

## The 9-Step Process

If you've been a blogger, freelancer or a small business owner for even a few months, I'm sure you've heard the advice, "Differentiate, or die!"

The experts are like a dog with a bone: "Nail down your USP, if you want to succeed," they say.

But when you're struggling to even understand what the heck a "unique selling proposition" can do for you, deciding on how to focus your marketing (via your brand) can make you feel like a little lost kid at an amusement park.

Here's my piece of advice: **Quit trying to discover your USP, and start cooking up your Secret Sauce.**

Now you want the recipe, right?

I knew it.

But here's the thing: there's no one-size-fits-all, plug-and-play recipe for secret sauce. Nope.

Secret Sauce — by its *very nature* — has to be totally unlike anyone else's. Which means, the recipe **does not exist.** (Sorry, pumpkin.)

Over the years though, I've learned that there are specific *types* of ingredients that every great brand uses to create their own addicting flavors.

And *that* is definitely something I can help you with.

## These are the 9 Steps we're going to take to find *your* Secret Sauce ingredients

(Don't be fooled! These 9 Steps take some time. And you'll probably need to enlist the help of a good friend or colleague to bounce some ideas around and make sure you haven't overlooked anything.)

## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

1. **Do a self-inventory:** Examine all the bits that make up who you are: your passions, values, skills, strengths, weaknesses, motivations and goals. Here's a quick audio on how to get started with this:
2. **Get inside your Ideal Customer's head:** Do the same inventory that you did for yourself. Only this time, focus on who you'd really like to work with. Create an Ideal Customer persona from all that wonderful research.
3. **Find the archetypes:** Who could be the model for what you bring to the table? Is there a comic book hero, fairy tale character or real-life leader that you could say you're like? What about your ideal customer? Find one for each of you.
4. **Look for patterns:** Make a summary of your life path and employment history. Just like a fingerprint, yours is totally distinctive. Now look at the rest of what you've uncovered so far. Where are the intersections and overlaps? What kind of patterns do you see?
5. **Write the back story:** You and your ideal customer are the main characters. What big problem or desire are you two dealing with? As the hero of the story, what is your "perfect world" vision? How would you like the story to end? And, how do you champion that vision? (Hint: that's your *mission statement*.)
6. **Find the metaphors:** Add to the story with symbols and images. Even other words will work here. The point is to find something that your ideal customer relates to immediately. One symbol can speak volumes on your behalf. (This is where you begin to develop your business identity pieces like your logo.)
7. **Test!** How does your audience respond to this new branding? Do they get it? Do they understand the meanings behind your visual and verbal representations? And does your branding stick? (Is it memorable?)
8. **Create a plan:** Set some specific goals that you can measure and then outline how you'll reach them. What is the best way to deliver your brand's message? Is there something you can do (on a regular basis) to reinforce that message? Schedule it with a marketing calendar.
9. **Review and adjust:** Take a look every month at how your marketing (via your branding) is working for you. Are you closing in on your goals? What do you need to adjust?

**Yep, the process works.**

I promise it will help you identify your particular “points of differentiation” and how to clearly express those to your target market.

I also swear on all that is holy in marketing that if you do this, you will make it 200x easier for your ideal customers to find you.

But don't do this process in a vacuum. Get your best business friend to work through this with you. Or better yet, suggest your mastermind group tackle this over the next few weeks.

If you do this *now*, you'll be ready to make a huge splash — and *create a real difference to your bottom line*.

*Okay, let's get started.*

## Step 1: The Inventory

Before we start playing around with the ingredients, we need to know what we have to work with. To that end, the first thing you're going to do is some inventory taking. But don't worry. This will be fun! (Because it's all about YOU.)

### Your Top Passion(s)

*pas·sion/ 'paSHən/*

Noun:

1. Strong and barely controllable emotion.
2. A state or outburst of such emotion.

Every strong brand that exists today has one thing in common: *passion*.

This passion can come from many sources — for example, the founder's intense zeal for the product (and its ability to solve a particular problem); or it could be the passionate drive on the part of the customer to buy the product at any cost, no substitutes allowed.

Ideally, the passion originates with the founder and is passed on to the customers. It's much more effective if everyone plays together. Why?

*In an article on [Mashable](#), Meteor Solutions reported that 1% of a site's audience can generate as much as 20% of a site's traffic through the sharing of a link or content with others.*

That's some pretty heavy lifting.

So how do you actually get that to happen?

### It Starts with You

A few years back, I interviewed [Haley Rushing](#), co-author of [It's Not What You Sell, It's What You Stand For](#). The premise of that book is that every extraordinary business begins with a strong purpose — something that is bigger than just making money.

The companies they examine are mostly big players (BMW and Southwest are two examples), but the concepts

## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

they explore apply just as much to small businesses — even freelancers — at least those that want to grow. If you're wondering whether or not you've probably brought your passion into your brand...

**Ask yourself these questions (for more, [see the surveys at INWYS](#)):**

- Would my customers care (or notice) if I went out of business?
- Does my business act any differently from my competitors?
- Do I feel deeply passionate about the work I'm doing?
- Am I willing to make hard decisions based on dedication to my purpose (versus reacting to the actions of my competitors)?
- Do I have a larger vision of how the world could be (in relation to my product or service)?
- Do I have a mission statement that explains how my business works toward fulfilling that vision?

If most of your answers are 'No,' I would strongly suggest that you take some time to examine who you are and what your business means to you, your customers, and the world.

### Passion is Contagious

Those who inspire us to change (our habits, our way of doing business, our government, etc.) rarely do so strictly through a particular message. Messages that spark transformation are those delivered with passion.

Those who truly influence us are those who are excited about what they're doing. So much so, that they're able to create real and lasting impact because they've got a message that others want to help spread, too.

Building your brand around your passions helps make that happen.

### What's Your Passion?

Over the course of my time as a small business consultant, I've seen plenty of start-ups who couldn't explain how their business aligned with their personal mission in life. ("What do you mean, my personal mission?")

When I ask them why they're starting their business, many times I hear, "I think it has the potential to make me some really good money."

I'm all for making good money, folks. Don't get me wrong. But you've got to have more than that in your back pocket to keep you going.

When times get tough (and you feel overwhelmed by everything you've got to do), you need to have an *emotional reason* for pushing yourself up over those hurdles. There needs to be a foundation of purpose and passion

## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

underlying everything you're doing. It's what will keep you moving toward ultimate success.

Believe me, no one wants to work 80 hours a week just for the money. (You'll never have time to enjoy that money, if you do.) And everyone knows that start-ups require a whole of time, energy and money.

So how do you figure out what your passion is? First, think about what it is *not*:

- Passion is not talent
- Passion is not topical knowledge
- Passion is not skill
- Passion is not being seen as an expert
- Passion is not having a lot of experience

Passion is your emotional response or enthusiasm for a particular cause or topic. So while it's *not* those things in the list above, those *are* big clues. Take a moment to write them all down.

Sometimes, we develop skills, knowledge and talents because we have a passion for something. And sometimes we don't. This is just a starting place.

### How to Find Your Passion

There's a series of exercises I have folks do in my [Find Your Secret Sauce Workshop](#), called the Self-Inventory (see the end of this chapter for those worksheets). And the first piece of that involves finding your top passions.

Some of us are lucky — we already know the answer to “What gets you out of bed in the morning?” And we can speak clearly and succinctly about a particular cause or topic that's near and dear to our hearts.

Others aren't so lucky. When asked what they would be willing to do for free, they often say things like, “travel” or “shop.”

And while a few might argue that travel and shopping are valid passions, for most of us those are just ways to relax and unwind. The key is — could you travel or shop *continuously* for the next 20 to 30 years? I'd bet you'd need some long breaks in between.

If you're one who's not quite sure what your passions are, OR how you can relate them to your business, take the next few weeks to think deeply about what you love to do, what you would give money to do over and over and over again, and how those might fit with your life purpose.

