

Three Rules of Powerful Positioning

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The only way to differentiate in today's hyper-competitive economy is your positioning and messaging.

The positioning of an organization determines how its products and services are perceived by their target market. If your target customers do not clearly understand what your organization does to solve their problems – or if they receive inconsistent messages from different sources – they will not be able to distinguish your value from the competitors. With no differentiation, the lowest price will rule the day. Once this happens your value proposition may as well be “me too.”

A positioning statement is not the same as a slogan or tag line. A powerful positioning statement should have 4 fundamental elements:

- The target customer/market
- The compelling need or benefit to target market
- The name of your solution or brand
- The manner in which you satisfy the need and how it is different from the competition

There are numerous examples of successful positioning that has forever associated a brand with a promise. One that comes to mind is Volvo who has been associated with being a very safe car for many years. Using the 4 elements above Volvo could develop a positioning statement something like this:

"For (1) families concerned about (2) safety, (3) Volvo builds vehicles with (4) the highest safety rating, giving you peace of mind on the road."

Powerful positioning and messaging adheres to 3 Rules:

- It's About the Buyer

Great positioning focuses the needs and benefits of the target customers not on the product or the company that produces it. Products are often introduced by their technical specifications and features. This information is irrelevant to your target customer unless it addresses their motivating needs first and foremost.

- Emphasize WHY over WHAT and HOW

Positioning messages that present actual customer scenarios place more emphasis on “why” your offering

is valuable to the customer versus "what" it does or "how" it does it. This positioning enhances overall brand recognition, accelerates product acceptance and adoption, and propels sales performance. No one will care about the features (WHAT) or functionality (HOW) until they understand WHY they need your product.

- Differentiate

It is important to understand what makes you different from your competitors. Most companies don't effectively leverage their competitive advantages to reap the full benefits. In research conducted by a veteran business consultancy of 1,000 CEO's, only 2 could clearly name their competitive advantages. If your positioning doesn't articulate your uniqueness, how will your target customers ever figure it out on their own?

Positioning isn't about your products. It's about your ability to convince buyers you understand their needs. Products are the proof points that substantiate your understanding of the needs.

If your positioning is all about products and fails to differentiate from the competition, contact us about a Product Positioning & Messaging workshop where you'll learn to develop and present your value proposition in plain simple English and do it with greater impact by making it all about your target buyers. The more convinced they are that you are the best solution, the more you'll sell.