

State University of New York College at Buffalo - Buffalo State College Digital Commons at Buffalo State

Creative Studies Graduate Student Master's Projects

International Center for Studies in Creativity

12-2007

Embracing the Principles of Creativity in the Internal Branding Process: How the Principles of Creativity Vitalize a Company's Internal Brand so it is Relevant, Vibrant, Engaging and Valuable

Marysia Czarski
Buffalo State College

To learn more about the International Center for Studies in Creativity and its educational programs, research, and resources, go to <http://creativity.buffalostate.edu/>.

Recommended Citation

Czarski, Marysia, "Embracing the Principles of Creativity in the Internal Branding Process: How the Principles of Creativity Vitalize a Company's Internal Brand so it is Relevant, Vibrant, Engaging and Valuable" (2007). *Creative Studies Graduate Student Master's Projects*. 92.

<http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/creativeprojects/92>

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/creativeprojects>



Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

Embracing the Principles of Creativity in the Internal Branding Process:
How the Principles of Creativity vitalize a company's internal brand so it is relevant,
vibrant, engaging and valuable

by

Marysia Czarski

An Abstract of a Project
in
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements
For the Degree of

Master of Science

December 2007

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
International Centre for Studies in Creativity

ABSTRACT OF PROJECT

Embracing Creativity in the Internal Branding Process:
How the Principles of Creativity vitalize a company's internal brand so it is
relevant, vibrant, engaging and valuable

This Project reports on the results of research conducted to explore the power of embracing the principles of creativity in the internal branding process. It reviews how the principles of creativity can vitalize a company's internal brand so it is relevant, vibrant, engaging and valuable. The principles of creativity are defined to explore how they play a part of the internal branding methodology and ultimately, how they impact the context of all of the work throughout this methodology. To understand the relevance and importance of internal branding, five respected and admired North American organizations were paralleled to see where the distinctions from this methodology were present to see where these organizations were living their internal brand. Additionally important in this project was the review of literature in this area and conversations with people who are working and engaged in the distinctions of internal branding or organizational design. Conclusions, implications, and next steps are explored for future work and development.

Date: December 5, 2007

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
International Centre for Studies in Creativity

*Embracing Creativity in the Internal Branding Process:
How the Principles of Creativity vitalize a company's internal brand so it is relevant,
vibrant, engaging and valuable*

A Project in
Creative Studies

by

Marysia J. Czarski

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements
For the Degree of

Masters of Science
December, 2007

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
International Centre for Studies in Creativity

*Embracing Creativity in the Internal Branding Process:
How the Principles of Creativity vitalize a company's internal brand so it is relevant,
vibrant, engaging and valuable*

A Project in
Creative Studies

by

Marysia J. Czarski

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements
For the Degree of

Masters of Science
December, 2007

Dates of Approval:

Dr. Mary Murdock, Advisor
International Centre for Studies in Creativity

Marysia J. Czarski
Candidate

Dedication and Acknowledgment Page

My Master's Project is a culmination of a life time of influences, experiences and education. I wish to dedicate this project to my loving parents, sister and brother who were fundamental in my growing up in an environment that was supportive, fair, gentle, open minded, encouraging and inclusive of all people and all creatures.

I also want to acknowledge the many wonderful people who have provided me with a world class education throughout the years in Ottawa, London, Toronto and Buffalo. Learning occurs as much out of the classroom as in and my class cohort has been a wonderful group of people to learn from and with. I live in a city that embraces creativity and am excited to give back to my community and beyond through this work.

With hours of writing comes hours of sitting. I was fortunate to have the company of Murphy, Cormac, Finnoula and Melo, three cats and a dog who know the true meaning of fun, play and loyalty!

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the love and support of my partner and spouse Melee Hutton who is herself a master in creativity, and a wonderful inspiration to all of my work.

Table of Contents

Section 1: Background to the Project	10
Purpose and background.....	10
Project Description.....	13
Rationale for selection.....	15
Creative Contributions.....	16
Section 2: Pertinent Literature	18
Overview.....	18
Climate.....	19
Leadership.....	21
Culture.....	22
Section 3: Process Plan	24
Introduction.....	24
Timeline.....	25
Section 4: Outcomes	27
Refined Methodology.....	28
Compare and Contrast to North American Organizations.....	37
Use of Branding Methodology With Clients.....	39
“How To” Binder Notes.....	42
Review of Assessment Tools.....	44

Section 5: Key Learnings	47
Introduction.....	47
Content.....	47
Section 6: Conclusion	50
Introduction.....	50
Next Steps.....	50
References.....	51

List of Tables and Figures

Tables

1) Timeline – November 11, 2007.....	24
2) North American Companies Who Embody Inside Out Branding.....	36
3) Inside Out Branding Achievements With Clients.....	38
4) Inside Out Branding Methodology Notes.....	41
5) Dimensions Within the Four Denison Traits.....	45

Figures

1) Inside Out Branding.....	35
2) Denison Organizational Culture Survey.....	44

Appendices

Appendix A: Research Materials

Appendix B: Concept Paper

Section 1: Background to the Project

In this section I will provide the purpose and rationale for my project and describe the pertinent background. This will begin with the inspiration and the *grand* objectives of the project, some of which will occur outside of the time line of this project. The first objective was to create a strong bridge between the principles of creativity and internal branding. I wanted to explore how the principles of creativity and internal branding, when combined, could embrace and engage the human side of the equation. The second objective was to prepare myself to become an expert in the area of creativity and internal branding so that I have the experience and depth to write a White Paper, a book and to present at conferences. This second objective was the larger project vision that will occur outside of the project's timelines.

Purpose and Background

The purpose of this Master's project was to explore how the principles of creativity vitalize a company's internal brand so that it is relevant, vibrant, engaging and valuable (Czarski, 2007, p. 1).

My interest in internal branding resides from a combination of my experiences, education and passion regarding people, organizations and transformation. I started my business career in a marketing department and learnt about branding inside of the 'packaged goods' model. As I transitioned out of marketing, the impact of the experience I had in marketing continued to affect how I worked. I seemed to be always asking the question, 'why aren't companies as interested in how their employees feel about their company as they are about how their customers or clients feel?' As a business coach, facilitator and consultant I stayed in this inquiry.

Through my engagement in *The International Center for Creative Studies* I have seen that the application of creativity is something that all organizations can easily embrace and benefit from. While companies have warmed to creativity being a workplace skill for the individual, (Puccio, Murdock, Mance, 2007) in my experience, the principles of creativity are not openly embraced by companies as a way to better impact how they get their work done, and for the most part, they don't know quite how to harness these principles. I also believe that if positioned to them correctly internal branding is something they will warm to.

Internal branding was a term I coined a number of years ago because I thought all of the 'internal dynamics' of a company needed a holistic strategy that was named after something near and dear to most companies – its brand. I also felt that the accountability for this area that I was naming 'internal branding' needed to reside outside of the Human Resources department. Instead HR would be partners in creating and executing this strategy with other teams in the company. Lederman (2007) in his book *Brand Integrity* stated "Focusing on maximizing the value of the people in your organization requires a change in mindset and role accountability." (p. 135) I am also saying that employees are the ultimate brand of a company. "You must first delight the workplace if you want to delight the marketplace." (Lederman, 2007, p.132)

This was something else I had noted from my conversations and research with marketing stakeholders; internal branding had not been considered in most companies brand strategy. Yet a large number of dollars are invested in a company's brand strategy and rarely do any of these dollars go into generating a company's internal brand. The mindset appeared to be that putting money in external branding was an investment; however putting money into people was an expense. What appears to be happening is

companies are building great stories that they are telling their customers about their products and services, however, internally; employees are not having *consistent* experiences which fulfill them and represent what the company says it stands for. As Ind stated (2003) “Research consistently shows that people do not feel that they fulfill their potential at work and that internal politics prevents effective communication. The employee may have the desire and the potential to become an active participant in the organization, but there are clear barriers to engagement.” (p. 15) Also Anixter (2003) stated:

The one thing that most big brands and their strategies have historically missed: that individuals cannot be co-opted or manipulated (for ever or for long) – but instead can and must be trusted to co-create the brand. It is in the process of co-creation that individuals are fully recognized as the unique adults they are – capable of making principled choices that bring values to customers.” (p.168)

I described such personal incidents in my concept paper (Czarski, 2007):

I have experienced this first hand in the world of packaged goods marketing which is the birthplace of branding. I worked with a large, multi-national consumer goods company right out of university. All of my attention in the marketing department was on branding, however, product branding. There were little to no conversation about the internal brand of our company. (p.1)

Therefore, from this background, my purpose for creating this project started to take shape. My personal learning goals have reflected that. The journey of achieving the learning goals for my project has moved me forward in a rewarding and fulfilling way. I had already developed a very high level methodology for an internal branding process about eight months ago that reflected my thinking on what was needed to have a company define and live its internal brand. Therefore one of my goals was to test and refine the first methodology which I simply called *Internal Branding*. I have been able to do this by working with my clients in the many distinctions of this methodology and introducing more distinctions as my project moved forward. This has also helped me to

develop succinct and relevant language to speak about internal branding and improved my ability to convincingly and credibly speak about the benefits of internal branding. In doing so, my confidence has increased and I have deepened my ability to execute my methodology by moving clients more confidently through the different stages of this process.

Ultimately, after this project was completed I wanted to write a White Paper about the topic, speak at conferences and become known as an expert who can support companies who want an engaging and vibrant internal brand. That is what lies ahead.

Project Description

It is important to note that internal branding is unique from, but not highly different to, a company's external brand. The external brand gets seen and experienced by a company's customers and the consumers in the market place while the internal brand is what gets seen and experienced by a company's employees and inside stakeholders. There are a number of definitions for an external brand that I have heard or read over the years and which date back to my undergraduate business program and marketing class. For the purpose of this paper, I have combined the essence of the ones that most resonated with me and that come from a variety of sources (Ind, Yan, Gad, Anixter, Ryder, Caswell, Moore). An external brand is a promise kept over time that delivers an experience that differentiates a product or service in a way that is meaningful, valuable and relevant to the user or stakeholder. It's what can be counted on from engaging in a relationship with a company's product or service.

It is also important to be clear about the many dimensions of branding. There are brand promises, brand experiences, external brands and internal brands. All of this rolled up can be called a company's brand strategy. The accountability for the brand strategy

resides in the marketing department and this department is responsible to on-goingly manage its growth.

There were two aspects to the project that were critical to explore and talk about because both are not commonplace in most organizations today. The first area was internal branding.

