

Communicating a Compelling Company Narrative

When communicating with the general public, staff, or potential employees, use these methods to effectively share your strengths or why you're an amazing, cutting edge company:

- Use simple, clear language
- Share about what is authentic to you/the company
- Sell the experience or greater good with the product
- Use storytelling to promote your company and products
- Harness the power of 'show, don't tell' to create a compelling narrative
- Be mindful that most people's attention span is short, so you have 30 seconds to 1 minute to capture their interest

Examples of compelling things to share:

How does your business move the world forward? What are people able to do with your products that makes what you do so powerful? How does this complement the story you're sharing about the experience or greater good of your company and/or products? How are you more than a web page or brick & mortar on a street?

Examples of companies clearly communicating who they are and what they believe in:

All of these companies use simple, clear language to communicate, they align their products or culture with an experience or greater good, and show (they don't tell) why they are great at what they do.

- ❖ Zappos is known for their values: <https://www.zapposinsights.com/about/core-values>
They deliver a great employee-powered company culture and exceptional customer service. Zappos cares about people's happiness.
- ❖ Patagonia is well known for their mission: <http://www.patagonia.com/company-info.html>
They sell a lifestyle of environmental stewardship and epic adventure. Patagonia in particular excels at selling the experience or greater good and then positioning their product within the frame as a subtle piece of the bigger picture. Scroll through Patagonia's work wear page for examples of selling a lifestyle. The images convey strength, grit, and hard work: <http://www.patagonia.com/workwear.html> .
- ❖ Method: <https://methodhome.com/beyond-the-bottle/our-business/>
Method sells saving the planet through home-cleaning products and thoughtful sourcing of the packaging. Method is particularly effective at tracking and sharing about efforts to minimize their environmental impact. Their Benefit Blueprint and 'beyond the bottle' section on their website are strong examples of effective public communication about their culture. <https://methodhome.com/benefit-blueprint/>
- ❖ Annie's organic: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VwaVoslfk3Y&width=720&height=405>
The opening line in the video is: "We believe that when we eat organic, we not only care about our family's health and wellness, but that of the planet and everyone on it". They sell healthy snacks and a shared care for all residents of the planet with their bunny mascot heavily incorporated throughout their products.

Sources:

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/219509>

<https://www.inc.com/les-mckeown/ways-to-make-a-more-vibrant-company-culture.html>

How to Gauge and Cultivate Company Culture

For businesses interested in checking in on the the building blocks of their company's culture, the following six checkpoints excerpted from "Above the Line: How to Create a Company Culture That Engages Employees, Delights Customers and Delivers Results" by Michael Henderson provide a starting point for conversation on where the culture is currently and how to cultivate the desired culture.

Michael Henderson created a model for educating organizations on how to work through the process of aligning a culture to higher aspects of performance and an organization's strategy. These aspects of a culture combine to give a culture its shape, feeling, rhythm, momentum, and sense of self. In hierarchical order the aspects are:

Purpose – Why does the organization exist?

Identity – Who do the people within a culture see themselves as, and what do they want to be known for?

Values and Beliefs – Values express what is most important to us through preference and priorities and beliefs define why the values are important to us. Values must be functional, motivational and meaningful in order for them to work. If a company has more than three values people struggle to remember them.

Capability – What skills will people require to build and maintain the company culture?

Questions to determine what your culture may require to develop capability are:

What do we need to do to attract, retain, inspire and focus good people?

How can we build our group identity and embody our values?

What resources are necessary to achieve our desired culture?

What leadership skills are required to lead a culture? Do we have them?

Are we prepared for the future?

Do we understand the benefits of thought leadership as a competitive advantage?

Behavior – How do people actually behave in relation to how they could or should behave? Reward and recognize behaviors you most want to encourage.

Environment – Where does the culture occur and how does the environment impact the culture?