



How to create strong branding messages that really count

by *Clinton Bugg & Sally-Ann Lawrence*



Small Business Mentoring Service
Suite 1/12 Maroondah Hwy
Ringwood VIC 3134
Phone: 1300 816 817



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Branding is important because not only is it what makes a memorable impression on consumers but it allows your customers and clients to know what to **expect** from your business.

It is a way of distinguishing yourself from the competitors and clarifying what it is you offer that makes you the better choice.





Why branding is important to your business

The ability for a brand to separate itself from the rest of the market and rally employees to deliver distinguishing experiences for customers is a challenge for every business.

Almost every organization has put together its mission, vision and values at some stage but few have gone beyond to look into **brand purpose**.

The importance of building a brand on ‘purpose’ is becoming more and more important, not only for customers but also for a new wave of employees.

While **a brand promise lets people know what to expect** – think of FedEx’s promise of reliability “when it absolutely, positively has to get there overnight” – a brand purpose goes much deeper.



Clearly defining your Purpose, Vision, Mission and Values will help your team understand what you’re trying to achieve.



PURPOSE GUIDES YOU MISSION DRIVES YOU VISION IS WHAT YOU ASPIRE TO IMPACT IS WHAT MATTERS

The Why, the What & the How – Purpose, Vision, Mission

Brand Purpose (or Brand Story): The Why

What is your brand's ultimate reason for being? If you went away tomorrow, what gap would there be? These are foundational questions that your purpose statement needs to answer.

Vision: The What

If your purpose statement is your 'why,' then your vision is 'what' you want to accomplish as a result of it. If you remain committed to your purpose, what will be the outcome of it?

Mission: The How

This is where most brands start and stop, by just describing how the work gets done. Both executives and marketers have an easier time getting their head around tactical things. But unless you know 'why' you are in business and 'what' you expect to accomplish, how you get there won't mean a thing.

Whereas you might achieve a goal or complete a strategy, you cannot fulfill a purpose.

It is like a guiding star—forever pursued but never reached.

Although purpose itself does not change, it does inspire change.

The very fact that purpose can never be fully realized means that an organization can never stop stimulating change and progress.

Whether you develop your brand's purpose, vision and mission all at once or in phases doesn't matter. What does matter is that you understand the need and place for each, and use them where they belong in order to succeed.



Leading with Purpose

Your Company's Purpose Is Not Its Vision, Mission, or Values

We hear more and more that organizations must have a compelling “purpose” — but what does that mean exactly?

Purpose is about why you choose to exist together, beyond financial gain.

A good way to test whether your Purpose is meaningful is to “gut check” whether it holds true for individuals as well as the organization as a whole.

Start with **“We believe...”**

When crafting a purpose statement

Find a way to express the organization's **impact on the lives of customers, clients, students, patients** — whomever you're trying to serve.

Make them *really* feel it.



Starting with your WHY – Values are what drives our brands

Values

The principles and values that will accelerate your progress together.

These statements typically start with a verb, like

“Be committed”

or

“Deliver excellence.”

Successful values are limited (so they're easier to remember) and written in the company's voice.

Values are very important as they describe the desired culture of your business.

As Coca-Cola puts it, they serve as a behavioural compass.

For example: Coke's values include having the courage to shape a better future, leveraging collective genius, being real, and being accountable and committed.

Having clear company **values** (like Coke) helps ensure that all your employees are working towards the same goals.

Your core **values** support the company's vision and shape its culture.

Every **business** decision should be aligned with these **values**.

A **business** without core **values** isn't really a **business**.

Vision

Vision is the
long-term view, how
successful business
vision statement is
an aspirational de

Vision Statement - Your Desired End State

It is vital to adopt a vision statement

It guides your business planning and strategy. Articulating, installing and sharing a company vision is a crucial characteristic of influential business leaders, while a good statement will form the inspiration behind all your marketing campaigns and advertising messages.

It's a compass, too; as your company grows, you can circle back to your idea and determine if you are still aspiring for the realisation of your vision from your company's early days.

A Vision statement is a one sentence statement describing the clear and inspirational long term change resulting from the organisations work.

This should be a practical, tangible tool you can use to lead the organisation to achieve quality results

Questions to ask: (1-5 word answers)

1. What needs to change?
2. What the costs of the issue to those involved?
3. What is your desired end state?
4. What would success look like for your business?