Internal Branding Defined

I defined internal branding as “the unique aspects of an organization’s culture and environment that differentiate it in a compelling and engaging way so employees have a sense of engagement in something bigger and more exciting than just increasing the bottom line.” (Czarski, 2007, p.1). Internal branding is about having an authentic company culture that is clear, stands for something, and mirrors the engaging aspects of a company’s collective external brand. It is the stand that a company takes for its employees and its own relevance other than for the purpose of making money. The experience created for employees from this internal brand is intentional and there is consistency between the talk and the walk. The brand is living! (Czarski, 2007, p.1)

This process is rigorous, takes committed leadership, patience, emotional intelligence and time. These concepts aren’t frequently embraced in North American organizations, yet without them, an internal brand is not even a possibility.

The second critical distinction that I explored in this project was the value of embracing the principles of creativity in the internal branding process. I believe creativity added ‘humanity’ to this process and reduced the risk that the internal branding process will become mechanical, rigid, and dehumanizing. At one point in conversation Markus Redvall (2007) stated that he believed creativity is strongly linked to truth finding. I agree with his statement and can see the link to the Creative Problem Solving

Process (Osborne, 1940) that begins with trying to get to the root of a problem. To get to the root of a problem, truth telling is needed. To bring creativity forward in a meaningful and valuable way in an organization, the creative process must first discover the ‘truths’ of an organization. To find ‘truths’, many questions must be asked. These questions will add authenticity and integrity to the process.

Rationale for Selection

I believe that the use of creativity is a distinction that needs to be applied to intentionally turn an organization’s environment and culture into a vibrant internal brand. If it were a formula, it would look like this:

(Environment + Culture + Leadership) x Principles of Creativity = Vibrant Internal Brand

I wanted to work in this area because I didn’t believe companies currently invested the time, money or energy into this very important aspect of their company. Most companies leave their culture and environment to chance and don’t do the thinking and exploring to ensure they know what they stand for, can say it, and have the systems, processes and ways of being to support it. To do so takes ‘intentionality’. Creativity also takes intentionality or deliberateness as Puccio, Murdock and Mance (2007) call it. Therefore I wanted to explore both this connection and my belief that a company with an internal brand designed from the principles of creativity would be vibrant and relevant.

I also believed that if more companies integrated the principles of creativity into the design of their internal brand, more people would be living lives that were more engaging, fun and invigorating during a big piece of the waking hours of their day. As for myself, I am committed to making a difference in the lives of others, including living creatures. I believe an organization that has gone through a rigorous internal branding

process will be more deeply present to the other stakeholders who are involved in their business and their surrounding communities and not just interested in the shareholders who are looking at the bottom line.

What This Project Adds Creatively to Me and Others; How it Improves Quality of Life for Me or Others

This project will add a completely new context to the work I've been doing with my clients. I have thought through the impact I have been making with my clients and the impact that I want to be making in the future. I want to become more deeply engaged in the way clients think about what they do, how they do it, how they have conversations about it, and how they make it happen. The opportunity to be focused on internal branding has given me the opportunity to synthesize what I believe I can be great at and therefore produce the greatest impact for my clients. The very nature of this inquiry has caused me to look at how I operate and what my ideal state was versus my current reality (Erhard, 1974). Operating from this context allowed me to seek out other people who could contribute to this thinking. This in turn, has made a difference for them as they explore how they do their work and the creative process they have. I want to be doing this work. It is exciting and challenging. It incorporates my experience, my expertise, and my passions.

Companies need to be having these conversations! I think that the conversations a company needs to have to create an internal brand and the structures that will result in the creation of an organization's internal brand are critical for a company to remain vibrant and relevant. Therefore although this project was all about people and their interaction with each other and their company's culture, it was also about those same people being able to fully contribute their own unique creative ability to that company to ensure its

long-term success and viability. As I said in my concept paper (Czarski, 2007),
“ultimately, companies setting themselves up with this framework will be more open to Creative Problem Solving, dynamic conversations, and embracing the differences in their people instead of trying to make them all fairly similar.”(p. 5) The quality of a company will improve as the quality of life improves for the employees. This will lead to greater employee loyalty, increased engagement and sense of purpose. (Ind, 2006)

Section 2: Pertinent Literature

In this section I will introduce and review the pertinent literature for my project and the important distinctions that applied to my work. I will also include a bibliography of useful sources for readers. Although I discovered Nicholas Ind and received his two books quite late in my process, his writings had a tremendous impact on my project. The books were *Living the Brand* (2004) and *Beyond Branding* (2003) and they added a lot of valuable information to my project and deepened my confidence that I was on the right track. I am still awaiting another book from Ind titled *Inspiration, Capturing the Creative Potential of Your Organization* (2004). I think it is very exciting that Ind has written about both living the brand and creative potential from a corporate perspective.

Overview

Over the years I have been exposed to an abundance of literature on marketing, sales, strategic thinking, the ‘how to’ to running a successful company, ways to be a more innovative company, leadership development and team development. A quick search on *Amazon.com* said there were over 2,300 different books available to purchase in these topics. I was not, however, very successful in finding much literature on internal branding or the application of creativity in the design of a company’s way of getting their work done. Given this situation in the literature, I spent more time reading about great companies, creative and innovative corporate cultures, causing vital and energized workplaces, high performing work teams, and how to cause change and transformation in an organization. What I noticed with all of my reading was that many of the distinctions and best practices identified could easily be mapped onto the principles of creativity and the distinctions of internal branding.

Because I had an initial methodology created for internal branding, my reading and research was about deepening the validity of what I had designed and evolving and expanding this methodology. I found myself pulling out the critical aspects and distinctions that the authors I was reading were highlighting in the organizations they were talking about. For example, Burlington (2006) in his book *Small Giants* outlined what passion and dedication, combined with other core operating principles can accomplish. He wrote:

Employees have witnessed where companies lost their creativity as they grew. They have lost their emotional connection with their customers. They've become too commercial and have compromised quality and authenticity all in the name of reducing costs. They've ignored the relationship with the community and failed to retain the culture that brought them great success in the first place. (p. xxix).

Ultimately, a company that becomes focused *only* on making more money and reducing costs is a company that has lost sight of what it stands for, or has never defined it. Ultimately this will impact the experience they provide for all of its stakeholders. This doesn't mean that this kind of a company doesn't have some of the components of what is being discussed here; however, if its reason for existence is lead by making money, I would assert that the experience of working at that kind of company would be diminished, ultimately affecting this company's ability to attract and keep the best talent.

Finally, it was my belief from my research that there are three areas that are the initial building blocks to creating an internal brand. These three areas are also highly conducive to the *principles of creativity*. These areas are climate, culture and leadership.

Climate

From all of the literature I have read, the work of Ekvall (1996), Amabile (1996), Isaken (1998) and Lauer (1998) have most impacted my thinking in this area. As a result, I have re-mapped my methodology a number of times trying to understand how it all

integrated together. As Isaken and Lauer (April, 1998) stated “The climate supports the development, assimilation, and utilization of new and different approaches and concepts.”(p.3) The very essence of an internal brand is ‘new and different’ because it is about how a company differentiates itself in the marketplace. Therefore climate was a vital building block and when built from the principles of creativity provided an important part of an internal brand remaining vibrant, relevant and alive over time. Ekvall’s (1996) ‘Ten Dimensions of a Creative Climate’ are very relevant to developing the kind of climate that was needed to support the internal branding process. These ten dimensions were:

1. Challenge. The emotional involvement of the members of the organization in its operations and goals.
2. Freedom. The independence in behavior exerted by the people in the organization. People making contacts and giving and receiving information; discuss problems and alternatives; plan and take initiatives of different kinds; and make decisions.
3. Idea Support. The ways new ideas are treated. In a supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an attentive and supportive way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives.
4. Trust/Openness. The emotional safety in relationships. When there is a strong level of trust, everyone in the organization dare to put forward ideas and opinions.
5. Dynamism/liveliness. The eventfulness of life in the organization. In the highly dynamic situation, new things are happening all the time and alterations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occur.

6. Playfulness/humour. The spontaneity and ease that is displayed. A relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organization.
7. Debates. The presence of personal and emotional tensions (in contrast to conflicts between ideas) in the organization where viewpoints, ideas, differing experiences and knowledge can be discussed openly.
8. Risk Taking. The tolerance of uncertainty in the organization. In the high risk-taking case, decisions and actions are prompt and rapid, arising opportunities are taken and concrete experimentation is preferred to detailed investigation and analysis.
9. Idea Time. The amount of time people can use (and do use) for elaborating new ideas.
10. (Low) - Conflict. The lack of presence of personal and emotional tension.

Having these dimensions present in a company's environment can provide the space for the work to be done to develop an engaging internal brand. A creative climate can also create the space for the internal brand to flourish. If a creative climate is not present, the internal brand is at risk of becoming redundant and short lived and what was once possibility and a future that was evocative could quickly turn to cynicism.

Leadership

I take the same creative lenses towards leadership as Puccio, Murdock and Mance (2007) do in their work on creative leadership. Creativity was a needed core competency of leadership in a company that wants to develop an engaging internal brand. They have stated that there was a clear focus on being deliberate when being creative. "By deliberate creativity we mean taking a proactive approach toward the production of novel

and useful ideas that address a predicament or opportunity.” (p. xiv). This is **exactly** the kind of leadership needed in a company which is dedicated to developing its internal brand. An internal brand puts intentionality into defining how the leaders want the inside dynamics of their organization to work and engage its people. It’s never about letting it just happen. Therefore those in a leadership role have the opportunity to create a ‘working space’ that is ‘novel and useful’ and then put in the systems, structures, principles and planning to bring it to life every day. This takes a mindset that can understand that “creativity is clearly about doing something in an original way that is at the same time useful.” (p. 21)

Culture

In his book *Brand Integrity* Lederman (2007) stated that “your brand drives your work culture.” (p. 29). As corporate culture is about values, beliefs and norms, every organization has some kind of a culture. If left to ‘just happen’, a company’s culture can often become subversive and political and have a devastating impact on the people in a company (Anixter, 2003). Therefore being deliberate in developing the culture was critical so the internal brand will be based in a strong foundation of what a company stands for. Lederman talked about making the “invisible, visible” by having behaviors support the values of a company. This mirrors the premise that I have heard that creativity without some kind of output is not creativity at all. In this case the output would be desired behaviours. Lederman (p.31) used concepts such as:

- Appreciating Diversity
- Commitment to Innovation
- Excellent Service
- Uncompromising Integrity

Lederman stated:

Individuals have certain beliefs about the customers, partners, and their fellow employees in the companies they work for. These beliefs (whether correct or not) influence their attitudes, which directly impact the behaviors (actions) they exhibit from minute to minute, hour to hour, and day to day. (p.30)

A company that is committed to creating a **consistent** internal brand will be deliberate in its efforts to define what these areas mean to them.

