

## Come Monday morning, are you ready to live the brand?

The other day I received a question from a CEO that was unique in its phrasing yet common in concept, like questions I've been fielding for years.

Jack, the CEO, said: "Gregg, we've just spent a small fortune with a consultancy who took us through this rebranding effort where we developed a distinctive and potentially differentiated positioning, created a much-needed messaging platform to strengthen our sales effort and determined the core values for our company that will supposedly help align all of our employees."

Jack seemed a bit uneasy as he asked me the question, which he really should have asked the consultancy that performed the work.

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### You achieve brand integrity when you are who you say you are.

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He asked, "Now that we've done the pep rally with our workforce to get them aligned and fired up, we've done the big announcement to our clients, partners and the marketplace and we've determined our marketing strategies and tactics to ensure we create constant awareness in our target markets ..., what happens on Monday morning?"

I said, "That's a great question. Your 'refreshed brand' is well-thought-out, and the promises you are making to your customers and potential customers are quite appealing. But how are you going to get your workforce to stay energized, engaged and committed to delivering upon those promises?"

"That is what I am getting at. Come Monday morning, what if nothing is really different around here? What a waste of time, energy and ... money," he replied with a really sad look on his face.

I am used to having this conversation with business leaders. It happens all the time. The timing of my conversation with



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Jack was a bit different, though. Usually, we get the call about a year after the big marketing and advertising investment when the company leaders realize that the culture of the organization is not one in which employees are either empowered or motivated to keep the promises being made.

There were two reasons why this particular conversation with Jack was different from the norm. First, Jack is unique in that he was not caught up in the hoopla of the marketing effort without recognizing very early on that the existing culture was not ready to support the ideal market positioning. He realized the company couldn't just say that it is all about customer service excellence or proclaim outlandish promises about high-quality products when the workforce was not ready for the day-to-day efforts to bring that level of service and those promises to life.

Second, the timing of this question was perfect for us because my firm, Brand Integrity, will be in exactly the same position in about 90 days. We've just hired the Brand Mother, a brand consultancy (BrandMotherKnowsBest.com), to help us refresh our message and positioning in the market. You might be thinking, "Why does a company named Brand Integrity need to hire a consultant to help them 'position their brand'?"

Well, my answer is the same one I gave Jack, Mr. I'm a Bit Uneasy about Monday Morning. Brand Integrity is the name of our company, but it is also something every company should try to achieve. The concept of achieving it is quite simple; the act of doing it is not so easy.

You achieve brand integrity when you

are who you say you are. For instance, when you walk into Wegmans, do they tell you they are going to deliver "incredible service," or do they just do it? Yes, Wegmans markets the concept of "Making Great Meals Easy," but the best part for consumers is that employees in every store every day know how to deliver incredible service and how to make great meals easy. Think of it this way: Your company does not need to tell me you are a gentleman. Simply be a gentleman.

Now back to the Monday morning question. I shared with Jack the obvious reality that "announcing the desired culture and brand" is not enough. To get his workforce genuinely engaged, he should help his people discover how they perform the culture and brand.

I said: "Jack, send an email to your top 20 managers or influential employees and ask them to share with you the top five behaviors that they believe employees do that positively represent your newly refreshed brand and core values. Ask them: 'On our best day, what is it that our employees do to bring our brand and values to life?'"

Even though I didn't need to sell Jack any further on this idea, I reminded him that his best employees don't get out of bed each day to come to work because they are trying to help him and his top leaders make more money. They don't come in every day just because they want a paycheck.

No, the best employees want to make a difference. They want to belong to something. They want to deliver an experience that matters. Come Monday morning, they want to bring your brand to life. They just need to know how to live the brand!

*Gregg Lederman, CEO of Brand Integrity Inc., is a professional speaker on the customer experience, leadership and culture change. He is an adjunct professor at University of Rochester's Simon Business School and is the author of the New York Times bestselling book "Engaged! Outbehave Your Competition to Create Customers for Life." Read more from him at [www.gregglederman.com](http://www.gregglederman.com).*