**Here are few additional sources to help you dive a bit deeper:**

## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

[The Passion Test: Effortless Path to Discovering Your Life Purpose](#)

[The One Question \(an online assessment\)](#)

[Your Myers-Briggs Type \(an online assessment\)](#)

[Identify your Motivation Style](#)

*Self-Inventory Worksheets*

## **Your Top Passion(s)**

For this first exercise, try not to censor yourself or respond in ways you think you “should.” Be as honest as possible. Only you will see this!

Get ready to jot down whatever comes into your head:

1. When I was a kid, I dreamed of...
2. I can't pass up a book or movie about...
3. If I played hooky from work for a week, I'd spend the time...
4. Most people don't know this about me, but I really enjoy...
5. I am the Go-To person when my friends need help with...
6. If I could star in my own how-to TV show, it would be about...
7. If I were to make a homemade gift, it would involve...
8. I've tried it only once or twice, but I really enjoy...
9. The closest I come to a runner's high is when I'm...

**Now we're going to narrow down your list to just your top 5 passions:** Compare each of your answers two-at-a-time. Ask yourself, If I had to choose between the first activity and the second, which is more appealing to me? Circle that one.

Then take the one you circled and compare it with #3 and so on. Once you've gone through the list and identified your #1 choice, put an X next to it.

Now, start over again, comparing pairs of activities (excluding the one you put an X next to). This gives you your 2nd choice. Rinse and repeat until you have your top 5.

Write your Top 5 Passions Here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## The SWOT Analysis of You

One of the first things you might learn in business school is the SWOT Analysis -- a way to look at your strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

It's a tool that's been around a long time for good reason: it helps you focus on what your priorities need to be -- in both the immediate and short-term.

If you've never done a SWOT Analysis before, [watch this video](#) for the full explanation.

Then: take 15 minutes and do a SWOT on YOU. Not on your business, **but on YOU**. Don't think too hard about this, but if you find yourself struggling to finish this exercise, you may want to enlist the help of a close friend or two (only if they promise to be kind AND honest).

You want to capture the personality traits, talents and skills (as well as your weak spots).

For the opportunities and threats -- think about what's **out** there for YOU in the near future. Have you seen or heard anything that you should probably investigate further? This could be with regard to your personal or professional life.

Use the grid on the next page to capture your thoughts.

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<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>

## Your Life Path: The Timeline

Using a large piece of paper or your computer, create a timeline with increments of no more than 5 years at a time.

Begin with your birth and end with your current age. Now think back over the years and make notes of any significant occurrences, struggles or adventures. Fill out the timeline as completely as you can.

Once you're done, take a look and see if any patterns emerge. If you had to choose a "theme" for your life so far, what would you call it? If you don't see any patterns yet, that's okay. Set the timeline aside for now.

Example:

**0 to 5 years:**

- \* sister was born (age 3)
- \* repeated illness (age 2 to 5)

**5 to 10 years:**

- \* hospitalized w/ tonsillectomy (age 5)
- \* started school (age 6)
- \* family moved (age 7) had to adapt to a new school

**10 to 15 years:**

- \* first job (baby-sitting) (age 13)
- \* first kiss (age 14)
- \* first (real) job at JCPenney (age 15)

**15 to 20 years:**

- \* experimented with drugs and alcohol (age 16)
- \* got drivers license (age 16)
- \* family moved again (age 17)
- \* started community college (age 17)
- \* met Darryl/moved in (age 18)
- \* got married (age 20)

**25 to 30 years:**

- \* had Sean (age 22)
- \* got divorced (age 25)
- \* moved to Boulder, started college (age 27)

...and so on...

## Your Fascination Score

Why are we captivated by some people but not by others? Why do we recall some brands yet forget the rest? In a distracted, overcrowded world, how do certain leaders, friends, and family members convince us to change our behavior?

Simple. Through ***Fascination triggers***: the most powerful way to influence decision making. According to Sally Hogshead, the author of "Fascinate: Your Seven Triggers to Persuasion and Captivation," these triggers are more persuasive than marketing, advertising, or any other form of communication. What are they? **Passion, Mystique, Prestige, Power, Rebellion, Alarm, and Trust.**

Fascination plays a role in every type of decision making, from the brands we choose to the songs we remember, from the person we marry to the employees we hire. And by activating the right triggers, we can make anything become fascinating.

Now it's time to find out what *your* fascination triggers are. [Click here](#) to take Sally Hogshead's F-Score quiz.

Write your main and secondary triggers here:

- 1.
- 2.

And your dormant trigger:

## Your Quirky Side

Yes, we want to know what your passions and strengths are, but we also need to take a look at the stuff others might label as a little "freaky."

What odd idiosyncrasies do you have? What did the other kids tease you about when you were growing up? Was it your name? Your size? Your hair color?

Make a list of at least 5 things that you've always wished you could change -- or at least used to wish you could change as a child (you may have grown to love these quirks, which is awesome).

My Quirks:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## Your Goals

What's on your bucket list? What are the things you really want to accomplish this year? And where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10 years? 20?

All of us have goals -- we may not write them down, but they're there. Lurking in the back of your mind. You might "hear" the voice of a parent telling you there's something you need to be doing -- these are the "shoulds" that plague all of us.

Most of the time, "shoulds" aren't actual goals. Just things we use to beat ourselves up with. What is it you really want to do? What will you regret if you don't get it done?

### **Thing big *and* small here.**

Make your list and then put it in order of priority (#1 = most important). Make these goals as specific as possible. If they have a deadline (or need one), attach that as well. (If you need more space, great! Just get out another piece of paper and go to town.)

### **Short-term Goals (< 1 year)**

### **Medium-term Goals (1 to 3 years)**

### **Long-term Goals (3 to 20 years)**

## Your Work History

I swear this is a lot more fun than putting together your resume, so bear with me...

For this exercise, I want you to make a list of EVERY job you've ever had beginning with that first one back in high school. Yes, babysitting counts. Go ahead and make the list. I'll wait.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.

Now, go back through the list and make *brief* notes next to each job about what you learned from that experience, and what you enjoyed most about the work. See if you notice any themes or patterns. Often times, a past career can inform your current brand (e.g., a business coach who used to be in the medical profession might call herself The Business Doctor).

## Your Values

Everyone has them. These are the principles that guide our decisions and keep us focused (or not) on any particular project -- either short term or long term.

Understanding what your personal values are is the first step to connecting them to your business values -- putting them in alignment.

You would think you know yourself after all these years, but a lot of things get in the way. For example, maybe you never took the time to write down your top five values. Or maybe, you got caught up in what you think you *should* value or what other people scripted for you.

Either way, now's the time to figure out your values. If you know your values, then you know what you want, who you are, and where you stand. You know your values when you have a list of about five to seven you can rattle off.

### **List Them**

To find your values, start with a list. This one will get you started:

<b>Achievement</b> <b>Advancement</b> <b>Adventure</b> <b>Affection</b> <b>Competitiveness</b> <b>Cooperation</b> <b>Creativity</b> <b>Economic Security</b> <b>Fame</b> <b>Family Happiness</b>	<b>Freedom</b> <b>Friendship</b> <b>Health</b> <b>Helpfulness</b> <b>Inner Harmony</b> <b>Integrity</b> <b>Involvement</b> <b>Loyalty</b> <b>Order</b> <b>Personal Dev.</b>	<b>Pleasure</b> <b>Power</b> <b>Recognition</b> <b>Responsibility</b> <b>Self-respect</b> <b>Spirituality</b> <b>Wealth</b> <b>Wisdom</b>
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If that list doesn't work for you, there's plenty of lists on the Web. Some are overwhelming and some have lists of values that are too fine-grained. The key is to have a list of big values that really shape your life decisions as well as your day to day. Think macro vs. micro.

### **Find Your Top Values**

To find your top values, chunk down the list a little at a time. Make multiple passes:

- Find your top 10.
- Find your top 5.
- Find your top 3.
- Find your top value.

Remember that it's not finding *what* you value. Chances are, you value a lot of the items on the list. It's about finding what you value *most*. You need to know your top most values so when you have to prioritize or make compromises, you have something to guide you. A simple way to think of it is that

value are your gauges in life.

