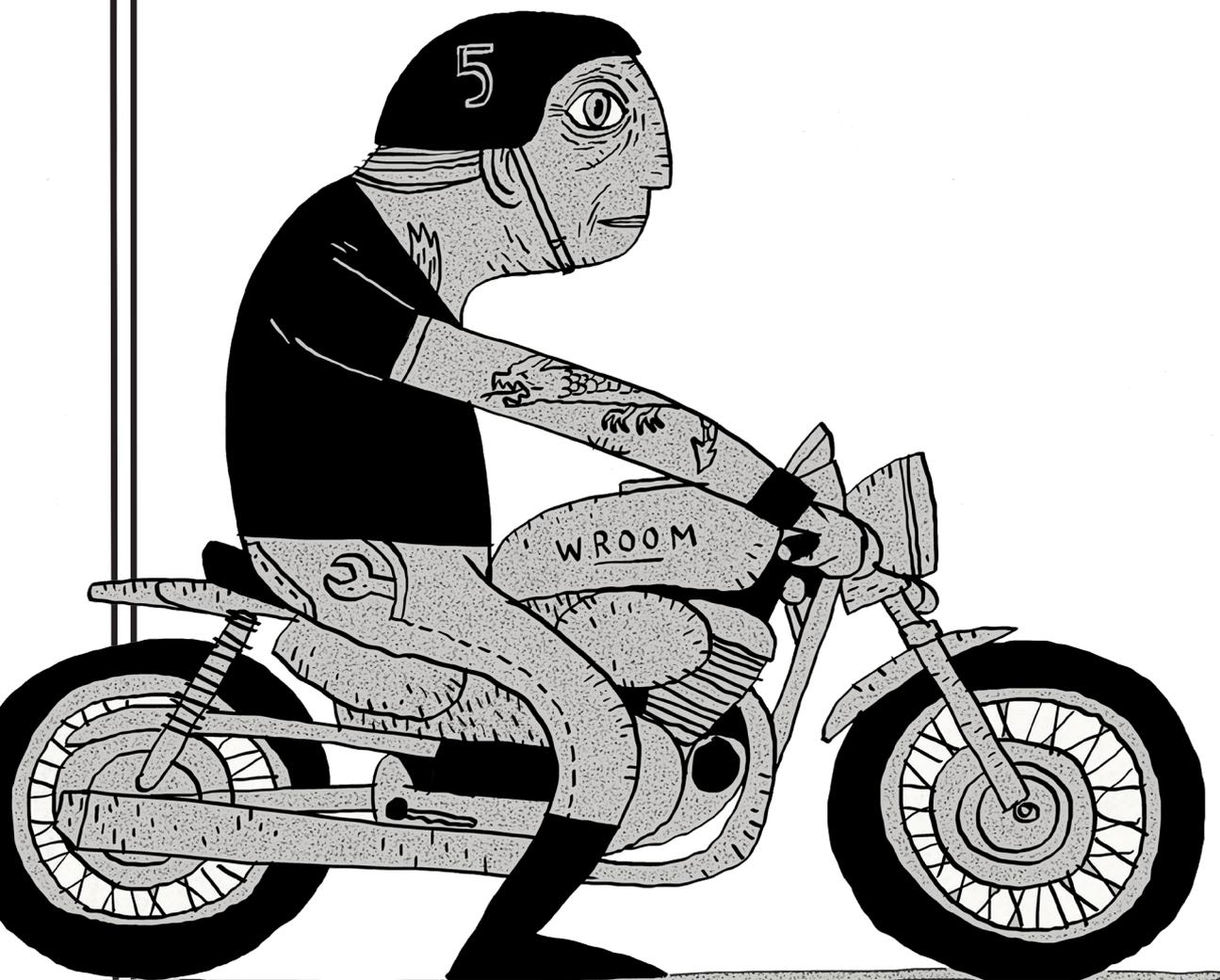


THE BRAND TRANSFORMATION TOOL



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INTRODUCTION =

We have to change the way we build organisations

Organisations don't hold any power, they don't exist simply because of a burning why, but because they matter to someone. We as people give them power, we give them meaning by our participation. Organisations, like leaders (dictators and authoritarian leaders exempt), rely on that interrelationship and when organisations, like leaders, forget who they are there for, they lose relevance. Most organisations didn't become irrelevant because they forgot their why, but because they forgot who they were there for. You

have to ask different questions, if you as a brand want to enable people's personal transformation and move them from intention to action. Life is one long continuous journey towards realising ourselves and as an organisation one valuable contribution is to show people the way. In the following you'll be introduced to a number of tools, that'll help you build a more meaningful brand that drive people towards realising their ambitions and dreams.