The difference you'll create in your customers' lives or the larger world when you ultimately realize your Purpose. The Vision should excite people both inside and outside the company. Try starting with **"We will..."**



How to write a vision statement

Step 1:

Define what you do as an output

Start by being exceptionally clear about what it is your organization actually does. Be careful to remain 'output focused' rather than 'input focused'.

For example, Microsoft famously had a vision statement to Put a Microsoft powered computer on every desk in the world (slightly paraphrased). Strictly speaking what Microsoft 'do' is make computer software, but for the purposes of their Vision, they looked forward to the actual outcome of this process - i.e. computers on desks.

A Vision Statement Needs to be:

- ✓ Clear and simple
- ✓ Not in buzz words or elaborate language
- ✓ Easily explained by those involved
- ✓ Not the same as the Mission statement



Whilst this process may seem obvious - you would be surprised by how rarely organizations actually go through this process in a formal, written way. Doing so will take you a long way towards creating your vision statement - BUT it's not enough alone! If it was, all bakeries, consulting services and government departments would have the same vision statement - which is hardly inspiring!

Let's look at some other examples

1. A bakery makes bread.
But the outcome is consumers enjoying that bread.
2. A consulting company gives advice.
But the outcome is the success of others based on that advice.
3. A government department does...lots of . things. *But* the outcome is better lives for the citizens they serve.

What is the special outcome or solution that your business offer?



How to write a vision statement

Step 2

Define what unique twist your organization brings to the above outcome

Very few products or services these days are truly new - most are more like reinventions of something that exists already, but with a different approach, focus or spin.

At some point in your business's lifespan - someone will have believed that the reason that **THIS** business would be successful where others have failed, was because of..... something.

What we need to do is clearly define that something!

Take our bakery example...

So far, our vision statement is looking pretty generic, along the lines of customers enjoying our bread.

But why will they enjoy our bread **MORE** than the bread from the place next door?

Is it because we use centuries-old traditions passed through generations of our family? Because we only use premium grade locally sourced ingredients? Whatever your unique selling point is - let it shine through in your vision statement

How to write a vision statement

Step 3 Apply some high-level quantification

A common problem with a not so good vision statement is ironically, that it can be too visionary!

With no possible end in sight (or a totally unrealistic one) - the initial inspiration derived from a good vision statement can quickly turn to frustration or even cynicism among employees and customers.

That said - don't be too specific or apply specific metrics at this stage (they will come later in our planning process).

Staying with the bakery example...

Perhaps you might want to refine the target audience to...

every customer who walks through the door

that's fine, or maybe we want to be bolder...

every customer within walking distance of a store

The quantification we apply could also be industry specific if you're a B2B - are you shooting for SMEs or multinationals for example?



How to write a vision statement

Step 4 Add relatable, human, 'real world' aspects

Your vision statement is now pretty close to finished!

One final trick you can apply to help make it even more memorable is to add a real-life aspect.

This will allow people to conjure up a solid mental image to associate with your vision statement.

For example, which of the following statements is likely to be more memorable:

- a) To have every working person in the world using Microsoft product. or...
- b) A Microsoft powered computer on every desk.



It (b) is more memorable because as we read this, we are actually visualizing a computer sitting on a desk.

There's nothing wrong with (a) but it's highly conceptual and thus difficult to transform into a mental picture.

Here is another example:

Ensure that every customer who leaves our store, does so smiling.

Using the word 'smiling' as opposed to 'happy' is powerful, because it conjures a mental image of a person smiling. It won't always be possible to bring this level of tangibility to a good vision statement - but if it is, we strongly encourage doing so.



How to write a vision statement

Step 5: How to Bring your Vision Statement Together

This is what a completed good vision statement could look like for our bakery. Based on the above:

Producing and selling locally sourced cakes and pies that are so delicious and satisfying, that every customer who leaves our store does so with a smile.

Deconstructed into the various steps, it works as follows:

Step 1 (output) Producing and selling locally sourced cakes and pies

Step 2 (the twist) that are so delicious and satisfying

Step 3 (the quantification) that every customer who leaves our store

Step 4 (the human connection) does so with a smile.

A vision statement describes the company's purpose, what the company is striving for, and what it wants to achieve.





Mission Statement - Why you Exist Putting Your Vision Into Action

A mission statement is, in some ways, an action-oriented vision statement, declaring the purpose an organization serves to its audience. It often includes a general description of the organization, its function, and its objectives. As a company grows, its objectives and goals may be reached, and in turn they'll change.