For example, my top five values are: Adventure, Community, Creativity, Integrity, and Personal Development. I think. It's tough since freedom is important to me too, as is loyalty. So is helpfulness. I like to help. Some values I can't trade-off. Luckily, I don't need to, except in certain scenarios and decisions.

### **Be Willing to Be Surprised**

I was surprised the first time I explored my values. I didn't realize how important adventure is to me. It was like my life flashed before my eyes: "Go west young lady," "lead an epic adventure," cross-country road-trips in my car, exploring new territory, back packing across Europe, and so on.

I've always been willing to jump into something new and unknown. The adrenaline rush is the same whether I'm at my computer or behind the wheel of my car. A lot of my personal metaphors are about adventure.

### **Testing Your Values**

Just having your list of values from the top of your mind, might not be enough. To get more clarity, you can test your values:

- Is it truly **YOUR** value? (i.e. is it internally motivated or is it external ... a "should")
- Is it a means or an end? If one value exists simply to accomplish another, then look to the value you want to accomplish. If you want economic security because you think it leads to freedom, then freedom is the one you value most. This is important because there's multiple ways to accomplish a goal and flexibility is key. Know what you want, but be flexible in your approach.
- **Do your actions show your values?** Actions speak louder than words.
- When were you happiest or most excited? What was your proudest moment? These highlights are a potential showcase of your values.
- What do you regret the most? Again, this is a way to figure out what's most important to you.

### **It's an Ongoing Exercise**

Finding and living your values is an ongoing exercise. Life-changing events can shift our values. (think Scrooge.) So don't think that just because you've done this exercise once, you're done.

Nope. Now we're going to look at how you can apply *your* values to your brand or business.

## **Your branding helps tell the story of your company's core values (and vice versa)**

These values should build an emotional connection with prospects and customers, and many experts tell us that consumers now look specifically for brands whose values match their own.

Knowing this, I consciously established The Word Chef's brand values as:

- Deliciously Clear Communication
- Passionate Pursuit of Learning and Growth
- Joyful Creativity
- Sincere and Genuine Generosity
- Transparency
- Solid and Deep Relationships
- Sustainability
- Profitability

For me, **communication is at the heart of every relationship**. It's what helps us have relationships to begin with. Yep, it's that important. And since Word Chef-ing is all about communicating, it makes sense that I would value every and all method for ensuring that all messages are received loud-and-clear.

Learning, teaching, sharing and growth are all parts of how I like to do business. I'm a huge believer in **empowering others through the learning process**. I think it's what frees us all to then be our most creative selves.

And **creativity is what really puts a zing in my heart**. When I'm creating something new — whether it's a blog post, a painting or a new dish — I'm in the zone. And the more I can bring that feeling into every bit of my business, the happier I am.

The last one — **generosity** — is the position I try to occupy at all times. Because when I'm there, **it means I'm living in abundance**. And all my decisions then come from *that* place (as opposed to fear, or lack).

## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

These core business values are fleshed out in more depth in my Entrepreneur's Manifesto. But stating your values and living your values are two different things.

While I may not always live up to my stated values perfectly, they're always there, guiding my decisions, actions and interactions.

They're also associated with the Word Chef brand via those same three methods — especially when I do them publicly. **Remember: words are powerful, but actions speak louder.** If you've worked with me at all, I hope you've noticed.

*Here are three more examples of small business brands who've consciously established — and communicated through actions! — their core values:*



Beecology is a small company, with just four employees including its two founders. They're a family of beekeepers who produce eco-friendly, natural bath and body products, and have received a lot of great national and local reviews. They've even been picked up by Whole Foods and a national distributor.



The founders, Amy and David met while attending Ohio State University. They've been married for over 22 years and have three teenage children. Amy says her family has always valued nature and their time outdoors. Read more about their story [here](#).

What you'll notice is that Beecology is a business born from a love (or passion) for the outdoors. That passion informs the company's core values (natural, renewable ingredients; healthy living, and sharing with others). In addition to their adherence to sustainable and eco-friendly products, they donate 10% of their net profits to their consumer's charity of choice.

The fact that every product carries that message is a strong

## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

reinforcement of the brand's core values (each supported product contains a charity code and after the purchase, consumers can visit Beecology's charity web site, [sweetyear.org](http://sweetyear.org) to enter the code and designate to which charity their percentage should be donated).

Beecology also spells out their brand promises on their own website, reinforcing those promises via conversations on Facebook and Twitter – and it's paying off. Beecology has gained some real traction in the media over the last 5 years and continues to grow at a healthy pace, seeing an incredible 200% growth rate in just the last two years, alone!



This little auto shop has been family-owned and operated since 1974, so it's safe to say their online presence is relatively new. But check out their vow they made public earlier this year. Glenn (the current owner) understands the value of transparency and letting folks know what you really stand for. He talks about how important the environment has always been to his family, and how he thought it was time to make a strong promise to do even better. If you live or work in Ventura, CA, then you know that the Auto Lube Care brand name communicates a strong promise of service and caring for the environment. They're an active member of the community and are currently spearheading an effort to build a coalition of small eco-friendly businesses in the area.

All that hard work pays off! They've been voted Best Oil Change in Ventura County every year since 2005, and were recently recognized by the Ventura City Council for their environmental efforts.



Barefoot Books is an independent children's book publisher that began with two mothers who wanted their children to have books that would feed the imagination, while instilling a respect for diversity and a love of the planet. Today, they are a world-wide community of writers, artists, storytellers, musicians, and others who are committed to providing timeless stories and captivating art that can help children become happy, engaged members of a global society.

On their website, they state their core values: "Explore. Imagine. Create. Connect. Give Back." They explain this in more detail:

*It's exploring other cultures, our planet, ourselves. It's making time for make-believe and letting imaginations run wild and free. Most of all, it's about using the power of stories to nourish the creative spark in everyone and strengthen connections with family, the global community, and the earth.*

And you can see these core values in action both on and offline. They've got a thriving community section on their site as well as on Facebook and Twitter, and a fabulous video that highlights that point of view through words of that community:

Barefoot's continues to communicate their brand values in offline experiences as well. Their website is a real treat and fun to explore, but they've taken that experience to the three dimensional world with offline events, studios and more.

### **What are Your Business' Core Values?**

If you're unsure about how to express core values for your business, use your personal values as a starting point.

Spend some time writing about the topic or discuss it with a trusted colleague. You'll be surprised at how many insights these can provide.

*Remember: if you go too long without stating your core values for the world to see, it's too easy to be who you're not. And that's no way to create a lasting brand.*

### **Convert your values into a Manifesto**

## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

Every business needs to stand for something. Your exploration and self-discovery up to this point have all helped you see what it is YOU stand for -- as a person, and as a business owner.

Now it's time to write out your manifesto. Start with a blank piece of paper and then put numbers down the left side (from 1 to 10).

Go back and revisit your passions, values and the other exercises you've completed to this point. Think in terms now of *your business or blog*.

What elements do you require as must-haves in your efforts? What *must* be there for you to feel fulfilled and successful? What do you feel strongly that others must also adopt for them to succeed?

You don't have to stick with 10 things. It may end up being more or less. Just write until you feel that most everything you need has been captured on paper.

## Your Perfect World Scenario

**Let me ask you a question:** If you could wave your magic wand and create a perfect world, what would that look like?

I know it's hard to go there, so you may want to put your feet up and close your eyes. Take a few deep breaths and relaaaaax. Got your perfect world? Good.

Now narrow that vision down to the realm where your products and/or services live. What's the perfect world related to how they're created, used, and or recycled? What would need to happen in order to make your business obsolete?

## Complete this sentence: "I envision a world where ..."

**Important Clue >>** Your answer is the key to your business vision.

The thing to remember here is that your vision shouldn't be something that only you could create. It's not something that one person or business can tackle alone.

So go ahead. Think BIG.

Once you've got your vision sketched out, it's time to look at *your part* in that vision. Your business mission/purpose comes from the part you play in making that vision a reality. In other words, your mission statement explains why your business exists and what part it plays in bringing your vision to fruition.

These can be challenging concepts, so let's look at a real life example. (One of the best ways to learn a new concept is to see it in action.)