The Brand Transformation Tool:

2.0 The Arrow

Uncovering how to play a more meaningful role in people's lives

3.0 The transformative promise

Shaping your organisation's relevance

4.0 The WHO Void

Discovering a blue ocean to own in people's lives

5.0 The People Transformation Canvas

Different roles to own and play in people's lives

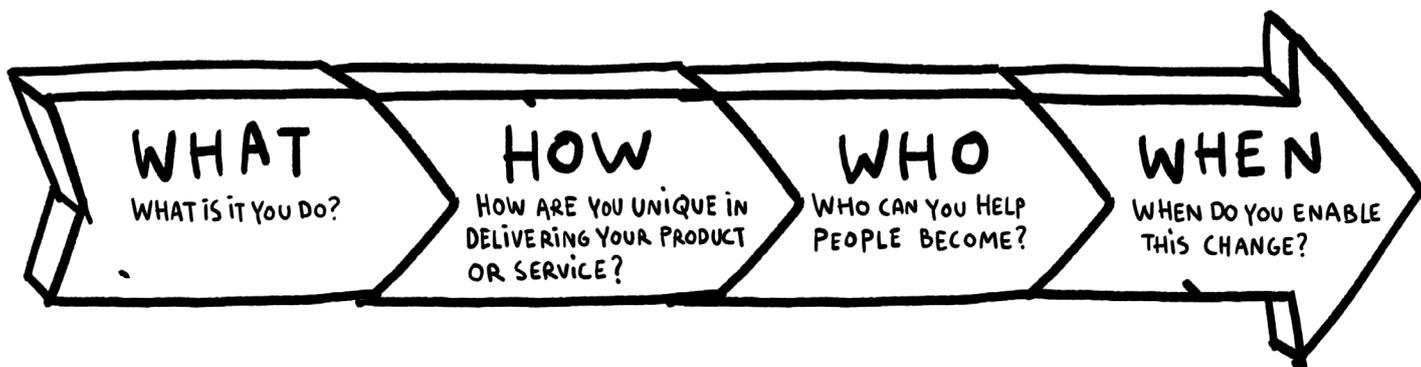
2.0 THE ARROW =

The Arrow towards a better you

It's about time we change the way we build brands by putting people first. The Arrow focuses your efforts on who you can enable people to become. In shaping the Arrow, I was inspired by coaching and psychotherapy methodologies and I kept reverting to those techniques to make sure I had a razor-sharp focus on moving people towards their dreams and aspirations. By using the Arrow with leaders, organisations and brands

around the world, I noticed one interesting thing each and every time - the marketing people or the leadership in the room realised they had "forgotten their customers" or "the role they played in people's lives". They were selling what made the brand special in the market, not what could make people special. They were selling a predefined identity or vision instead of a personal transformation.

The Arrow



WHAT product do you sell or service do you deliver?

This is the product you sell or the service you deliver e.g. running shoes.

HOW are you unique in delivering your product or service?

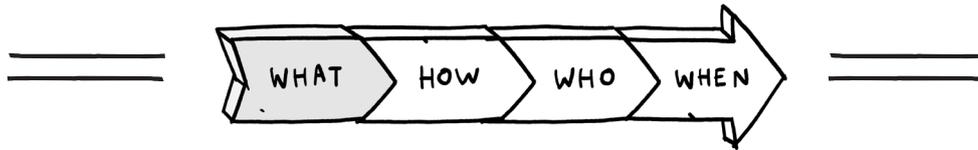
This is what makes your offering stand out e.g. convenience.

WHO can you help people become?

This is the personal transformation you enable e.g. a mindful runner

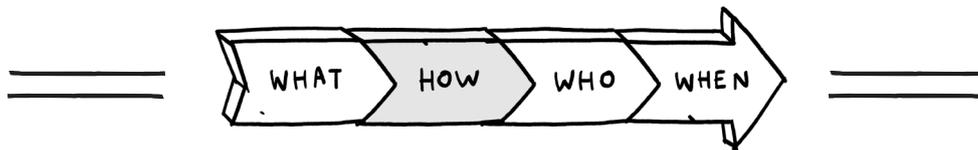
WHEN do you enable this change?

This is your call to arms: a specific time of day, a situation, a life-phase or a state of mind.



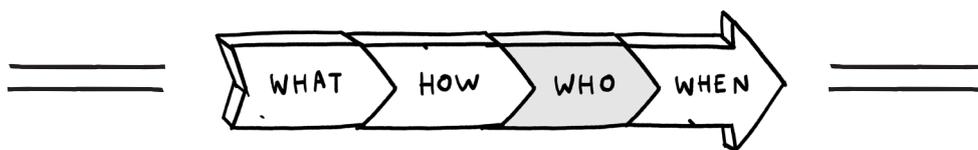
WHAT product do you sell or service do you deliver?

WHAT you sell obviously shouldn't give you too much of a headache. It's the product you make or the service you deliver, e.g. for Volvo it would be its cars, trucks and buses. The WHAT are not necessarily set in stone as you might change your product or its delivery, like Apple suddenly pivoting into music with the iPod.



