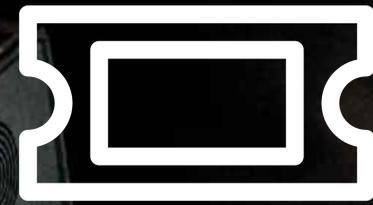


Ch. 1



NARRATIVE

*Say Goodbye to
Hollywood: A New
Kind of Storytelling*

Strategic Narrative

Say Goodbye to Hollywood: A New Kind of Storytelling

Mark Bonchek, Phd



Welcome to your Shift Expedition® on Strategic Narrative. I'm your guide, Mark Bonchek, the founder of Shift Thinking.

The purpose of this Expedition is to give you a new way of thinking about digital storytelling that creates more enduring and authentic engagement and differentiation. This Expedition is a followup to my recent webinar, "Say Goodbye to Hollywood." If you didn't catch the webinar live, you're welcome to go back and watch the recording [here](#).

What to Expect

At each destination of the Expedition we'll review a key element of the Shift Thinking approach to Strategic Narrative. You'll see examples of each element from companies you know. And you'll get a simple exercise to start applying the method to your own business.

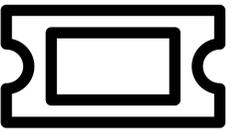
This worksheet will walk you through the journey. After each destination, you can fill in a few notes on your thoughts on the exercise to keep your journey moving forward.

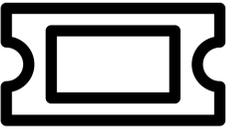
I think you will be amazed at how quickly you can start to see new opportunities open up when you change how you think before trying to change what you do.

Say Goodbye to Hollywood

Our starting point is the belief that in business, we need a new kind of storytelling. In the past, companies looked to Hollywood as a model for how to tell their story. The product or company is the hero, and the message is like a movie script that employers are reading from.

But digital technology has changed the way these stories are told, and who gets to tell them. Thanks to social media, what others say about your company matters more than what you say about yourself.





People want to know who you are, not just what you sell, and customers are not just consumers of your story, they are co-creators. You simply can't control the message the way you used to.

It's time for marketers to say goodbye to Hollywood -- today's brands need to focus less on persuading and entertaining, and more on engaging and co-creating.

For the sake of this discussion, let's make a distinction between story and narrative:

A story	A narrative
is something I tell you about me	is something we create together
has a pre-determined outcome	is open-ended
has a beginning, middle and end	connects the past, present and future
has an audience	has participants

Most corporate communications fall into the category of story rather than narrative. They explain why a person should buy something from the company and what they will get if they do. It is a story building up to a transaction.

But in today's digital economy, the narrative needs to be more about a relationship than a transaction. People need to know why they should have a relationship with you, what they will get from that relationship, and who they will be if they do. It is as much a story about identity as it is about utility.

The brands that understand this new kind of narrative are the brands that have been the most successful. In the coming days we'll learn from their example.

You might be wondering how this applies to B2B companies or your particular industry. I've used the same method with companies of all sizes and industries and even personal brands. I haven't found a situation yet where it doesn't apply. These days everything is H2H (human to human).

Story vs. Narrative



A STORY	A NARRATIVE
is something I tell you about me	is something we create together
has a pre-determined outcome	is open-ended
has a beginning, middle and end	connects the past, present and future
has an audience	has participants

Exercise: Assess Your Company Story



How clearly does it connect your past to your future?



How much does it focus on your product vs. your purpose?



How well does it engage people as consumers vs. as co-creators?



Up Next:

Next we will look at Shared Purpose, the first element of Strategic Narrative. Do you have a purpose TO, FOR or WITH?

Go Deeper:

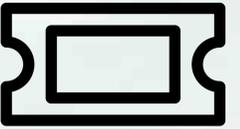
For more on the distinction between story and narrative, see my friend John Hagel's post on the topic [here](#).

Put into Practice:

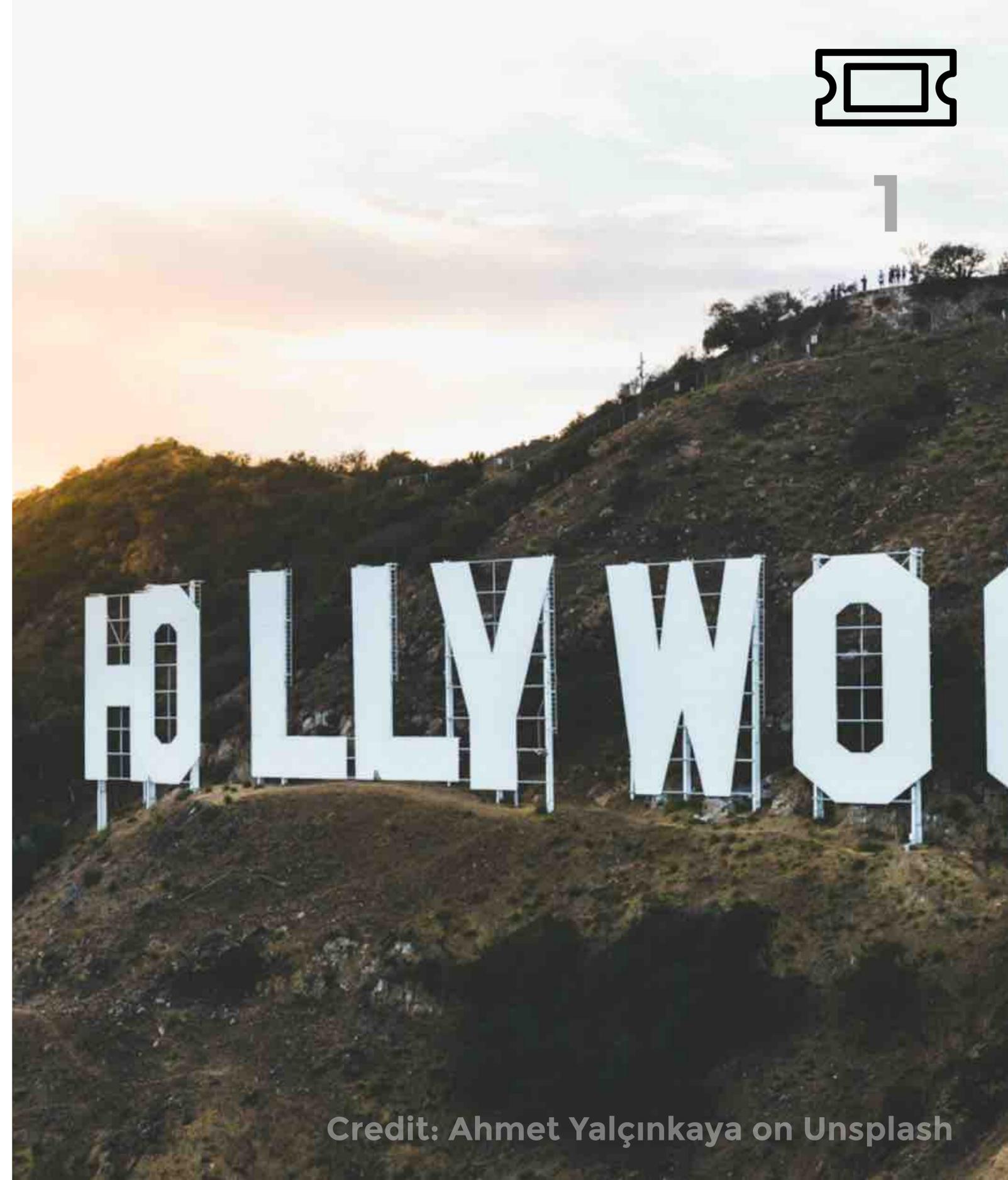
Think about your own company story. How well does it connect your past to your future? How much does it focus on your product vs. your purpose? Does it engage people as consumers or as co-creators?

Share With Others:

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1



Ch.2



SHARED PURPOSE

Creating a Shared Purpose, or Who Wears the Shirt?

Shared Purpose

Creating a Shared Purpose, or Who Wears the Shirt?

Mark Bonchek, Phd

Welcome to the second destination of your Shift Expedition on Strategic Narrative.

Previously we talked about why the Hollywood model of storytelling doesn't apply well to business in a digital age, and why we need a new kind of narrative that engages audiences as co-creators.

The foundation of this new kind of narrative is **shared purpose**.

Purpose has become a popular concept recently. But I've found that there are different kinds of purpose. Most narratives only address the first kind. A few address the second. The most powerful address all three.

A Purpose TO is what you deliver to your stakeholders. It is the value you create by selling and delivering your product or service. Most marketing and communications is focused on this level of purpose and why a person should transact with the company as a customer, employee, partner or investor.

A Purpose FOR is what you contribute to the wider community. It is not just what you sell, but why you sell it. It is your values as much as your value. This includes corporate social responsibility but extends into the broader brand position in the marketplace.

A Purpose WITH is what you create with others. It is a shared goal to which everyone contributes. It is not just what you sell TO or do FOR others, but what everyone can do. Where a purpose TO is about transaction and a purpose FOR is about contribution, a purpose WITH is about co-creation.



2

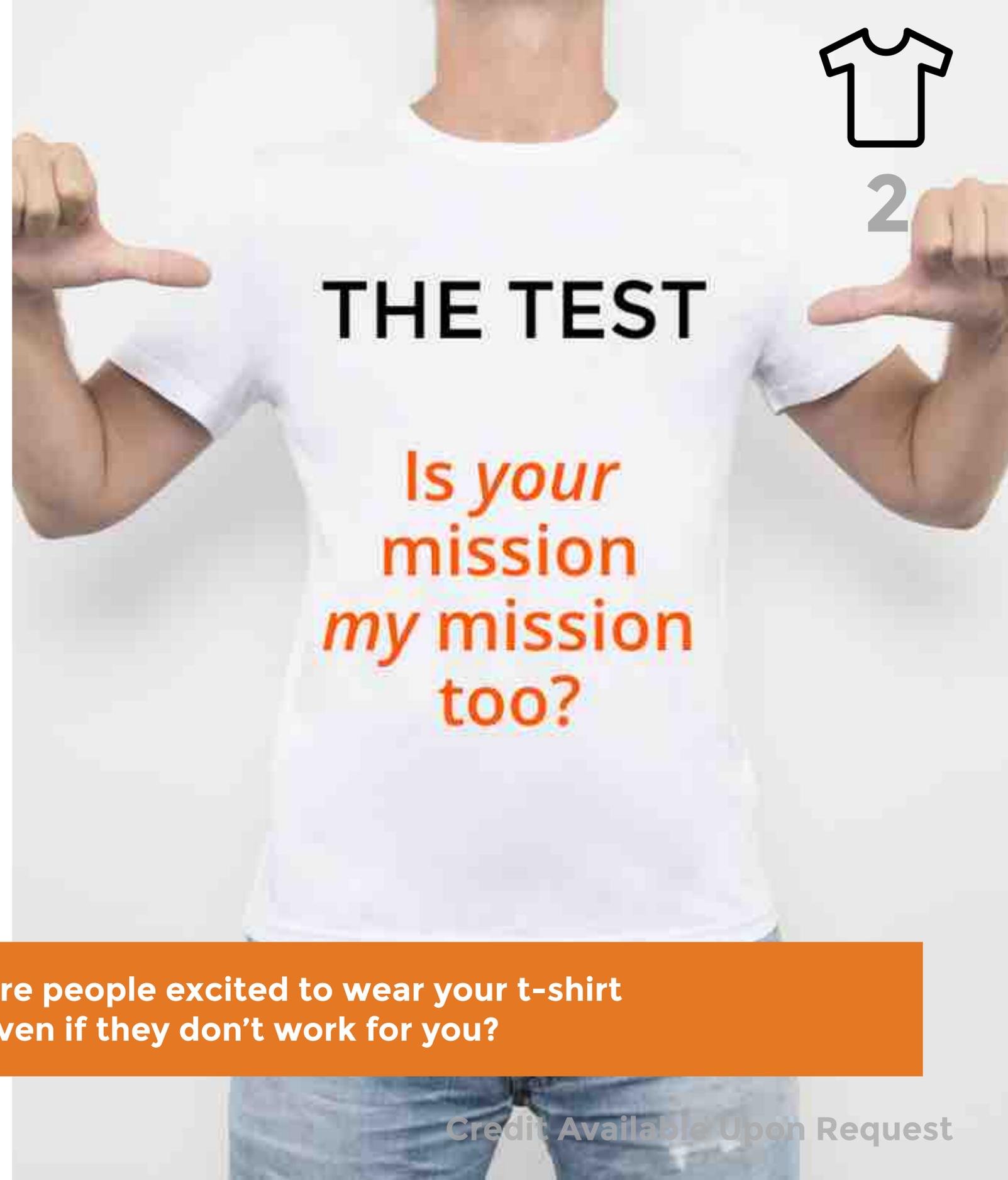
The T-Shirt Test

What's on your t-shirt?

A good test of a purpose TO and a purpose FOR is whether something would make sense to put on a t-shirt.