Section 3: Process Plan

In this section I will review the process steps and elements I used from my timeline and describe how they have moved forward. Overall, I've been working in all of the areas I identified in my original timeline (Czarski, 2007, p. 6, 7, 8). I did not put in the due dates for my drafts of the sections of my paper, and as a result, missed the first date. I've added them into my revised timeline so that won't happen again. The process with the ethical review to use human subjects took an extensive amount of time. I only had one interview that needed to involve this process and I managed to get that complete in time.

Introduction

There were many 'positives' to preparing a detailed timeline for this project. The initial process of preparing a timeline was a positive experience and a vital structure to flush out everything that needed to be completed to achieve the objectives and learning goals of this paper. It helped me with my thinking to understand what could get done and provided a framework for that to happen. Ultimately the biggest strides were made in my project progress because of the work I'd been doing with my clients with this methodology.

The 'potential' would have been for me to refer to it more frequently! My office moved locations due to a renovation and I've found myself less organized than I usually am because I don't have the space in which I would to typically manage myself. Additionally, I can could have printed out more copies of the timeline and put them into relevant documents to refer to during my project.

The 'concerns' have been quite straightforward. How might I put all the actions behind the structures? How to ensure I stay on top of all of the areas I knew were critical

for my project? In what ways might I confirm that I've captured all of the pertinent details to complete my project? In Table 1, I've prepared a revised timeline as of November 11, 2007.

Table 1: Timeline – November 11, 2007

Timing	Hours:	Activities
September 2 – September 25	17 hrs	Concept Paper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting of the paper • Feedback and conversations from my resource group • Final version completed
September 2 – December 5	30 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading relevant books, articles, and materials on Internal Branding, Creative Cultures and Respected, successful companies
September 18 – December 5	40 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client preparation, work, facilitations and feedback in my methodology
October 1 – December 3	8 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the most respected companies in North America and choose 5 – 10 to reference as my benchmarks
September 2 – November 30	15 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations with relevant people in the fields of marketing, market research and advertising
October 4 – December 3	24 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity Seminar Series: A life by design. Eight sessions on designing a creative life.
October 30 – November 25	2 hrs	Assessment of Climate and Culture Surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K.E.Y.S • 360 • Culture Assessment Tool
November 16	3 hrs	Interview of Brooks Entwistle, President, Goldman Sachs India <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation for • Human subjects approval process • Interview • Post data compiling

November 6 – December 5	48 hrs	Paper Write Up & Feedback From Resource Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sections 1 – 3 • Sections 4 – 7 • Final complete • Packaged and sent out
November 30 – December 5	5 hrs	“How To” Exercise Binder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine structure to summarize notes • Prepare outline
December 1 - 9	2 hrs	Finalize structure for 15 minutes on line work for Dr. M

Section 4: Outcomes

In this section I have provided the original methodology for internal branding that I developed approximately six months ago and had been the base of work researched in this area. The concept of creativity being a part of this methodology was acknowledged as a must however, it was not originally fully integrated into this methodology.

Therefore in this section I have elaborated on how the principles of creativity became a vital part of this methodology and a distinguishing factor to ensure that creating a company's internal brand didn't become a mechanical process and something done to the employees of a company to manipulate them to just give more to a company. Finally, I've outlined how each of the intended products and outcomes for this project has transpired (Czarski, 2007). They were:

1. Develop a clean, clear, tested and true methodology.
2. Compare and contrast my methodology to 5 -10 organizations in North America who are respected, successful and have a relevant internal brand.
3. Use (parts of) my methodology with 3 clients that I work with so I can develop my skills and expertise in internal branding.
4. Capture notes so I have the basis for the materials and initial thinking to develop a 'how to' exercise binder.
5. Research a '360' like tool that can assess the current culture and environment of a company and see if that can be valuable for an internal brand. The K.E.Y.S tool (Amabile 1987, 1990, 1995) will be one tool that is assessed in relationship to my methodology to see if it supports what I am doing and how it might be integrated.

The question that I answered was “Can I use the K.E.Y.S tools or do I need to research something myself?”

Outcome #1 Refined Methodology

My first outcome was to have a refined methodology that would evolve from the methodology which I had created in the summer. The original methodology called *Internal Branding* began with three sections that were the important components to create a company’s internal brand. It was fairly linear in nature, and had small injections of the principles of creativity integrated throughout. The purpose of the methodology was to demonstrate these parts were a piece of a greater whole and needed to be present or a company would be missing important components to have its employees live their brand. It also served as a high level audit for a company that was committed to generating their internal brand and wanted to know what might be missing or need to be added to achieve that. My original methodology was (Czarski, 2007) as follows:

INTERNAL BRANDING

THE ESSENCE OF THE INTERNAL BRANDING PROCESS

A) SYNTHESIZE YOUR BRAND

What conversation do you want to be happening with stakeholders about your company and products?

POWERFUL CONTEXT

- ☒ Do what you love, what you can be best at, and what makes economic sense
- ☒ Vision, value, purpose work
- ☒ Mind set – gauging self awareness
- ☒ Development of your brand experience

- ❏ What promises will you stand behind for your brand?
- ❏ Creative Environment

B) SYSTEMIZE YOUR BRAND

Do you have the systems and structures in place to support your brand?

STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS

- ❏ A culture of discipline and freedom
- ❏ Accountability and responsibility structures
- ❏ Delivery touch points of your brand experience
- ❏ Feedback mechanisms and Performance Management
- ❏ Goal setting, number tracking and sharing of results
- ❏ Business Planning

C) OPERATIONALIZE YOUR BRAND

How are you and your employees ‘being’ the brand?

UNLEASING POWER THROUGH UNSTOPPABLE ACTION

- ❏ Training and development
- ❏ Creative Leadership
- ❏ Sound and flawless execution
- ❏ Expertise sharing
- ❏ Coaching conversations

I struggled with this original methodology for a number of reasons. First off, it felt like it was too linear and was missing some of the fundamental learnings I had been taking from my Master’s in Creativity and Change Leadership. I didn’t intend this; however, it felt like it *could* be something “done to” people if it weren’t coming from the

right place and actually could suppress their individual creativity instead of enhancing it.

As Ind stated in *Living the Brand* (2004):

Organizations through their systems, values, training and rules try to suppress creativity, yet the implication of the need for self-actualization is that they need their Socrateses and their Galileos. For that to happen they have to create environments where freedom of expression is encouraged and creative genius stimulated. The managerial fear here is that anarchy may ensue, but to create entrepreneurial organizations, rules must be questioned and occasionally violated. If they are not, stasis ensues and people feel unfulfilled. There has to be sufficient freedom for people to contribute and to help define the organization. This is a spur to action: to accept the individual responsibility to help build something worthwhile. (p. 37)

The spirit of my developing this methodology and the purpose of all of my work is to humanize organizations, not de-humanize them. I believed that if people understand what an organization stands for; have the opportunity to engage and contribute to the delivery of what that is; if they can bring their creative self forward in the process of making that difference; and if they are acknowledged and encouraged to keep growing within the organization, there will be a win for the company, a win for the employees and a win for the communities in which the company operates in. This methodology was a fundamental expression of my personal belief that one can't compartmentalize parts of a human being, nor an organization. Human beings are not machines and bring emotion, feeling, experience (the past), aspirations (the future) and their own context to the work place. (Erhart, 1974) By denying this, we are denying the understanding of how humans operate. In most organizations, especially in the western world, human beings are the greatest asset of a company. Very few of our organizations depend upon assembly line production that is linear in nature and where product is churned out regardless of what the human part of the human being is bringing to the process. Organizations need human 'beings' not human 'doings' yet, many have not fully awakened to this and are distrustful

of what could happen if they did. And here in lies the breakdown of today's organization. In *Presence* (Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski and Flowers, 2006), the authors wrote:

Everything we have to say starts with understanding the nature of wholes, and how parts and wholes are interrelated. Our normal way of thinking cheats us. It leads us to think of wholes as made up of many parts, the way a car is made up of wheels, a chassis, and a drive train. In this way of thinking, the whole is assembled from the parts and depends upon them to work efficiently. If a part is broken, it must be repaired or replaced. This is a very logical way of thinking about machines. But living systems are different.

Unlike machines, living systems, such as your body or a tree create themselves. They are not mere assemblages of their parts but are continually growing and changing along with their elements. (p. 5)

Creating an internal brand is about recognizing the whole. Embracing the principles of creativity is a way to safeguard that the internal brand does not become the end, static and fixed. Instead, it becomes the means to have an organization maintain integrity with all of its parts, looking at how all of its parts are integrating together, and has a point of reference to do so. It's this divide which has held back so many companies. Employees look to be a part of something bigger and are looking for companies that can provide a good reason or motivation to show up to work and really apply themselves day after day. Amabile (1997) has written much on intrinsic motivation which she defined as "the motivation to work on something because it is interesting, exciting, satisfying or personally challenging." (p. 39) An internal brand needed to be all of this on a 'holistic' level so all of the people will be motivated to bring their best selves forward, ultimately, being creative inside of the internal brand that has inspired and engaged them. The internal brand fuels the people AND the people fuel the internal brand. As the integration evolves, ultimately, it's hard to tell them a part, much like a human hand, visually different on both sides, however, actually the same thing. At this

point, in conversations with a client, the term *Inside Out Branding* came about and became the name of my evolved methodology.

It appeared from my research that companies that have created an internal brand and have embraced the principles of creativity have also achieved success in their industry. (Appendices 1 – 5). In success, we are talking about success beyond strong financial results, we are talking about being a company that is respected, admired in the communities that it works, and building something that gives back beyond a pay cheque to the stakeholders involved. Ind (2004) summarized the many potential benefits of what happens when a company lives its internal brand (p. 14):

- Employees flourish in organizations where they identify with the brand;
- Organizations flourish when the brand has relevance and creates meaning;
- Purpose and values are not created – they exist; the issue is how well they are articulated and embedded;
- Brand clarity creates freedom;
- Brands come to life when the boundaries between the internal and external blur;
- Stories and myths are important for sustaining brands;
- Living the brand requires imagination.

