participants.
3. They experience value journaling clearly to themselves about status of their brands.
1. They are developing a deeper understanding about the brand development process.
2. They appreciate the value of away time to do creative / strategic work.
3. They appreciate the value of Clarity tools and camp supports for reflection.
4. They are building a conceptual map about brand development they hope to retain.
5. They have a sense of a direction for future work.

Course Objectives

Continuing the bridge from Brand Camp, an online course has “Learning Objectives” that help meet expectation set up in “[Preparation Goals](#)” above, specific to this course and community. “Performance Objectives”, on the other hand, are defined in general as effectively doing in-house brand development and application, and are a basis for comparing OBC with other online courses for brand development. Lastly, “Business Objectives” justify the entire enterprise as something other than community service.

A. Learning Objectives

1. To experience the OBC community as an extension of Brand Camp’s, learners will:
 - a. Participate in substantive collaborative interactions prompted by course tasks.
 - b. Participate actively in at least one of three optional online course meetings.
2. To maintain an experience of self-efficacy as they adopt online tools and workflows, learners will:
 - a. Complete 80% of required course tasks on schedule and to specifications.
 - b. Access online Clarity Tools introduced in Camp to complete course tasks.
 - c. Apply Clarity tools as performance aids for their work.
 - d. Configure a personal computer for online course and brand development software.
3. To overcome personal learning barriers identified in post-camp surveys, learners will:
 - a. Establish and maintain a personal space (FOS) for online learning and brand development.
 - b. Develop habits of mind for effective strategic thinking.

B. Performance Objectives

To prepare learners to succeed with in-house brand development, the course will serve as a springboard for activities that affect professional performance, engagement with team members and supervisors, and outreach to clients and other stakeholders.

Ideally, each performance objective should include review of a case study or example (to avoid remaining abstract), an opportunity for written reflection (and sharing on course forums), a pointer to a resource (listed on the Syllabus, linked to the resource on the Clarity website), and an application to the performance environment (either as a major activities like the Creative Brief, or a microtask like customer outreach).

Note: when these resources are added to the Clarity website, they should be summarized on Blog Posts on the site. Learners can be assigned the task of adding public comments on the Clarity Blog (rather than private comments on Moodle Forums) not only as social learning but also as an example of how to elevate web content through social media. These comments will push further refinement of the resource, but also require Clarity staff to keep track of and reply to comments.

The [Course Activity Matrix](#) is a reference document for tracking these objectives and associated activities.

1. To establish productive supervisor and co-worker engagement in brand development, learners will:
 - a. Assess organizational capacity for brand development via audit.
 - b. Engage co-workers in a productive strategic brand development conversation.
 - c. Get team buy-in for a project requiring a creative brief.
2. To outreach to clients and peers for market research and practice support, learners will:
 - a. Build research relationships with clients and prospects (“Call your clients”).
3. To effectively apply the stages of brand development [[appendix](#)] to action plans, learners will perform the following tasks:

Define Their Audience (min 15 calls per course)

1. Define up to three demographic segments via sales records and anecdotal research.
2. Talk to 3-5 favorite clients who “get” you and your brand about “sample questions”.
3. Define the “brand personality” (psychographic profile).
4. Talk to 3-5 representative acquaintances.
5. Develop persona, reflecting most important demographic and psychographic profile.
6. Talk to 3-5 representatives re: [needs](#).
 - a. If clients, about what was going on for them when they engaged.
 - b. If not clients, NVC needs questions.

Apply Audience Definition to Product Definition: What client needs will be met, and how?

1. Create a features / benefits analysis (not what you do, how you help me). Rank benefits 1-3.
2. Call clients: does this resonate for you?

Define Brand Distinction

1. Research and rank competitors as threat in spreadsheet.
2. Pick top 1-3 competitors, analyze features / benefits / brand promise?
3. Define how product differs from top 1-3 competitors (differentiation).
4. Call clients to check out the assumption.
5. Develop up to three messaging strategies for maintaining competitive difference.

Apply Brand Distinction to business process to maintain brand differentiation.

1. Develop a creative brief that demonstrates integration of brand development principles.
2. Analyze each required task for brand differentiation opportunity

C. Business Objectives

1. To provide marketing resources (e.g. testimonials, work samples) participants will:
 - a. Regularly complete course surveys.
 - b. Permit Clarity to modify samples of their work for public access.
2. To establish trust and value of Clarity staff, learners will view engaging preview/reflection videos, and receive feedback for their course submissions from Todd and Mitch.
3. To set triggers for hiring Clarity for post-course consulting, learners will engage Clarity staff at appropriate inflection points in their action plans (up to Course Time Allotments), including:
 - a. Internal Needs Actions (Creative Brief for Campaign)
 - b. External Event Response Actions (So That Happened; Now What?)