- Dunkin Donuts has a mission to "serve fresh, delicious coffee" (**a purpose TO**). Starbucks has a mission to "inspire the human spirit" (**a purpose FOR**).
- Stop&Shop has a mission to "offer safe, wholesome, quality guaranteed products in clean, modern and attractive stores" (**a purpose TO**). Whole Foods has a motto of "Whole Foods, Whole People, Whole Planet" (**a purpose FOR**).

The purpose FOR makes for a much better T-shirt than a purpose TO. But the third kind of purpose, the purpose WITH, generates the most powerful narrative.



Are people excited to wear your t-shirt even if they don't work for you?



SHIFThinking

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Credit Available Upon Request

Who wears the shirt?

The test of a purpose WITH is who gets to wear the t-shirt. If only your employees wear the shirt, then it is a purpose FOR. If your customers are co-creators in the mission, i.e. if they also get to wear the shirt, then you have a truly shared purpose WITH.

The makeup retailer Sephora is a good example of how a company can evolve its purpose.

- In the beginning, Sephora had a mission to be "The Beauty Authority" **(a purpose TO)**.
- Then it changed its mission to lead a movement for "Transforming Beauty" **(a purpose FOR)**.
- Most recently, it has evolved its mission to "Beauty Together" **(a purpose WITH)**.



Shared Purpose

Example of "The Beauty Authority:" Purpose TO

"Classes for Confidence" held by Sephora— a Beauty Together: Purpose WITH



Credit: PR Newswire

 **SHIFT**thinking

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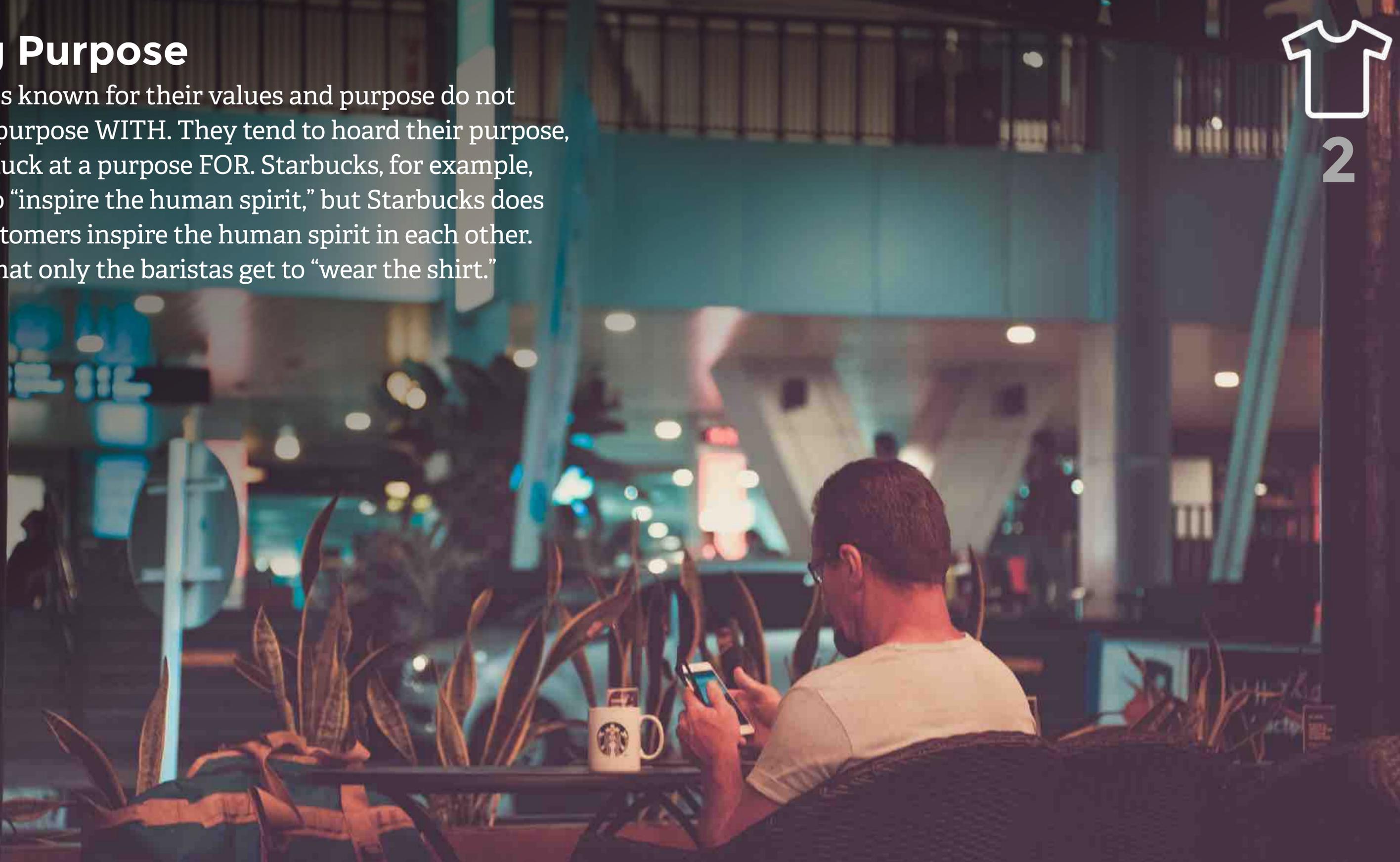
Credit: Sephora Stands

Hoarding Purpose

Many companies known for their values and purpose do not actually have a purpose WITH. They tend to hoard their purpose, keeping them stuck at a purpose FOR. Starbucks, for example, has a purpose to “inspire the human spirit,” but Starbucks does little to help customers inspire the human spirit in each other. You might say that only the baristas get to “wear the shirt.”



2



By contrast, Airbnb has a mission for people to “Belong Anywhere” and they actively work on helping their hosts create a sense of belonging for their guests. They even are developing a metric for how much “belonging” their hosts create for their guests.



2

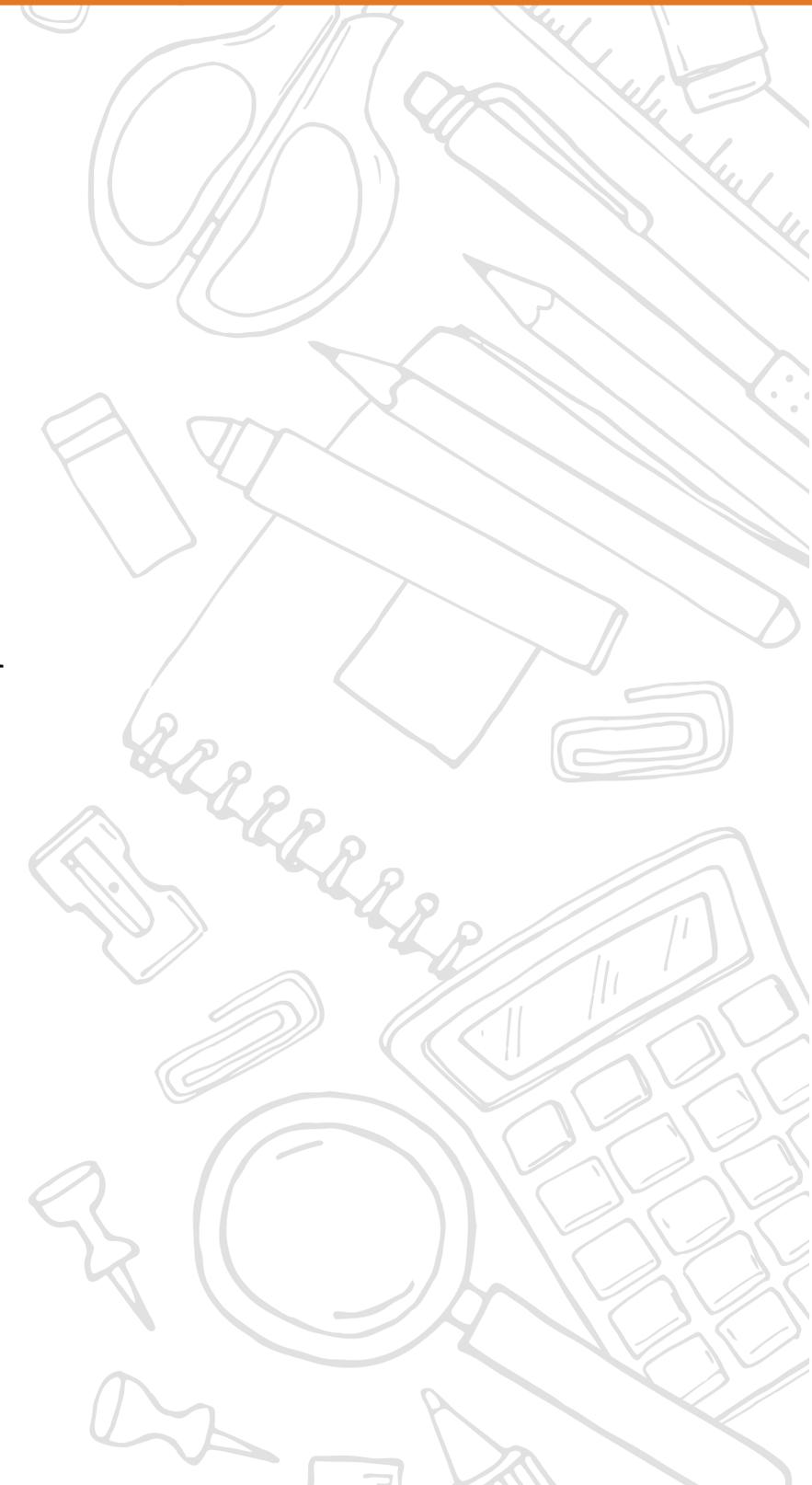
Exercise: Analyze Your Mission Statement



To identify your shared purpose, start by analyzing your mission statement. Is it something that might belong on a t-shirt? Would someone hearing it be glad that you are at work on that problem?

One cautionary note: Don't make it something too philanthropic. You want to tie it back to your business. It's often a simple elevation. For one hospital system I worked with, it was a shift from **“delivering care”** to **“being healthy”**.

Once you have something that belongs on a t-shirt, think about who gets to wear it. Don't keep it only for your employees. Include your customers, partners and wider community. For the hospital system, the shift from healthcare to health revealed a whole ecosystem contributing to their patients health.



Shared Purpose/T-Shirt Test



“WITH OUR CUSTOMERS, WE ARE
CREATING MORE _____
IN THE WORLD.”

noun

“WITH OUR CUSTOMERS, WE
_____ WHICH MAKES
THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE.”

verb



Up Next:

Shared Purpose can be a bit tricky to figure out. The next destination's topic might help. We will look at **Purpose Metrics** as a way to measure your progress against this shared purpose. The exercise often sparks people's thinking in productive ways.

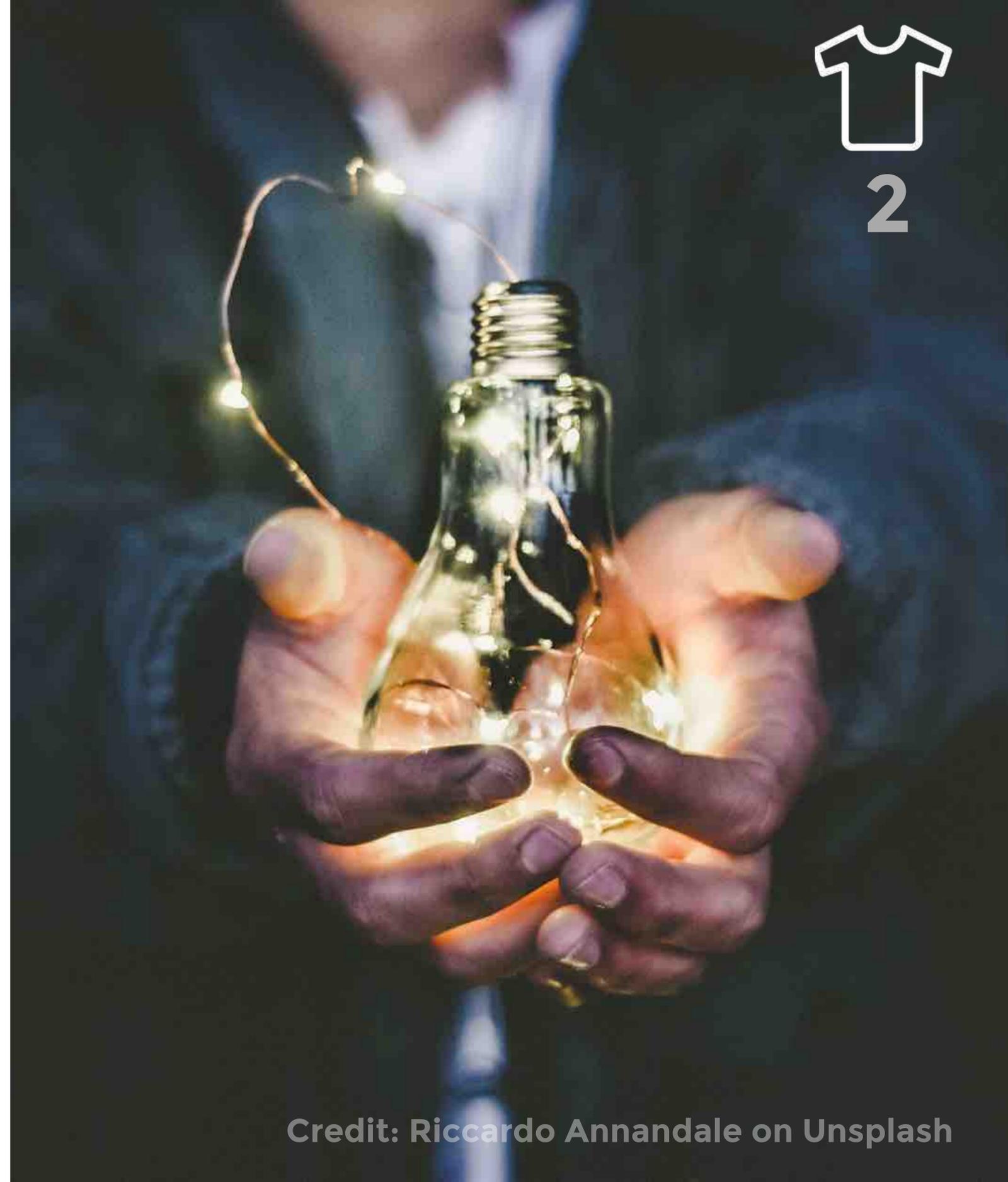
Go Deeper:

If you want to learn more about shared purpose, [read my article from Harvard Business Review](#).

