WBA

WORKSHOP TOOLS – BRAND TRAJECTORY

Brand Trajectory is very much a Yellow Quadrant exercise as it asks us to imagine how the brand will evolve. How will it look in 3-5 years’ time? How will it have maintained a competitive advantage? What success story might it have to tell?

The process for doing this is very simple.

We break the workshop participants into teams of three. In an ideal world, they would be sufficiently familiar with the Whole-Brain model for us to create teams of diverse thinking preferences. We’d avoid putting three ‘yellows’ or three ‘greens’ together.

Why?

We’re trying to stimulate what is sometimes called ‘Creative Abrasion’. That is the effect of different thinking styles rubbing up against one another. There is real value in this. Teams with multiple perspectives will always generate more thoughts and ideas.

One well established theory of creative thinking is ‘bisociation’, a term coined by Arthur Koestler in his book ‘The Act of Creation’. By this he meant the bringing together of two seemingly incompatible or distant ideas to create something new.

One way of doing this, is to pair people with different thinking styles in the same team.

Once we have established the teams, we set this simple assignment.

We ask them to imagine that it is three or five years from now and they have been charged with the responsibility of writing two emails.

Both are to come from the CEO of the company.

One is an all-staff memo. The other is a press release. Both are 200 words or less.

While the audiences may differ, the themes are much the same. These emails are celebrating the company’s success, and they give specific details of its achievements.

So, the task is to visualise this success and the understand the trajectory the company must take to get there.

We overlay a time-honoured workshop tool onto this process. The old SWOT analysis.

We ask that the emails reflect four things:

1. The Strengths that enabled us to achieve this success

2. The Weaknesses we had to overcome to prevail

3. The Opportunities we identified to create a path forward

4. The Threats we had to neutralise in order to succeed.

So, this exercise is part analytical and part creative. The value in this is that the outcome is likely to be feasible and not fantastical. The left brain will keep the right brain grounded while allowing it to explore the possibilities.

We then share these emails as a group and identify the common themes and ask what strategies should we be adopting to make this future a reality.

And, as is always the case, we ask how these strategies could be conveyed to our staff as well as our customers and clients.

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