A mission statement is a simple statement that explains your company's goals. It's a summary of what your company does for its customers, employees, and owners. It explains how you do what you do. And, it focuses on why your company does what it does. Some of the best mission statements also extend themselves to include fourth and fifth dimensions: what the company does for its community, and for the world. Developing your company's first mission statement, or writing a new or revised one, is your opportunity to define the company's goals, ethics, culture, and norms for decision-making. The daily routine of business gets in the way sometimes, and a quick refresh with the mission statement helps you take a step back and remember what's most important: the organization has a purpose.

Don't waste your time with a bad mission statement

That a traditional business plan often includes a mission statement isn't a reason to do one. If it's not going to be useful for you and help guide your business, don't bother. The vast majority of the mission statements are just meaningless hype that could be used to describe any business.

Don't fall into the trap of writing a mission statement just because some checklist or expert said you had to.



A mission statement is a one sentence statement describing the reason an organization or program exists.

A Mission Statement Needs to be:

- ✓ **Clear and simple**
- ✓ **Not in buzz words**
- ✓ **Easily explained by you and others**
- ✓ **Not the same as a Vision statement**
- ✓ **Recognisably YOURS**

Your mission is about getting really clear and staying really focused.

It should be a practical, tangible tool you can use to make decisions about priorities, actions, and responsibilities?

Quick questions to ask: (1-5 word answers)

1. What type of entity/program and is this important?
2. Why do you exist? What is the problem/need?
3. Who is your customer? Who are you serving?
4. Where do you do this work?

Think of your mission as internal branding!



the power of mission statements

How to develop a mission statement

When writing your mission statement, use vibrant, exciting words.

- ✓ Get really clear about your passion and values for operating your unique business.
- ✓ Create dynamic, visual images and inspire action.
- ✓ Describe your purpose using unusual, colorful verbs and adjectives to spice up your statements.
- ✓ Drop in words like "passion," "sizzle," "outrageous," "fun," and "marvel" to add zest.
- ✓ Keep your mission statement fairly short and make sure that it feels really good when you read it and say it.

Your mission statement captures, in a few succinct sentences, the essence of your business's goals and the philosophies underlying them. It signals what your business is all about to your customers, employees, suppliers and the community.

Some more great questions to ask:

- What do we do?
- For whom do we do it?
- Why do we serve our clients in the way that we do?
- How do we serve our clients in the way that we do?
- Why are we in this industry?
- Why did we start this business?
- What image of our business do we want to convey?

Your mission statement should be the driving force behind everything that your team does within your company, and externally with prospects, customers, vendors, and associates. It also shapes your internal corporate culture.

Your mission is an ambitious yet achievable position in the market or in your customers' lives that **recognizes your Purpose**. It should make clear which business you're in, and often starts with the phrase **"Be the most..."**



WHAT'S YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH?

What's your elevator pitch/branding statement?

Most people undersell themselves, their successes, their skills and what their business does. Most of the time it is because they don't want to seem self-centred or conceited. But in professional relationships we really need to leave our reservations aside and be proud of what we do and our successes.

To help with this it is a good idea to create an elevator speech or branding statement. This is a short spiel that needs to be clear and concise and spark enough interest from the other person in what you do to get them to ask questions about you, your business or your products. The elevator pitch/branding statement needs to be versatile so it can be used anytime, anywhere in response to the question 'so what do you do?'

Breakdown of an elevator pitch/branding statement

- 1. Secs What are you hoping to achieve from the pitch?**
What you want people to know will determine what you talk about.
- 5 Secs How to deliver?**
Your enthusiasm for what you do should always come across in what you say.
- 10 Secs What do you do?**
Explain in simple terms what you do, talk about solutions you may offer. Inspire
- 15 Secs Why you?**
What is unique about you or your product? Why should people choose you?
- 20 Secs Ask a question**
After you say your USP pose a question about a problem they may have
- 25 Secs Tie it up**
Bring it all together – keep it brief, cut anything unnecessary, don't dominate
- 30 Secs Practice**
Practice your pace and enthusiasm.
Practice until it sounds natural.



Important Features of an Elevator Pitch

1. The length of one out-breath

You should be able to take a deep breath and then comfortably deliver your statement. If it's any longer than this, you risk not making that impact you were looking for so chop it down.

2. It has WOW-factor

Just like any performance, your personal brand statement should be received with a mixture of surprise and delight. If this isn't the case, you are probably saying something very similar to your peers. Make it unique and you'll evoke the WOW on people's faces.

