



Playbook For Creating New Healthcare Brand Energy


New Brand Energy

Energy. It's the force that flows throughout the system that links businesses and stakeholders. High-energy brands create a constant sense of interest and excitement. Consumers sense that these brands see farther and move faster, are more experiential and responsive to their needs, and more central to their lives.

THE TRUTH

Much of what you do is (likely) indistinguishable and forgettable to the communities and patients you're trying to connect to:

your services, experiences, messaging

WHY

Because what you sell and what your communities and patients buy, are not the same thing.

Brands are not about you and your offerings, they're about your communities and patients – about their hopes, dreams, stories.

And they're not limited to the “marketing department.”

PLAYBOOK

I. YOUR BUSINESS DOESN'T MATTER

Reality: No one cares about **your** business. About your products, solutions or ideas.

What they do care about is the story that's attached to it. About what your healthcare organization can help **them** achieve, how it makes **them** feel beyond others, how you fit with **their** stories of what they already believe and how choosing you is **their** smart choice.

Proof: Think of three brands that you can't live without. Chances are, it's not because of what they functionally do for you.

I. YOUR BUSINESS DOESN'T MATTER

Those who tell the stories
rule the world.

American Indian Proverb

Also attributed to PLATO, Greek Philosopher

2. YOUR BRAND AS CENTRAL ORGANIZING IDEA.

Nothing connects your purpose, positioning, values, promises, people, products and partners together as effectively as your brand.

It is the **ONLY** strategic asset that ensures your collective energy is being put to its fullest potential.

Ask Virgin, Ritz Carlton, Harley Davidson, Apple, Nike, Starbucks, Nordstrom, Six Senses, Hello Health, Disney, Smart Car, Memorial Sloan Kettering, Cemex...

3. YOUR BRAND AS CENTRAL ENERGIZING IDEA.

Premise: **There are no low interest categories, only low interest thinking.**

Your healthcare brand does not have to be relegated to a life of mediocrity and sameness. You **can** be unique, inspiring and own a place in people's lives.

It's the performance of your brand that makes it emotionally relevant and meaningful, or not. And it's up to you whether you have the will to do the work to make it happen.

4. STAND FOR SOMETHING.

Or stand against something. But you must take a stand.

And things like *quality of care, outstanding care, best clinical care, latest technology and awards* don't count. They don't distinguish you or suggest what customers can uniquely expect from your healthcare brand.

Be more vibrant. Knock down the walls of conventional thinking.

Reject the argument that your organization must remain comfortable and middle of the road. Try something new.

5. EXTRAORDINARY CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

The more you can create an extraordinary customer experience, the more powerful and distinctive it becomes. Consider The Geek Squad, Ritz-Carlton, Zappos. Why not?

How can you bring your healthcare experience alive for customers in a more dramatic way? So that they'll have an indelible memory of you? Pre-during-post experience.

Create an experience map. Which steps don't add value. Find ways to improve them. Then elaborate on the others to add even more value to the customer.

6. SIMPLER IS SMARTER

No one has time to shop. Particularly those shopping for healthcare. And if you're like other healthcare organizations, you have too many brands in your portfolio.

But truth is, you can't excel across all service lines, and you certainly can't support them all.

So develop a stronger (streamlined) portfolio that allows you to focus energy and resources on supporting those health services that best align with vision and business strategy, build strategic and financial value back to the organization, and meet customer/stakeholder current and future needs.

7. DEMONSTRATE ZEALOUS LEADERSHIP

Having a purpose is one thing, remaining true to it is quite another.

It isn't necessary to be the CEO, but if you want to create brand energy inside and outside, you have to be a bold leader and embrace the brand and work zealously to deliver what it promises.

This role is title-agnostic. Dramatize your brand values through your own behavior. Be the spark that ignites others!

8. CREATE A CULT-LIKE CULTURE

Reinforce what is different and special about your healthcare brand through the culture you have the power to create. See your internal audiences and your customers as members of a like-minded community.

Invent your own language, adopt rites and rituals, employ individual hiring practices.

To quote CEO Tony Hsieh of Zappos “a company’s culture and a company’s brand are really just two sides of the same coin. Brand is just a lagging indicator of culture.”

9. CREATE “MARKETING THAT MATTERS”

Consider how to create new marketing energy.

Marketing that **people actually value and want**, and that in and of itself, adds value to their lives. Marketing that helps both your customer and your organization grow stronger.

FROM TRANSACTIONS	TO RELATIONSHIPS
Messages/Saying	Conversations/Doing
Consistent	Coherent
Authority	Transparency
Controlling	Empowering
Followers	Participants

10. 3E'S ARE CRITICAL TO SUCCESS

Everything starts on the inside – building passion, building relationships, building respect, building communication, building connection.

It starts from the top down. But it comes down to:
Educating, Engaging, Empowering.

Because people, not books, are your best
brand manuals!



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