I frequently use the term that I adopted from Collins (2001) where he talked about the need for the balance of “discipline” and “freedom” when running an organization. Again, in reference to this balance like the human hand – the front and back of my hand look very different, however, it’s the same hand and completes the whole. The first methodology I created defined the “discipline” but lacked emphasis on “freedom”. I knew somewhere the principles of creativity provided the context for “freedom” if

applied while respecting the “discipline” of working from the structures of the internal brand. Ultimately this lays the foundation for a company to be vitalized and relevant, leading to engaged and vibrant employees. It was exciting to hear people in the field of leadership getting it. It is very common to hear the term ‘authentic leadership’. George (2004) in his article *The Journey to Authenticity* defined five qualities that authentic leaders demonstrated (p.30):

- Understanding their purpose
- Practicing solid values
- Leading with heart
- Establishing connected relationships
- Demonstrating self-discipline

If this proved to be valuable for leader, why not the companies they lead? I spent four days exploring *The Pathway to Authentic Leadership* at the creativity conference, *CREA*, in Italy in the spring of 2007. We talked about Collins (2001) and *Level 5 Leadership*. As I wrote in my Masters paper from that research (Czarski, 2007):

Ultimately, a Level 5 leader is *being creative* in their pursuit of greatness. There is *debate* about ideas, as this Level 5 leader does not bring their ego to dialogue, and is *open* and *trustful* of the team around her. They are committed to creating a high performance culture, and in doing so, must actually embody the characteristics of the environment they want to create. (p. 7)

Therefore I am saying that when an organization creates its internal brand and lives its brand, it is also creating its authentic expression and being authentic as a whole.

Amabile’s (1996) and Ekvall’s (1996) work on creative environment seemed to capture so much of the principles of creativity that I struggled because I wondered aloud if creative environment was the core area that companies needed to embrace. Could that

be all they needed and they'd then be embracing the principles of creativity and well on their way to achieving a powerful internal brand? That didn't feel 'whole' though. What I concluded was that Amabile's and Ekvall's assertions about environment were essential for the internal branding methodology, AND they also helped to articulate the principles of creativity that I believe needed to be the context for all of the work in the internal branding methodology! I have already stated Ekvall's *10 Dimensions of a Creative Climate* and their influence on my work. The *10 Dimensions* combined with the *Stimulants to Creativity* (Burnside, Amabile, and Grysiewicz, 1988) created an extensive and strong set of guidelines for *The Principles of Creativity*. These stimulants are "freedom, effective project management, adequate resources, collaborative atmosphere, recognition, sufficient time and challenge." (p. 169 – 185).

But how did this all work together? Ultimately, leadership was needed to ensure that it all tied together and happened. The 'leaders' needed to champion the brand and operate inside of these principles of creativity to create the behaviors and actions to be the brand. What the individual embodies ultimately will become what the organization embodies. Therefore people need to demonstrate that they can and will "walk the talk". I believed the talk and walk would be greatly enhanced if a leader embraced the qualities of a creative person. Davis (1986) provided a long list of qualities that I assert will enhance the internal branding process and inspire others to live the brand. The *Qualities of Creative People* he listed are: "Curious; Energetic; Experimenting; Independent; Industrious; Flexible; Open Minded; Original; Playful; Perceptive; Persevering; Questioning; Risk taker; Self-aware; Sensitive." (p. 84).

Leadership played a part in my initial methodology; however it wasn't emphasized as much as it is now. Ultimately, the leader(s) is going to spearhead the

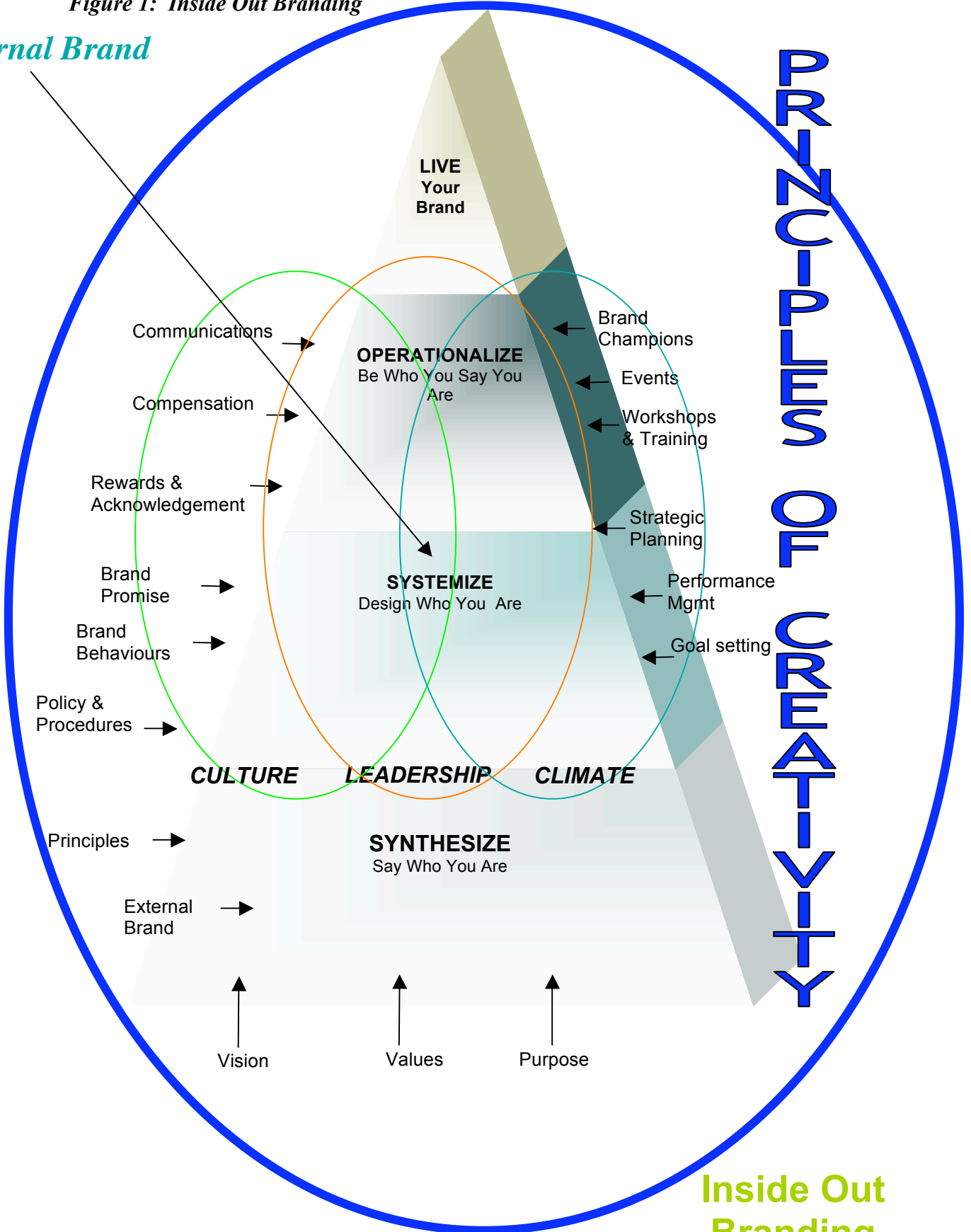
process for internal branding which means that the organization will be going through change because all aspects of how it operates will be deliberately impacted and influenced by the internal brand so that everyone knows how to be and can be living that brand. I agree with the assertion of Puccio, Murdock and Mance (2007) that “Leaders help the individuals and organizations they influence grow by deliberately facilitating productive change.” and that “because leaders bring about change, creativity is a core leadership competence.” (p. xii). Without the principles of creativity and creative leadership, the internal branding process will stall and may even fail.

From all of this work, I have reworked my original methodology to produce the following methodology for internal branding which I am calling *Inside Out Branding*.

Managing all of the elements in Figure 1 (next page) in symmetry will be the challenge of everyone involved to ensure all are living a brand that invigorates and is creative and relevant.

Figure 1: Inside Out Branding

Internal Brand



Outcome # 2: Compare and Contrast Inside Out Branding to North American Organizations

I chose five North American organizations that I feel embodied *Inside Out Branding* and therefore were living their brand day by day. My criteria for choosing these organizations were:

- They are respected by their customers and their employees
- They are successful financially
- They have a strong brand that has made them a leader in their industry
- There was enough written information available to make these conclusions
- I might know someone personally who worked there, or had personal experience as a customer of this company

To structure this overview, I have taken the core elements of the *Inside Out Branding* methodology and rated whether these elements are present in these companies.

I have provided an overview of these companies in Table 2.

Table 2: North American Companies Who Embody Inside Out Branding

Company	Synthesize: Clearly state who they are	Systemize: Design who they are	Operationalize: Be who they say they are	Principles of Creativity Present	Stories from people that support this
Starbucks	Yes – Appendix 1	Yes – Appendix 1.1	Yes – Appendix 1.2	Yes – Appendix 1.3	Yes – Appendix 1.4
Goldman Sachs	Yes – Appendix 2	Yes – Appendix 2.1	Yes – Appendix 2.2	Yes – Appendix 2.3	Yes – Appendix 2.4
Google	Yes – Appendix 3	Yes – Appendix 3.1	Yes – Appendix 3.2	Yes – Appendix 3.3	Yes – Appendix 3.4
Four Seasons	Yes – Appendix 4	N/A	Yes – Appendix 4.2	Yes – Appendix 4.3	Yes – Appendix 4.4
Cirque du Soleil	Yes – Appendix 5	Yes – Appendix N/A	Yes – Appendix 5.2	Yes – Appendix 5.3	Yes – Appendix 5.4

The more I did my research on these companies, the more questions I had, which really had me assess closely these five companies to ensure they really could be declared as companies who have created an internal brand and are living it. Table 2 provided a high level affirmation that these companies have gone through a lot of the necessary stages of the Inside Out Branding methodology. These companies have proven to have done the deep work to define who they are as demonstrated by the abundance of written material readily available that is both inspirational and unique. There was a clear design to how these companies operated, and they have demonstrated that they have operationalized their brand by the reputation they have achieved as an employer and member of the community. And what was most impressive was that these companies all had unique and innovative ways of operating and working with their employees. It appeared each was living inside of the principles of creativity.

In three of the five organizations chosen, I had friends and acquaintances who work there and gave deeper insight and appreciation to how these companies have worked in these areas. For example, I was very inspired by how Goldman Sachs operated after my conversation with Brooks Entwistle who is the CEO of the operations in India. Brooks made it clear that the organization strove to operate with integrity with its core principles (Appendix 2.1) that he said are “pounded into our heads so there is no mistaking what we stand for at GS”. This is never taken lightly as the firm has strong accountability structures that are both formal and informal to ensure employees are living the principles of Goldman’s and ultimately the brand. As Brooks put it, “our acid test is would you want to read about that event on the front page of the Wall Street Journal?? We have a strong brand in an industry that has lost a lot of credibility and trust with clients. It could only take one person doing something very ‘stupid’ to blow all of that.”

I also have an acquaintance who I interviewed over one year ago regarding her experience of managing the most profitable Starbucks in Canada for over two years. Even though she had not been working at Starbucks for over one year, I could hear the pride in her voice as she explained what she had accomplished while working there. It was evidently clear that she knew

what success looked like for her and her team, and what the rewards would be for being successful. For example it is common that Starbucks’ managers are rewarded by being taken to places like Costa Rica to find out about where the coffee to sell comes from. This also provided them with a connection to their product, and impassioned its people to the brand. See Appendix A for more detailed examples of some of these four areas assessed in these organizations.

