

HOW TO UNITE YOUR IDEAS TO FORM YOUR BRAND PERSONALITY



Ask key questions to help crystallize what you have to offer patients.

BY ROD SOLAR AND LAURA LIVESEY

You need to know yourself so that others can get to know you, and the same goes for your practice. If you haven't clarified who you are, what you stand for, and what you offer, how can you expect others to understand you and let you in? The human brain is drawn to clarity and away from unfamiliarity and confusion. It is your job, as the owner of a practice, to communicate who you are and what you offer so that potential customers know that they need you and why.

GET INTO CHARACTER

Method acting is an acting technique whereby an actor aspires to become the character by emotionally and physically immersing him or herself in the role in order to produce a totally convincing and genuine performance.

The technique led Robert De Niro to pile on 60 pounds to play boxer Jake La Motta in Martin Scorsese's "Raging Bull." It prompted Adrien Brody to isolate himself from friends, family, and all of his personal possessions to play Holocaust survivor Wladyslaw Szpilman in Roman Polanski's "The Pianist." And it caused Jim Carrey to plunge so deeply into the role of Andy Kaufman for the 1999 film "Man on the Moon" that he couldn't break character off set and completely lost himself to the point that he didn't know what was real and what was fiction.

In fact, Carrey took his role to such lengths that, by the time the movie was over, he couldn't remember who he was anymore. Lost and confused, Carrey attempted to pull together parts of his fragmented personality to recreate an identity and restore his sense of meaning.

THE THINGS THAT MAKE YOU YOU

Who am I? What makes me, me? What makes me tick? What do I bring to the world? For complex and multifaceted human beings, knowing the answers to these questions isn't straightforward or obvious. We are all constantly reevaluating our thoughts, ideas, and beliefs on a subconscious level, so the aspects of our identity are subjective and forever changing.

Were you ever asked what you wanted to be when you were growing up? Or asked to describe yourself in three words? Whether we like it or not, these kinds of questions, and their answers, are useful within society. They can help us find a job, avoid the things we dislike, and seek out the things that we do like. Without them, we would struggle to form relationships with like-minded individuals and to navigate our way through life.

CLEAR COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Even if you offer the best service on the market, you'll lose to an inferior practice if its offering is communicated more clearly than yours. What is

your message? Is it simple, catchy, and coherent? Is it compelling? Will people remember it? How many leads are you losing because customers can't figure out what you're offering within 5 seconds of visiting your website?

FOUR QUESTIONS

Think of your brand identity as how your audience perceives you—the face of your business. Without a well-defined brand identity, your audience might not understand who you are. In the end, you need to make a personal connection. To do this, answer these four questions:

► **Question No. 1: What is your brand's personality?** Ascribe a set of human characteristics to your brand. Brands that have a well-defined personality make a product relatable on a personal level. How do you want to make your customers feel, and what type of characteristics would achieve this? Confident? Trusting? Knowledgeable? Skilled? Protective? Understanding?

► **Question No. 2: What is the company mission or BHAG?** BHAG stands for *big hairy audacious goal*, and it is a long-term objective that changes the nature of a business' existence. On a corporate level, a BHAG is nearly impossible to achieve without consistently working outside of a comfort zone and displaying

commitment and confidence—so be ambitious. Perhaps you want to treat 100,000 eyes, be a major player in the market, or revolutionize vision correction.

► **Question No. 3: What is your niche?** What is your unique selling point that sets you apart from your competitors? Do you offer affordability? A tailored approach? The ability to conform to your customers' hectic and busy lifestyles?

► **Question No. 4: What is your target market?** Who is your dream customer? If you could design your ideal patients, what would they be like? What is their demographic? What problems would they have? What are their goals and aspirations?

CLARITY AND SIMPLICITY

Once you have established the answers to these questions, analyze your existing marketing material and check for the following two things.

► **No. 1: Clarity.** Your customers have questions burning inside them. If you don't have the answers, they will move on to another practice that does. Have you identified what it is they want, what the problem is you are helping them solve, and what life will look like after they engage with your service? Ultimately they want to know how you're going to help them survive and thrive, so tell them how your practice will help them achieve the life they want.

► **No. 2: Simplicity.** One of the main reasons most marketing collateral—that is, the brochures, websites, and other media intended to support a product or service—fails is because it is too complicated, and the brain is unable to process the information. The more predictable and straightforward the communication, the easier it is for the brain to digest.

Don't let company clutter detract from your core message. No matter how many revenue streams you have or how diverse your service is, it is always possible to simplify your core offering. The key to excellent writing isn't what you say; it's what you don't say. Remove 90% of the text from your website, and stop using inside language or jargon that customers won't understand. You can explain all of the intricacies at the consultation.

A resource you can use to help organize, simplify, and clarify your brand personality and identity is the LiveseySolar Ultimate Brand Personality Generator (www.liveseySolar.com/my-brand-personality/). ■

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