*Here's the story of a small business whose vision and mission are keeping them on track to real success:*

## The Vision and Mission of Green3

One might wonder, what happens to a town that is known worldwide for a company that no longer resides there? That's the question that pertains to two companies in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Ask any adult over the age of 35 about Oshkosh B'Gosh, and a smile comes to their face as they remember the

railroad stripe overalls they had as a child.

For many people outside of Oshkosh, WI, the question of whether the town was named for the company or the company was named for the town is a very real one. After 100 years of supplying high quality apparel and accessories, made in the USA (for the first 80 years), the company was sold in 2005 and with that sale many employees found themselves out of work. As the story of the Phoenix goes, from the ashes a beautiful bird rises.



Jim and Sandy Martin, founders of Green3 Apparel

In 2005, former Oshkosh B'Gosh and apparel industry veteran, Sandy Martin decided to start her own apparel company.

Her vision was a company built upon the core tenets of environmental awareness and USA production. A vision not born from any marketing strategy, but rather from values that came a result of years of international travel, and an equal number of years growing up on farm in Michigan.

The international travel had taken her to the far corners of the earth, and in those corners she had seen both the good and the bad of how clothing was made in factories of all sizes. She knew in her heart her company would bring apparel jobs back to the USA. Jobs that would offer fair wages and decent working conditions to its employees. Jobs in facilities that she could visit easily and monitor to assure that these standards were being met.

She also knew that traditional and conventional methods of farming, laden with toxic chemicals, would not be the source of the products she wanted to produce. She'd seen too clearly in her own family the negative health impacts of this conventional methodology. Her products were to be produced with methods that caused the least possible impact on the environment, and would utilize sustainable fibers of all kinds.

## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

With these principles in place Sandy began to develop her business plan. In 2006, with \$25,000 and the help of her daughter and husband, Green 3 (named for the three family members) was born.

Now in its fifth full year of operation, Green 3 has 17 employees, 8 of which are ex-B'Gosh. Green 3 is now carried by over 600 special stores coast to coast, and provides products to a myriad of globally recognized catalog retailers. Its products still remain true to Sandy's original vision of environmental awareness and USA production. It is now under one 18,000 square foot roof, where design, distribution, and its first company store is now located.

They have an active community on Facebook and Twitter. Can Green 3 someday have the awareness that other great Oshkosh based brand had? Well time will tell, but it's off to a great start!

In case you missed my yellow highlighting, Green 3's vision is *a world where apparel is made from sustainable materials by companies that pay a fair wage and provide decent working conditions*. The company's mission is to produce some of that apparel here in the USA. Not too difficult, right?

Green 3 incorporates their vision and mission into every marketing message they deliver. On their blog, a recent post on handwarmers details the benefits of their product then goes on to boast:  
*...our hand warmers are among the select few that are both organic and made in the US.*

Green 3 is just one great example of a company that gets its branding right. Over the course of the remainder of this series, I'll be highlighting a few other tremendous businesses. Each one has been included in the 12 Days of Branding because they adhere to my triple threat criteria:

- 1: Grabs attention via a unique logo/message.
- 2: Keeps attention via a unique mission/back story incorporated into every marketing opportunity.
- 3: Builds loyalty via community engagement.

Now it's your turn. If you could wave your magic wand and create a perfect world, what would it look like? Not just for you, but for everyone.

Close your eyes for a minute and let your mind wander. Really have fun with this and imagine things not as they are, but as you'd like them to be.

Now - take that same perfect world and focus in on just one aspect: the part that relates to your

business.

In my perfect world, for instance, every small business owner would feel confident and strong about who they are and what they have to offer. They would be able to communicate their messages with clarity.

And they'd be thrilled to be making boat loads of money doing exactly what they love and were meant to do.

In short, I'd probably be out of business (at least as a marketing consultant) because all these folks would have the tools, knowledge and oomph to achieve their business goals.

Now - what would your perfect world look like in relation to the service or product you offer the world? Jot down 3 or 4 sentences that capture what it is that you'd want your target market to enjoy. This needs to be bigger than just something you alone could provide. It needs to be massively global.

**Complete this sentence:** "I imagine a world where all [insert your target market] have/do/be/enjoy..."

## The Mission Statement

Don't let this exercise scare you. One thing I've learned about mission statements is that they can really be a lot of fun.

Here's what I want you to keep in mind before we start:

- Your mission statement doesn't need to inspire anybody -- that's not what it's for! So please don't try to write something inspirational or even cool and hip.
- Your mission statement will evolve as you do -- expect it to change and you will be less attached to crafting something "perfect"

Okay, ready? Let's go.

Go back to your perfect world scenario and take a look at the vision you had as it relates to the product or service you offer.

**Now - write out one sentence (two tops!) about how your business works to fulfill that mission.**

Remember my vision? A world where every entrepreneur has the tools and resources they need to effectively communicate who they are and what they do -- so they can make boatloads of money doing exactly what they love?

Well, The Word Chef mission is to help very small business owners learn how to market themselves online.

See how that mission statement fulfills the vision? Plus, it's not fancy at all.

Where I got fancy is with my tagline: *Helping you find and share your Secret Sauce with the world.*

But that came later.

Many marketing and business experts will tell you to take your time and craft something radiant and inspiring. I'm telling you to *let that go. (At least for now.)*

## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

Your mission statement doesn't need to be long -- in fact, the shorter it is the better. Why? Because you'll actually be able to remember it.

Don't forget, you'll also have a vision statement and a values statement (two separate pieces where you can use more flowery language). For now - keep it simple.

## **Your Motivations**

Why do you get out of bed in the morning? Why do you keep on keeping on?

Is it your family? Your spouse? Your business? Or maybe you just want to see what's around the next corner?

These are basic motivations that we sometimes overlook.

Examine them now. Take out another blank sheet of paper and answer the following question. (Write for about 3 to 5 minutes and just capture whatever comes to mind):

**Why do you earn money to pay the bills? What's in it for you?**

## Step 2: Get Inside Your Customer's Head

### You care about your Aunt Sally.



When she comes to dinner, you don't knowingly serve her shellfish because she's allergic.

By the same token, any marketing message you try to deliver also needs to be created around specific knowledge of your prospective customer.

*Here's what I mean:* Who is the person you are trying to reach? Does she have a name? Of course she does. So start there. If you don't know her name, make one up.

Use the worksheet at the end of this chapter as a guide and write down everything you know about her. For the bits you don't know, guess. (You can research them later.)

The idea is to get a clear picture of the person you'd most enjoy doing business with.

Yes, the requisite demographics will get you started. But dig *really* deep and add some of the things you just looked at for yourself -- things like hobbies, passions and other interests.

What gets her out of bed in the morning? What makes her tick? What problems does she need to deal with?

Where does she hang out? What radio/television/websites does she listen to/watch/peruse?

What personality type is she? Does she prefer to communicate by phone or email? How tech-saavy is

she?

You get the idea.

### **Your Perfect Client Persona**

*Write a full page about your ideal client or audience member. You can model this after an actual ideal client you've already worked with or know well. Use the items below as your starting point. Add or subtract qualities as appropriate for your situation.*

<p><b>Give this person a name:</b></p>	
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<b>Age:</b>	
<b>Family Size:</b>	

<b>Geographic Location:</b>	
<b>Income:</b>	

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<b>Hobbies:</b>	
<b>Clubs/Organization(s):</b>	

<b>Religious affiliation:</b>	
<b>Political affiliation:</b>	

<b>Publications/Books reads:</b>	
<b>Music Listens to:</b>	

<b>TV watches:</b>	
<b>Time online/URLs visits:</b>	

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<b>Main motivation in life:</b>	
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Number 1 Burning Desire or Problem (as it relates to YOUR product or service):

## Step 3: Find the Archetypes

Now that you've clarified what your motivations, values and vision are, it's time to find a metaphor or archetype that will work as shorthand for all of that.

Think about the stories we tell each other via fairy tales, comic books, movies and television. What kind of hero are you? Are you a superhero? With super powers?

If you've never thought about archetypes before (or how you might use one to tell your story), don't worry. It's not something that most people consciously do.

However, you *will* find clues in those themes that you find especially appealing: your passions.