Outcome #3: Use of Branding Methodology with Clients

I have been working with three different clients with my methodology. Most of the work began with these clients in July and is still in progress. The results so far are defined by the following colour coded scale in Table 3:

Completed this part of the methodology	Partial completion of this part of the methodology	Have not begun this part of the methodology
--	--	---

This measured if my clients were embracing and integrating the principles of creativity within the *Culture, Environment* and *Leadership* of the organization as defined by the colour coded scale that is reflected in each of my client’s company names:

All of the principles	Some of the principles	None of the principles
-----------------------	------------------------	------------------------

Table 3: Inside Out Branding Achievements With Clients

Client	Synthesize	Systemize	Operationalize	Living the Brand
Modern Weave				No – and committed
Art Interiors				No – and committed
Au Lit Fine Linens				No – and committed

From my experiences, I have noticed that living the brand was rare with companies because it takes hard work and time! These are two words that business can shy away from. As Anixter (2005) stated:

Why has integrated branding not integrated us? Perhaps the answer is that it’s just plain hard. It takes great discipline and consistency of purpose to include people in the story of the brand in a way that makes it theirs, and frankly some of us don’t want to be integrated

in someone else's story. Or to paraphrase one CEO I know, 'I'm not really interested in the people.' Topped only by 'So don't make me try to be.' (p.165)

I respect my clients for taking on this process as for all of them, this is the first time they have gone through any process like this. I can see that for their whole company to live the brand, they will need to transform their leadership. That includes more of walking the talk and embracing the leadership component of this process in a way that they become a brand champion and a brand catalyst. For many entrepreneurs, this isn't a natural role for them to take on. However, as Mahatma Gandhi (1934) so eloquently put it, "We must become the change we wish to see." Without strong leadership, a gap can occur in the execution of this process. The 'catch' has been these leaders really wanted the results, yet were very challenged to take the time away from working 'in' the business that's necessary to work 'on' the business. They get caught up in the day to day, 'fixing' the problems of the day, instead of re-inventing their organization so that a lot of these problems can dissipate.

With the trust developed in our relationship, my clients have been using me as an external resource to facilitate the learning of what it means to be the brand of the company. In doing so, I will continue to work with my clients on their leadership to ensure they can be their own company's brand champion and catalyst.

Inside Out Branding With Clients - Pluses, Potentials, Concerns, and Overcomes (PPCO)

To summarize my work with my clients, I have completed a PPCO to provide a review of the work completed to date.

Pluses

- They are 'bought in' and committed to the concept of Inside Out Branding
- They are excited about the possibilities of Inside Out Branding
- They see the value in sticking to the process
- They have each completed the first layer of the work which is the *Synthesizing* stage of the methodology

- They have been doing the work for longer than 3 months
- They are talking the talk
- They are starting to more frequently walk the talk
- They are more coachable
- They are far more open to ensure they have diagnosed the right problem before they start to provide solutions
- They are looking at their companies from a much larger context
- They are more excited about their business
- Two out of the three clients are executing brand extensions (rolling out cutting edge retail concepts in Toronto)
- They are bringing in a lot more structure into their business
- They are making less assumptions about their people, and are providing a lot more clarity around what their expectations are of their performance
- They are asking their employees for a lot more feedback
- They are really getting that they can't be the only brand champions in the company
- They are starting to hire people who are aligned and firing people who are not
- They are bringing more of their employees into the conversations by having me coach them and facilitate meetings talking about these distinctions

Potentials

- Provide more training and development for employees that occurs more frequently
- Go deeper into the 'Systemizing' and 'Operationalizing' components of this methodology
- Have more fun with it
- Get more of their employees involved with Inside Out Branding

Concerns

- How to ensure clients continue to do the heavy lifting of this work?
- In what ways might I encourage Management to include more employees in the rollout?

- How to keep the rigor in place for the execution of Inside Out Branding?
- How might I work with the leaders to ensure they hold their teams to account?

Overcomes

- Keep going back to the heart of the methodology
- Ensure constant check ins and measurement of all outcomes
- Keep the dialogue going
- Train the leaders in coaching conversations
- Bring in collaborative consultants to do the work
- Keep checking in with the client
- Identify potential employee brand champions to lead some of this process
- Incorporate structures into the performance management systems
- Ensure clients have a solid and integrated performance management system

Outcome #4: Notes for the “How To” Binder

Ultimately I wanted to have an extensive set of tools for the *Inside Out Branding Methodology*. Right now I am calling this the “How to” Binder which captured my initial notes. This binder will have the explanations, readings, exercises and detailed distinctions of this methodology. The notes to date are captured in Table 4.

Table 4: Inside Out Branding Methodology Notes

POWERFUL CONTEXT - Embracing the Principles of Creativity
 Standing in and operating from these principles will create a powerful internal brand. There principles are:

- Freedom
- Effective project management
- Adequate resources
- Collaborative atmosphere
- Recognition
- Sufficient time and challenge
- Challenge
- Freedom
- Idea Support

- Trust/Openness
- Dynamism/liveliness
- Playfulness/humour
- Debates
- Risk Taking
- Idea Time
- (Low) – Conflict

SYNTHESIZE YOUR BRAND STRATEGY - Say Who You Are

1. Create Your Vision
2. Define Your Values
3. Purpose – what you do regardless of the money. It’s the soul of how you operate.
4. Principles – what you stand for
5. Define your external brand if you don’t have one. Does your brand provide an external differentiator for your service or product? Branding Formula = commodity + service + experience. Go through the exercise of “You are This, Not This”.
6. What is your mindset or underlying beliefs? Do these beliefs enhance or restrict your internal brand? What can’t be said in your organization? What questions can’t be asked? What are the superstitions you have in your organization that could be limiting your internal brand?
7. Brand Promises - what are the promises you will not break and you are willing to be held to account for? What can your company be counted on for (i.e 24 hour return all calls).

SYSTEMIZE YOUR BRAND STRATEGY – Design Who You Are

1. Brand Experience – what are the touch points of your internal brand for your employees? What are the touch points of your external brand for your customers?
2. Policies and Procedures – what are the behaviours that are ‘on-brand’ and what would be considered ‘off-brand’? What are the guidelines to create the discipline needed to be the brand of your company?
3. Performance Management – how is your team doing in the following areas: Attitudes, Behaviours, Results and Expertise. Do they know what the expectations are and how they are reviewed? Do they consider Performance Management conversations an opportunity to expand themselves and an opportunity to see how they are doing living the brand?
4. Business and Strategic Planning
5. Goals and Milestones – declarations, promises and fulfillment
6. Brand behaviours – coaching conversations and the opportunity to transform and renew oneself. Provides a context for freedom inside of the brand.

OPERATIONALIZE YOUR BRAND STRATEGY – Be Who You Say You Are

1. Rewards, acknowledgements and pay – what behaviours and results get recognized and rewarded. Do you they compliment and expand your brand?
2. Events – create events that deepen the principles of creativity, and breakdown silos.
3. Brand Champions – who are they, recognize them, and encourage them. Give them the resources to continue to expand your brand.
4. Workshops and Training – where do your employees need to be stretched to fulfill on or expand the brand? Provide training that will deepen their understanding of being the brand, and show them alternative ways to live the brand. Set up a Creative Problem Solving Session to tap their creative energy to solve an issue or seize an opportunity.
5. Internal Communications – have conversations that expand your brand and your people, building them up, not killing off their creativity and their contribution. These conversations can look like coaching conversations to embrace brand accountability. Tell stories about the origins and successes of your company – enhance the excitement of where you came from and what you are doing.

Outcome #5: Review of Assessment Tools for This Methodology

This far in my research, I have evaluated two assessment tools for my methodology. They are the K.E.Y.S (1999) and the Denison Organizational Culture Survey (2000).

K.E.Y.S

Developed by Teresa Amabile, this survey is designed to assess the climate for creativity in organizations. The specific areas looked at were: freedom, challenging work, sufficient resources, supervisory encouragement, work group supports, and organizational encouragement. While the focus is on ‘creativity and productivity’ understanding how an organization is doing in the specific elements would be valuable as they represent the principles of creativity that need to be present to develop an internal brand and ultimately live the brand. This assessment would provide good insight for a

client who wanted to understand how its organization was doing in this area of environment and therefore would enhance the *Inside Out Branding methodology*.

Denison Organizational Survey

Developed by Dr. Daniel Denison (2007), Professor of Organizational Development at IMD in Lausanne, Switzerland, and William S. Neale, this assessment incorporates over 15 years of experience at over 1000 organizations. Figure 2.0 provides an overview of the assessment.

Figure 2.0: Denison Organizational Culture Survey (DOCS)

Traditionally, organizational culture surveys have taken a behavioral approach making it difficult to link the results back to business. The Denison Organizational Culture Survey (DOCS) enables leaders, key stakeholders and employees to understand the impact their culture has on their organization's performance and learn how to redirect their culture to improve organizational effectiveness.

Based on the Denison model, the Denison Organizational Culture Survey has 60 items that measure specific aspects of an organization's culture. The culture is measured through four traits (Mission, Adaptability, Involvement, and Consistency) and twelve management practices. Individual surveys are collectively tabulated into a graphic profile that compares your organization's culture to that of higher and lower-performing organizations.

Repeated use of the Denison Organizational Culture Survey provides a measure of the organization's progress toward achieving a high-performance culture and optimum performance. The survey and the prescriptive suggestions are written in easily understood business terms, making it a powerful and user-friendly tool.

Within each of the four traits, there are additional measures that would be useful to have benchmarked for any company that was taking on *Inside Out Branding*. These measures are listed in Table 5.

Table 5: Dimensions within the Four Denison Traits

Involvement

- *Empowerment
- *Team Orientation
- *Capacity Development

Consistency

- *Core Values
- *Agreements
- *Co-ordination and Integration

Mission

- *Vision
- *Goals and Objectives
- *Strategic Direction and Intent

Adaptability

- *Organizational Learning
- *Customer Focus
- *Creating Change

Section 5: Key Learnings

Introduction

In this section I elaborate on the key content and process learnings and on my creativity and domain relevant skill developed which have resulted from my work on this project. Some of my key learnings were:

- This is an inter-connected and holistic this process;
- This methodology can not be executed in linear nature as it will limit its value and possibility;
- Not having the *principles of creativity* as the context of the work could result in this methodology being something else ‘done to’ employees, instead of being ‘done with’ them. These principles are a way to ensure the process is humanistic, and not mechanical;
- Leadership is a vital aspect of the Inside Out Branding Process, and specifically, having creative leaders championing this process will enhance it tremendously;
- This process is about creating both ‘freedom’ and ‘discipline’ and the delicate balance of both being happening;
- This whole process takes commitment, hard work, and patience;
- In so many ways this methodology mirrors the Creative Problem Solving Process

Content

I had defined for myself some very specific learning goals for this project. They were (Czarski, 2007):

- a) Testing and refining my current methodology;
- b) To develop succinct and relevant language to speak about this area;

- c) Deepen my ability to execute my methodology;
- d) The ability to convincingly and credibly speak about the benefits of internal branding. It is the building block to me being sought after as an expert in this area and to speak at conferences and in companies;
- e) Once I have the methodology refined, look at where it might apply elsewhere, i.e. cities or not-for-profits.