Instructional Strategies

Bridging from Brand Camp

At end of Brand Camp, an Action Plan sequence will have been added so that campers have a clear path toward applying the work. The sharing of these plans should be followed by a presentation on Branding ROI which addresses the financial case for brand development (e.g. “measure twice, cut once” on material development), and the value to the organization when everyone gets to clarity about branding. Lastly, the opportunity of an online course to continue the work should be presented, both for present company and for other members of the organization to join in.

Following this presentation, members will be prompted to indicate their commitment to continue the work and consider next steps. They are handed an exit survey about the Camp experiences, they are also given a brochure for the Online Brand Camp (OBC) course with a tear-off registration form panel, along with a handout

that describes best moments to hire Clarity for consulting. They should receive a second survey one week after Camp about their efforts to retain and apply the material, plus another OBC brochure.

The end-of-Camp exit survey ends with a Likert question about their current depth of commitment to applying Brand camp to their work, followed by an opportunity to request supports with options like these:

1. I need more help. I have attached or will complete online an OBC registration.
2. I want to bring in more team-mates to the OBC. I have taken (#) flyers.
3. I am going to follow my Action Plan on my own. Survey me in a week and I'll let you know how it went.
4. I still have questions about applying this material. I'll be in touch.
5. Other (see below)

In both cases, survey feedback provides an opportunity to improve Brand Camp, to inform the final design of the online course, AND to invite course registrations. While the motivation for registering at the end of Camp is a desire to maintain momentum, the motivation one week later is the recognition that help is needed.

A minimum of 10 paying registrants is a good target for closing registration and opening a Doodle poll to schedule an online course orientation day.

One Day Course Orientation

Although this requires as much planning and resourcing as a Brand Camp and adds expense to the course, a community that succeeds in a one-day face-to-face workshop can best prepare for a three-month online encounter by using the same format as a bridge. Also, some course participants will be from previous Brand Camps and need an opportunity to get to know the new folks.

Orientation Objectives

Objectives for the orientation include:

1. Learn more about the online course (objectives, syllabus, etc.)
2. Get to know each other (who they are, what they do, why they're here)
3. Become acquainted with course technologies (Moodle LMS, Google Apps.)
4. Become proficient in required tools for course access (e.g Moodle Forums, Google Hangouts)
5. Develop an online presence by completing a Moodle profile.

To attain the technical objectives, learners will need to come prepared:

1. Bring portable computer. If none, borrow one with same O/S as desktop.
2. Be able to login to Gmail / Google Account OR prepare to create one.

Orientation Schedule

Meet & Greet 9-9:30am

Computer Config 9:30-10am

Course Intro 10-12 What is the Brand Development Journey? Group Concept Map

Look at Action Plans & WBSs

Look at a Creative Brief

Go over Syllabus

Lunch	12-1	(eat out together)
Moodle Tour	1-2pm	Why Moodle?
Moodle Tour		
Assignments		
Forum		
Wiki		
Chat		
Customizing Interface		
Complete profile		
Google Tour	2-3:30pm	Why Google?
Google Accounts & Mail		
Google Drive & Docs		
Sharing		
Commenting		
Google Hangouts		
Peer Review	3:30-4:00pm	Why Peer Review? Why Formative Assessment? Dyads and Quads. Pair up Dyads and Quads by org/biz type and role. Dyads establish check-in preferences (e.g daily/weekly/triggered) Using Google Rubrics and Forum Posts for Peer Feedback.
Q&A	4:00 +	Open to any questions and follow-up networking. Drinks after?

Strategies that Support Objectives

- To help learners engage and apply Clarity Tools in the context of the workplace, assignments will
 - Reference [Brand Camp experiences](#) as they relate to current [Performance Objectives](#).
 - Require learners to apply data to business activities defined in learner action plans.
- To support authentic Camp Learning Community (LC) interactions, the course will:
 - Train learners to be forum posters and peer reviewers for each other.
 - Showcase instructor (Todd & Mitch) video commentary that reflects on interactions.
- To transfer Brand Camp learning to workplace performance, assignments will:
 - Require business data research (via records, focus groups, surveys and interviews)
 - Require application of data to business activities defined in learner action plans.
- To help learners develop an impactful Creative Brief that can later be profitably applied, the course will:
 - Include a "Scenario Brief" where learners apply a given Case and materials to the task first.
 - Position the Creative Brief as a capstone task, built up to by individual Action Plans.