Share With Others:

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Ch.3



PURPOSE METRICS

Ringling the Bell

Purpose Metrics

Ring the Bell

Mark Bonchek, Phd

At the previous destination we explored the first element in narrative design and the three kinds of purpose. Hopefully you've had a chance to think a little about your own purpose and how to elevate it from a TO to a FOR to a WITH.

Now we will go deeper on the idea of purpose by looking at **purpose metrics**.

We are all familiar with what you might call *profit* metrics: the measures that tell you whether you are on track to increase growth and efficiency. These include basic things like cost, revenue and margin. But how do you know if you are on track to fulfill your purpose?

Some companies have measures of social impact such as environmental footprint or charitable activities. These are important and valuable. But they measure your purpose FOR, not your purpose WITH.

So how do you measure a purpose WITH?

Measuring Shared Purpose

Did you ever see the movie "It's a Wonderful Life" with Jimmy Stewart? There is a famous line in the movie that says "every time a bell rings, an angel gets its wings."

We can apply this idea as a metric for your purpose. Imagine that you have three bells in your office.

- The first bell measures your Purpose **TO** — it rings when you sell and deliver your product.
- The second bell measures your Purpose **FOR** — it rings when someone in your company expresses purpose in their work.
- The third bell measures your Purpose **WITH** — it rings when *anyone* manifests your purpose to the world.

The reason this third bell is so important is that customers today want to be a part of something bigger. They also want to know the WHY in addition to the WHAT. They want to know if your purpose is



3

something you do in order to make money, or whether you make money in order to fulfill your purpose.

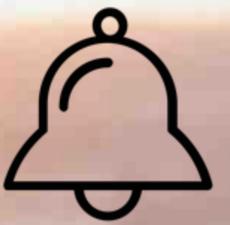
Example: Nike

Consider Nike, whose mission is to inspire the athlete in all of us.

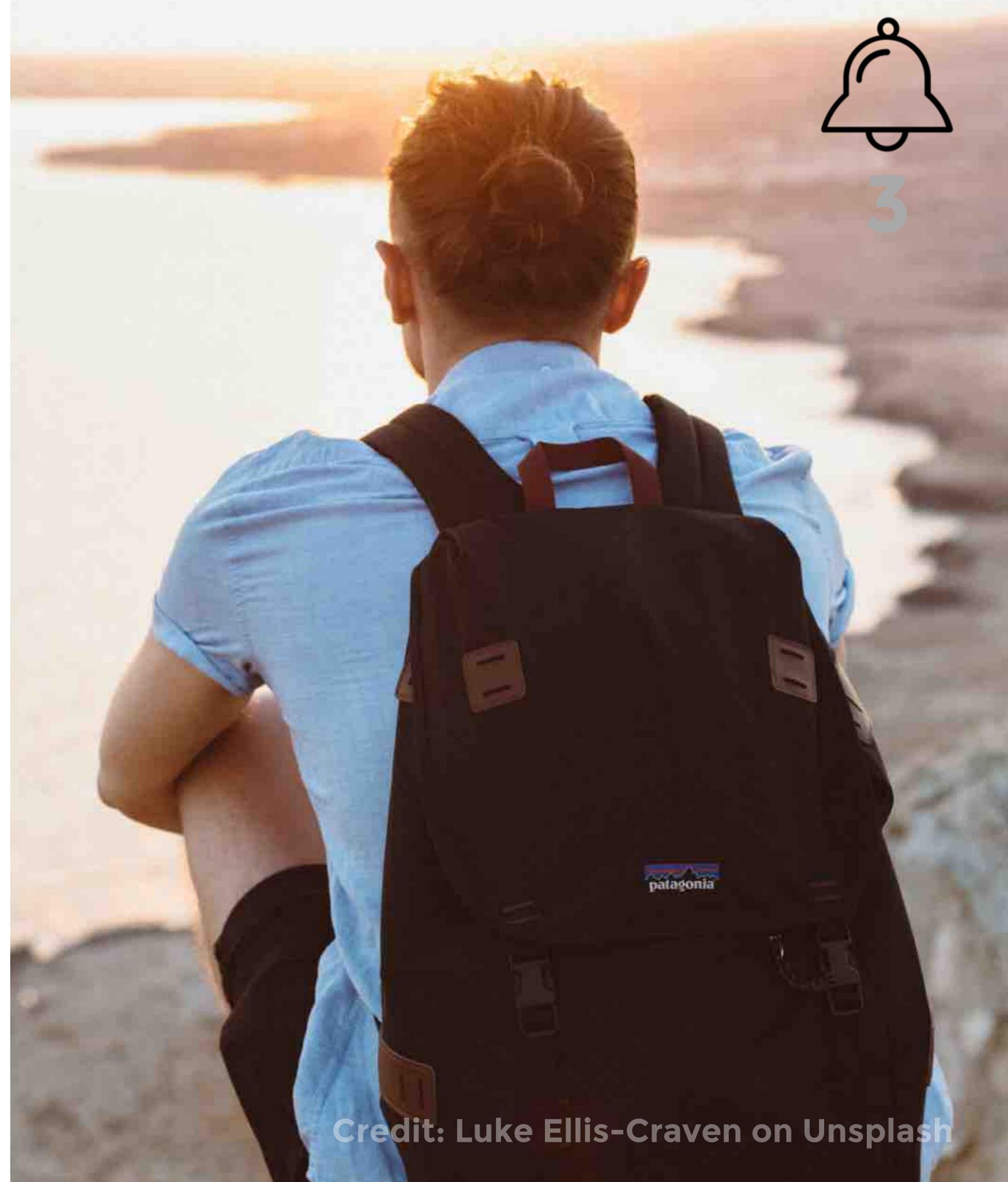
- The **TO** bell rings when they sell a pair of shoes.
- The **FOR** bell rings when Nike inspires someone to be more athletic.
- The **WITH** bell rings when *anyone* inspires *anyone else* to be more athletic.

Example: Patagonia

A company that orients itself strongly around this “third bell” is Patagonia. Their mission is to “build the best product {TO}, cause no unnecessary harm {FOR}, and use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis {WITH}.” Anytime someone does something good for the environment, you can imagine the bell ringing in Patagonia’s headquarters.



3



Credit: Luke Ellis-Craven on Unsplash

So let's assume that you have your purpose bell installed in your office. The next step is to figure out what exactly rings the bell. In other words, what's your purpose metric? How will Nike know that they, or anyone else, have inspired someone's inner athlete?

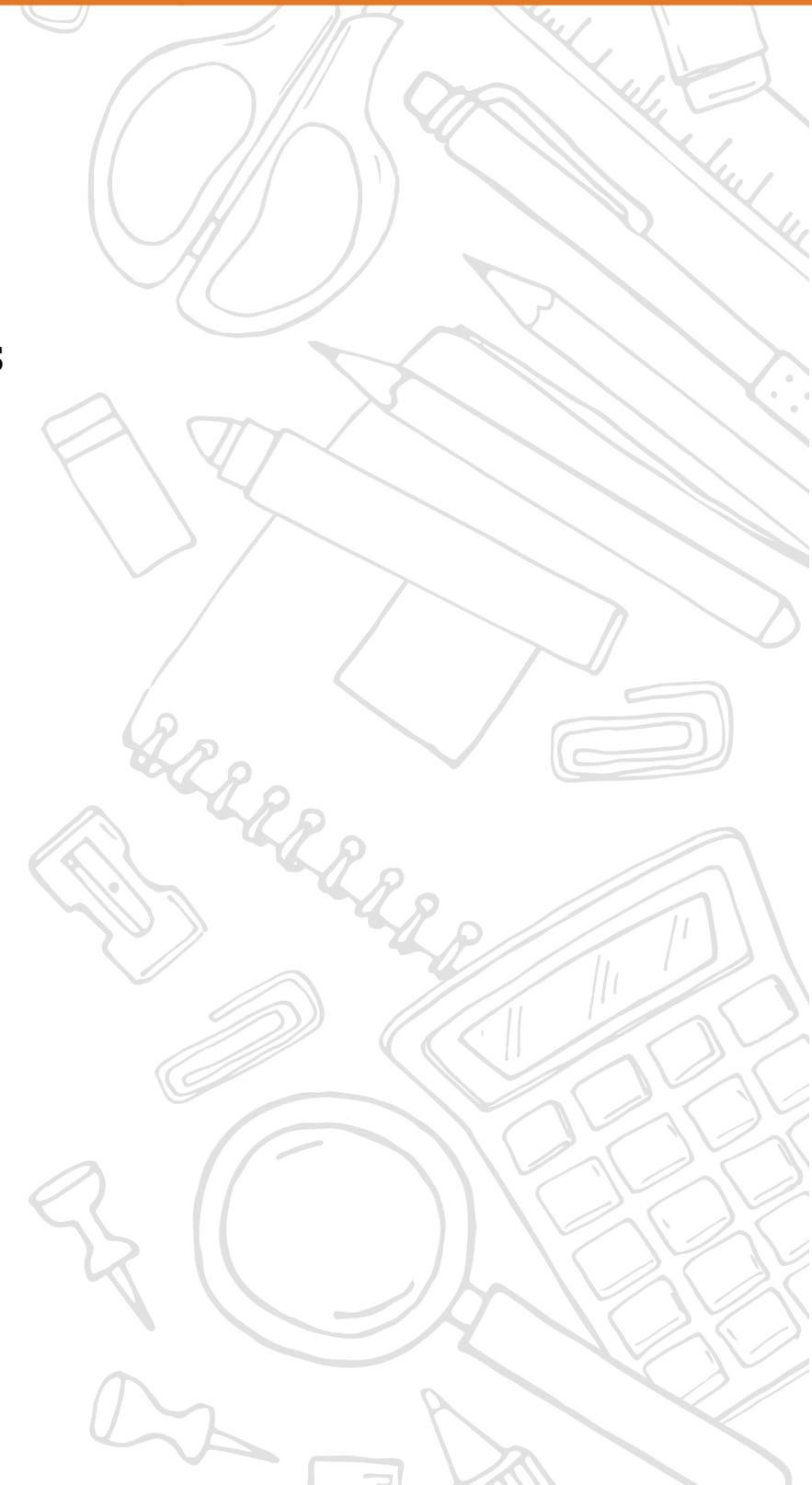
One thing Nike did in their Nike+ running app is create a feature called "Cheers." When someone goes for a run, it can post automatically to Facebook. If someone replies to that post, the app sends applause through the person's headphones while they are running. In effect, they are helping friends inspire friends. And they can measure it by how many times they send "cheers" to an app user. Through the Cheers feature, the third bell becomes something measurable and tangible.



Exercise: Design the Three Bells



To create your purpose metric, think about the change you want to see in the world. Something connected to your business, but not necessarily a direct result of using your product. Now imagine the bell ringing every time someone has that outcome, whether or not you were involved in making it happen. If you are a healthcare company, it might be every time someone gets healthy. If you are a beauty company, it might be every time someone looks in the mirror and likes what they see.





EVERY TIME _____, *this happens*
WE KNOW THE SHARED PURPOSE
IS BEING FULFILLED—AND THE
BELL RINGS.

Up Next:

At the next destination we will turn our attention to your Brand DNA. What is it that makes your company unique? What is it that you have always been and always will be? The more you figure out what stays the same, the better you will be able to adapt as things change around you.

