

inside-out

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Who do you work for? Getting on-brand behaviors to stick...

The hardest part of any change process is getting it to stick. The initial stages can be fairly easy. It's the weeks and months that follow that are the tough part. And we won't even talk about the years that follow!

on-brand



If your organization has a well-defined brand—and if your change initiative is linked to your brand—you have a chance. Our Business Connection Model (refer page 3) helps to explain this link. It's a link we recently saw operate beautifully with a jeweler, a company we got to know quite well in our last Consultant's Certification Brand Simulation Camp held in Las Vegas. Known locally as M.J.s, M.J. Christensen, a legacy and upscale jeweler in Las Vegas, is passionate about living up to its brand. Cliff Miller, devoted brand leader-in-chief is strategic about his operation. He wants to build M.J.s reputation as a jeweler interested in building relationships with its customers, rather than making sales transactions. M.J.s brand promise is "We build relationships." These words could be just three little words devised by an advertising company and meaning little. But Cliff and his team are driving their logical business strategy with the concept. Many jewelers are into pushing as much product out the door as possible. And certainly M.J. Christensen employees like to sell jewelry as well. After all, that's the business they are in. If you are in the business of building relationships around jewelry, you have to get to know your customers (guests at M.J.s.). You have to find out what is appropriate for them. You can't just push them out the door with a glittery trinket. After all, jewelry is a very meaningful and personal purchase.

Cliff is clear that they don't want to sell more jewelry that ends up in someone's vault or in a drawer. They want to help their guests enjoy the symbolism that the jewelry represents. He tells a powerful story of refusing to sell a piece of jewelry because the customer didn't have the right attitude towards buying an engagement ring. Cliff didn't want to be part of that relationship which he saw heading for the divorce courts even before the wedding ceremony was held! And therein is the power of the path that this jewelry retailer is on. By clearly defining precise beliefs, M.J.s helps everyone in the business to deliver the emotional connection its brand represents. Mr. Miller is convinced that when his staff works for the concept embodied in their brand they'll do even better than they are. It's fairly easy to define business goals—the logical connection. The emotional connection is where change occurs, given meaning by the brand. "We build relationships," could be just so many words hung in a framed poster on one of the M.J. Christensen walls. If it were that easy, every organization would be a super brand. Obviously, it's not that simple. And that's where the question, "Who do you work for?" comes into play. Is your staff working for a manager? Do they work for paychecks? Do they work for a set of year-end sales goals? Or, are they working for the ideas that your brand represents? If the brand's emotional base is understood and lived by staff, then the brand begins to resonate with strength and "logical" change is possible.



SKILLS **HARD AND FAST**
LINKING INSIGHTS TO ACTIONS

What we can learn from the M.J. Christensen process of change?

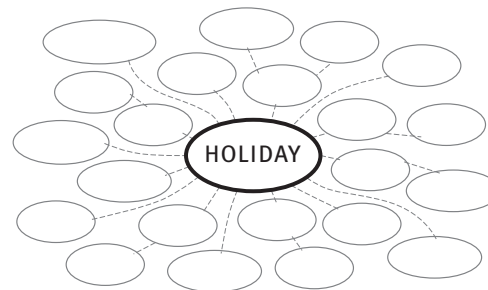
- 1 Emotions need to be more than slogans.** Words are very nice, but they have to be embedded in a series of logical practices. Your brand, if properly defined, can be the link between your logical and your emotional connections, the connection between mind and heart.
- 2 Stories provide the best representations of how to live the brand.** Cliff Miller repeatedly tells his best examples of how he thinks the brand operates when it is at their best. He doesn't mind repeating his examples. We strongly agree that a good example can't be told too many times.
- 3 Encourage risk taking with living your brand.** You will know you are on the right road to brand strength when your staff makes decisions based on what they think delivers the brand promise, rather than making decisions based on what they think their boss wants. Get your employees working for the brand, not you!



Holiday: our different perspectives

Shared values are an important part of determining how people make decisions within the business. But it's important that everyone has a common understanding of what these mean and how they need to be applied.

THE FOLLOWING EXERCISE USES A GENERIC WORD (HOLIDAY), TO SHOW HOW OUR UNIQUE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES, PREFERENCES, AND BACKGROUNDS SHAPE OUR THINKING AROUND EVERYDAY TERMS, AND RESULT IN VERY DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES.



Divide each group into teams of 5-8 people each. Explain that you will write a word on the white-board. Tell them that you want each person to write down five things that this word means to them. Make sure they don't discuss it. Write HOLIDAY on the white-board and allow them a few seconds to note their five words. Now ask them to check with their teams how many words "everyone" has the same. Ask the group how many teams have words in common. Make sure it is the same word, e.g. warm is not the same as hot, water is not the same as beach. (It is unlikely any team will have more than one word in common.) Ask one team to call out all of their words and write them up around HOLIDAY. Keep going until you have a wide variety of words (e.g. 12-15).

Highlight the following:

- How wide a variety of words there is.
 - How people's reaction to some words is different (e.g. "hot" may be positive for some people but negative for others).
 - Some words may polarize people (e.g. baseball, golf, or skimpy clothing).
- Get the group to discuss the reasons why — different tastes, preferences, experiences, cultures, upbringings, etc. Now write up a couple of words that relate to brand or values (e.g. trust, teamwork, service excellence, integrity), and ask "is it any different?" Suggest that in organizations we might often assume everyone has the same understanding, when in reality they don't.