5. To find a balance between Clarity content and learner generated content, the course will:
 - a. First position Clarity content as a social learning object
 - b. Then assign micro tasks (like forum posts wiki additions) to connect it to their own work.
 - c. Then refer to Clarity content and posts together in end-of-week instructor video commenting.

Scenario Brief

The Creative Brief is the capstone task for the course. In theory, when they apply this brief to a campaign or other marketing project, learners will use all the skills and knowledge obtained to achieve business goals defined by their action plans. In practice, each learner's business or organization affects this outcome.

Each learner's context will be a different stage of brand development, and have a different capacity for success at a marketing or other campaign. As a result, each action plan may either need to stretch business capacity and needs to accommodate course schedules, or require application of course assignments to businesses after the course ends, when supports are no longer available as part of the course fee and context.

Also, some component tasks for implementing a campaign are not going to be taught during the course, beyond supplying generalized performance aids and checklists. For example, developing graphics for high quality materials is beyond the course scope.

However, we can control for understanding the structure and function of a creative brief without getting lost in each business' particulars by preceding the application task with a simulation, where learners build a creative brief from artificially created scenario, and compare their approaches and products. Because the simulation must provide materials that effectively test the application of all course material, its developing is the highest course priority, and should begin as soon as possible, even if there is plenty of time to complete it.

For this activity, learners will team up to work from course-supplied elements (visuals and background details).

Capstone Task: Creative Brief

The preparatory activity will be followed by applying the same model to real settings. All participants will produce Creative Briefs that model the application of the Clarity Tools, are reviewed by quad peer groups, then shared in forums for full course review and instructor comments. After multiple feedback cycles, these briefs will be applied to campaigns in performance settings, as indicated by action plans

Application of creative briefs to campaigns will probably not be concurrent with the course, so sharing success will be a CoP rather than LC activity. Once conducted, measurable ROI data on campaign performance will be shared back with Clarity to help gage how well the course succeeded with this key task, and provide indications for improvement.

Application of Course Content

A Creative Brief answers three questions:

1. With whom are we talking? This answer follows the work previously done about audience definition. Learners should be as specific as possible. For the purpose of the course, one persona will suffice.
2. What do we want them to know? This follows messaging work pointed to at the end of Brand Camp. Messaging can include the need fulfillment promise (what do we do that you need) and differentiation (why choose us?).
3. What do we want them to do? This applies Brand Definition to the target of the Campaign for which the brief is composed. It defines and maps conversion paths to messaging via advertising channels. It may as simple as "go to our website", or "refer us", or "think of us the next time they need this..."

Components

For a more detailed breakdown, [Mohawk](#) cites 10 elements. In the table below, these have been slightly altered (with one added), and coded as C (treated by course), E (dependent on performance environment), N (not considered), or some combination. Further development will occur on the [sheet version](#).

Prep	Component	Description
C+E	Context	Who is the client? What is the product or service? What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (or SWOTs) involved with this product or service? What research, reports and other documents help you understand the situation?
E	Opportunity	What is the project? What are we designing and why? Why do we need this project?
E	Drivers	What is our goal for this project? What are we trying to achieve? What is the purpose of our work? What are our top three objectives?
C	Audience	Who are we talking to? What do they think of us? Why should they care?
C	Competitors	Who is the competition? What are they telling the audience that we should be telling them? SWOT analysis on them? What differentiates us from them?
C	Tone	How should we be communicating? What adjectives describe the feeling?
C	Message	What are we saying with this piece exactly? Are the words already developed or do we need to develop them? What do we want audiences to take away?
N	Visuals	Are we developing new images or picking up existing ones? If we are creating them, who/what/where are we photographing or illustrating? And why?
E	Deliverables	Format parameters? Limitations and restrictions?
E	Team Roles	Who are we reporting to? Who exactly is approving this work? Who needs to be informed of our progress? By what means?
C+E	Work Breakdown	Timeline, schedule, budget?