3. An eight-year-old can understand it

Or a four-year-old if you are really tough on yourself. Your statement should never contain any technical terms or jargon, it should be in plain English and touching on the lowest common denominator. Test it on your children and see how you fare, can they tell you exactly what benefit and value you add?

4. Yours and only yours

Can you be sure that your statement is unique? Well and easy way to test that is by asking colleagues, peers and competitors what they use. Or you can go to an industry event and do some eavesdropping to see what NOT to say. If you find that your statement is similar to others, try harder to really make it stand out by examining exactly what you do uniquely and how to present this.

5. Delivered with confidence

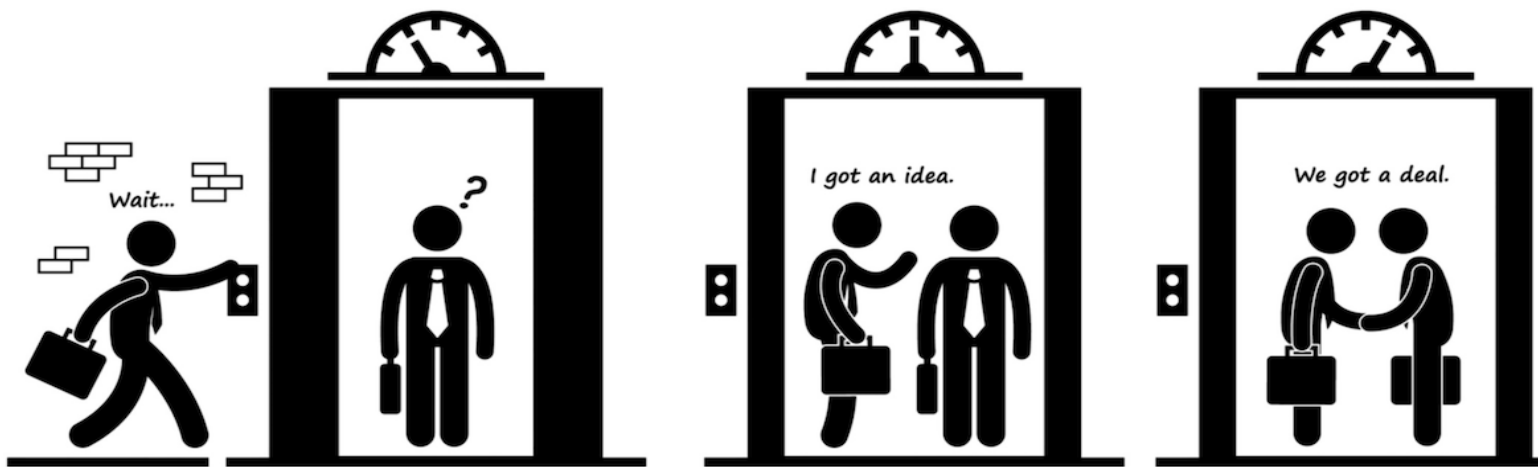
The delivery is equally important to the content. You must be able to put on your best story telling voice and really mesmerize your new-found acquaintance. Great delivery comes with practice so get in front of your mirror and get rehearsing today.

6. Leaves them wanting more

A classic trick in show business is to dazzle the audience and have them begging for more. By only giving out a teaser that is interesting enough, you are likely to be asked to elaborate and that's when you go into selling mode.

7. Catchy, memorable and repeatable

To cover a lot of ground you are going to need others to spread your statement via word-of-mouth marketing. In order for them to do this, you have to stay punchy and memorable enough to get repeated over and over.



Crafting Your Elevator Pitch/Branding Statement

About the Technique

As outlined an elevator pitch is a brief, persuasive speech that you use to spark interest in what your organization does. You can also use elevator pitches to create interest in a project, idea, or product – or in yourself. A good elevator pitch should last no longer than a short elevator ride of **20 to 30 seconds**, hence the name.

Elevator pitches should be interesting, memorable, and succinct. They also need to explain what makes you – or your organization, product, or idea – unique.

When to use an Elevator Pitch

Whenever you are speaking with someone who may assist with your job search!

Creating an Elevator Pitch

It can take some time to get an elevator pitch right. You'll likely go through several versions before finding one that is compelling, and that sounds natural in conversation. Don't forget that you'll need to vary your approach depending on what your pitch is about.

Step 1. Identify Your Goal

Start by thinking about the objective of your pitch. For instance, do you want to tell potential employers about you and what you do?

Step 2. Explain What You Do

Start your pitch by describing what you do. Focus on the problems that you solve and how you help people. If you can, add information or a statistic that shows the value in what you do.