Revisit the inventory exercises to see if anything stands out for you.

Check out the list of archetypes at the end of this chapter (some generic archetypes to get you started) and see if any of those sound like you.

Is there a movie character or type that you think fits your mission? Hint: this will usually be related to your WHY and your HOW. (Why you do what you do, and how you do it.)

Make a short list of at least 3 different "characters" and then apply those characters to your passions. In my case (to come up with the Word Chef) I applied my love of food and creativity in the kitchen to my passion for communication and marketing.

This character doesn't necessarily need to be incorporated into your branding (like mine), but it IS very helpful for talking about what you do when people ask. It's much more fun to say, "I'm the Freddy Krueger of blogging," than it is to tell folks you're a blogging expert. Am I right?

Okay - so what does your character look like? And what are its super powers?

Don't forget it's weak spots -- what kind of "kryptonite" does your character struggle with?

Remember: real heroes are flawed. Don't try to create a hero that sits up on a pedestal. You'll crumble the first time you don't live up to that ideal.

### **The Hero that is Me**

*Write down all your thoughts about what character(s) or archetype(s) could represent who you are and what you stand for:*

## **Your Side-kick (Your Ideal Customer)**

*Write down all your thoughts about what character(s) or archetype(s) could represent your ideal customer and what she stands for:*

## Brand Archetypes

*Note: The content in this article is an excerpt from an article written by Genece Hamby. (www.genecehamby.com)*

Archetypes are forms or images of a collective nature that naturally establish meaning and relevance at a subconscious level. Archetypes are authentic, genuine, compelling, credible, universal, and deeply moving.

Personal brand archetypes go beyond merely stating our features and benefits to connect with others in a deep and profoundly meaningful way.

### Personal Branding Archetypes

Read the descriptions below and identify your own primary and secondary personal brand archetype.

<p><b>1. The Boss</b> A dynamic personal brand that has time for nothing but work. You might have been born to lead, or perhaps you conquered your way to the top, but either way, you're tough, decisive, goal-oriented. You are a "take charge" personal brand who accepts nothing but respect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Manager, organizer, take-charge attitude</li><li>● Efficient, productive</li><li>● Confident, responsible, role model</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are the boss: Donald Trump, Martha Stewart, Billy Graham Famous "boss" tagline -- Timex's "Takes a licking and keeps on ticking."</p>	<p><b>2. The Enigma</b> Gutsy and true, this personal brand is loyal to the end. Others can't help but root for you. You're not looking to be at the top of the heap; you just want to be in your own little niche. You represent the universal messages of mystery, suspense and uncertainty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Clown, jester, trickster</li><li>● Playful, take things lightly, create a little fun/chaos</li><li>● Impulsive, spontaneous, lives in the moment</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are the enigma: Meryl Streep, Jack Nicholson, Marilyn Monroe Famous "enigma" tagline – Braniff Airlines, "When you've got it, flaunt it!"</p>
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<p><b>3. The Best Friend</b> Sweet and safe, this personal brand will never let anyone down. You are kind, responsible, decent, a regular Mr. Nice Guy or Ms. Nice Gal. You don't enjoy confrontation and can sometimes be unassertive because you don't want to hurt anyone's feelings. But you'll always be there.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Not pretentious, straight shooter, people-oriented</li><li>● Reliable, dependable, practical, down to earth</li><li>● Value routines, predictability, the status quo, tradition</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are best friends: Bill Cosby, Tipper Gore, Dr. Phil Famous "best friend" tagline -- Hallmark, "When you care to send the very best."</p>	<p><b>4. The Charmer</b> This personal brand creates fantasies. You are fun and irresistible, and have a need to attract and be attracted to others. You are accustomed to sizing up everyone in a room the minute you enter. You enjoy having fans everywhere you. You have a unique ability to hold and transfix your audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Seeks true love, intimacy, sensuality</li><li>● Passionate and seductive</li><li>● Seek pleasure, to indulge, follow emotions</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are charmers: President Bill Clinton, OJ Simpson, Halle Berry Famous "charmer" tagline – L'Oreal, "Because I'm worth it!"</p>
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<p><b>5. The Nurturer</b> A sensitive being, this personal brand understands. You are vulnerable and altruistic. You are able always there when someone needs nurturing. Others can count on you to be supportive and generous.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Altruistic, selfless</li><li>● Nurturing, compassionate, empathetic</li><li>● Supportive, generous</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are nurturers: Mother Teresa, Phil Donahue, Doris Day Famous “nurturer” tagline – Campbell Soup’s, “Mmmm, mmmm Good!”</p>	<p><b>6. The Philosopher &amp; Sage</b> Coolly analytical, this personal brand knows the answers. You are genuine about your feelings. You like to maintain a neutral perspective and you are very good at seeing all sides of an issue. You are a natural student with a high level of curiosity and a great willingness to risk in order to satisfy your thirst for new knowledge. You love to experiment with things to find out what would happen 'if...'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Thinker, philosopher, reflective</li><li>● Expert, advisor, teacher</li><li>● Confident, in-control, self-contained, credible</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are philosophers: Dr. Ruth, Thomas Edison, Stephen Covey Famous “philosopher” tagline – Haig Scotch Whiskey, “Don’t be vague, ask for Haig.”</p>
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<p><b>7. The Adventurer</b> Mr. or Ms. Excitement, you're about adventure. You are about action, action, and more action. You're physical and daring. Fearless, you're a daredevil, or an explorer. You need thrills and chills to keep you happy. You stand for independence and value freedom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Searcher, seeker, adventurous, restless, desire</li><li>● excitement Independent, self-directed, self-sufficient</li><li>● Value freedom</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are adventurers: Tom Cruise, Clint Eastwood, Angelina Jolie Famous "adventurer" tagline – The Independent, "It is. Are you?"</p>	<p><b>8. The Warrior</b> A noble champion, you act with honor. You are the reluctant rescuer that's noble, tenacious, and relentless. You're a natural protector. You don't buckle under to rules, and don't go along just to get along. You are the representative of everyone's struggle to overcome adversity and challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Warrior, competitive, aggressive, winner</li><li>● Principled, idealist, challenge "wrongs," improve the world</li><li>● Proud, brave, courageous, sacrifice for greater good</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are warriors: Robert Redford, Hilary Clinton, Mary Kay Ash Famous "warrior" tagline – Merrill Lynch, "Merrill Lynch is bullish on America."</p>
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<p><b>9. The Free Spirit</b> Eternal optimist, you dance to unheard tunes. Playful and fun loving, you travel through life with a hop, skip and a jump. You are creative and known to act on a whim, following your heart instead of your head. You always try to translate authenticity through your communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Innovative, imaginative, artistic, creative</li><li>● Experimental, willing to take risks</li><li>● Ambitious, desire to turn ideas into reality</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are free spirits: Michael Jackson, Elizabeth Taylor, Albert Einstein Famous “free spirit” tagline – Pepsi’s “Come alive, you’re in the Pepsi Generation.”</p>	<p><b>10. The Change Master</b> You are strongly intuitive and holistic. You are charismatic in a mysterious way. You are self-contained and dedicated to making a difference through change. You represent the desire to be the master of our own destiny and having control over our lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Shaman, healer, spiritual, holistic, intuitive</li><li>● Value magical moments and special rituals</li><li>● Catalyst for change, charismatic – uplifting and inspiring</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are change masters: Tom Brokaw, Stephen Hawking, Oprah Winfrey Famous “change master” tagline – Audi’s “Advancement Through Technology”</p>
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<p><b>11. The Purist</b> Serene and capable, you nourish the spirit. You are wholesome and a joy to have around. You are optimistic and trusting. Forgiving, you enjoy simple things and have a childlike innocence about you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Wholesome, pure</li><li>● Forgiving, trusting, honest</li><li>● Happy, optimistic, enjoy simple pleasures</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are purists: Princess Diana, Audrey Hepburn, Celine Dion Famous “purists” tagline – Ivory Soap, “Pure clean, pure ivory.”</p>	<p><b>12. The Rebel</b> You tend to be a bit dangerous because you walk on the wild side. You are generally a crushed idealist -- charismatic and street smart. You are dramatic and fearless with an interest in being liberated from social conditioning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Rebellious, shocking, outrageous, disruptive</li><li>● Feared, powerful</li><li>● Counter cultural, revolutionary, liberated</li></ul> <p>Popular personal brands that are rebels: Martin Luther King, Jack Welch, Madonna Famous “rebel” tagline – Seven Up, “The Uncola.”</p>
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<p><b>13. The Innocent</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Wholesome, pure</li><li>● Forgiving, trusting, honest</li><li>● Happy, optimistic, enjoy simple pleasures</li></ul>	<p><b>14. The Explorer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Searcher, seeker, adventurous, restless, desire excitement</li><li>● Independent, self-directed, self sufficient</li><li>● Values freedom</li></ul>
<p><b>15. The Sage:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Thinker, philosopher, reflective</li><li>● Expert, advisor, teacher</li><li>● Confident, in-control, self-contained, credible</li></ul>	<p><b>16. The Hero</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Warrior, competitive, aggressive, winner</li><li>● Principled, idealist, challenge “wrongs,” improve the world</li><li>● Proud, brave, courageous, sacrifice for greater good</li></ul>