Measuring and Sharing Success

Surfacing Red Flags

The course should prompt for the identification of warning signs that learners are losing engagement or hitting barriers, and bring the intervening support of the community and course resources to bear if so. Red flags include (but are not limited to):

1. Failure to complete a time-sensitive course task (need refocus on FOS?)
2. Failure to meet a time-bound implementation goal (need peer coaching?)
3. Difficulty engaging in online conversation with other learners, either on discussion boards or during live meetings (need instructor coaching?)
4. Inability to get workplace bought in to marketing effort (need paid consulting?)

Of all of these, the first red flag is most critical, because it blocks experience of the benefit of the learning community's shared experience. The central challenge of any online course for busy business people: is time spent on course activities perceived as valuable enough by participants to keep it a time priority? Without that, even the prospect of wasting a high registration fee will not maintain their alignment to due dates and engagement with peers.

Milestones

Course application to business and organizational branding generate ROI that justifies the course expense. If the course curriculum is valid, this should involve common milestones tied to the curriculum. Target milestones should be core needs, such that failure to achieve them will limit impacts, and the course should be designed around supporting these. Such milestones could include (but are not limited to):

- a. Key members of the workplace team express buy-in to the process
- b. Key members of the workplace team collaborate on brand development
- c. Market research is conducted to define the audience, brand and alignment.
- d. Market research is applied to brand development and messaging.
- e. Brand Development phase ends with a major outreach expense (e.g. new website).

Designing the course to help participants reach these milestones can help participants experience the alignment of learning tasks to performance needs, increasing the impact of the course. Anyone who has taken online courses knows the experience of coursework as busywork, a result of activities that are not authentic and serve no obvious applicable purpose.

These milestones should be assessed via quick surveys. When a milestone is reached, participants should describe the change: if a team for the first time expresses buy-in, what happened? What market research was conducted? These examples should be shared in the course discussion forum, rather than in the survey, to encourage other participants and prompt discussion about what worked and why.

Additional Strategies for Consideration

Once course development begins, the following ideas (and others yet to be added) should be considered:

1. Guest Speakers: Although course instructors will present each week / every other week (recap on previous activity, introduction of current activity), there can also be Guest Speakers who present via Google Hangouts on Branding and related topics*. Guest speakers should be willing to contribute for free, because they will want more business / online presence, as long as they are given co-ownership of the recordings. *Google Hangouts are free, and the first 10 participants can interact; those that follow can only watch. If speakers want more interaction, they should provide their own tools, like GoToMeeting; or the course can adopt something more robust for a monthly fee.
2. Apply Prochaska's [Stages of Change](#) for Pre-Post Assessment of changes learners need to make to be successful, keyed to individual identification of barriers in Brand Camp survey. These address:
 - a. What stage of change is the learner at in relation to the targeted behavior?
 - b. What actions should be taken by learners to reach the next stage?
 - c. What psychosocial, structural or other factors will make the most difference now?
 - d. What strategies will be effective in addressing those determinants and factors?

Appendices:

Three Stages of Brand Development

This is the framework for which Clarity tools are developed and applied. The following seven tasks are engaged with in iterative cycles, to greater fidelity each time around. However, there is also a “measure twice / cut once” requirement when preparing for a major rebranding launch expense / exposure, so quality matters.

All learners will apply these tasks effectively as appropriate to their individual action plans, with effectiveness gaged by self-, peer- and instructor-review guided by competency rubrics.

1. Stage One: Define Audience (Analytical, Exogenous)
 - a. Develop Market Personae
 - b. Perform Psychographic Segmentation
 - c. Analyze Needs of Personae
2. Stage Two: Define their Need Fulfillment Promise (Analytical, Endogenous)
 - a. Apply Audience Definition to Product Definition
3. Stage Three: Define their Brand Distinction (Creative / Analytical)
 - a. Define how product differs from competitors (differentiation).
 - b. Develop strategies for maintaining competitive difference (leverage).
 - c. Apply brand promise to business model that maintains difference.

The DIY Brand Camp Rules of Thumb

"If you can't explain something simply, you don't understand it well enough."

- Albert Einstein

Branding starts within. The most important audience for any branding effort is the company's own people.

Branding starts inside. Why do you exist? When you are successful, how will the world be different?

The two tools that work better than any other - no matter the size of your budget - are clarity and repetition.

Don't tell your customer what you do, tell her how you help.

A brand is not a logo or a website. It is a promise from you to the customer you serve. A brand is revealed wherever and whenever your customer interfaces with it.

Details matter. A lot. Sweat them. Distinctive design standards and clear and focused editorial standards telegraph the farthest.