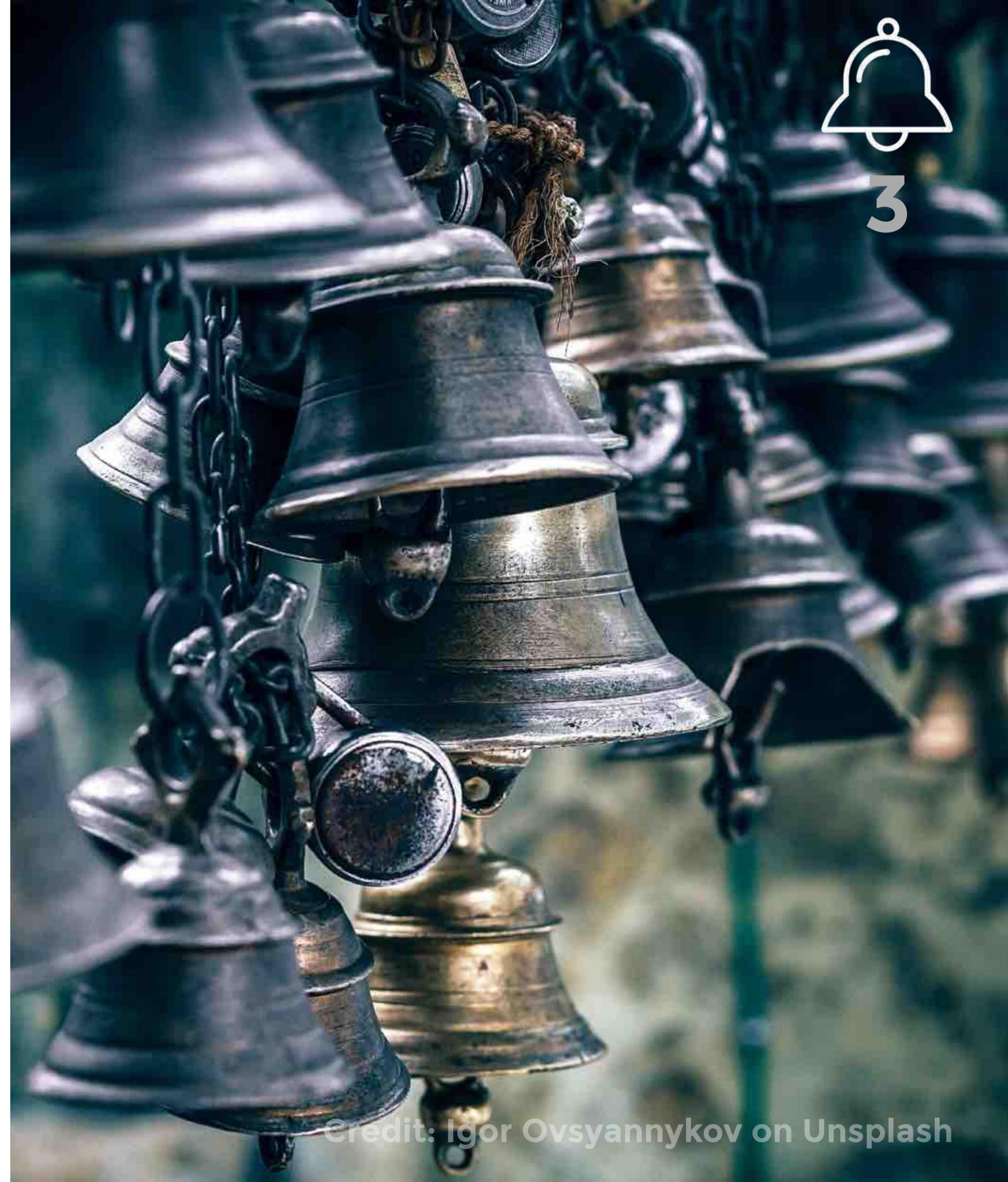
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3



Ch.4



COMPANY DNA

Finding Your Thread

Company DNA

Finding Your Thread

Mark Bonchek, Phd

Imagine you are interviewing for a new position and the applicant says, “Don’t worry about what I did before. Let’s just talk about what I can do for you now.” You would be a little suspicious.

It turns out that humans use the same part of our brains to evaluate brands as we do people. So as a company, you have to act like a person. It’s hard to trust someone if you don’t think they want what’s best for you. It’s the reason shared purpose is so important.

It’s also hard to trust someone if you don’t understand where they came from and what they will do next. This is why a good narrative has a through line that connects the past with the future.

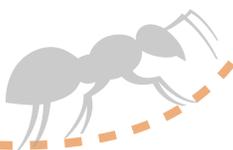
Company DNA

The element of Strategic Narrative that defines this thread is Company or Brand DNA. It is the source of your authenticity as it comes from who you are rather than what you say. Since no one else has your DNA, it is a sustainable source of differentiation.

Like human DNA, your company DNA was formed at conception and does not change over its lifetime. But it's not completely fixed. Like human DNA, it can be expressed in different ways.

As an example, consider the story of Satoshi Tajiri, a boy growing up outside Tokyo. He loved collecting insects so much the other children called him “Dr. Bug.” But as urban expansion replaced the fields and forests, Satoshi’s insects disappeared.

Satoshi grew up and developed an interest in games. He saw a way to recreate his childhood experience of collecting magical, elusive creatures. He did this with trading cards and video games. Eventually his vision came to smartphones in the game Pokemon Go.





Pokemon Go became the most popular mobile game in history. In 2016, millions of people gathered in public spaces trying to “catch” Pokemon characters with their phones. The Pokemon DNA of “collecting creatures” had come to life in the outdoor environments where it was first conceived.



THINK

COMPLIMENTS OF IBM CORPORATION

Credit: IBM

Meanwhile, a comparison of IBM and HP reveals what happens when a company abandons its DNA and how Brand DNA applies to B2B companies.

Tom Watson was the founder of IBM. On his desk was a sign that said THINK. It reflected his belief that IBM should make machines that helped people think, and should use thinking to build better machines. This DNA of “thinking machines” has expressed itself in many ways over the years, from

the ThinkPad laptop to the Smarter Planet initiative to today’s artificial intelligence engine of Watson.

In contrast, the founder of HP, Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard, founded the company in a one-car garage in Palo Alto in 1939. As they grew, the founders sought to maintain the spirit of entrepreneurship on a larger scale. This became the “HP Way,” one of the first examples of empowering employees, decentralizing the organization, and tying pay to performance. But in the 1990s, HP repudiated the HP Way, even as the rest of Silicon Valley embraced these same principles. Today, HP has been split into three separate companies without a clear identity or purpose.

We can see this same through line in other companies. Kaiser Permanente was founded in the Great Depression to serve thousands of workers building the Colorado River Aqueduct Project. The managers wanted to keep workers healthy, not just treat them when they got sick. Today Kaiser is the market leader in accountable care because their DNA is about good health through prevention rather than treatment of disease.

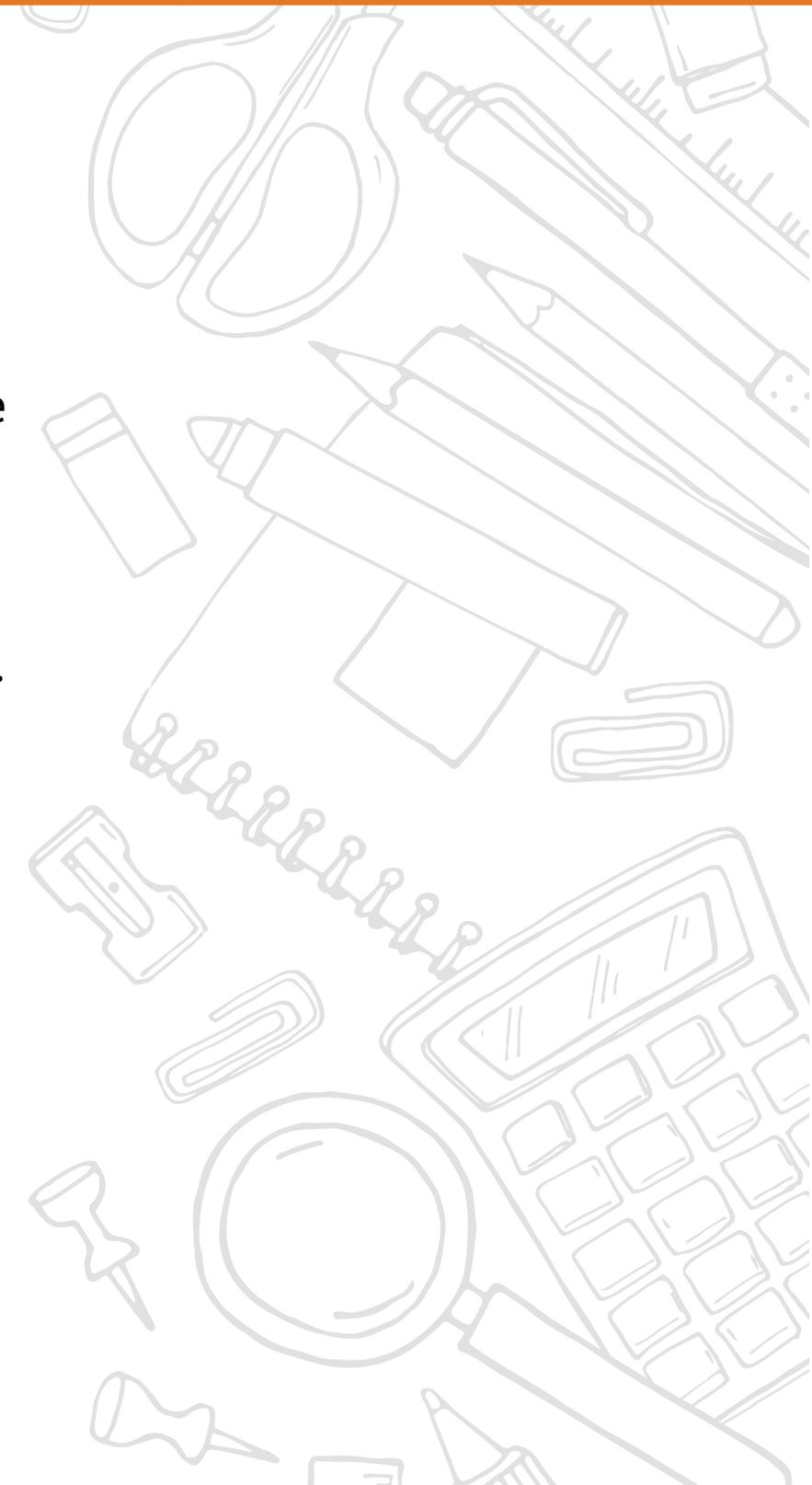
Exercise: Finding Your Company DNA



To find your company or brand DNA, start in the archive. Go back to your company history and look at what problems your founders were initially out to solve. Don't get hung up on the product or business model they used. Look at the fundamental need, activity or desire they were addressing.

Second, look into your company culture. What are the stories that people tell each other about the origins of the company? Pay particular attention to what you tell new employees. For example, at Staples every employee hears about how founder Tom Stemberg ran out of a typewriter ribbon on a July 4 holiday weekend, couldn't find an open stationery store, and came up with the idea for the company. This story reveals a key element of Staples DNA: keeping people in the flow of work.

Third, look at the most successful products and businesses you've had across the history of the company. What's the common thread that connects them together? What problem were they solving? What capability or expertise did they employ? What objective were they trying to achieve?



THE COMMON THREAD TO
EVERYTHING WE HAVE DONE IS

THIS IS WHO WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN,
AND WHAT WE INSPIRE IN OTHERS.

Up Next:

At next destination we'll connect your company DNA to your shared purpose as we explore the next narrative element: Path to Purpose. This combines the vision of your purpose with the authenticity of your DNA to create a unique source of differentiation.

Share With Others:

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Ch.5



PATH TO PURPOSE

Climbing the Mountain

Path to Purpose

Climbing the Mountain

Mark Bonchek, Phd

You probably spend a lot of time thinking about customers' path to *purchase*. At this destination we are going to look instead at their path to *purpose*.