<p><b>17. The Outlaw</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Rebellious, shocking, outrageous,</li><li>● disruptive</li><li>● Feared, powerful</li><li>● Countercultural, revolutionary, liberated</li></ul>	<p><b>18. The Magician</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Shaman, healer, spiritual, holistic, intuitive</li><li>● Value magical moments and special rituals</li><li>● Catalyst for change, charismatic</li></ul>
<p><b>19. The Regular Guy/Gal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Not pretentious, straight shooter, people-oriented</li><li>● Reliable, dependable, practical, down to earth</li><li>● Value routines, predictability, the status quo, tradition</li></ul>	<p><b>20. The Lover</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Seek True Love, intimacy, sensuality</li><li>● Passionate, sexy, seductive, erotic</li><li>● Seek pleasure, to indulge, follow emotion</li></ul>

<p><b>21. The Jester</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Clown, jester, trickster</li><li>● Playful, take things lightly, create a little fun/chaos</li><li>● Impulsive, spontaneous, lives in the moment</li></ul>	<p><b>22. The Caregiver</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Altruistic, selfless</li><li>● Nurturing, compassionate, empathetic</li><li>● Supportive, generous</li></ul>
<p><b>23. The Creator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Innovative, imaginative, artistic</li><li>● Experimental, willing to take risks</li><li>● Ambitious, desire to turn ideas into reality</li></ul>	<p><b>24. The Ruler</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Manager, organizer, take charge attitude</li><li>● Efficient, productive</li><li>● Confident, responsible, role model</li></ul>



## Step 4: Look for Patterns

It's time now to go back over all your work and look for clues. This is a little like being a private investigator.

If you can, try to distance yourself from your own inventory and look at from the point of view of an objective observer. What patterns or themes keep showing up?

Your path and background are as unique to you as your fingerprint. You may be an artist, a home maker, a blogger or a coach -- but you will do your thing in a way that is uniquely you. You can't help it.

Your competitors can't copy it because they aren't you. And this is a good thing!

Pretend that you are an anthropologist or archaeologist who has uncovered a mountain of data about this person (you). Look for in these four areas:

1. **Sociocultural** - what themes recurred over your life with friends and family? What lessons did you tend to repeat? Which beliefs, values, practices, ideas, technologies and/or economies did you keep bumping up against over your lifetime?
2. **Biological** - were there any particular issues or challenges you overcame or learned from that were particular to your biology? (Could include your sex/gender, medical history, and general health).
3. **Linguistic** - what about communication? Were you particularly adept at getting your point across? Or did you struggle to communicate your needs?
4. **Archeological** - what tangible belongings make up who you are and what you've done with your life? Did you collect anything? Despise anything? Just look at the items that you surrounded yourself with. What story do they tell about you?

### Exercise: Create a Character Board

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It's time to build a visual representation of all that you've discovered and uncovered about yourself.

You can do this electronically (Pinterest is great for this) or with magazines and other hard copy/analog items. But the idea is to create something you can look at and meditate on.

Start with a photo of yourself in the middle. Then build out from there with photos that speak to all four areas of the anthropological You. Add words, colors and anything at all that speaks to your passions, values, talents and quirks.

What theme(s) or patterns do you see appearing in this montage?

## Step 5: Write Your Story

Every story has a beginning, a middle and an end. In the beginning you setup your hero (or heroine) and his story, then you throw something at him that is a great source of conflict and takes him into a whole heap of trouble. After facing many foes and overcoming various obstacles the hero saves the day and wins the girl.

Your Brand is also a story. And that story will be told over and over again via various methods:

- Your website copy and content
- Your social media status updates
- Your emails and other correspondence
- How you serve your customers
- Word of mouth (via your customers)

Before you can tell all these stories, it's good to begin with the very first story: your business' creation story. How and why did you come to be doing what you're doing? What inspired you? What prompted you? And why should we pay attention to you (or your product)?

If you can tell a compelling creation story, you will be halfway there in terms of your marketing messages and branding. How do you do that? You start with a structure (or a recipe) and then you make it your own.

### The 12 Stages of The Hero's Journey

A popular form of story structure derives from Joseph Campbell's book *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*. There are three sections to this structure, and while many popular and compelling stories follow this "recipe," not every story contains every element. Don't worry if your story doesn't quite fit.

## Your Hero's Journey - Part 1: The Departure

Every hero's journey begins with **the Departure**. In your case, the Departure is the moment you began to pursue your current business or activity.

**Assignment:** Get out of a piece of paper so you can take notes.

Read over these elements and find the place(s) in your own life that correspond to as many of them as you can. Write down in a few sentences for each element, what happened in your life that could be considered...

1. **Your Call to Adventure** - The call to adventure is the point in a person's life when they are first given notice that everything is going to change, whether they know it or not.
2. **Refusal of the Call** - Often when the call is given, the future hero refuses to heed it. This may be from a sense of duty or obligation, fear, insecurity, a sense of inadequacy, or any of a range of reasons that work to hold the person in his or her current circumstances.
3. **Supernatural Aid** - Once the hero has committed to the quest, consciously or unconsciously, his or her guide and magical helper appears, or becomes known.
4. **The Crossing of the First Threshold** - This is the point where the person actually crosses into the field of adventure, leaving the known limits of his or her world and venturing into an unknown and dangerous realm where the rules and limits are not known.
5. **The Belly of the Whale** - The belly of the whale represents the final separation from the hero's known world and self. It is sometimes described as the person's lowest point, but it is actually the point when the person is between or transitioning between worlds and selves. The separation has been made, or is being made, or being fully recognized between the old world and old self and the potential for a new world/self. The experiences that will shape the new world and self will begin shortly, or may be beginning with this experience which is often symbolized by something dark, unknown and frightening. By entering this stage, the person shows their willingness to undergo a metamorphosis, to die to him or herself.

## Your Hero's Journey - Part 2: The Initiation

Continue doing for this section what you did in part one. What happened in your own life that corresponds with these elements?

Write them down in one or two sentences for each item. If you can't identify anything in your life that matches a particular element, that's okay. Just leave it blank for now.