Branding is a long term commitment. You are building a cathedral. There are many people involved and each one will contribute their own artistry.

Branding is emergent. Everything you try reveals information. A smart brand is a learning brand.

Step outside the norm. The brain is biologically programmed to notice what's different.

Emotions trump efficacy.

"Trust is the ultimate shortcut to a buying decision, and the bedrock of modern branding." - Marty Neumeier

"Be interesting. Tell the truth. And if you can't tell the truth, fix it so you can."

- John Powers

Six essential questions to ask about why your brand exists

1. Why do we exist?
2. How do we behave?
3. What do we do?
4. How will we succeed?
5. What is most important, right now?
6. Who must do what?

From: The Advantage. Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business. by Patrick Lencioni

Sample questions to ask when learning about your customer

Is s/he a she or a he?

If gender matters, why? How old is s/he?

Single, Married, Divorced?

Kids? How old are they? Where are they? How important is family to her?

High school. Some College. Graduate?

Low, average, high income? Independent?

What totally juices her? What is her idea of a powerful contribution to the world? What worries her? What keeps her up at night?

Does s/he seek adventure? Does s/he like to push the envelope?

What does she want to be when she grows up? What does s/he want to share?

What does s/he want to get back? Is she a reader? Of what?

Where does s/he find community?

Does s/he have a strong sense of purpose? What is it? What roles do aesthetics play in her life?

What does she need help with?

What does she need?

Where does she get her news? etc. etc. etc

Basic needs we all share

Autonomy

- To choose one's dreams, goals, values
- To choose one's plan for fulfilling one's dreams, goals, values

Integrity

- Authenticity
- Creativity
- Meaning
- Self-worth

Celebration

- To celebrate the creation of life and dreams fulfilled
- To celebrate losses: loved ones, dreams, etc. (mourning)

Spiritual Communion

- Beauty
- Harmony
- Inspiration
- Order
- Peace

Physical Nurturance

- Air
- Food
- Movement, exercise
- Protection from life threatening forms of life: viruses, bacteria, insects, predatory animals
- Rest
- Sexual expression
- Shelter
- Touch
- Water

Interdependence

- Acceptance
- Appreciation
- Closeness
- Community
- Consideration
- Contribution to the enrichment of life (to exercise one's power by giving that which contributes to life)
- Emotional safety
- Empathy
- Honesty (the empowering honesty that enables us to learn from our limitations)
- Love

- Reassurance
- Respect
- Support
- Trust
- Understanding
- Warmth

Play

- Fun
- Laughter

From: Nonviolent Communication. A Language of Life, by Marshall Rosenberg, Ph.D.

Booklist

Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind, by Al Ries and Jack Trout

Read this book first. Then filter all of your plans through its lens: what your customers think of you is the position you own in their mind. Is it what you want them to think? What do you want them to think? Now you have two points on a map. Navigating this never straight line is the art of branding defined.

Nonviolent Communication, A Language of Life, by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D

NVC teaches how to listen empathetically and to express honestly. Honest branders need these skills.

Ogilvy on Advertising, by David Ogilvy

The first review of this book that comes up for me on Amazon says "If you are selling communications services and you do not have a copy of this book in your workspace then you are ripping your clients off." I agree. Ogilvy's advice is fundamental.

The Advantage. Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else, by Patrick Lencioni

Lencioni has a delightfully simple formula for creating robust and resilient organizational health:

1. Build a Cohesive Leadership Team,
2. Create Clarity,
3. Over Communicate Clarity, and
4. Reinforce Clarity.

It's inside out branding without using the word.

Winning the Story Wars. Why those who tell - and live - the best stories will rule the future, by Jonah Sachs

Stories can change lives. Sachs shows the mechanics of how and why it works.

The Brand Gap. How to bridge the distance between business strategy and design, by Marty Neumeir

There are a lot of branding gurus out there. Marty Neumeir delivers more pith per page than most. I predict you'll quote him within a day of reading him.

Brand Camp Schedule & Curriculum

Outline of 1-Day Workshop

Notes related to course design from Bram are in italics:

Suggestion: Require that attendees are part of currently operating businesses and organizations, so that activities and participation are informed by real contexts. Otherwise there is a tendency to allow thinking to be abstract, which is a pitfall.

For Curriculum: learning objectives are defined as KSA (new Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes) but also reference environmental objectives (changes that support brand development) that are tied to workplace changes.