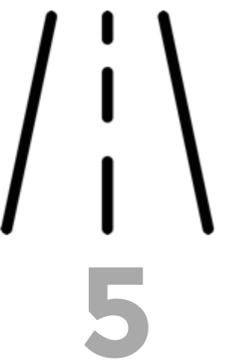
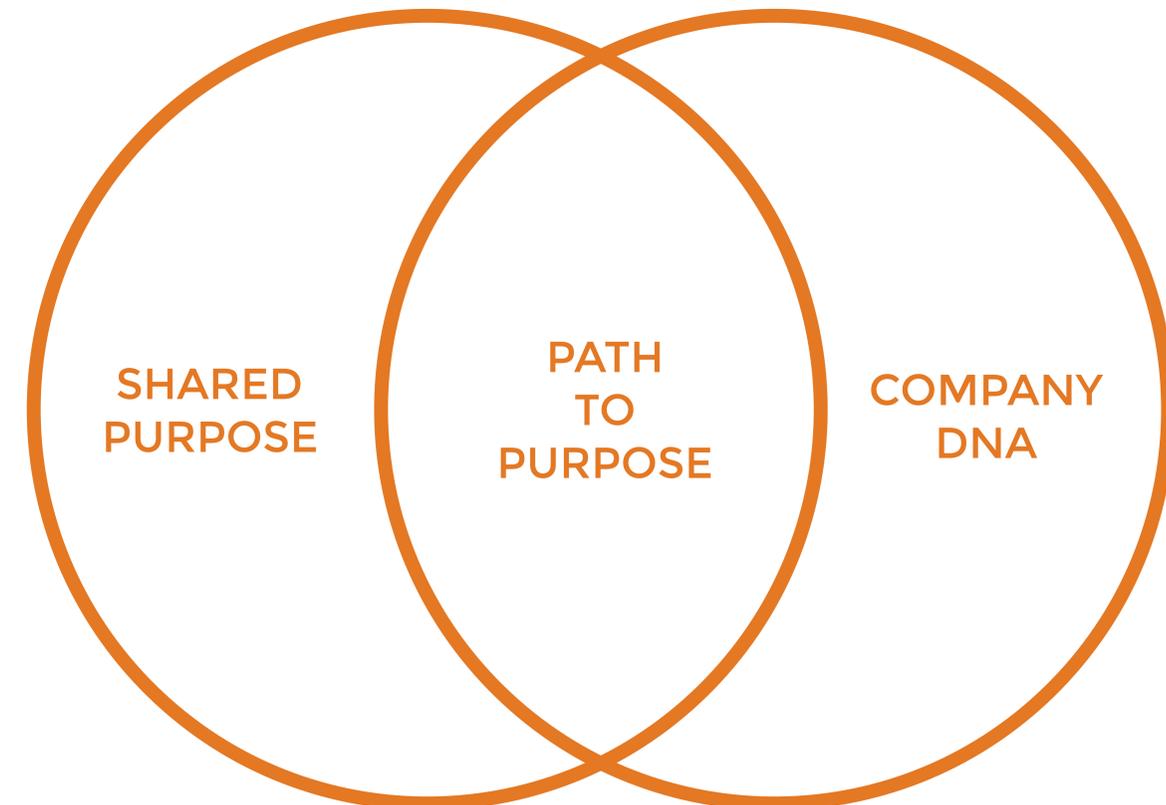
First let's do a quick recap on our progress for this Shift Expedition on Strategic Narrative. We've looked at the need for a new kind of storytelling that engages audiences as co-creators. Hopefully you've started to identify a shared purpose that passes the t-shirt test. You've found a metric for your purpose that rings the bell. And you've located the unique DNA for your company or brand that connects the past with the future.

A common concern about shared purpose is that it isn't distinctive enough. But that's the point. You want your shared purpose to tap into a universal need or aspiration. Everyone should want to wear the shirt—it creates the gravitational pull around your brand.

DNA is at the opposite end of the spectrum. It's uniquely yours. No one else can have your DNA. Purpose and DNA come together in your **Path to Purpose**.

Think about it like climbing a mountain. Your shared purpose is the mountain. Everyone on the mountain is pursuing the same purpose. But there are different ways up the mountain.

Your path to purpose is the part of the narrative that tells people HOW you are going to achieve the shared purpose.



One Purpose, Two Paths: Starbucks vs. Oprah

Starbucks' mission is to "inspire the human spirit." But Starbucks isn't the only one working on this purpose. Oprah Winfrey's purpose WITH is for everyone to feel they have value and purpose.

Same mountain, different paths. For Oprah, her path goes back to a childhood desire to be a teacher. For Starbucks, the path began when founder Howard Schulz visited Europe in 1983 and realized everywhere he went, people came together over a beverage for coffee and community.

"We are the third place in the lives of millions of our customers. We are the coffee that brings people together every day around the world to foster conversation and community."

—Howard Schultz

Exercise: Finding Your Path to Purpose



Fundamentally, a path to purpose is a point of view about how the shared purpose can be achieved.

STEP 1 - TRY COMPLETING THE FOLLOWING SENTENCE:

“There are many ways to poster [Shared Purpose]. Our way is to [Path to Purpose]”.

Starbucks' mission statement says: "To inspire the human spirit -- one cup, one person, one neighborhood at a time." Their path to inspiring the human spirit is through coffee, community and connection.

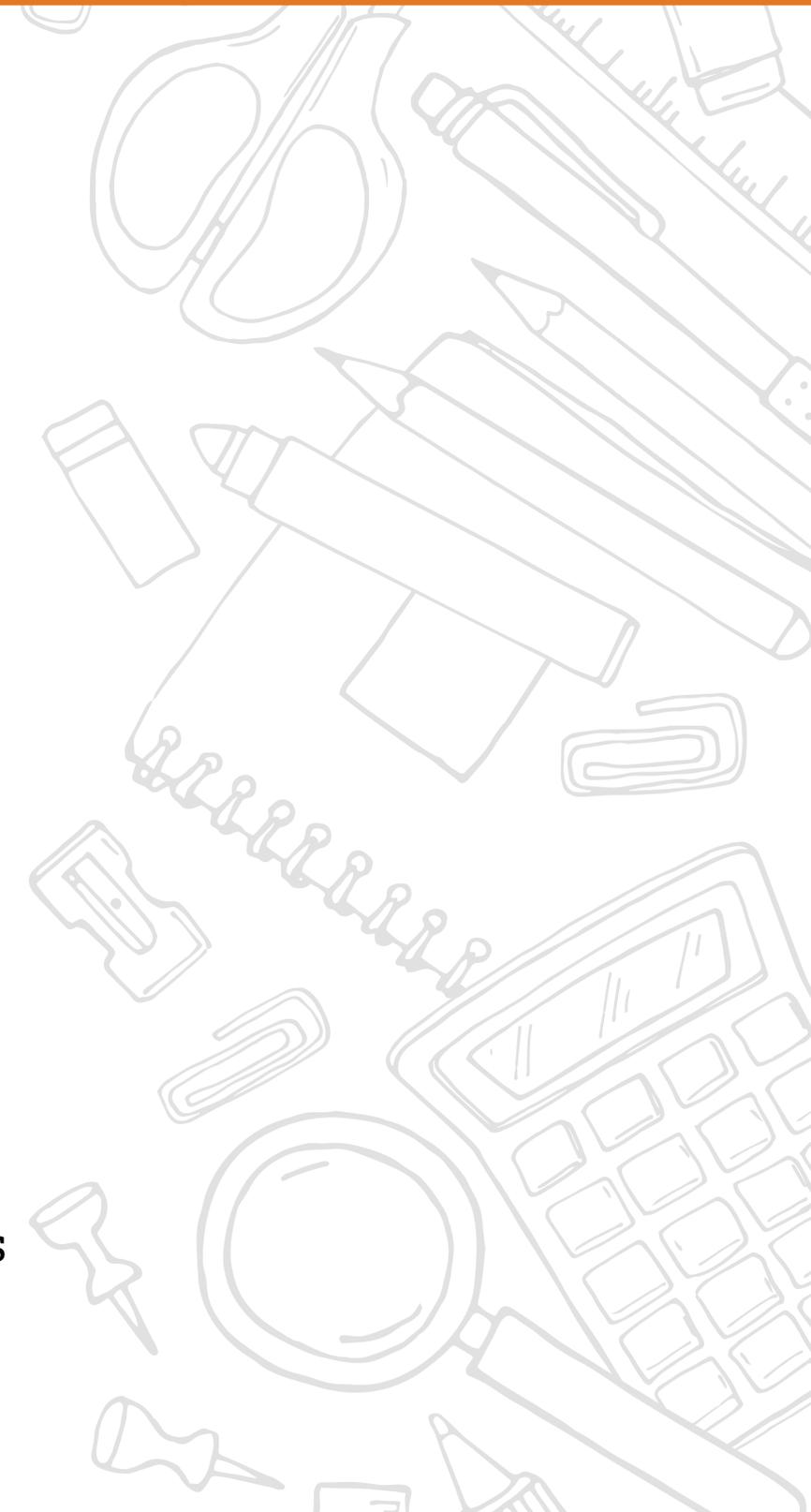
For Oprah, it's a similar purpose but a different path. Oprah has said her path to purpose is "to inspire my students to be more than they thought they could be."

STEP 2 - TEST THE PATH TO PURPOSE AGAINST YOUR DNA:

It's important that the path is authentic and natural to who you are. For Starbucks, the idea of a third place was Howard Schultz's original inspiration. For Oprah, she always wanted to be a teacher, even when she was a little girl.

STEP 3 - MAKE SURE THE PATH TO PURPOSE DOESN'T COLLAPSE INTO A PATH TO PURCHASE:

In his book *Onward*, Schulz talks about how Starbucks lost its way when it started thinking it was in the coffee business instead of the third place business.



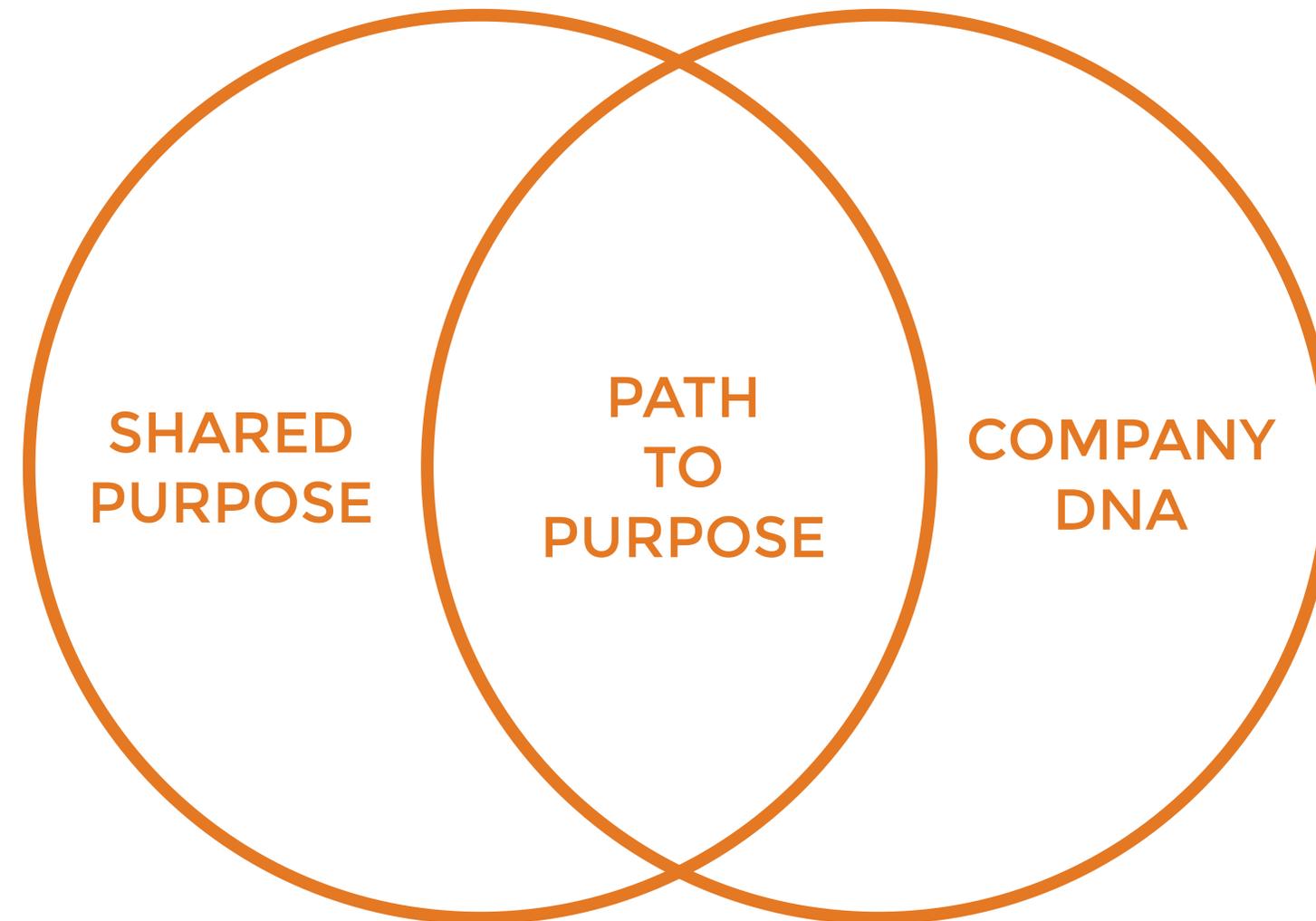


THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO

shared purpose

OUR WAY IS TO

Path to Purpose



Path to Purpose lies at the intersection of your shared purpose and your DNA. The shared purpose is what makes it universally accessible and valuable, whether creating beauty, improving health, or making people smile. The DNA is what makes it uniquely yours.



“WE BELIEVE THERE SHOULD BE MORE CONVERSATION AND COMMUNITY IN THE WORLD, WHICH CAN BE ACHIEVED BY PROVIDING A THIRD PLACE BETWEEN WORK AND HOME.”



Up Next:

During the next destination we'll go further on how to connect Path to Purpose to your products and services. You'll also discover what you bring to the potluck.

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5

Ch.6



CONTRIBUTION

the Potluck

Contribution

Contribution and the Potluck

Mark Bonchek, Phd

When your narrative starts with your product, everything is about what you can do for others. It's like a full-service restaurant. Just show up, enjoy the meal, and pay the bill.

But when your narrative starts with your purpose, things need to be more reciprocal and multi-dimensional. Everyone has something to contribute. It's more like a potluck in which everyone brings a different dish.

A potluck doesn't work if everyone brings the same dish. Or if some people don't bring anything at all.

A key part of the narrative is therefore describing what everyone contributes to the shared purpose, like a potluck for purpose.