It is very powerful to look back at these goals and to see the strides I've taken since beginning this project! Although I have tested the methodology, I feel like I have done more than refine it, I have actually over-hauled it. My major learnings as stated in the introduction highlight how valuable this work has been for me.

I didn't know at first quite how the principles of creativity would impact this process, I just recognized they would be valuable *somewhere*. I now see that that "somewhere" led to the very heart of the *Inside Out Branding* methodology, it's the context in which all of the work gets done. Creativity is about transformation, and this process is about transforming an organization into a workplace that has meaning, relevance, vitality, humanity and something it can stand behind. As Caswell (2003) stated in *Beyond Branding*, "Almost all the issues we face in our work with clients across the world and all of the misunderstandings that we have discussed here seem to me ultimately related to context, whether personal or organizational. We therefore desperately need new and more innovative approaches to tackle both of these together." (p. 135). I've always known there has been a gap in creating a powerful context in many companies and organizations and I am becoming more confident that this methodology could be one approach to bridge this gap.

The language I am using for my work is not that different than when I began my project. The difference is that this language now has deeper meaning to me, and I feel like I can own the words because I understand their relevance to the process and what they mean in defining the internal brand. The reading I have done, the conversations I have had, the reflection I have taken, have enabled me to engage more meaningfully into the conclusions and writings for this project. This has supported me to achieve my goal of speaking with greater credibility and conviction and facilitating conversations to enroll people in this methodology. This project has also given me the confidence to submit this work to the Conference in Buffalo in May, 2008 for consideration of presenting it.

This process takes time and commitment and I see that the work I've begun with my clients is still in the early days. Realistically, it may take up to another 8 months to 2 years before they are completely living their brand. My commitment is to be working with these clients every step of the way. To push the process prematurely could lead to it becoming mechanical in nature, killing off the very thing it is meant to spur, originality, inspiration and engagement.

Finally, although I've spent the least amount of time in this learning goal, I'm clear that this methodology could apply to cities and other organizations like not-for-profits. Ultimately, this process is about human beings, the same human beings who live in our cities.

Section 6: Conclusions

Introduction

The two critical elements that were re-formulated into my methodology in a far more relevant way were the principles of creativity and leadership. Although I don't call it change leadership in my work, the process is fully about change and transformation. What I didn't know before I began this project was how the principles of creativity would become the context of this methodology and how the distinction of *creativity* would be the critical component of how things get defined and done. I also failed to see in the beginning of the project that without leadership being at the forefront of this methodology, there would be no traction to the work and little chance of brand championing occurring. Therefore the distinction of leadership has come forth as a fundamental component for success.

Next Steps

What I see myself doing next is (Czarski, 2007):

- a) Completing the 'How To' exercise binder to be used in the facilitation of this process with companies. By March 30, 2008.
- b) Creating a White Paper that can be sent out to the business community. The paper will pull together all of the relevant information from my work. In doing so, it will clarify why this area is important, the methodology I believe a company can use, and how to use it. May 30, 2008.
- c) Creating the intentions and outcomes, and possible chapters for the beginnings of a book. September 30, 2008.
- d) From my methodology and conclusions, I will develop the outline for a Pod Cast that can be put on my website. May 30, 2008.

And since I wrote these next steps from my Concept Paper, I will add:

- e) Continue the work with my clients in the *Inside Out Branding* methodology. Ongoing.
- f) Finish reading more of the books that are in my *Reference* Section. Ongoing.
- g) Search out other conferences that I can present at. June 30, 2008.

References

Amabile, T. (1996). *Creativity in context*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Amabile, T. (1997). *Motivating creativity in organizations. On doing what you love, and loving what you do*. California: California Management Review. Vo. 40, No. 1, 39 – 58.

Andrew, J. & Sirkin, H. (2006). *Payback. Reaping the rewards of innovation*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Annunzio, S. (2004). *Contagious success. Spreading high performance throughout your organization*. New York, NY: Penguin Press.

Burlingham, B. (2005). *Small giants. Companies that choose to be great instead of big*. New York, NY: Penguin Press.

Burnside, R.M., Amabile, T. & Gyskiewicz, S. (1988). Assessing organizational climates for creativity and innovation: Methodological review of large company audits. In Y. Ijiri & R.L Kuhn (Eds.), *New directions in creative and innovative management* (pp. 169 – 185). Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.

Cameron, J. (1997). *The Artists Way: a spiritual path to higher creativity*. New York: J. P. Tarcher.

Collins, J. (2001). *Good to great. Why some companies make the leap...and others don't*. New York, NY: Harper Business.

Davis, G. (1986). *Creativity is forever* (2nd ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall-Hunt.

Fritz, R. (1989). *The path of least resistance. Learning to become the creative force in your own life*. New York, NY: Random House.

Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R. & McKee, A. (2002). *Primal leadership. Realizing the power of emotional leadership*. New York, NY: Random House.

Gardner, H. (2007). *Five minds for the future*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Gardner, H. (2004). *Changing minds*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

- George, B. (Winter, 2004). *The Journey to Authenticity*. Leader to Leader, 29 – 35.
- Heward, L. & Bacon, J. (2006). *Cirque du Soleil, the spark. Igniting the creative fire that lives within us all*. Toronto, ON: Random House of Canada.
- Ind, B. (2004). *Living the brand. How to transform every member of your organization into a brand champion*. Philadelphia, PA: Kogan Page Limited.
- Ind, B. (2003), *Beyond branding. How the new values of transparency and integrity are changing the world of brands*. Philadelphia, PA: Kogan Page Limited.
- Isaken, S., Lauer, K., Ekvall, G. (Apr. 1998). *Perceptions of the best and worst climates for creativity*. Buffalo, NY: Creative Problem Solving Group – Buffalo, 1 -19.
- Lederman, G. (2007). *Achieve brand integrity*. Rochester, NY: B@W Press.
- McGehee, T. (2001). *Whoosh. Unleashing the power of a creation company*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books Group.
- Puccio, G., Murdock, M., & Mance, M. (2007). *Creative leadership. Skills that drive change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Schwartz, R. (2002). *The skilled facilitator: Practical wisdom for developing effective groups* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Schultz, H. (1997). *Pour your heart into it. How Starbucks built a company one cup at a time*. New York, NY: Hyperion.
- Tharp, T. (2003). *The creative habit: Learn it and use it for life*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Tischer, L. (2005). Without a Net. *Fast Company*, 96, p. 56. Retrieved 26th Nov 2007 from <http://www.fastcompany.com/online/96/cirque-du-soleil-fasttake1.html>
- Gryskiewicz, S. (1999). *Positive turbulence. Developing climates for creativity, innovation and renewal*. New York, NY: Wiley & Sons.
- Senge, P. (2005). *Presence. An exploration of profound change in people, organizations, and society*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Vise, D. & Malseed, M. (2005). *The Google story*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Wheatley, M. (2006). *Leadership and the new science. Discovering order in a chaotic world*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers Inc.

Appendix A: Research Materials for Comparisons of Companies to Methodology

This Appendix contains the materials I researched and the results of some of the conversations I had with employees of the five companies I chose as companies who are highly respected and demonstrated that they live their brand.

Starbucks

1.0 Say Who We Are:

Establish Starbucks as the premier purveyor of the finest coffee in the world while maintaining our uncompromising principles while we grow.

The following six guiding principles will help us measure the appropriateness of our decisions:

- Provide a great work environment and treat each other with respect and dignity.
- Embrace diversity as an essential component in the way we do business.
- Apply the highest standards of excellence to the purchasing, roasting and fresh delivery of our coffee.
- Develop enthusiastically satisfied customers all of the time.
- Contribute positively to our communities and our environment.
- Recognize that profitability is essential to our future success.

Starbucks is committed to a role of environmental leadership in all facets of our business.

We fulfill this mission by a commitment to:

Understanding of environmental issues and sharing information with our partners.

- Developing innovative and flexible solutions to bring about change.
- Striving to buy, sell and use environmentally friendly products.
- Recognizing that fiscal responsibility is essential to our environmental future.
- Instilling environmental responsibility as a corporate value.

- Measuring and monitoring our progress for each project.
- Encouraging all partners to share in our mission

1.1 Design Who You Are

Over one year ago I spoke with a woman who had managed the most profitable Starbucks store in Canada. She walked me through the Starbucks systems and structures to ensure that their brand is consistent, and that every employee of Starbucks knows what it means to fulfill on the brand experience. Everything they do from their hiring practices to their frequent employee appraisal system which occurs informally every month and formally ever three months is created inside of their commitment. This makes sense from a company that has a founder, Howard Schultz (1997), who said, “We built the Starbucks brand first with our people, not with consumers – the opposite approach from that of the crackers-and cereal companies.” (p. 245)

1.2 Be Who You Say You Are

Starbucks has extensive training and development programs for anyone who is employed by the company. Typically the training cycle is three months long, and this includes a number of days out of the store so Baristas can understand how to consistently provide the Starbucks experience. This is consistent with the talk of Schultz (1997) who says that in 1994:

I wanted to raise Starbucks to the next level, to make it stand for something even more than a great cup of coffee and a warm, inviting atmosphere. As we grew larger, it became clear that we needed a dedicated brand champion, someone whose responsibility it would be to clarify and elevate the Starbucks message.....It had to be someone who had both a creative mind and the ability to execute a strategy. (p. 260)

1.3 Principles of Creativity Present

This comes from the Starbucks website (www.starbucks.com):

Embracing our differences Aside from extraordinary coffee, Starbucks has made a business out of human connections, community involvement and the celebration of cultures. And so, it's

only natural that as a guiding principle, diversity is integral to everything we do.

The word "diversity" means many things to different people. We see diversity as "all the ways we differ and are the same." This concept encompasses, but is not limited to, human differences with regard to race, ethnicity, gender, culture, and physical ability. In addressing diversity, we also consider issues like tenure, style, and our individual roles within the company.

Just as critical to our success as a global company is the idea of inclusion, defined as a combination of differences and similarities in the pursuit of new ideas and individual relationships made everyday.