- *"Knowledge" - ability to summarize and locate (online?) content offered*
- *"Skills" - ability to demonstrate performances under conditions to standards*
- *"Attitudes" - approaching Brand Development in a sustainable and effective way*

DIY Brand Camp @ Smith 04.29.15

9 - Check in, circle. Name, company, one word

9:15 - Welcome, housekeeping

The Brand Definition Journey

Knowledge: Why Brand development matters, and what the process is. Overview.

A process of opening and receiving

Mission meets message

Journaling, sharing, listening, synthesizing

It's a ride. ride the bumps.

When it gets hard or confusing, go back to the basics:

1. Why do you exist?
2. Who do you serve?
3. How do you help?

The Nature of this work:

The only constant is change

Branding is the art and science of using communications as a strategic tool for organization building

It is not a destination but a process

Smart companies manage learning brands. That is, they use the process of effective communications to learn, about themselves, their customers, and the ecology of the ideascapes in which they operate.

The process is iterative, emergent and always learning.

You are building a cathedral. There are hundreds of people involved.

It is fundamental, not an add on.

It's about who you are: who you serve, how you help them.

It's value is in the synergy it unleashes. Internally, with your collaborators, with your customer.

Your brand isn't what you say it is, it's what your customer says it is.

It starts with understanding who you serve, and what problems you solve for them.

It clicks when they get it.

9:50 - Party line When your best customer thinks of you, what do they think?

Meta-Knowledge: how well do you know the answer?

10:20 - break

10:30 - Circle, what's coming up?

10:45 - Cafe exercise: March 3, 2020

5 years from now: set long range frame on brand development. Skill: distinguish between aspirational (strategic planning) and diagnosis (market awareness)

11:05 - Circle, What's coming up?

11:15 - A brand is a promise

Knowledge: the customer defines your brand, but you aspire towards that definition.

It's from you to the person you serve.

It starts inside: why are you here?

How can I help?

(This is the heart of the story)

A brand isn't what you think it is, it's what your customer thinks it is

This is the position you own.

From your customer's point of view your brand is about recognition

Tribal recognition

Familiarity

Trust

How Can I help?

11:30 - Circle: Who do you serve?

Skill (tool) and meta-knowledge (do I know these answers?)

What questions can we ask to identify our audience?

Distribute Questions to Ask When Thinking About Your Customer

11:40 - Journal: My ideal customer is

Skill (Journaling to know) and meta-knowledge Knowledge (how well do I know my ideal customer?)

12 - lunch

1 - Circle - what's coming up?

1:15 - Journal: Bullseye Features and Benefits

Skill (tool) and meta-knowledge (how well do I know what customers want)?

We speak to a broad audience. We serve a very finite one.

Messaging is addressed to those we serve.

Why does your ideal customer care about you? What itch do you scratch?

What does your audience care about?

Rank top 4.

Choose top 1.

1:45 - circle, What's coming up?

1:55 - Harley Davidson does not sell motorcycles

Knowledge; also Skill (can distinguish between Feature and Benefit)

"What we sell is the ability for a 43-year old accountant to dress up in black leather, ride through a small town, and have people be afraid of him." - Harley Davidson exec

Starbucks sells "the third place, that is not work or home. It's the place our customers come for a refuge." - Starbucks district manager

"Club Med is a means of rediscovering oneself, or inventing an entirely new 'me'." - marketing guru on Club Med

"Guinness as a brand is all about community. It's about bringing people together and sharing stories." - brand strategist for Guinness

1. Brand
2. Outcome
3. Differentiator

Positioning/Messaging, two tools, two different jobs

2:15 - Journal What do you do better than anyone else in the world?

Meta-Knowledge (do you know your brand difference?)

What do you provide to your customer that no one else can?

2:35 - Party line: What is your brand?

Meta-Knowledge (How well do you know your Brand identity at this stage?)

3 - break

3:10 - There are 3 primary components of your brand system:

Knowledge: thinking ahead to action plans.

1. The brand's promise to those it serves. Its desired position in the minds of its audience,
2. The messaging strategy that supports this position, and
3. The places that the brand comes into contact with its audience.

It's that simple. When in doubt, go back to these basics.

3:20 - Messaging

Knowledge (messaging matters) or meta-knowledge (how well do I know this?)

What does your audience need to know?

Offer?

Distinction?

News?

Features?

Assurance?

Dyad until 4

4 - What's coming up? Where do you use this? Where do you come in contact with?