

Ignite YOUR BRAND

LEADERSHIP & BRAND STRATEGY COACHING PROGRAM

MODULE 3 - WEEK 10

Your Impact Message: Differentiator, Value Proposition & Brand Positioning Language



Welcome to week 10! This week is **oh, so** important, as you'll solidify how to communicate about your business in a way that serves customers, resonates with them, and doesn't leave you feeling like you are "just talking about myself..."

Last week, you reviewed your competition; this week, you'll think about Your Differentiator, Market Positioning (Brand Positioning Statement) and the Value Proposition or "brand promise."

These are the elements that are important for facing outwardly to your customers. Marketing is about being authentically you, while understanding your customers' discomforts and desires, so that you can market to those needs and wants.

By understanding your differentiator, you can understand how to POSITION yourself/your business in the minds of your prospective clients, to be in service of them so they can understand how you can help them.

The exercises this week will help you embody how you are communicating externally. I encourage you not to attach yourself too tightly to following each exercise to the T. There are several exercises and messaging models designed for different types of learners and processors. If it starts to feel too "heady" you may need to take a breath, come back to your body and "let it be easy."

This week's lessons:

Lesson 1: Differentiator

Lesson 2: Brand Positioning Statement (*Internal*)

Lesson 3: Value Proposition (*External*)

Lesson 4: Messaging matrix model to sum it all up & "let it be easy"

Amber

MODULE 3 - WEEK 10

Lesson 1: Differentiator or Unique Selling Point (USP)

If you want to stand out, it's important to figure out what you do that is different or better than your competition. This is called DIFFERENTIATION, or differentiator. Some call this the Unique Selling Point (USP). For our purposes, we will call it your DIFFERENTIATOR.

In today's marketplace, many customers choose to do business with companies that align with their values and beliefs. While this is important, don't mistake this as being 'enough.' You must still solve a specific problem or challenge for customers, and if you're in a field with a lot of options, you really need to understand your unique way of doing things.

Don't approach this exercise thinking you need to come up with something wild or a marketing gimmick; that is not what we're aiming for when we talk about how you are "different." Instead, think about what inherently makes your offering different or how you do things. How can you lead with that?

Determining your Differentiator/USP is important in messaging. If you are in a room with 10 other people who do something similar to you, this is how you set yourself apart. If you can stand out from the crowd in your own way that is authentic for you, it will make your brand growth easier because it will be special, unique, and genuine. People can energetically feel if something is contrived. Customers will come to know you for that 'thing' you stand for/do better/do differently. If you don't develop a USP, it can be difficult to build an audience that knows you for something. **It's your job to make it easy for your customers to understand WHY YOU for THEM and remember, it's about doing this from a place of realness.**

On the following pages are some visual examples to help you click into this idea about how a company might differentiate....

JIMMY JOHN'S SUBS

There are a ton of sub companies, but Jimmy John's took the position of being FAST and they carry it through all of their services by being fast with making the sandwich, with delivery, and with last-minute catering requests.

This is their differentiator and they strive to **own** this market position.



CHARM CITY CAKES

SAME



DIFFERENT!



EXAMPLE: SOUL SEED

Coaching/consulting is one of the fastest-growing industries with many coaches across all industries. Where most other programs focus on coaching just the individual or just the marketing or strategy, our differentiator is that our approach is Transformational - combining both Soul + Strategy.

Your differentiator might even be your unique niche! For example, I focus on heart-centered soulful entrepreneurs. You may be saying, "Hold on, wouldn't that be the niche?" Yes, 'soulful entrepreneur' is the niche, but, today, the idea of differentiator is evolving. It's not always about being the fastest, cheapest, or most fun. Today, many service-based businesses' #1 job is to create an experience and build community. So, the way in which you do that could also be your differentiator. Soul Seed's differentiator is based on Unique Market Niche and Positioning (you'll read through more examples of how to differentiate on the next page). Here's a statement about what Soul Seed's brand is about:

Unique market niche: Soul Seed exists to help soulful leaders like you to bring your internal desires into your external reality while growing a successful business and making the impact you desire as a result of creating soul alignment in your business strategy.