6



Nike

Everyone knows the Nike slogan of “Just Do It.” What makes this slogan so powerful is that in three words it captures three different elements: shared purpose, path to purpose, and potluck.

Nike’s shared purpose is inspiring the athlete in all of us.

The path to purpose is the idea that “if you have a body, you are an athlete.”

The potluck is the idea that:

- Nike can provide the shoes, apparel and equipment.
- Nike’s athletes can provide the inspiration.
- Your friends can provide the support.
- But you you have to get off the couch, lace up your shoes, and “just do it.”

Everyone contributes something.



SHIFT

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Credit: Mārtiņš Zemlickis on Unsplash

Starbucks

Starbucks' potluck follows directly from the concept of third place. In effect, Starbucks is saying:

"We'll provide the coffee, comfortable couches, and wi-fi.
"You provide the conversation, connection and community."

The potluck explains why Starbucks "Race Together" initiative was a failure. As a quick recap, Starbucks wanted to promote a dialogue about race relations. The aspiration is consistent with its shared purpose to "inspire the human spirit." The problem is that the program encouraged people to talk to their barista about the subject. This was inconsistent with the potluck around the purpose. It's not the barista's job to provide the conversation. Starbucks once again hoarded its purpose.

What Starbucks might have done instead is stayed true to its path to purpose of being a Third Place, and invited others to "wear the T-shirt" of its shared purpose. It could have closed an hour earlier on the first Monday of the month,

partnered with organizations expert in holding conversations about race, and served free coffee to anyone who joined the conversation. That way Starbucks would have still made its contribution of coffee and Third Place and left the conversation and community to others.



6



Exercise: What's Your Potluck?



For this exercise, think about your shared purpose as a potluck dinner party. What does everyone need to bring for the party and meal to be complete?

If you are a hospital system, then the shared purpose might be related to health. Diagnosing and treating illness is only one element of what it takes for someone to be healthy. Identifying the other stakeholders and what they each bring to the party helps you see the entire system of what it takes to fulfill your purpose.

If you haven't yet, [download this worksheet](#) to help you keep notes on your narrative as you move through this Shift Expedition.



STAKEHOLDERS IN OUR COMPANY
FULFILL ON OUR SHARED
PURPOSE OF _____
shared purpose
IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

WE	BRING _____	TO THE POTLUCK
	<i>specific value</i>	
CUSTOMERS	BRING _____	TO THE POTLUCK
	<i>specific value</i>	
PARTNERS	BRING _____	TO THE POTLUCK
	<i>specific value</i>	



Up Next:

At the next step of our Expedition we will continue on this theme and look at social facets and the role of your brand in the potluck. We want to define the relationship you have with your customer beyond seller and buyer.

Share With Others:

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Ch.7



BRAND ROLES

And Improv

Brand Roles

Brand Roles and Improv

Mark Bonchek, Phd

Have you ever seen an improv comedy show? If so, you know that every sketch starts with two things: a setting and roles.

If you don't know the roles, you can't do the sketch. You might know the setting is a car, but the role might be a salesperson and buyer, or mechanic and owner, or driver and passenger. Even if you know it's a driver and passenger, is it a friend driving a friend to the airport? A parent teaching their teenager to drive? Or an Uber driver picking up a customer?

Our roles determine our relationships.

Most companies have narratives that operate inside only a few role relationships. The most common are Seller / Buyer, Employer / Employee, and Distributor / Reseller. They all have one thing in common: they are all commercial relationships based on a transaction.

As you recall from our first day of the Expedition, the narrative needs to explain why someone should have a relationship with you beyond the benefits of buying your product. This means that you need to define a brand role that is something other than being a seller.

Nike | Coach: Athlete

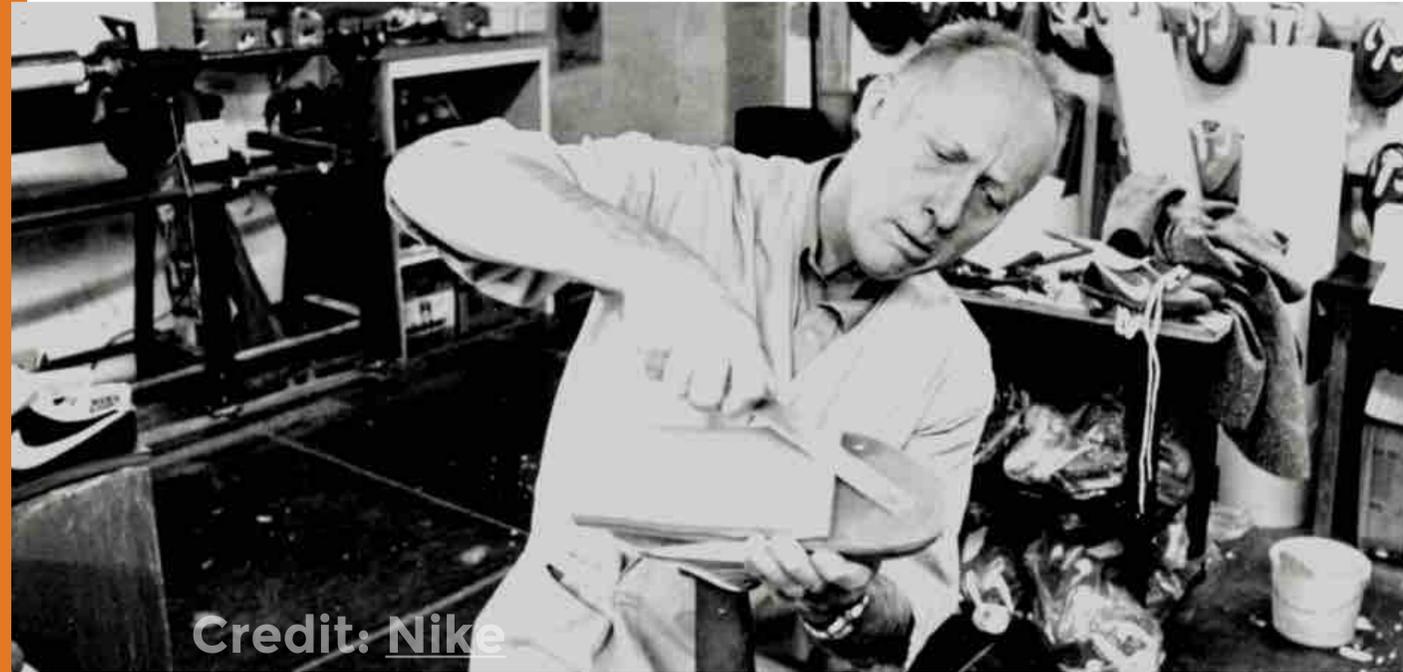
Since you are now familiar with the Nike narrative, let's take a look at their brand roles. The default role would be manufacturer and customer. Nike makes shoes, apparel and equipment and their customers buy, wear and use them. But Nike's DNA includes the influence of Bill Bowerman, the former coach of the Oregon track team and the inventor of the original waffle sole. Bill was one part coach and one part inventor, always tinkering with the best gear to help his athletes go faster.

These brand roles continue to this day. Nike is like a coach and outfitter, looking to inspire better performance and provide the best equipment to make it possible. Meanwhile, Nike's customers are athletes, as reflected in Bill Bowerman's mantra that



7

“If you have a body you are an athlete.” So the brand roles go beyond the commercial relationship of Shoemaker / Customer to the roles of Coach / Athlete, which better align to its shared purpose.



Credit: Nike

Sephora | Teacher:Student or Artist:Artist

Sephora’s approach to customer service and segmentation can be seen through the lens of brand roles as well. The shared purpose for Sephora is reflected in its current tagline of “Beauty Together.”

Sephora’s salespeople are known as advisors. So you might think the role relationship is Advisor / Customer. But that would still be a commercial relationship and not well aligned to Beauty Together.

Instead, Sephora has found that there are two kinds of role that play out in the relationships between advisors and customers. One is a Teacher / Student relationship in which the customer is looking to the advisor for expertise and instruction.

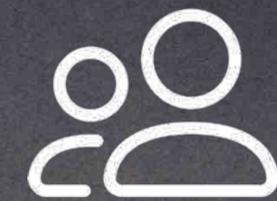
But there is another kind of relationship as well. In this one, the customer sees themselves as having some degree of expertise already. They want to collaborate and share ideas with the advisor as a peer. The relationship is therefore more symmetrical, what might call Artist / Artist.

Interestingly and importantly, Sephora advisors are trained to look for signals that determine which role to use in the relationship or interaction with a customer. Do they want to be a student and learn from the advisor’s expertise? Or do they want to be appreciated and related to as a peer?

SAP Analytics | Q:Bond

One of my favorite examples of a brand role in a corporate narrative is by SAP Analytics. They identified their shared purpose to be “Better Business Decisions.” The path to purpose was turning data into insight. The brand role emerged from a brainstorming session after we identified that SAP was fundamentally a toolmaker, and in particular tools for mission-critical assignments. One of the team members said, “Like Q for James Bond.”

Now when someone from SAP walks into a meeting, the person on the other side of the desk isn't just a customer, but an agent in need of the innovative tools that will help them complete their mission-critical assignment.



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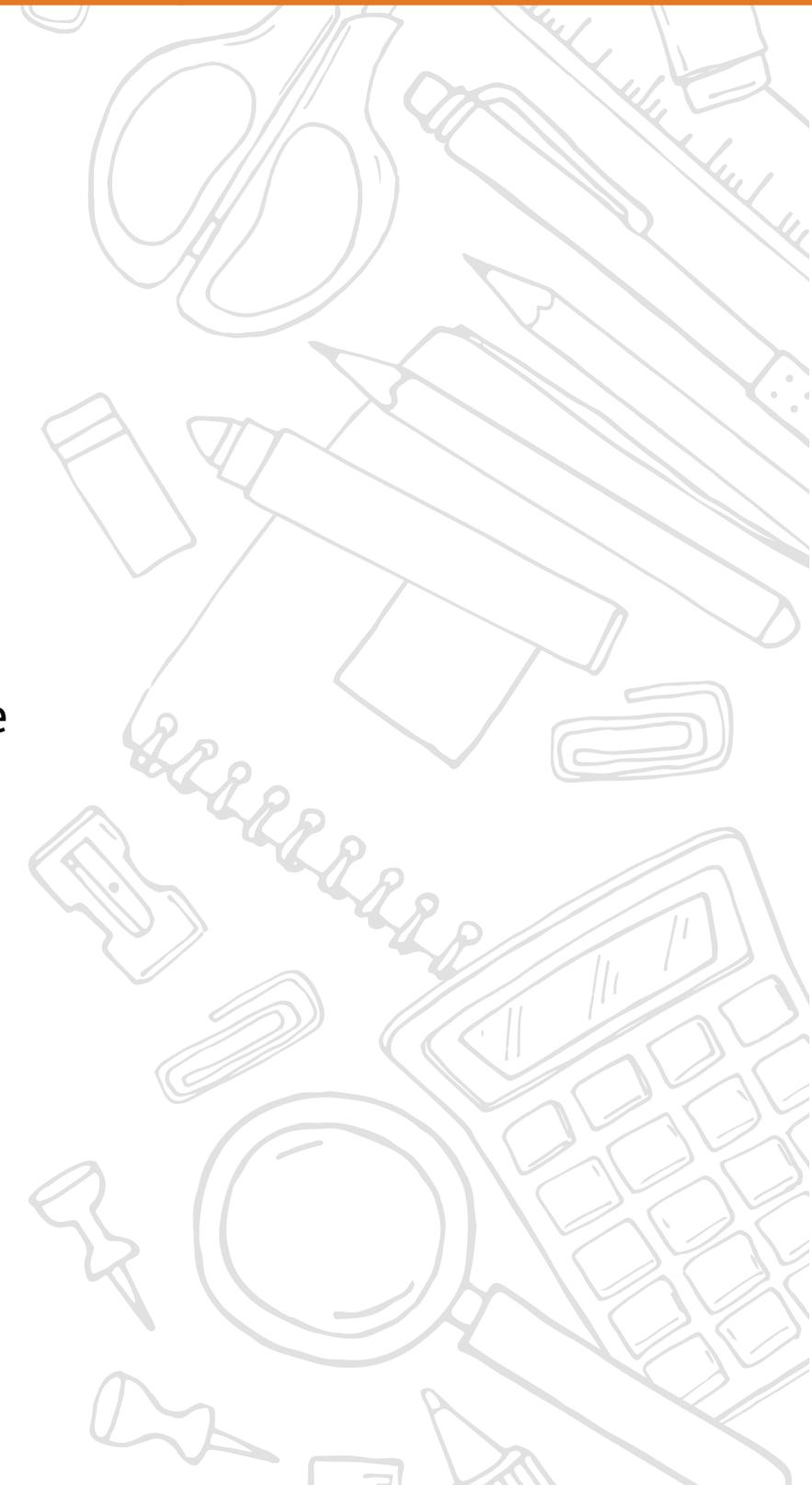
Exercise: What's Your Brand Role?



Think about your shared purpose, DNA and especially your potluck of what you bring to the shared purpose. What are the kinds of role that go with this contribution? If you are someone that brings expertise, are you a scientist, engineer, or teacher? If you are someone that connects people together, are you a broker, matchmaker or party host?

