



DOES YOUR FIRM HAVE A COMPELLING POSITION?

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Based on studies conducted by the American Marketing Association, the CMO Council, and Booz Allen Hamilton:

- Salespeople are spending approximately **40%** of their time preparing customer-facing deliverables while leveraging ***less than 50%*** of the materials created for them by marketing.
- Only **10-20%** of salespeople create deliverables that are both compelling to their customers and consistent with their corporate brand.
- **85%** of a company's external BRAND image is determined by direct interaction between the sales force and target buyers. Not surprisingly, 85% of PURCHASE decisions are influenced by this direct interaction.





A “NON” COMPELLING POSITION!

Think of a lighthouse for a minute. This lighthouse is on the shore of a very rocky coastline. The lighthouse has a critical job to do with its messaging system. Ships passing by rely on the lighthouse to provide direction and safety. But, imagine for a moment that this lighthouse is very “different.” It has tiny little feet! And, when it sees a ship coming, it reacts by running up and down the shore hollering and screaming, attempting to shine its light in the right direction to get the attention of nearby ships. Unfortunately, for these ships passing by and for their weary crews, the lighthouse has created a very dangerous dilemma. There is simply no way to gauge which maneuvers to make because there is no stable consistent messaging from the crazy lighthouse. Many firms operate just like this lighthouse! They follow a shotgun approach to their messaging and how they position themselves in the marketplace. They send out inconsistent communication about what they do best, what sets them apart from the competition and why. Their sales people are lost and can’t produce results because they are not given consistent messaging from management to communicate to potential customers. These firms, like the ships in the example, end up on the rocks because of it.

Brand positioning is about identifying your brand's real value and competitive difference and communicating this information consistently to customers so that they have good reason to buy your product and service. Think of Timex! "*Takes a licking and keeps on ticking.*" A solid message and position communicated clearly and consistently over a period of time becomes foundational.

Communicating sameness is a waste of time and money!

Let's look at two common mistakes of brand positioning:

1. **Lack of Differentiation:** Highlighting what may be true but what is not a key differentiation point (i.e. "you'll like working with us"). Differentiation defines the compelling reasons to buy.
2. **Lack of Focus:** A generic marketing message to a generic target market. Remember the old adage "jack of all trades master of none". Customers need to know what your unique solution is and how it solves their unique pain points.

And remember, that what positions a brand, is not simply concrete, tangible and easily defined. Coke's brand position is refreshment and fun times, not just cola. Apple's brand position is built around great innovation and beautiful design, not little black or white boxes.

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