HOW are you unique in delivering your product or service?

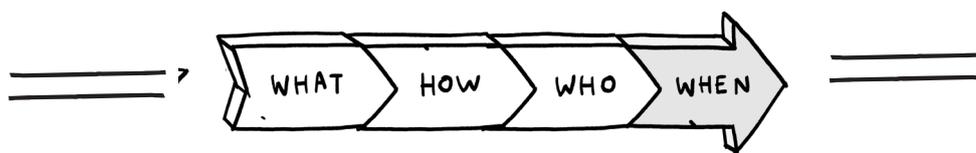
HOW are your products or services unique? How do they stand out from your competitors'? How are you unique in delivering them to people? For the American chocolate company Kind Snacks, it's a snack made with "premium, better-for-you ingredients that are kind to your body without sacrificing quality or flavour."



WHO can you help people become?

The WHO-question moves the product or service to the background as it's the personal transformation people essentially buy. You don't buy the running shoes from Nike, you buy who you can become: a superior runner. Nike's mission reads: „To bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete* in the world.“ And the asterisk is not be missed as it reads: „If you have a body, you are an athlete.“ Their mission is for everyone despite proficiency level or qualifications. For Nike it's about the very essence of moving you from inaction to action.

As an organisation you're selling the transformative outcome people potentially are achieving: better health, finance, skills and the list goes on. It's your potential as an organisation to stand out in the market by owning a transformative role in people's lives. You're taking people up to dance on the very top of Maslow's Pyramid - that's not a bad place to take anyone.



WHEN do you enable this change?

People's best intentions or biggest dreams are not enough, if they don't turn into action. "When?" is your call to arms: a specific time of day, a situation, a life-phase or a state of mind. This is where it's getting really interesting. When organisations can get us to live more in balance with ourselves, get us to achieve our goals, we experience the difference. It's a realised outcome that's difficult for any competitor to compete with.

When the hygiene pad brand Always can make a young girl use "Like a girl" as a statement of power or defiance instead of an insult. That's magical. Always is changing a state of mind. When District Vision get me to run with my mind and body as a whole, I can feel the improved result. There is no higher accomplishment from an organisation as you're moving from people's hearts and down into their hands: changing behaviours for the better, changing people for the better. For an organisation it's really about pushing people towards that desired state and instilling them with the confidence needed. When is not a deadline, it's an attitude.

Anchor your mission in people

Don't look inside the organisation to find the meaning why you matter to people, but rather look to people to see how you as an organisation can matter to them. If you want to fix the broken relationship, the answer lies in the relationship. Very few organisations can answer the question; "Who can you help me become?". When making the life better for your customers or stakeholders is the driving force behind your efforts, people can feel the difference, there's a concrete outcome and you drive the whole organisation towards fulfilling that promise. You become hyper-transformation-focused from every contact point in the organisation it's about saying: I'm there for you. It's a goal that's truly bigger than yourself as an organisation and for me the truest purpose. Purpose is not an eternal burning flame that inspires everyone around your brand. It's something people will have to find for themselves. All you can do is give them some dry wood,

matches and good advice, and hope for the best.

Like in any relationship, when you forget each other, when you don't spend enough time together, when you don't listen to each other, when you don't support each other or when one plus one doesn't make three anymore, you put the relationship at risk. You can have a shared passion or mission with someone, that makes you good friends, colleagues or kindred spirits, but if somebody empowers you and makes you see or experience a better version of yourself, that's a companion. Maybe even a companion for life? Think about your own life partner, girlfriend or boyfriend. Do you feel that he or she makes you feel better, worth more, capable of more? (If that's a no, I take no responsibility) As an organisation you should always aim to be in the transformation business asking yourself the pivotal question: WHO can you help people become?