As you identify these roles, be sure to think about the roles of the customer or other stakeholders that go along with it. You are looking to create reciprocal roles. So if you are a Teacher, that means the other role might be a Student. Coach naturally goes with Athlete. Conductor goes with Musician.

If you haven't yet, [download this worksheet](#) to help you keep notes on your narrative as you move through this Shift Expedition.

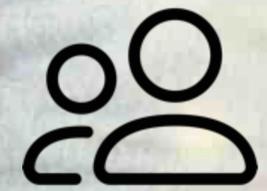




WE ARE THE _____ TO _____
role *role*

*ex: We are the **coach** to **athletes**.*

_____	:	_____
<i>role</i>		<i>role</i>
_____	:	_____
<i>role</i>		<i>role</i>
_____	:	_____
<i>role</i>		<i>role</i>



Up Next:

At the next destination we will turn our attention from relationships to mindsets. Every innovation requires a new way of thinking, and your narrative needs to help people make the appropriate shifts in thinking.

Go Deeper:

For more on brand roles, see the article [“Build Your Brand as Relationship.”](#)

Share With Others:

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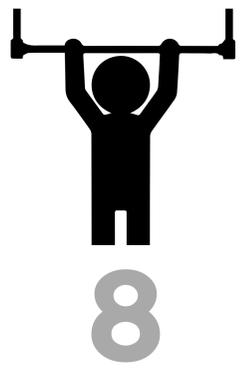
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Ch.8



MINDSHIFTS

and the Horseless Carriage



Mindshifts

Mindshifts and the Horseless Carriage

Mark Bonchek, Phd

To change what people do, you first have to change how they think. But change is like a trapeze. People don't let go of the old bar until there's a new one within reach. The problem isn't getting them to learn something new, it's getting them to **unlearn** something they already know.

This shift in thinking, or mindshift, can be achieved in three steps:

1. Get people to see that the rope is fraying, i.e. their current way of thinking is ineffective.
2. Get them to see the new bar, i.e. a better way of thinking about their situation.
3. Help them move to the new bar, i.e. let go of the old thinking and adopt the new mindset.

When trying to shift thinking, most of us tend to focus on the second step to persuade people why our way of thinking (or product or company) is better

than others. But I find that most people on the trapeze get stuck when it comes to the first or third. They can be convinced your solution is better, but they don't think they have the problem, or aren't ready to make the jump.

Steve Jobs

Steve Jobs was a master of mindshift. He understood that his products were so innovative that people didn't have a way of thinking about them. When he introduced a new product, he didn't focus on the features and benefits. Instead, he gave people a new way to think about the technology. By selling a new mental model, he sold a new solution.

We can see this in the first Macintosh commercial from Apple and its famous 1984 "Big Brother" theme. Jobs shifted people's thinking about computers from what it could do *for* you, to what it said *about* you. By buying a Macintosh, you were saying something about yourself—as someone who didn't conform and could "think different."

Jobs showed us that the rope was fraying (the existing model of computing was turning us into automatons), that there was a new bar (a truly *personal* computer) and that it was within reach (easy to use and better designed).

Twenty years later, in 2007, Steve Jobs introduced the iPhone. He began his talk by saying that Apple would be introducing *three* new products: a touch iPod, a mobile phone and an Internet communicator. Then he showed how the three products were actually *one* device: the iPhone.

To drive the point home, he presented a picture of how other companies might have combined these three devices into one—a sharp contrast to Apple’s sleek and elegant product.

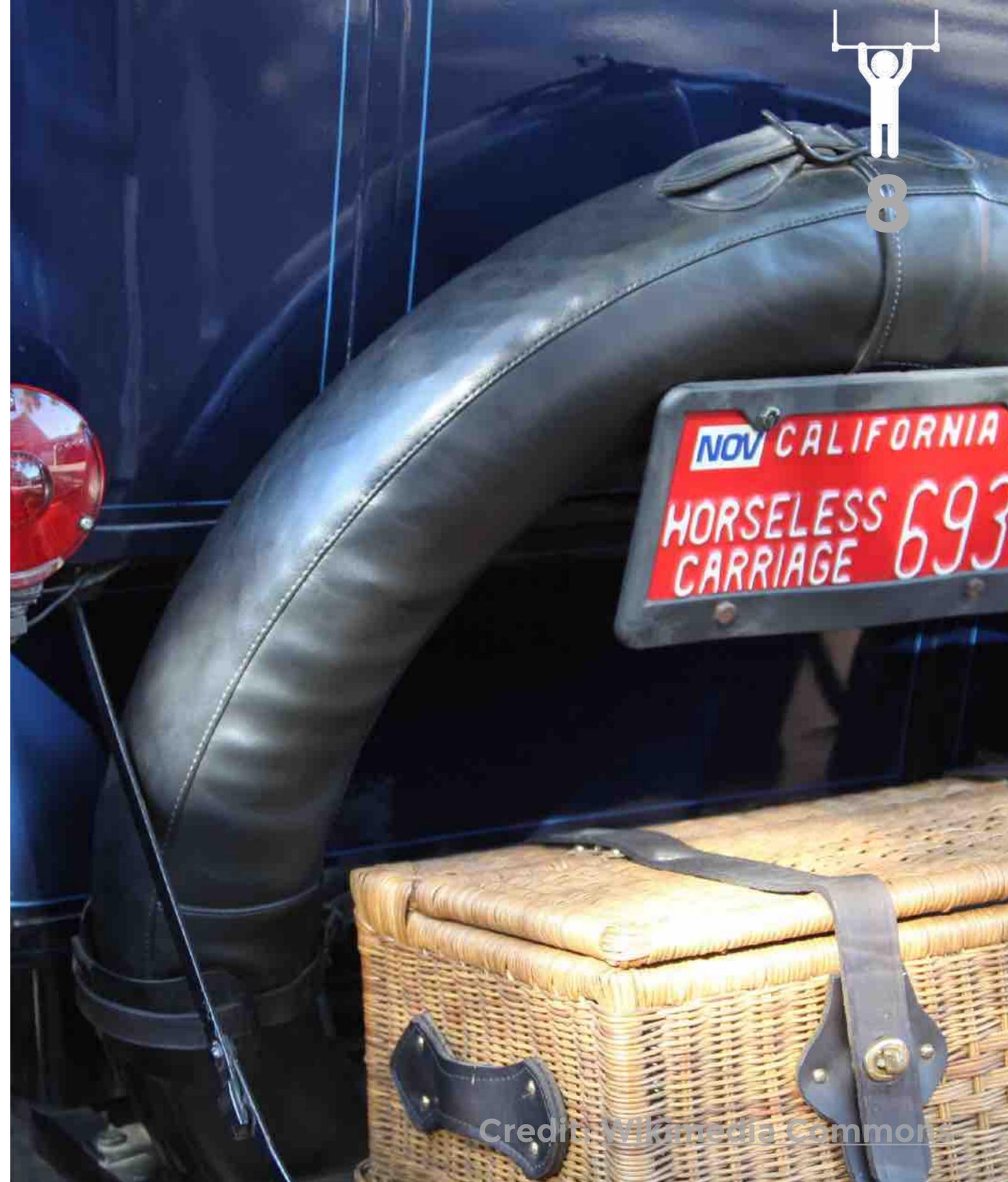
In his announcement, Jobs attended carefully to his audience’s existing mental models. If he had just said “introducing the iPhone” and showed the product, they wouldn’t have known what to make of it. So he moved them carefully from the old bar to the new one, and made sure to show how the existing bar was now obsolete.



The “Horseless Carriage”

Jobs’ technique had actually been applied nearly a century earlier with the “horseless carriage.” When motor cars first came into being around 1900, people had no frame of reference. So they became known as “horseless carriages.” They were like a horse-drawn carriage, but without a horse. In the picture below, you can also see that they were steered not with a wheel, but with something like a boat tiller.

As humans, we see the new through the lens of the old. If you have a novel solution, you need to give people a way to make the bridge from the old to the new. Give them a way to have one hand on the old bar and one hand on the new before you ask them to let go of the trapeze.



Exercise: Creating a Mindshift

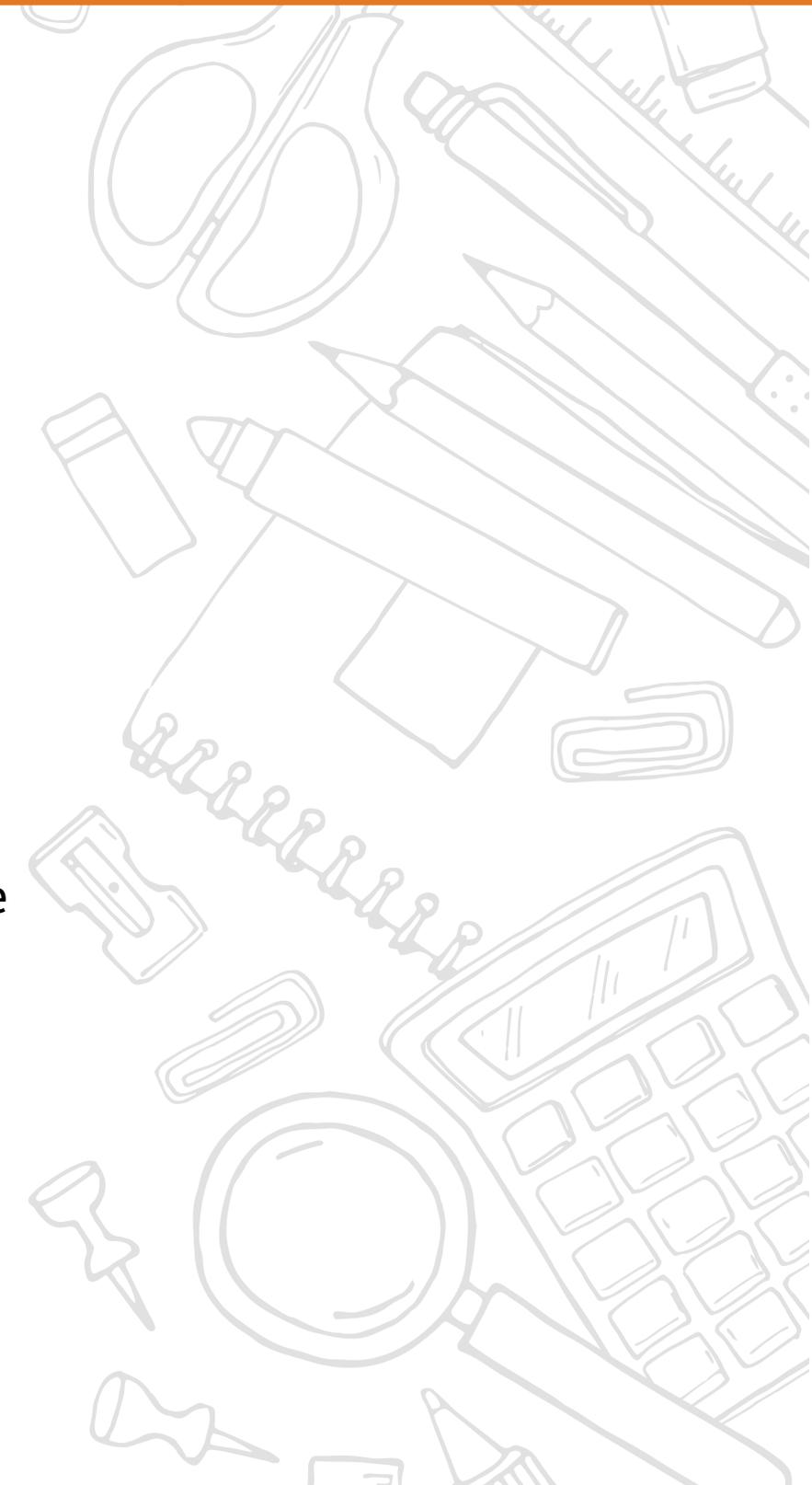


Think about all the elements of your narrative and the nature of your product or service. Where does it require your audience to shift their thinking? Keep in mind that the more you feel your product is original and distinctive, the more work you will have to do in shifting their thinking.

First, identify where people tend to get stuck in the narrative. Do they not see the problem? Not see the solution? Or not feel that the solution is achievable? Work on shoring up the weak spots.

Second, see where you can build your own “horseless carriage” to get them from the old to the new. For practice, start looking around and observe these bridging concepts in today’s digital transformation. Note that we are now adopting “driverless cars,” “digital wallets,” “3D printing,” “machine learning” and “bitcoin.” In each case, there is something we already know (cars, wallets, printing) modified to be something we don’t.

If you haven't yet, [download this worksheet](#) to help you keep notes on your narrative as you move through this Shift Expedition.



Exercise: Mindshifts



constituency

Transition

A WAY TO THINK ABOUT THE
FUTURE OF _____ THROUGH THE LENS OF
THE PAST IS AS _____

A way to think about future of transportation from the existing mindset is a horseless carriage.



Up Next:

With two more stops in our expedition, next we will look at how to write up the narrative. Then at the last destination you will get a simple test to know whether your narrative is ready for the world.