Value proposition: make a positive impact in the world by gaining clarity for your dreams, the confidence to go for them, and the strategies to bring them to life.

How it's done - note, of much less importance than value proposition: This is accomplished through coaching, experiences, consulting, educational materials, and retreats designed to help you align with your deeper authenticity and create success from that place.

8 MORE WAYS TO DIFFERENTIATE

1. **Storytelling:** What about YOUR STORY connects with others? Makes you different?
2. **Positioning:** Are you positioned uniquely in some way that is so very different from everyone else?
3. **Service:** Is there an element to how your service is delivered that nobody else claims? (Fastest, we bring to you, etc.)
4. **Distribution:** Serving areas nobody else can reach.
5. **Product Feature:** a feature about your product that is SO different from others.
6. **Market Niche:** Serving a unique market segment.
7. **Specialization:** Are you highly specialized in an area that nobody else is?
8. **Processes:** Are your processes so different that it benefits customers in a way no other business can?

Another way to help you think about differentiating is to explore Unique Selling Points or a "USP." You might find it helpful to reflect on if any of these USPs are a match for your brand:

The Niche Audience USP: Are you an attorney who focuses on employment law? A CPA who helps public workers? When you specialize in a narrow market segment, you can market yourself more easily to that specific audience. You know where to find your audience and how to reach them (trade magazines, local market research to get mailing lists, attend industry trade shows and conferences, etc.)

Do you have a niche audience?

Niche Specialty USP: You could specialize more narrowly in a particular aspect of your field. Examples are...

- A social media marketer who focuses on helping you build influence on Instagram
- A mechanic who specializes in American-made hybrid vehicles
- A dentist who focuses specifically on dental crowns

Do you offer a niche specialty?

The Persona USP: everyone has a personal brand whether you are building your brand around it or not but not every brand is built around the founder's personal brand. If you are building a brand around YOU as the service provider, as the thought leader, think about your personality, beliefs, and how you show up. What about your personality, expertise, and beliefs resonates with your customers? For some brands, their personality is their USP. By putting your personal stamp on your business, you are creating a business that is uniquely YOU that nobody else can compete with.

What about your personality resonates with your customer?

Intersection USP: This USP is when you take two seemingly unrelated ideas/offerings and bring them together to create your unique USP. You can create this USP by taking something well-known and presenting it to a new, niche audience. Keep in mind, there still needs to be a customer base for your offering. Examples are:

- Yoga for Senior Citizens (specific service, for specific niche audience).
- Copywriting services for CPAs.
- Personal Shopping for Attorneys.

Is there a crossroads that works for your business?

Metaphor USP: Sometimes you'll find an overarching metaphor that makes sense for your brand and brings everything into alignment. This metaphor may become your business name or tagline. Examples are:

- Jaguar: Represents the speed, agility, and sleekness of the animal and the car
- Duct Tape Marketing: this tells you duct tape (piece it together, make it stick) is the metaphor for the approach of the marketing company.
- Amazon: The business name represents a huge Amazon to shop from, endless shopping.

Are there metaphors that work for your business?

Put it all together. Look at what you've written down in each section. What is your Differentiator or USP?

Value Proposition or brand promise is for EXTERNAL use with your clients (we'll cover that in the next lesson)
Brand Positioning Statement is for INTERNAL use.

Your BPS is where you want to sit in the minds of customers. This market positioning is the space you want to own... think about it like this: in your mind (and your customer's minds) there are shelves, like at a grocery store. There are only so many slots to own that space on those shelves... Think about laundry detergent, what are the top 3 that come to mind? (you likely said Tide, Gain, Era, 7th Generation...) or top auto manufacturers (Ford, Chevy, Toyota...) what you come up with will also depend on what YOU value. Think about: **What shelf do you want to be on and what position do you want to own, in the minds of your customers? Who are you positioned next to** (think of your closest competitors). This is how to develop your market positioning.