Putting diversity into practice Talking about diversity is important. Acting on it is essential. Creating a place for customers to feel welcome, providing equal opportunities and benefits to every one of our partners (employees) and working with minority or women owned businesses are among the ways we meet and set new goals for an inclusive business.

While we serve coffee to the entire world, we strive to meet and respect the interests of our local communities. Our partnership with Magic Johnson's Urban Coffee Opportunities helps introduce Starbucks to ethnically diverse communities throughout the country, providing even more places for people to connect.

Goldman Sachs

2.0 Say Who We Are:

Goldman Sachs has clearly stated on its website their fourteen principles which each and every employee of the company understands, and adheres to (www.goldmansachs.com):

- Our clients' interests always come first. Our experience shows that if we serve our clients well, our own success will follow.
- Our assets are our people, capital and reputation. If any of these is ever diminished, the last is the most difficult to restore. We are dedicated to complying fully with the letter and spirit of the laws, rules and ethical principles that govern us. Our continued success depends upon unswerving adherence to this standard.
- Our goal is to provide superior returns to our shareholders. Profitability is critical to achieving superior returns, building our capital, and attracting and keeping our best people. Significant employee stock ownership aligns the interests of our employees and our shareholders.
- We take great pride in the professional quality of our work. We have an uncompromising determination to achieve excellence in everything we undertake. Though we may be involved in a wide variety and heavy volume of activity, we would, if it came to a choice, rather be best than biggest.
- We stress creativity and imagination in everything we do. While recognizing that the old way may still be the best way, we constantly strive to find a better solution to a client's problems. We pride ourselves on having pioneered many of the practices and techniques that have become standard in the industry.
- We make an unusual effort to identify and recruit the very best person for every job. Although our activities are measured in billions of dollars, we select our people one

by one. In a service business, we know that without the best people, we cannot be the best firm.

- We offer our people the opportunity to move ahead more rapidly than is possible at most other places. Advancement depends on merit and we have yet to find the limits to the responsibility our best people are able to assume. For us to be successful, our men and women must reflect the diversity of the communities and cultures in which we operate. That means we must attract, retain and motivate people from many backgrounds and perspectives. Being diverse is not optional; it is what we must be.
- We stress teamwork in everything we do. While individual creativity is always encouraged, we have found that team effort often produces the best results. We have no room for those who put their personal interests ahead of the interests of the firm and its clients.
- The dedication of our people to the firm and the intense effort they give their jobs are greater than one finds in most other organizations. We think that this is an important part of our success
- We consider our size an asset that we try hard to preserve. We want to be big enough to undertake the largest project that any of our clients could contemplate, yet small enough to maintain the loyalty, the intimacy and the esprit de corps that we all treasure and that contribute greatly to our success.
- We constantly strive to anticipate the rapidly changing needs of our clients and to develop new services to meet those needs. We know that the world of finance will not stand still and that complacency can lead to extinction.

- We regularly receive confidential information as part of our normal client relationships. To breach a confidence or to use confidential information improperly or carelessly would be unthinkable.
- Our business is highly competitive, and we aggressively seek to expand our client relationships. However, we must always be fair competitors and must never denigrate other firms.
- Integrity and honesty are at the heart of our business. We expect our people to maintain high ethical standards in everything they do, both in their work for the firm and in their personal lives.

2.1 Design Who You Are

- Strong systems of Performance Management
- Constant monitoring of results and behaviours in the market
- Zero tolerance for operating outside of the integrity structures of the firm

2.2 Be Who You Say You Are

In the words of Brooks Entwistle (2007), CEO of Goldman Sachs India, “The fourteen principles of Goldman Sachs are pounded into your head! They were put on paper in the 60’s, and you are expected to know them and live by them.”

Google

3.0 Say Who You Are

Company Overview

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful.

Our Philosophy - Never settle for the best

"The perfect search engine," says Google co-founder Larry Page, "would understand exactly what you mean and give back exactly what you want." Given the state of search technology today, that's a far-reaching vision requiring research, development and innovation to realize. Google is committed to blazing that trail. Though acknowledged as the world's leading search technology company, Google's goal is to provide a much higher level of service to all those who seek information, whether they're at a desk in Boston, driving through Bonn, or strolling in Bangkok.

To that end, Google has persistently pursued innovation and pushed the limits of existing technology to provide a fast, accurate and easy-to-use search service that can be accessed from anywhere. To fully understand Google, it's helpful to understand all the ways in which the company has helped to redefine how individuals, businesses and technologists view the Internet

3.2 Be Who You Say You Are

It appeared that Google has gone to painstaking lengths to stay true to their roots. As Wise (2005) stated in *The Google Story*:

They spared no expense when it came to creating the right culture inside of the Googleplex and cultivating strong loyalty and job satisfaction among Googlers. The artifacts of that culture – brightly coloured medicine balls, lava lamps, and assorted gadgets and toys here and there-gave the business the appeal of a vibrant college campus.....Beach volleyball, football, bean bag chairs, even dogs-it was all part of making work fun and fostering a creative, playful environment where Google's employees, most of them young and single, would want to spend their waking hours. (p. 94)

The Four Seasons

4.0 Say Who You Are

Who We Are

We have chosen to specialize within the hospitality industry, by offering only experiences of exceptional quality. Our objective is to be recognised as the company that manages the finest hotels, resorts and residence clubs wherever we locate.

We create properties of enduring value using superior design and finishes, and support them with a deeply instilled ethic of personal service. Doing so allows Four Seasons to satisfy the needs and tastes of our discriminating customers, and to maintain our position as the world's premier luxury hospitality company.

What We Believe

Our greatest asset, and the key to our success, is our people.

We believe that each of us needs a sense of dignity, pride and satisfaction in what we do. Because satisfying our guests depends on the united efforts of many, we are most effective when we work together cooperatively, respecting each other's contribution and importance.

How We Behave

We demonstrate our beliefs most meaningfully in the way we treat each other and by the example we set for one another. In all our interactions with our guests, customers, business associates and colleagues, we seek to deal with others as we would have them deal with us.

How We Succeed

We succeed when every decision is based on a clear understanding of and belief in what we do and when we couple this conviction with sound financial planning. We expect to achieve a fair and reasonable profit to ensure the prosperity of the company, and to offer

long-term benefits to our hotel owners, our shareholders, our customers and our employees

4.2 Be Who You Say You Are

The Four Seasons takes a great deal of pride in being their principals and values. As Anixter (2003) stated, “At the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts there are four service values that leadership at each hotel works to imbue in everything. Those values are ‘kindness, intelligence, mutual respect and customer delight.’” (pp. 170)

5.0 *Cirque du Soleil*

Say Who You Are

The Cirque has a very clear sense of what makes them successful, and in almost anything you read about them, it is clearly spoken. Listed is some of its operating principles.

1. Cast teams for creative conflict.

Cirque officials generally make sure there's a mix of nationalities and viewpoints when they draft a creative team. Then they lock creators in a room with the instructions, "Don't come out till you have something great." Easy consensus, says Daniel Lamarre, Cirque's president, is the enemy of groundbreaking ideas.

2. Always shoot for the triple somersault.

Cirque's founder, Guy Laliberte, is famous for asking his people to stretch beyond the great to the jaw-dropping. "It's a commitment to a degree of sophistication and performance that distinguishes Cirque du Soleil productions from their less-demanding peers," says coach Boris Verkhovsky. And it's the reason they continue to dazzle audiences even after two decades.

3. Recruit the near-great.

Elite athletes who just missed the national team generally have the same work ethic, the same tricks, and nearly the same skills as medal winners. The difference: They still have something to prove, and they're rarely prima donnas. They'll get the job done and be better team players than the champions.

4. Push the envelope -- at the interview.

Cirque scouts routinely ask candidates to do something unexpected at their audition: Climb a rope . . . then sing a song when you get to the top ("Happy Birthday" is forbidden). It's a good way to find talent that's multidimensional and comfortable improvising, not to mention a great character test. If the candidate freaks at the challenge, he's generally out the door.

5. Don't be greedy.

Cirque limits its show production to one a year. "If we want to have fun creating shows and pushing the boundaries, one show a year is good enough for us. We don't want to jeopardize quality," Lamarre says. Besides, "if there's not a creative challenge, we're not going to do a deal, regardless of the financial impact."

6. Protect creative teams from business pressures.

Lamarre isolates his creative teams from the Cirque du Soleil "machine." "I want them to eat and breathe their show," he says, "and keeping them away from day-to-day operations is the best thing."

5.3 Principles of Creativity Present

Everything that I read about the Cirque demonstrated how everything this amazing organization does is soaked in the *Principles of Creativity*! Specifically, they acknowledge and demonstrate how they operate from (Heward and Bacon, 2006):

- Leaving your comfort zone
- Working with what you have
- Attention to detail
- Flexibility
- Learning to trust

Appendix B: Concept Paper for Marysia Czarski

Embracing Creativity in the Internal Branding Process

How the Principals of Creativity vitalize a company's internal brand so it is relevant, vibrant, engaging and valuable

Marysia Czarski _____ September, 2007

Project Type:

This Project will be a combination of developing a skill and using a skill to improve the life of others. It's a combination because I have been doing some work in this area and have not become fully proficient in this area.

What Is This Project About?

This project is about refining, testing and auditing my internal branding methodology.

This includes deepening and broadening the application of the principals of creativity

which I believe are highly relevant and a distinguishing factor in the generation of a

company's internal brand. I want to deepen my skills at facilitating this change process

for a company so they have a vibrant, relevant, engaging and valuable internal brand. I will deepen my ability and have the capacity to expand my reputation as an expert in internal branding.

Internal Brand – Defined

An internal brand is defined as the unique aspects of an organization's culture and environment that differentiate it in a compelling and engaging way so employees have a sense of engagement in something bigger and more exciting than just increasing the bottom line. It's about having an authentic company culture that has it stand out and mirrors the engaging aspects of a company's collective external brand. The experience created for employees is intentional and is the stand that a company takes for its employees and own success. There is consistency between the talk and the walk. This company is respected and a highly sought after place to work.

Rationale for Choice:

This project is an area I've been working in and thinking about for many years. I graduated from business school in 1990 and entered the world of packaged goods marketing which is the birth place of branding. All of my attention was on branding, however, product branding. There was little to no conversation about the internal brand of our company. This changed in 1995 when I joined a company called Lavalife. When I joined this company I was wearing a 'marketing hat', but by 1998 I had changed roles and began to focus on the training and development of team members across Lavalife's North American operations. My attention shifted to how we treated people and engaged them in their work so they were excited and inspired to come to work and do a good job representing the Lavalife brand.

