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Biggest Branding Flubs Part 2 (and the 20 Ways to Brand Better)

Flub 11: They have a really lousy business card.

I have collected many thousands of business cards throughout my 27 years in business. Few stood out. Imagine that – scarcely 1 in 10 impressed me! That says a lot about your brand. If your card is overloaded with words, I won't know what's most important. If the main purpose of a business card is to make it easy for me to remember you and contact you, why is your email address in 5 point type? Honestly, it is my personal belief that your card is not a brochure, a web site or a resume. Your card shows me the way to get this information, period. Hand me an easy to read card and I'll know you are easy to do business with. Less is more.

Here's how to avoid making this awful branding flub: Design a business card that tells me who you are, what you do and how to reach you. Here's the real squeeze – you've got three seconds so be bold and brief!

Flub 12: They underestimate the destructive power of email.

Emails communicate a great deal about you. Rush an email and blow your brand. The flubbers don't write 'Dear', allow misspelled words, poor grammar and unimpressive signatures. Elevate your brand by writing a professional letter. It will speak volumes to new prospects and loyal clients. Read it before you send it! And now I will create a controversy with half of you. Quit using yahoo, gmail, aol and especially hotmail. Real businesses have real business addresses.

Avoid this common branding flub by investing two ways: spend a few extra seconds to compose a work of art in every email. Spend around ten bucks a year and get a professional email address.

Flub 13: They think too little of themselves.

Prospects and clients know in a jiffy if you know or don't know what you're talking about. Either you exude confidence or not. There's no middle ground. Using words like *maybe, I'll try, I'm not sure, we'll see, I'm not sure, I don't understand it either* will knock the integrity right out of your sales and sails.

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Be confident and this branding flub cannot knock you out of a sale.

Flub 14: They keep attracting clients they don't like.

It's the law of attraction: what you believe will manifest. The brand flubbers do nothing but complain about bad customers and keep believing they will keep coming. And they do! Avoid this by thinking about all the good customers you do want.

Avoid this by making sure you think positive and your touch-points appeal to the customers you want most.

Flub 15: They stay invisible.

A smiling face makes a powerful brand statement. Many of us do business with clients and prospects who live far away. They may never meet us but always wonder what we look like. I say, show them a beautiful smile! Pictures do say a thousand words. In fact, our wonderful photo is more important than our fancy logo.

How to brand better: Avoid this branding flub by proudly including a photo to help complete the picture.

Flub 16: They don't get lift from strategic partnerships.

Align your business with another business. Ideally one with similar customers. Help each other out. their branding is not flubbed – that it tells a story just like yours.

Leverage your products & services. Cross promote. Grow together. Be certain

Flub 17: They hang their hat on the big brand names.

A super big flub is to make more of a supplier brand than your own. That totally minimizes your importance in the whole equation. Remember that prospects and clients have choices. Perhaps what you sell is available through thousands of others or online. Failure to elevate your brand as the most important part of the experience is a failure to establish credibility. A consumer may as well book direct (after using them as a library).

Avoid this branding flub by building your brand on top of the big guys. Positioning them over you will squash all hopes of establishing your brand. Leverage the big brands to boost yours.

Flub 18: They are not known for a gratitude attitude.

People love to be friends with grateful people. People love to do business with grateful people. Why on earth would you keep giving your business to a person who never says thank you or shows any sign of appreciation?

Have the gratitude attitude always and your brand will rise above the rest. You can't thank your prospects and clients enough.

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Flub 19: They never ask customers “what do you think of me?”

I think that if you're afraid to survey your customers, you're afraid to hear the answers. I think that if you're afraid to say how'd I do, you already know the answer.

To build your brand, ask the question. Listening and reacting to client feedback creates a strong brand. And it shows you care!

Flub 20: They don't think branding matters.

Have you heard the popular saying “attitude is everything”? I believe branding is the very attitude of our business. Therefore, branding is everything! How to brand better: Avoid this branding flub by making storytelling a matter of terrific importance!