The BPS is not for external use (you can't TELL customers that you want to be #1 in their mind), you use your BPS as a guide for the stories you convey in order to make your positioning come true.

Here's an example: say a business wants to become the best-selling natural energy drink. If they were to come out and say, "we want to be #1," that might come off as arrogant and be a put-off to customers (why do customers care that a company wants to be #1?). Instead, they are better off showcasing examples that reinforce the idea of them being the #1 natural energy drink...

"With 40% less than sugar than other natural energy drinks True Life energy strives to be your go-to-natural energy drink, providing natural energy, for the healthiest and most active life."

The brand positioning statement should always be in your mind, **as you market yourself in a way that helps the BPS come true.**

A value proposition and a brand positioning statement can be difficult to differentiate. Let's break it down:

Your **value proposition** is the language you use to communicate to customers what they can expect to receive (benefits) from using your products/services. Think of the value proposition as what you promise your customer (brand promise).

A **brand positioning statement** defines the advantages of your product/service over your competition, it's meant to be **a tool to use internally** as a check-in, to make sure you are working toward achieving the position you want, and to check in and see that you are staying true to the position you want to attain. It also **INFORMS** your messaging and the stories you share externally.

A brand positioning framework often includes:

- The target audience
- The customer problem
- Identify the category in which the brand competes
- Showcase the benefit that the customer gets from the product/service
- Unlike our competition (give reference)
- Our solution (advantages that differentiates your service from competition and creates customer value)

Continue to the next page for BPS examples...

EXAMPLES of brand positioning statements (for internal use)

Example 1: Fictitious school:

"While many public schools provide a one-size-fits-all approach to education, at Agape Children's School, we develop a customized holistic education plan to nurture and engage the mental, physical, emotional, and creative well-being of each student. Holistic education inspires life-long learning and enables students to fully develop their unique capacities, enhancing their ability to be engaged citizens and create a better world."

Example 2: Fictitious bakery:

"While other bakeries use additives and preservatives in their food that can cause allergic reactions, are limited in nutrition, and pose potential weight gain, we use additive-free, whole food products that lessen food reactions and provide a more balanced food option for health-minded people. With a focus on whole food ingredients, our bakery provides tasty bakery items without the guilt, and that also provides healthy energy to get you through your day."

Remember these 6 components of your positioning statement:

- The target audience
- The customer problem
- Identify the category in which the brand competes
- Showcase the benefit that the customer gets from the product/service
- Unlike our competition (give reference)
- Our solution (provide advantages that differentiates your product/service from competition and creates customer value)

Example 3: Ignite your Brand Program

"While many **coaching** programs address either the person, or the business,
(category that the brand competes in)

The Ignite Your Brand program helps **soulful leaders**
(target audience)

to uncover their inner desire and vision, and **lead more authentically**,
(benefits.....)

and while **overcoming the false belief** that in order to do so, means they can't be too profitable.
(customer problem)

We do this with our transformational process that addresses the personal motivations and desires as the core
(solution/advantages that differentiates)

foundational structure to their business, **unlike our competition** that only addresses either the personal development, or the business model, and does not create the connection between them."
(unlike the competition)

Recap: the value proposition is language you use to communicate expected benefits to customers. The brand positioning statement is used as an internal tool to help keep you and your team on track to help you achieve the position that you wish to achieve in the minds of your customers.

YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION

A value proposition includes a brand promise of value to be delivered. It explains the primary reason that a prospective customer would buy from you. **A value proposition is meant to be used in your outward-facing communications** as it conveys to potential customers how you can help them, what value they'll receive, and why you're better than the competition. Your value proposition is your external marketing message that combines all of the work you've been doing over the past 9 weeks:

A value proposition is a statement that typically includes:

- **How your product/service solves customers' problems or offers solutions/improvement** (Understanding the problem you solve, week 5 & 6)
- **Who your product/service is for** (target market, weeks 6 & 7)
- **What value/specific benefits the customer gains** (What value you provide, week 8)
- **Tells the customer why they should buy from you and not from the competition** (How you are better than the competition/what's different, week 9 & 10)

And, as a soulful entrepreneur, all of this has been rooted in a clear vision that is authentic to you! (weeks 1-4) See, it was all leading up to something! If you've been keeping up then this is going to be easy peasy!

Fill in the blanks.... Here are several ways you can approach your value proposition:

For _____ (*target customer*) who _____ (*statement of the need or opportunity*) our
_____ (*product/service name*) is _____ (*product category*) so that
_____ (*statement of benefit*).

Here's an example with the blanks filled in from the mortgage company we referenced in week 8...

For those looking to buy a home,
Who are denied a mortgage elsewhere,
We help people with low credit scores to get approved,
so that they can fulfill their homeownership dreams.

Once you fill in the blanks, you can then take those statements and flesh them out so they read easier: "We help people with low credit scores get mortgages so they can fulfill their homeownership dreams."

Here's a simple option known as the Customer-Problem-Solution model:

Customer: _____ (*who your customer is*).

Problem: _____ (*what problem you're solving for the customer*).

Solution: _____ (*what is your solution for the problem*).

After this exercise, you should have a much clearer understanding of your value proposition, which can be fine-tuned and used as your Marketing messaging in your marketing materials, advertising, how you talk about your business face-to-face, on your website, and more!

INTERNAL USE - WHAT'S YOUR BRAND POSITIONING STATEMENT?

What is your Brand Positioning statement (market positioning)? Fill in the blanks:

The target audience: _____

The customer problem: _____

Category in which the brand competes: _____

Benefit the customer gets from the product/service: _____

Unlike our competition (give reference): _____

Our solution _____
(provide advantages that differentiates your product/service from competition and creates customer value)

Now write that out into a fluid statement:

EXTERNAL USE - WHAT IS YOUR EXTERNAL BRAND POSITIONING?

What did you define as your Differentiator?

What is your Value Proposition or Brand Promise (the language you share with your customers that helps them understand "why you"?)

MESSAGING MATRIX SAMPLE

| BRAND PROMISE: Premier pet grooming, made fun | | |
|---|--|--|
| POSITIONING STATEMENT: World class grooming for pets, and educational partnership with the parents who love them | | |
| TARGET AUDIENCE: Affluent urban pet parents, ages 30-55, who value regular, high quality grooming care | | |
| PRIMARY CORE PILLAR MESSAGES | | |
| QUALITY <i>core value/pillar</i> | FUN <i>core value/pillar</i> | PARTNERSHIP <i>core value/pillar</i> |
| Founded by an internationally recognized pet groomer | Cage free environment ensures that your pet can enjoy their stay | More than a groom. We provide you tips & education about how to maintain the groom at home. |
| Staff are all rigorously trained to signature grooming protocols | It's like a bonus doggie daycare day, your pet will play & come home ready to relax | If we notice something that seems unusual related to your pet's health, we will communicate this with you upon pet pick up |
| The customer reviews say it all! The quality & care keeps them coming back | Our highly vetted & trained staff bring special loving care for every one of our pet customers | We aim to make it easy to schedule a recurring rotation to make it easy to maintain your pet's groom health |
| CTA(S): Call today to reserve ahead to secure a grooming date | | |

| BRAND PROMISE: | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| POSITIONING STATEMENT: | | |
| TARGET AUDIENCE: | | |
| PRIMARY CORE PILLAR MESSAGES | | |
| <i>core value/pillar</i> | <i>core value/pillar</i> | <i>core value/pillar</i> |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| CTA(S): | | |