1. **The Road of Trials** - The road of trials is a series of tests, tasks, or ordeals that the person must undergo to begin the transformation. Often the person fails one or more of these tests, which often occur in threes.
2. **The Meeting with the Goddess (the metaphor)** - The meeting with the goddess represents the point in the adventure when the person experiences a love that has the power and significance of the all-powerful, all encompassing, unconditional love that a fortunate infant may experience with his or her mother. It is also known as the "hieros gamos," or sacred marriage, **the union of opposites**, and may take place entirely within the person. In other words, **the person begins to see him or herself in a non-dualistic way**. This is a very important step in the process and is often represented by the person finding the other person that he or she loves most completely. Although Joseph Campbell symbolizes this step as a meeting with a goddess, unconditional love and /or **self unification** does not have to be represented by a person of the opposite sex.
3. **The Temptress** - At one level, this step is about **those temptations** that may lead the hero to abandon or stray from his or her quest, which as with the Meeting with the Goddess does not necessarily have to be represented by a woman. For Campbell, however, this step is about the revulsion that the usually male hero may feel about his own fleshy/earthy nature, and the subsequent attachment or projection of that revulsion to women. Woman is a metaphor for the physical or material temptations of life, since the hero-knight was often tempted by lust from his spiritual journey.
4. **Atonement** - In this step the person must confront and be initiated by whatever holds the ultimate power in his or her life. In many myths and stories this is the father, or a father figure who has life and death power. This is the center point of the journey. All the previous steps have been moving in to this place, all that follow will move out from it. Although this step is most frequently symbolized by an encounter with a male entity, it does not have to be a male; **just**

**someone or thing with incredible power.** For the transformation to take place, the person as he or she has been must be "killed" so that the new self can come into being. Sometimes this killing is literal, and the earthly journey for that character is either over or moves into a different realm.

5. **Apotheosis** - To apotheosize is to deify. When someone dies a physical death, or **dies to the self** to live in spirit, he or she moves beyond the pairs of opposites to a state of divine knowledge, love, compassion and bliss. This is a god-like state; the person is in heaven and beyond all strife. A more mundane way of looking at this step is that **it is a period of rest, peace and fulfillment before the hero begins the return.**
6. **The Ultimate Boon** - The ultimate boon is the achievement of the goal of the quest. It is what the person went on the journey to get. All the previous steps serve to prepare and purify the person for this step, since in many myths the boon is something transcendent like the elixir of life itself, or a plant that supplies immortality, or the holy grail.

### Your Hero's Journey - Part 3: The Return

As before, write down the places in your own life that correspond to these elements:

1. **Refusal of the Return** - So why, when all has been achieved, the ambrosia has been drunk, and we have conversed with the gods, why come back to normal life with all its cares and woes?
2. **The Magic Flight** - Sometimes the hero must escape with the boon, if it is something that the gods have been jealously guarding. It can be just as adventurous and dangerous returning from the journey as it was to go on it.
3. **Rescue from Without** - Just as the hero may need guides and assistants to set out on the quest, often times he or she must have powerful guides and rescuers to bring them back to everyday life, especially if the person has been wounded or weakened by the experience. Or perhaps the person doesn't realize that it is time to return, that they can return, or that others need their boon.
4. **The Crossing of the Return Threshold** - The trick in returning is to retain the wisdom gained on the quest, to integrate that wisdom into a human life, and then maybe figure out how to share the wisdom with the rest of the world. This is usually extremely difficult.
5. **Master of the Two Worlds** - In myth, this step is usually represented by a transcendental hero like Jesus or Buddha. For a human hero, it may mean achieving a balance between the material and spiritual. **The person has become comfortable and competent in both the inner and outer worlds.**

6. **Freedom to Live** - Mastery leads to freedom from the fear of death, which in turn is the freedom to live. This is sometimes referred to as living in the moment, neither anticipating the future nor regretting the past.

## The Other Characters in Your Story: Your Nemesis

You are the Hero. But you share the stage with other characters, too.

One of them is your nemesis, or the anti-hero, and is usually a metaphor for someTHING that you are working to overcome. (Note: you probably have more than one!)

For this exercise, first identify who or what you are fighting against. What conflicts do you resolve? What problems do you solve?

Next, build a personification around your nemesis. Think in terms of storybook or comic book characters. Give your nemesis a name. Write out in a few sentences what this "evil" character does or what motivates him/her. Have fun with this! Use your creativity and create someone as three dimensional as you can.

The technical term for this type of character is the deuteragonist. But in your case, we'll just go with side-kick.

This is the character that helps you work against the nemesis or antagonist.

For now, let's consider this character your customer, client or reader. What you want to remember is that the two of you work *together*.

Revisit the Ideal Client Persona you created. What other characteristics could you add to this profile to flesh it out even more?

## Step 6: Find the Metaphors

Now, think in terms of theme here. If you haven't yet chosen a name for your business or blog this will be helpful.

*If you already have a name, that's okay. You can keep it (you have my permission).*

For now though, choose a theme or metaphor for what you do based on the archetypes, mission, vision and so forth of your story.

For example, my theme is food/cooking and the elements of running a business like a chef. (My archetype is a chef.)

Once you have your theme, go back through your manifesto and re-write each statement from the point of view of your archetype. Stay true to your theme.

As an example, here's my own manifesto (a scaled down version) for you to review:

### **Be a Chef: a Manifesto for Entrepreneurs**

#### *Remember the Day You Said Yes to Your Dream?*

You hung out your shingle, launched a website and did plenty of other business-starting-activities.

Bet you never said, "I can't wait to create average, boring, standard work."

Me either.

The following ideas guide me as an entrepreneur and small business owner. If these principles resonate with you, we're probably a good fit to work together.

**1. Be a Chef, not a cook.** Recipes are great, but chefs know how to deviate from the rules in ways that really tap their creativity. In other words, know your box, but think outside of it whenever possible so you can create new

masterpieces.

**2. Find Your Secret Sauce.** Everyone has a particular blend of talents, passions, gifts and quiriness that make up their Secret Sauce. Sometimes you discover what's been there all along. Other times, you cook it up after years of experimentation. It's a dynamic interaction of your experiences, history and natural abilities. Nurture it!

**3. Clarity is power.** When you know what your goal is and who you are, you don't need to hurry the process. Clarity will provide the momentum you need.

**4. Think Big and Make a Bigger Pie.** You don't do any of us any good by holding back. You'll never be remarkable by holding back, either. Go out of your way to think around corners.

**5. Share generously.** Relationships are everything. In fact, they're really the ONLY thing that matters. It's why we're on this planet — to learn and grow through our relationships with others. (Because we're all ONE? Probably!)

**6. We eat with our eyes first.** Make sure your presentation is visually appealing. Your website and other marketing materials are just as important as how you dress and present yourself in person. If you want to attract more people to your party, set a beautiful table.

**7. Words are potent, magical ingredients.** Use them only for good. Learn everything you can about the power of words and how they help us manifest what we're after. But never twist the truth or use words to generate fear or other negative emotions.

**8. Stories = Food.** Feed everyone and be willing to let them feed you. Remember that humans are all about stories — it's how we learn and grow. Entertaining stories that teach are even better.

**9. Collaborate in the Kitchen!** Be open and willing to engage with other chefs. The energy and ideas you can create together will be exponentially more exciting than what you can do on your own.

**10. Be the hero of your story.** Look for ways to invite passion and creativity to the table. Lean towards the YES.

### A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words

Your logo and the other images you use in your marketing materials are all branding elements that help tell the story of your business. Let's make sure you have everything in place.

First you need to make sure you have answers to these questions:

### **Your Brand Position**

Who is addressed by your products or services? (Answer: Your ideal customer). What is the #1 problem you solve for that person? (Answer: see your Ideal customer persona worksheet.) What do you bring to the table that makes your offering different and unique? (Answer: all those elements you inventoried earlier.)

### **Brand Promise**

The ONE most important thing that the brand promises to deliver to its customers — Every time! What customers and partners should expect from every interaction, how should they *feel* as brand's customers.

### **Brand Personality**

What the brand is to be known for; personality traits that customers, partners, and employees use to describe the company. What comes to the (potential) customer's mind when addressed about the brand.

### **Brand Story**

The company's history and how the history adds value and credibility to the brand. A summary of products/services/solutions.

### **Brand Associations**

Sometimes the above questions can be answered succinctly, and sometimes it's easier to capture the essence of the answers in metaphors and images. Now it's time to get creative and utilize all the brainstorming you've been doing around archetypes, characters and themes.

The physical artifacts of your brand (your business' name, logo, colors, taglines, fonts, imagery) should ideally reflect your answers to all the above statements about your brand.

## **How do you choose a name?**

This is like naming your baby. Except there's no Business Baby Name Book to look to. And in fact, the

best business name is one that hasn't been used before.

Here are some things to consider as you decide on your business' name. Remember to start from the archetypes and themes you've already uncovered.

