

Set your brand position

Sue Currie suggests how to differentiate your business and personal brand.

Have you thought about the concept of positioning your offering or brand? What position do you own with your target market and what do you want to own?

I worked with the owner of an event company on a strategy to differentiate her business from many others competing in the same market place. Having grown the business from a one-man-band, she was undertaking a rebranding process to reflect its new direction and scope, but she was having difficulty coming up with her new brand direction. That's when we worked together on pinpointing her persona and the innate personality of the business to uncover the personal brand that was evolving. Ultimately we were able to identify the word or phrase that would determine her USP – Unique Shining Point – to help position her brand.

Head for success

With any branding exercise, whether it is your own personal brand or that of your business, the ultimate aim is to make a name for yourself – to be known for that one thing. Well-known examples include Woolworths 'the fresh food people'; Stefan 'millionaire hairdresser' or Michelle Bridges, 'Australia's leading fitness guru'.

There are numerous food outlets, hairdressers and fitness trainers, and of course bookkeepers and accountants. So why do certain brands stand out? What is the secret of these success stories? I believe it's a blend of marketing, public relations and personal branding elements that leads to a well-positioned and ultimately successful brand. It is also understanding that positioning really begins and ends with the customer. What do they expect from you?

Pinpoint your brand personality

Whether you are a new business, rebranding a well-established business or wanting to position yourself as the bookkeeper of choice in



your market, you need to drill down to the core essence of *you*. Put the 'personal' element into your business.

To find out what is unique about you and your business, ask yourself lots of questions. Do an audit to uncover your values, beliefs, goals and passions. Write down all the words that describe your personality, the *you* words. Look at your strengths and determine what you are good at or what you do differently. These are your action or *do* words – organiser, communicator, strategist and so on.

Ask your clients and colleagues questions on their perceptions of you and what you do well. Get feedback from clients on work you've done. Have you added value and impacted them in any way? Are they delighted or inspired – is there an emotional connection and what happens to them as an end result? These are the *them* words.

From your list of *you*, *do* and *them* words, find the common words or themes that

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come through and condense them into a few sentences of what it is you offer, why it's great and the benefit to your client. For example, I am a stickler for detail. My work is always accurate and clients can rely on my bookkeeping skills.

Look for a difference

Consider there may be a concept, major trend or idea that you can tap into to help set you apart from the rest. Woolworths was one of the first major food outlets to focus on the 'fresh' aspect – a growing trend in the industry with farmers markets and the increase of

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