What do you want your audience to remember most about you?

Keep in mind that your elevator pitch should excite you first; after all, if you don't get excited about what you're saying, neither will your audience. Your pitch should bring a smile to your face and quicken your heartbeat. People may not remember everything that you say, but they will likely remember your enthusiasm.

Example:

Imagine that you're creating an elevator pitch that describes what your company does. You plan to use it at networking events. You could say, "My company writes mobile device applications for other businesses." But that's not very memorable!

A better explanation would be, "My company develops mobile applications that businesses use to train their staff remotely. This results in a big increase in efficiency for an organization's managers." That's much more interesting, and shows the value that you provide to these organizations.

Step 3. Communicate Your USP

Your elevator pitch also needs to communicate your unique selling Proposition/point (USP), Identify what makes you, your organization, or your idea, unique. You'll want to communicate your USP after you've talked about what you do.



Example:

To highlight what makes your company unique, you could say, "We use a novel approach because unlike most other developers, we visit each organization to find out exactly what people need. Although this takes a bit more time, it means that on average, 95 percent of our clients are happy with the first beta version of their app."

Step 4. Engage With a Question

After you communicate your USP, you need to engage your audience. To do this, prepare open-ended questions (questions that can't be answered with a "yes" or "no" answer) to involve them in the conversation. Make sure that you're able to answer any questions that he or she may have.



Example: You might ask "So, how does your organization handle the training of new people?"

Step 5. Put it all Together

When you've completed each section of your pitch, put it all together. Then, read it aloud and use a stopwatch to time how long it takes. Your elevator pitch should be no longer than 20 – 30 seconds. Otherwise you risk losing the person's interest, or monopolizing the conversation. Then, try to cut out anything doesn't absolutely need to be there. Remember, your pitch needs to be snappy and compelling, so the shorter it is, the better!



Example:

Here's how your elevator pitch could come together:

"My company develops mobile applications that businesses use to train their staff remotely. This means that senior managers can spend time on other important tasks. Unlike other similar companies, we visit each organization to find out exactly what people need. This means that, on average, 95 percent of our clients are happy with the first version of their app. So, how does your organization handle the training of new people?"



Step 6. Practice

Like anything else, practice makes perfect. Remember, how you say it is just as important as what you say. If you don't practice, it's likely that you'll talk too fast, sound unnatural, or forget important elements of your pitch. Set a goal to practice your pitch regularly. The more you practice, the more natural your pitch will become. You want it to sound like a smooth conversation, not an aggressive sales pitch.

Make sure that you're aware of your body language as you talk, which conveys just as much information to the listener as your words do. Practice in front of a mirror or, better yet, in front of colleagues until the pitch feels natural.

As you get used to delivering your pitch, it's fine to vary it a little – the idea is that it doesn't sound too formulaic or like it's pre-prepared, even though it is!





Hot Tip 1:

You may want to keep small take-away items with you, which you can give to people after you've delivered your pitch. For example, these could be business cards or brochures that talk about your product idea or business.

Hot Tip 2:

Remember to tailor your elevator pitch for different audiences, if appropriate.

Key Points

An elevator pitch is a brief, persuasive speech that you can use to spark interest in what your organization does. You can also use one to create interest in a project, idea, or product.

An elevator pitch needs to be succinct, while conveying important information.

Remember to craft a great pitch, follow these steps:

- Identify your goal.
- Explain what you do.
- Communicate your USP.
- Engage with a question.
- Put it all together.
- Practice



Try to keep a business card or other take-away item with you, which helps the other person remember you and your message. And cut out any information that doesn't absolutely need to be there.



SUCCESS

About the Small Business Mentoring Service (SBMS)



SBMS Experienced Business Mentors are part of the Small Business Mentoring Service. SBMS is an incorporated not-for-profit association that started its journey in 1986 with just 14 members. Today there are around 150 Mentors, both male and female, who have the skills and experience to help small businesses.

Our Mentors have diverse and interesting backgrounds and have either owned their own small business or worked in an organisation that has had strong links to small business. They are extremely passionate about the role that small business plays in the economy and carry out their Mentoring work on a voluntary basis. They acknowledge that it can be difficult, lonely and at times financially worrying running a small business.

SBMS is proudly supported by the Victorian State Government, and in particular the Minister for Small Business, the Hon Jaala Pulford MP and Small Business Victoria.

Our mission is to support SME's to maximise their full potential

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