Go Deeper:

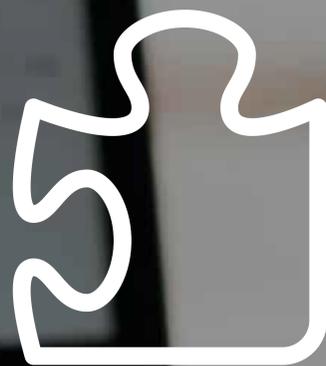
For more on mindshifts, read ["To Sell a New Product, Sell a New Way of Thinking" from Harvard Business Review](#).

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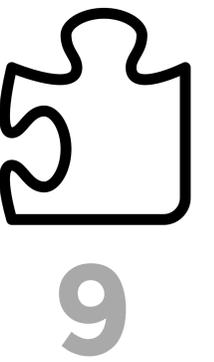
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Ch.9



**PUTTING IT
ALL TOGETHER**

Bring It On



Putting It All Together

Bring It On

Mark Bonchek, Phd

Over the last eight destinations of this Expedition, we've covered a lot of ground. You've identified seven different building blocks that go into the design of a Strategic Narrative. Now, we will look at how to pull it all together.

To recap, we started with a shared purpose that defines your business in a way that makes it universally relevant and engaging. Note that this shared purpose is not philanthropic. It is not separate from your business. It is the context in which you conduct your business. It is why you do what you do.

You can think about the narrative as expressing three dimensions of this purpose.

- **Differentiation** - Why your approach is different than others (Path to Purpose)

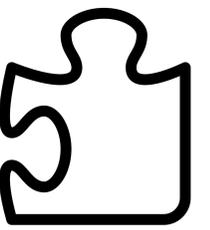
- **Authenticity** - Why you are genuinely qualified to fulfill this purpose (DNA)
- **Relationship** - How you relate to others and how they relate to you (Contribution, Roles)

The two other elements are about

- **Engagement** - How you pull people into your orbit (Mindshift)
- **Progress** - How you stay aligned to your purpose and measure success (Metrics)

So how do these all come together? I use a test called "Bring it On."

You are looking for the element of your narrative that is the essence of what you are about. The thing that you know you are better at than anyone else. The dimension on which you want to compete.



The test is that if a competitor said they are going to compete with you on this thing, you would say “Bring it On!”

- Imagine if Microsoft said, “We are going to compete by being user-friendly and having elegant design.” Apple would say “Bring it On.”
- Imagine if Dunkin Donuts said, “We are going to create more inviting environments as a Third Place.” Starbucks would say “Bring it On.”

We aren’t looking for a value proposition here, although it might be related to that. We are looking for the focal point of your narrative. To illustrate the point, I will give an example from my own work.

Here is the basic narrative of my business.

- My shared purpose is digital transformation and breakthrough results.
- My path to purpose is unlearning and the power of new thinking to drive exponential change.
- My purpose metric is the rate, reach and return on epiphany - how quickly people get to an “aha”

moment, how many people are reached, and how much value they get from it.

- My contribution to the potluck is the design of new mental models and the structures that bring them within reach.
- My brand role is one of a catalyst (rather than a consultant). In chemistry a catalyst accelerates a reaction without being used up in the process.
- The mindshift is getting people to focus on their thinking and not just their doing. As I like to say, “To change what you do, first change how you think.”

So what's my "Bring it On"?

Let's say that I'm being considered by a potential client for a consulting or speaking engagement and there are couple other candidates. If you told me they are looking for someone who can share best practices or talk about market trends, I'd say I'm as good as anyone else. But if you told me they are looking for someone to shift the thinking of their audience and give people a new mindset for success in a digital age, I'd say you won't find anyone better. In other words, "Bring it On!"

The tricky part of finding your "Bring it On" is that it is not as obvious as you might think. We often take our greatest gifts for granted. It is so obvious to us, we assume others can see it too. Or it comes so easily to us, that we assume it can't be a source of real differentiation or advantage.



9

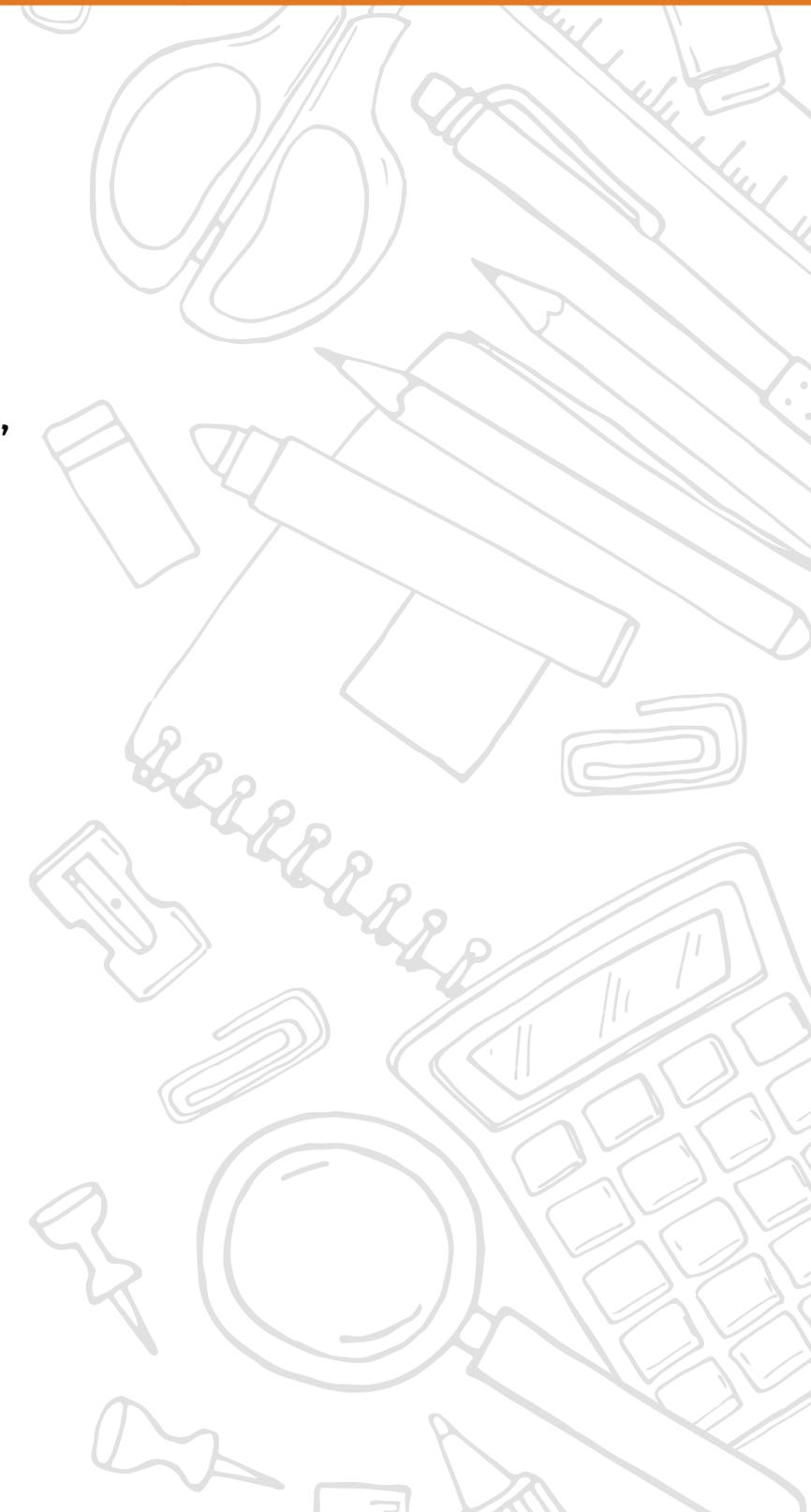
Exercise: Finding Your “Bring it On”



Take a look through your worksheet and see which of the narrative elements you feel really defines and distinguishes your business.

- Lyft’s “Bring it On” would likely center around role relationship. Lyft has a brand role of “driver as friend” while Uber is more “driver as entrepreneur.”
- Meanwhile, Starbucks’ “Bring it On” would likely center on its Path to Purpose. Its coffee is good, but Starbucks’ ability to create a Third Place is truly their “Bring it On.”

See if you can boil it down to a phrase or saying that captures the essence of the narrative.

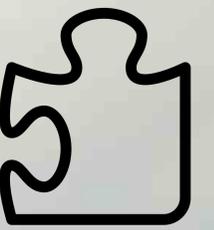


Bring it On:



IF ANYONE ELSE SAYS

WE SAY “BRING IT ON!”



Up Next:

Tomorrow is the last day of our expedition. I will share some tips on how to write up the narrative in a way that can be effectively put into practice.

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Ch.10



WRITING IT UP

Writing It Up

Mark Bonchek, Phd

Now that you have the individual threads of your narrative, it's time to weave them together into something concise, clear and compelling.

I've found the best approach is to create a kind of touchstone document that can inform all your other communications. I call it a "stem cell" document because it serves as the basis for lots of other kinds of expression.

You ultimately will want two formats of this document: presentation and prose. The prose format ensures the narrative stands on its own. The presentation format ensures it can be delivered by others. **This workbook is available as a fillable PDF with placeholders for each of the key prompts throughout the chapters.**

The prose version has four lengths:

- A word or phrase
- A sentence
- A paragraph
- A page

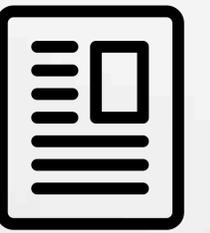
This way, you ensure that the narrative can scale longer or shorter without losing its essence.

The presentation version usually starts with some kind of observation or insight. Ideally, something that is intuitive but not obvious. This is the best combination to get people nodding their head in agreement, trusting in your credibility, and interested to learn more.

There is no formula for how to write a narrative. You want to combine the various elements that we've covered in this Expedition. The most common error I find is not in content, but in tone and context.



10



It's the same thing here. The narrative is saying:

- Who you are as a company.
- Why you do what you do.
- What you are out to achieve in the world.
- How you achieve it.
- Who you are for others.

Watch out for the tendency to try convince people you are right. The best narratives don't sell people on anything. They create a connection and flow in which people naturally sell themselves.

Remember that the purpose of the narrative is to establish a foundation for the relationship. If you meet someone new, you don't try to convince them that you would make a good friend. You share things about yourself that give a sense of who you are, what you've done and what's important to you. You trust that if there's the right fit, they will see that themselves.

Naturally, you should write the narrative in a way that is attentive to your audiences. Most importantly, write it in a way that inspires **you**. Ultimately it is your passion and authenticity that creates the most engaging narrative.





Example Narratives

Airbnb

"We used to take belonging for granted. Cities used to be villages. Everyone knew each other, and everyone knew they had a place to call home. But after the mechanization and Industrial Revolution of the last century, those feelings of trust and belonging were displaced by mass-produced and impersonal travel experiences. We also stopped trusting each other. And in doing so, we lost something essential about what it means to be a community. At a time when new technologies have made it easier to keep each other at a distance, you're using them to bring people together. And you're tapping into the universal human yearning to belong—the desire to feel welcomed, respected, and appreciated for who you are, no matter where you might be."

PHRASE: Belong anywhere

SENTENCE: Technology can help bring people together.





Example Narratives

Starbucks

"To say Starbucks purchases and roasts high-quality whole bean coffees is very true. That's the essence of what we do – but it hardly tells the whole story. Every day, we go to work hoping to do two things: share great coffee with our friends and help make the world a little better. It was true when the first Starbucks opened in 1971, and it's just as true today. From the beginning, Starbucks set out to be a different kind of company. One that not only celebrated coffee and the rich tradition, but that also brought a feeling of connection. Our mission to inspire and nurture the human spirit – one person, one cup, and one neighborhood at a time. We're a neighborhood gathering place, a part of the daily routine – and we couldn't be happier about it. Get to know us and you'll see: we are so much more than what we brew."

PHRASE: Third place

SENTENCE: Coffee, connection and community inspire the human spirit.





Example Narratives

Sephora

"At Sephora, beauty is in our DNA. Sephora believes every stroke, swipe and dab reveals possibility, and we share our client's love for the confidence that our products, services, and expertise brings to their life every day. In every store, clients unlock their beauty potential at our Beauty, Skincare and Fragrance Studios through intuitive technology and guidance from the most knowledgeable and professional team of product consultants in the beauty industry. [We are] obsessed with teaching and inspiring clients to play in a world of beauty. ... Sephora encourages bold choices in beauty – and in life with the purpose of inspiring fearlessness."

PHRASE: Let's beauty together

SENTENCE: We can all be artists for our own beauty.





I hope that you have found the expedition helpful. I would appreciate if you would take [this short three-question survey](#) to provide some feedback on how we can make things even better.

Also look for announcements of future webinars and clinics to provide live feedback on narratives from Expedition graduates.

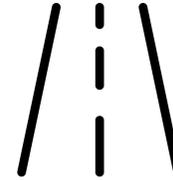
[Here's the link for the survey.](#)

With gratitude,
Mark Bonchek



PURPOSE METRICS

How to measure progress



PATH TO PURPOSE

How the purpose is achieved



ROLE

What you do for your customer



SHARED PURPOSE

A common objective



CONTRIBUTION

What everyone brings to the table



MINDSHIFT

The shift in thinking



DNA

What makes you unique

The Journey to Narrative