### **1. Be memorable – but easy to spell.**

Obviously, your ideal customers and target audience need to be able to remember your business name. But they also need to be able to find it easily if they're looking for it online. So choosing a business name such as "Crychalwellyn" is a bad idea. Unique is good but difficult spellings aren't the best first choice. When you're developing a totally new product, a strange name can be a good thing. But those names will require some education (e.g. additional marketing) in order for potential customers to understand them. Google and Yahoo were in that category when they first appeared on the scene. But they had loads of marketing dollars behind them that helped quickly educate the public to what they were about.

### **2. A winning business name needs a visual element.**

What popped into your head when you read "Crychalwellyn"? Anything? Most people don't visualize anything when they read that made-up name. But generally we are hard-wired to "see" images when we read or hear language, and incorporating a visual element into your business name can be a powerful aid to customers' memory (and a powerful advertising tool).

You'll also be better able to create a great logo if the name has a visual. The catch is that...

### **3. A fabulous business name has to have positive connotation.**

Many words have both denotation (literal meaning) and connotation (emotional meaning). A word's connotation can be positive, neutral or negative, depending on the emotional associations that people generally make. The classic example is the difference between "Mom" (which has a very positive connotation) and "Mother" (which has a neutral connotation).

When you create a business name, you need to choose words that have the positive connotations that you want people to associate with your business – and make sure these connotations are suitable for your business. They can certainly be positive in one sense, but give a negative connotation in another (e.g. "positive" means one thing to someone who wants to get pregnant and something totally different

to a person taking an AIDS test.)

If you are starting a trucking business, for instance, you don't want it to have a weak sounding or negative name, such as "Willow Twig Trucking" or "Kitten Transport." You want a business name that conveys strength and reliability. A choice such as "Stone Creek Trucking" would be much better. Notice how all these names have a strong visual element.

#### **4. The name should include information about what your business does.**

Chances are good that your new business is not going to become an international brand. It certainly isn't instantly going to become as well known as Nike. So you need to be sure that your new business name at least gives your potential customers or clients some clues about what you actually do. That's why you see so many landscaping businesses that have the word "landscaping" in their name, and hair styling businesses that include words such as "salon" or even "hair designs" in their names.

Including information about what your business does in your business name also makes it easier for potential customers and/or clients to find your business in directories (both off and online).

#### **5. A great business name should be fairly short.**

Once again this is vital because you want customers and clients to be able to remember your business' name (and be able to tell other people what it is)! But it's also important for promotional purposes. You want a business name, for example, that will fit well on a business card, look good displayed on a sign or in an ad, and perhaps even a business name that will serve well as a domain name and show up well in search if you have an online business. So keep it as short as possible.

Create at least two winning business names, and three is even better, because once you've selected them, the next step is to see if you can register the domain name (and your first choice may already be taken).

## **Designing the Logo**

The first part of your logo -- and perhaps the only part -- is the font or fonts you use to spell out your business' name.

And just like a professional handwriting analyst can tell things about your personality by the way you

sign your name, your potential customers and audience will subconsciously intuit things about your business by the fonts you use and how you use them.

The first thing to do is go back to your themes and archetypes -- what personality traits are you trying to convey?

If you want people to think of you and your business as young and fresh, your choice of fonts will be much different than if you're going for mature and stable.

Download the list of brand personality traits and follow the instructions to select your top three personality traits.

Then, visit [MyFonts.com](http://MyFonts.com) and enter your business name in the custom text field to see what various fonts would like as your logo.

Keep in mind these three main points when choosing a font to accompany your logo design:

- **Avoid the most commonly used fonts, such as Comic Sans or Papyrus. Using one will make your design come off as amateurish.**
- **Make sure the font is legible when scaled down, especially with script fonts.**
- **One font is ideal, but don't use more than two.**

Strongly consider a custom font for your design. The more original the font, the more it will distinguish the brand. Examples of successful logos that have a custom font are Yahoo!, Twitter, and Coca Cola. Your designer will usually take an existing font and modify it slightly to get that custom feel.

### **And Now for a Little Color!**

Just as typography tells a story and elicits certain meanings in our subconscious, so too does color. Your business and brand should have at least one color (possibly two or three) that you use on EVERY marketing piece, starting with your logo.

Visit <http://www.symbolism.com/> and type in the words you chose to represent your brand's personality. See which colors come up for you.

Now think about your competition. Is there a particular color combination used by your industry? Should

you run with the pack? Or venture out into new territory? Standing out is a good thing. But make sure it's a conscious decision on your part.

## Step 7: Test!

You've got a name, a logo, and a tagline -- now it's time to test out your branding on a few willing guinea pigs. But not just any guinea pigs. These should be folks who are...

- a match for your ideal customer
- not your friends, spouse or other family member
- willing and able to give you objective feedback

Find a small enough number that you can manage the gathering process, but enough that you'll feel comfortable that things are on the right track.

In-person Focus Groups should usually be no more than 7 to 9 people (who don't know each other). Just remember that this kind of research isn't scientifically sound -- humans often don't know why they like a particular thing or may lie about something either consciously or subconsciously.

If you can get a friend or colleague to help you, it will be easier to gather notes (one person can ask questions while the other writes down answers and keywords). But in any case, you should also record the sessions if you can.

If focus groups are beyond your realm of possibility, you can also do e-surveys online with free tools like Survey Monkey or Pop Survey. You'll want a way to present visuals (if you have a logo that you want feedback on).

Testing can take eons of your time, if you let it. At some point, you'll need to decide how much positive feedback you need in order to move forward. For every entrepreneur, this will be different -- but you should do a least some testing before you sink money into branding and marketing materials.

## **Step 8: Create a plan**

Are you starting from scratch or doing a brand refresh? Each path will have it's own needs and timeline. But both paths will need your attention to the same sorts of things.

You'll need to make a checklist of tasks that need to be done and attach deadlines to each. The best way is to work backwards from a particular date that you'd like to be up and running. Just remember that things often take 2 or 3 times longer than we think they will!

I've included a sample checklist at the end of this chapter for you to use for your own plan.

### **Things Need to Be Congruent**

The rollout should also include a lead capture device -- this is usually a free report or something that speaks to your Secret Sauce. If you want to build authority as the Queen of Interior Design for Kitchens, then you wouldn't give away a report on how to design your home office.

Figure out first what your #1 offer is/will be -- something that you'll charge money for. And then take a small part of that offer and create a piece of information or a product sample that will give your ideal customer a taste of that offer and leave them wanting more. This can be used as your enticement for building your email list.

Next, outline five to seven pieces of information that need to be in place to support your brand identity. These are usually blog posts or articles that live on your website or are linked to from your website. Write them. Tutorials are great ways to show your audience that you know what you're doing.

**Brand Rollout Planning Checklist**

<i>Item/Task</i>	<i>Date Needed By</i>	<i>Notes</i>

Logo Design (multiple formats)		
Email Signature Block		

Email Newsletter template		
Website		

Stationery and Biz Cards		
Postcards/Brochures		

## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

Facebook Page(s)		
Twitter Background		

Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

LinkedIn		
Slideshare		

## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

YouTube		
Google +		

Press Release		
Presentation Template		

Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

Uniform or Branded Apparel		
Banner		

Vehicle graphics		
Signage		

Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

Other Social Media Channels		
Your Free Gift/Giveaway		

Authority Content		


## Your Brand: How to Create an Enticingly Delicious Marketing Message

## Step 9: Review and adjust

Your brand rollout should take no more than three months in order to make sure you keep momentum building.

However, you will *always* continue the process of building your brand through every action you take as a business owner. Every tweet, every telephone call, every task you complete for a client is an opportunity to build your brand and your authority as that brand. Don't overlook them!

But also keep an eye on how things are going. Are you getting the response you hoped for? If not, it's time to review your efforts and see where things may have fallen down.

Take an honest look at your operations. Survey your customers. And keep networking. If people are responding positively to your brand, but not buying what you have to offer, then you may need to adjust how you put it out there.

In any case, review and adjustment is a constant process.

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If you'd ever like to chat about how your branding, don't hesitate to raise your hand via an email. I'm always happy to give you ten or 15 minutes on the house.