Fast forward to 2007 and as a Coach and Facilitative Consultant, I continue to work with companies in the area of how they motivate and engage their employees from what the company is about and what it stands for. My work at Buffalo State has allowed me to synthesize and distinguish creativity as the critical component to having a company develop an internal brand by generating a very intentional work environment and culture. The successful completion of this project will set me up so I can then take the actions to deliver my objectives I created in Dr. Puccio's class in the summer. These objectives included:

1. Write a paper to position myself as someone with knowledge in the area of creative environment.
2. Write a book.
3. Position myself to become a more sought after speaker.
4. Collaborate with a team of creative based consultants to transform a Fortune 500 company in Canada or the U.S.

What will be the Tangible Product(s) or Outcomes:

Phase 1 = Project due date, Dec. 5th, 07; Phase 2 = May 30,08; Phase 3 = Sept. 30,08.

1. A clean, clear, tested and true methodology. Phase 1.
2. Compare and contrast my methodology to 5 -10 organizations in North America who are respected, successful and have a relevant internal brand. Phase 1.
3. Use (parts of) my methodology with 3 clients that I work so I can develop my skills and expertise in internal branding. Phase 1.

4. Capture notes so I have the makings for the materials and initial thinking to develop a 'how to' exercise binder. Phase 1. The completed 'how to' exercise binder would be used in the facilitation of this process with a company. Phase 2.
5. Research a '360' like tool that can assess the current culture and environment of a company and see if that can be valuable for an internal brand. The K.E.Y.S tool will be one tool that is assessed in relationship to my methodology to see if it supports what I am doing and how it might be integrated. The question that I will answer is "can I use one of these tools or do I need to develop something myself?" Phase 1.
6. A White Paper that can be sent out to the business community. The paper will pull together all of the relevant information from my work. In doing so, it will clarify why this area is important, the methodology I believe a company can use, and how to use it. Phase 2.
7. Create the intentions and outcomes, and possible chapters for the beginnings of a book. Phase 3.
8. From my methodology and conclusions, I will develop the outline for a Pod Cast that can be put on my website. Phase 2.

LEARNING GOALS

- Testing and refining my current methodology;
- To develop succinct and relevant language to speak about this area;
- Deepen my ability to execute my methodology;
- The ability to convincingly and credibly speak about the benefits of internal branding. It is the building block to me being sought after as an expert in this area and to speak at conferences and in companies;

- Once I have my methodology, look at where this methodology might apply elsewhere, i.e cities or not-for-profits.

What Criteria Will You Use To Measure The Effectiveness Of Your Achievement:

- I will either have a defined methodology or know the gaps to doing this;
- I will have used components of this methodology with three of my clients;
- I have researched 360 tools and K.E.Y.S to understand their relevance and value for my methodology;
- Refined my thinking and explore the context to which this methodology could exist
- Increased confidence and perspective of the work I am doing;
- Clear ability to distinguish the difference in, and inter-dynamic of, organizational environment, culture and internal branding.

Who Will Be Involved or Influenced?

Stakeholders Involved or Influenced:

- My clients
- Sandor Kovacs of Run Rhino

People giving me feedback:

- Mary Murdock
- Mark Hylton
- Janice Francisco
- Sharon Walsh
- Maggie Duggan
- Sandor Kovacs
- Jamie Erickson

- My clients
- Mary Ann Neshevich

My role:

My role will be diverse in this project. I have broken it down into several areas.

Fact Finding

I will be facilitating dialogue and conversations and asking many questions with the stakeholders involved in this project to gather more information. I will be researching the concepts and ideas from my methodology from books, magazines, and talking to brand consultants about the validity and relevance of my work. I will also try and interview some companies who have developed a strong internal brand.

Facilitating

My intention is to lead one or two facilitations with my clients who are doing this internal branding work. The facilitation will be about engaging employees of my clients in the internal branding process.

Assessing

I intend to research 360 tools and the K.E.Y.S tool that could contribute to the knowledge needed from within an organization to work through my methodology. The goal is to try and find the best tool to integrate into this process.

Implementation

I will be implementing the methodology I have developed with my clients and coaching them to take the needed action to develop their internal brand, and then to bring it alive.

Conclusions and Final Write Up

Finally, I will write up the conclusions from this work, including determining if my methodology is valid or needs revisions. The final write will be completed by me also.

When Will This Project Take Place:

Phase 1, as defined by my outcomes will complete by December 5th, 2007. Phase 2 will begin during the Phase 1 time period, and will complete by May 30th, 2008. Elements of Phase 3 will begin during Phase 1, and will complete by September 30th, 2008.

The framework for our master's project will give me the discipline and environment to really flush out and expand my thinking and beliefs in this area. I want to use the next 3 months to do that. The expansion of the project, and taking into new and different businesses will occur into 2008.

Where Will This Project Occur?

This project will predominately occur in Toronto, Canada. I will be doing a little work with a client in NYC also. I will be talking and conversing with people in Canada, the US and in Europe for their feedback and thinking.

Why Is It Important to Do This:

I believe creativity is the distinction that needs to be applied to intentionally turn an organization's environment and culture into an internal brand. If it were a formula, it would look like this:

$$\text{(Environment + Culture) x Principals of Creativity = Internal Brand}$$

I want to work in this area because I don't believe companies currently invest the time, money or energy into this very important aspect of their company. Most companies leave their culture and environment to chance, and don't do the thinking and exploring to ensure they know what they stand for, can say it, and have the systems, processes, and

ways of being to support it. To do so takes ‘intentionality’. Creativity also takes intentionality. Therefore I want to explore this connection and my belief that a company with an internal brand designed from the principals of creativity will become extraordinary.

I also believe that if more companies integrated the principals of creativity into the design of their internal brand, more people would be living lives that are more engaging, fun, and invigorating during a big piece of the waking hours of their day. For myself, I am committed to making a difference in the lives of others, including living creatures. I believe an organization that has gone through this rigorous process will be more deeply present to the other stakeholders involved in their business and their surrounding community, and not just the shareholders looking at the bottom line.

Companies need to be having these conversations!

I think that the conversations a company needs to have to get here, and the structures that will result in the creation of an organization’s internal brand are critical for a company to remain vibrant and relevant. Therefore while this project is all about people and their interaction with each other and their company’s culture, it’s also about those same people being able to fully contribute their own unique creative ability to that company to ensure its long term success and viability. Ultimately, companies setting themselves up with this framework will be more open to ‘Creative Problem Solving’, dynamic conversations, and embracing the differences in their people instead of trying to make them all the same.

Personal Learning Goals:

- To deepen my knowledge and expertise in this area;
- To deepened my own creative output in this area;

- To develop myself as an internal brand expert;
- To begin to explore what it will take to have a ‘product’ of my own that can be taken to market to support companies in this area;
- To have the confidence to put myself forward in a broader arena in this area;

How Do You Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes?

I have structured myself from now until December 5th to have specific hours set aside each week and days taken off to work on this project. This has been mapped out in my day timer so I keep these days open for my work.

I also a number of people who have expressed an interest in this work I am doing who will be on my resource team. They will provide feedback for me as I move through this period of time. This is a combination of people in the field and people who have already completed this Master’s program.

If I find myself falling behind my weekly timeline and not moving towards achieving my outcomes, I will work with my buddy Mark Hylton and some tools from CPS to get me past this point. I will also use my resource group for support to move past a ‘creative funk’! If this does happen, I will use it as an opportunity to gain more insights for myself on how I can remain engaged and inspired in my work.

Evaluation:

I will take on a varied range of feedback and evaluation mechanisms. With my resource group, I will be asking them for both verbal and written feedback on the outputs I will be producing regarding my methodology, and the structures put into place to execute that methodology. I will also be working with current clients; therefore I will be getting their feedback on a regular basis. Additionally, as I engage in this client work, I will have

clearly stated objectives and outcomes that they want to achieve from this work, and will be measuring them throughout the duration of our work together.

Prepare Project Timeline:

Week Of:	Hours:	To be Started:	To be Completed:
September 2	8 hrs	The Artists Way	Draft Concept paper
September 9	8 hrs	Refine concept paper	Google book read
		Request feedback on first draft of methodology from Feedback Group	Define my client group and specify criteria for measurement of work
		Feedback mechanisms with client group	
September 16	8 hrs	Concept paper given to Resource Group	Concept Paper handed in
		Map out my 'sample group' of most respected companies in Canada and the US	Resource Group finalized
		Books to read: Brand Integrity; Starbucks – pouring your heart into it; Presence.	Read information on how to conduct interviews and engage in research with companies that are not my clients
September 23	24 hrs	Requests for interviews with relevant companies with strong internal brands	Collect feedback from my Resource Group about my Concept Paper
			Deepen definitions and explanations of the elements of my methodology
			Complete Concept Paper with revisions
September 30	8 hrs	Begin writing on findings so far – both results and insights	
		Gather info on K.E.Y.S tool from CCL	
October 7	8 hrs	Books to read: Small Giants; Starbucks – pouring your heart into it; Presence	Have structures of measurements for success and feedback with 3 clients

		Begin Stage 3 work of methodology with Art Weavers at their store Modern Weave	Final work completed for Stage 2 of my methodology with Art Interiors
		Get dates set up with Snippies to facilitate Stage 1 with the company	Key concepts drawn from books read: Brand Integrity, Presence and Starbucks Books to read: Brand Integrity; Starbucks – pouring your heart into it; Presence.
		Begin research into other 360 tools	
October 14	8 hrs		Access K.E.Y.S with one client and evaluate it's value in my methodology
October 21	16 hrs	Present methodology to Sandor Kovacs and request feedback	Interviews over the phone with companies that I've set up interviews with who have strong internal brands
			Key concepts drawn from books read: Brand Integrity, Presence and Starbucks Books to read: Brand Integrity; Starbucks – pouring your heart into it; Presence.
October 28	16 hrs	Start to create outline for my Paper	Review relevant info with resource group; continue writing
		Capture findings – refine insights	
November 4	8 hrs	Send out insights and notes to date to members of my resource group	Refine and write
November 11	8 hrs	Request meeting with Richard Florida for late December to discuss my project	Gather input and check in on client results to date
		Ensure I have a structure to summarize notes to date for my "How to" Exercise Binder	

		Begin refinement of methodology	
November 18	8 hrs	Request feedback from resource group on Masters Project intentions/ outcomes/ and findings so far	Refine and write
			Draft 1 of Masters Project complete
			Conclusions on 360 tools and K.E.Y.S and value add for methodology
November 25	32 hrs	Collect feedback from resource group regarding Masters Project intentions/outcomes/finding	Draft 1 of Masters Project complete
		Continue to add to “How to” Exercise Binder notes	Finalized Methodology
		Finalize structure for 15 minutes on line work for Dr. M	All client learnings written up
December 2	8 hrs		Final Project turned into Dr. Murdock – December 5 th
			15 minute presentation live on line
December 9		Prepare time lines for phase 2 and phase 3 of Project	