If you would like more Toolbox exercises to help you become an on-brand organization, visit the online Resource Center. www.brandedservice.com

Finding meaning in our work

One of the key challenges leaders face today in managing people is to understand what motivates them. We're all different (thankfully) and we all have different motivations.

In business many of us tend to focus on the logical aspects of managing people—developing and communicating goals and strategies, and ensuring we have appropriate measurements around these. But are these really what will build commitment by the employee?

When it comes to human behavior we need to find the unique motivators that will get hearts thumping, build commitment and create an energy and enthusiasm for the job. **The business connection model,**

	LOGICAL CONNECTION	EMOTIONAL CONNECTION	BRAND CONNECTION
What are we aiming for?	Goals	Meaningful purpose	Brand promise
How will we do it?	Strategies	Shared values	Brand personality
What's my role?	Tasks	Attitudes	On-brand behaviors
Are we serious?	Action	Walk the Talk	Brand integrity
How are we doing?	Measurement	Encouragement	Brand alignment
	COMPLIANCE	COMMITMENT	BRANDED SERVICE

provides a simple framework for managers to consider what they need to focus on. Starting from the view that most staff would like to think that what they did in their job makes a difference, it addresses five simple questions that ideally they should be able to confidently answer (refer left-hand column of chart).

Most organizations are pretty good at answering these questions from a logical (head) perspective—goals, tasks, activity, etc. Often we hear of managers spending vast amounts of time setting up business plans, job

descriptions, key performance indicators, and action plans. These are important aspects for effective management. However, this alone is not enough to build the commitment of staff to the organizational objectives. To do this we need to appeal to the emotional (heart) aspects. These are the factors that provide us with more intrinsic value from the work we do. Therefore, the question “What are we aiming for?” can be answered by outlining the goals of the role or organization and the meaningful purpose—why does this job exist and what difference can I make?

For example, as we worked through this concept with one group, a business executive provided an anecdote of this in action. He related how a senior manager, who had recently joined his team from a competitor bank (one that was outperforming in terms of customer engagement and retention), summarized the difference between the banks in terms of a simple mindset shift:

In the current bank: “employees are focused on selling the customer a mortgage,”

In his previous organization: “everyone was focused upon getting the person into their home.”

Consider these two statements. While this is fundamentally the same transaction, the intrinsic focus and value creates a quite different mindset in terms of how sales and service staff engage with, and respond to customers. Although money is important to many, research suggests that it is not the sole reason people work or remain in roles. Most of us would like a sense of fulfillment, excitement, interest, passion, and purpose in the work that we do. The more managers can understand what drives these factors for staff, the more energy and

enthusiasm they will unlock in their people.

One simple way of doing this is by getting staff to think about where they get meaning from their jobs.

Consider various dimensions through which meaning and value can occur:

Self: e.g. personal growth, development, recognition...

Team: e.g. friendship, learning from others, networking

Business: e.g. profitability, reputation

Customer: e.g. helping them improve their life, providing security

Industry: e.g. setting best practice standards, leading innovation

Society: e.g. creating stronger communities, etc.

The value we gain from each of these layers will depend upon our own personal values, and how we align these to our roles and company. Having a greater understanding of the meaning staff take from their role will help managers and leaders tap into employees emotional motivators. Those things that get you out of bed, and make you look forward to the day.

If we are to have our staff deliver the brand in a distinctively authentic manner, then it is important for them to connect with the “purpose” and “promise” of the brand, not just business targets. People choose to join an organization (a brand), and find meaning, for many different reasons.

At a brand connection level, people can define what is different or unique about an organization compared to others: “Who are we?” “What do we stand for?” “What do we put priority on?”

At a personal connection level, we need to find ways to help our staff define the meaning they personally take from their work, and then ensure we work hard at helping them extract more meaning and thus build their commitment and alignment to the brand.

who said what

MAKING WORK MEANINGFUL

The role played by managers—those who are responsible for the staff and processes of the organization—is critical. They have the opportunity to influence all the structures, systems, and practices through the lens of the organization’s brand.

Every management action has a reaction. The challenge for managers at all levels of the organization is to embrace the brand as a strategic framework which guides them in the everyday judgments and decisions they make.

As Lord Colin Marshall, former Chairman of British Airways says, “If we want effective change, we should not simply serve it up on a plate, but give people the ingredients to complete the dish themselves.”

❏ In a competitive world, organizations are realizing that only people can brand products or services effectively – that we are not just selling a branded product but *a mass of branded people* who support and deliver it. ❏

—Helena Rubenstein, *Managing Director, the lab*

“The essence of competitiveness is liberated when we make people believe that what they do is important and then get out of the way while they do it.”

—Jack Welch

know how CAN DO

ACTIVITIES TO ASSIST STAFF IN THE BRAND ALIGNMENT PROCESS



ARE YOU LOOKING FOR NEW WAYS TO BRING YOUR ORGANIZATION TOGETHER BEHIND THE BRAND AND THE CUSTOMER?

The *Branded Customer Service Activity Cards* are a set of 60 activities that can be used in several places in your consulting process to build knowledge and skills around defining, measuring, communicating, managing, and engaging your brand, culture, and customer service. They can be integrated into workshops, or used independently by managers as quick exercises with staff.

“If organizations buy-in to the need for improving their businesses through their people, then improving the methods and means to capturing hearts and minds have to be a priority.”

—Kevin Thomson, *Author, Emotional Capital*

EXTENDED PROMOTION FOR NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS:

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For more information and a complete outline go to www.brandedservice.com/Default.aspx?PageID=516 or contact us at info@brandedservice.com