3.0 TRANSFORMATIVE PROMISE

From purpose to transformative promise

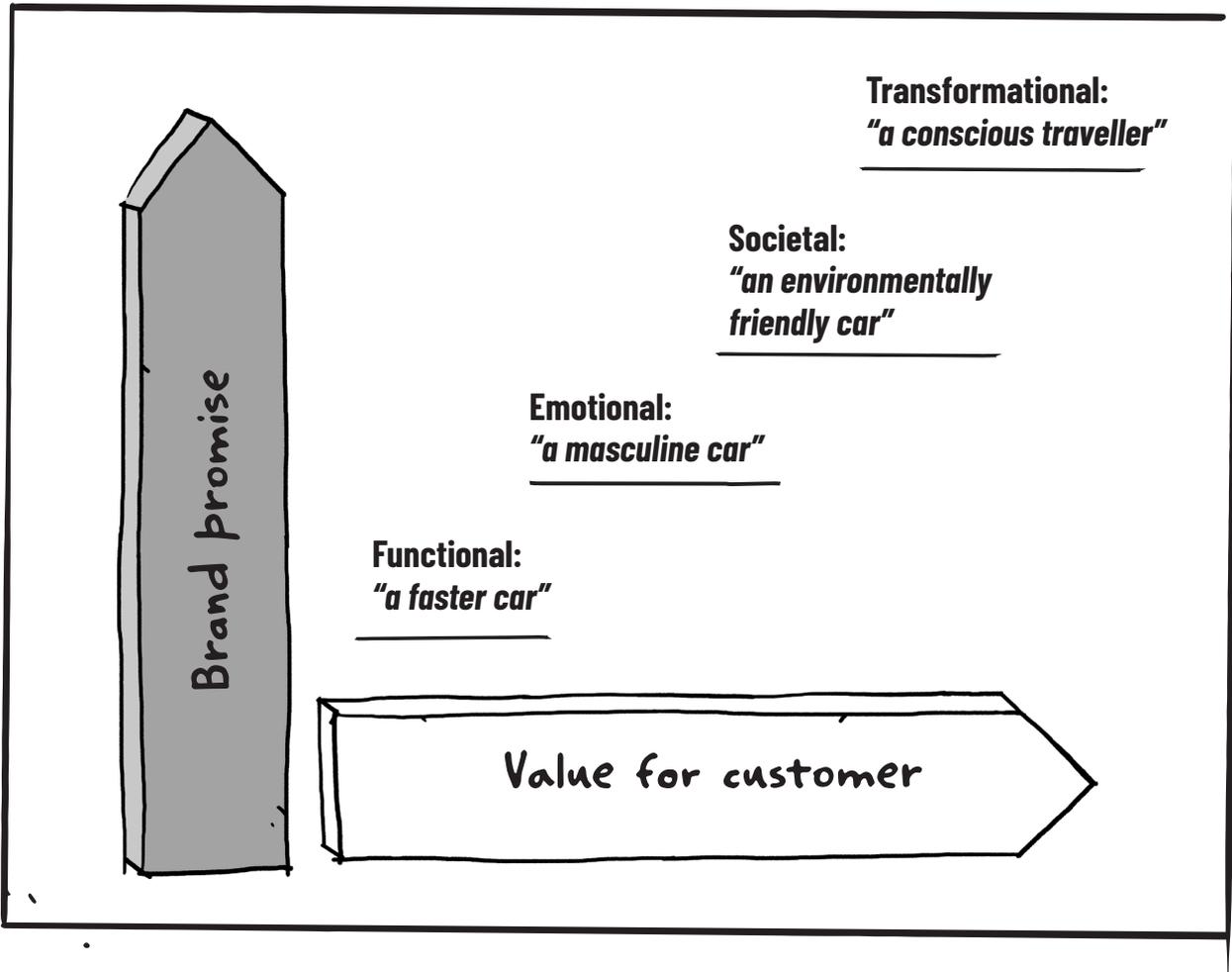
As someone that's touted the business case for purpose, it's time I question my own convictions. More often than not, purpose ends up as what I call a hero trap. If you asked a psychologist to evaluate most brand purposes, I guess the diagnosis would be somewhere between megalomania or delusion. The whole purpose space has moved from being a trust-building commercial exercise to a blind crusade with each brand trying to outdo the other's efforts. In the developed world where more and more companies are embracing more sustainable business

practices, adhering to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and crying their world-bettering commitments from every rooftop, it shouldn't be a surprise, that people are turning increasingly sceptical. Saying no to straws! Committing to wind energy! Minimising food waste! The space is overcommunicated and purpose is losing its meaning as it's become what "great, long-lasting taste" was to chewing gums in the eighties: tacky advertising lingo. As a consequence, it's increasingly difficult to claim or own a purpose positioning.

From functional benefit to transformational benefit

Societal, planetary or personal betterment, I believe, begins with an individual behaving differently. As positioning has moved from functional benefits (the faster car), to emotional benefits (the most masculine car), to societal benefits (the most environmentally friendly car), we're now moving to the very top of Maslow's pyramid to a transformational benefit unlocking self-actualisation (a more conscious traveller). The idea about a differentiating position has been the cornerstone of branding since Rosser Reeves and the USP, but as products and services were becoming more and more generic, the sustainability space has become a welcome opportunity in the last couple of years

to differentiate one product or service on its environmental and societal performance, from a more fuel-efficient car to one that's battery-powered. That societal difference is complex to measure and difficult to decipher or for that sake to believe. It's not getting easier as more and more companies speak up and admittedly, most people are too busy or convenience-seeking to take the needed time to review any potential metrics. The transformational benefit reshapes the branding landscape and focuses efforts on the tangible outcome people can feel organisations play in their lives, e.g. making them healthier or wiser.



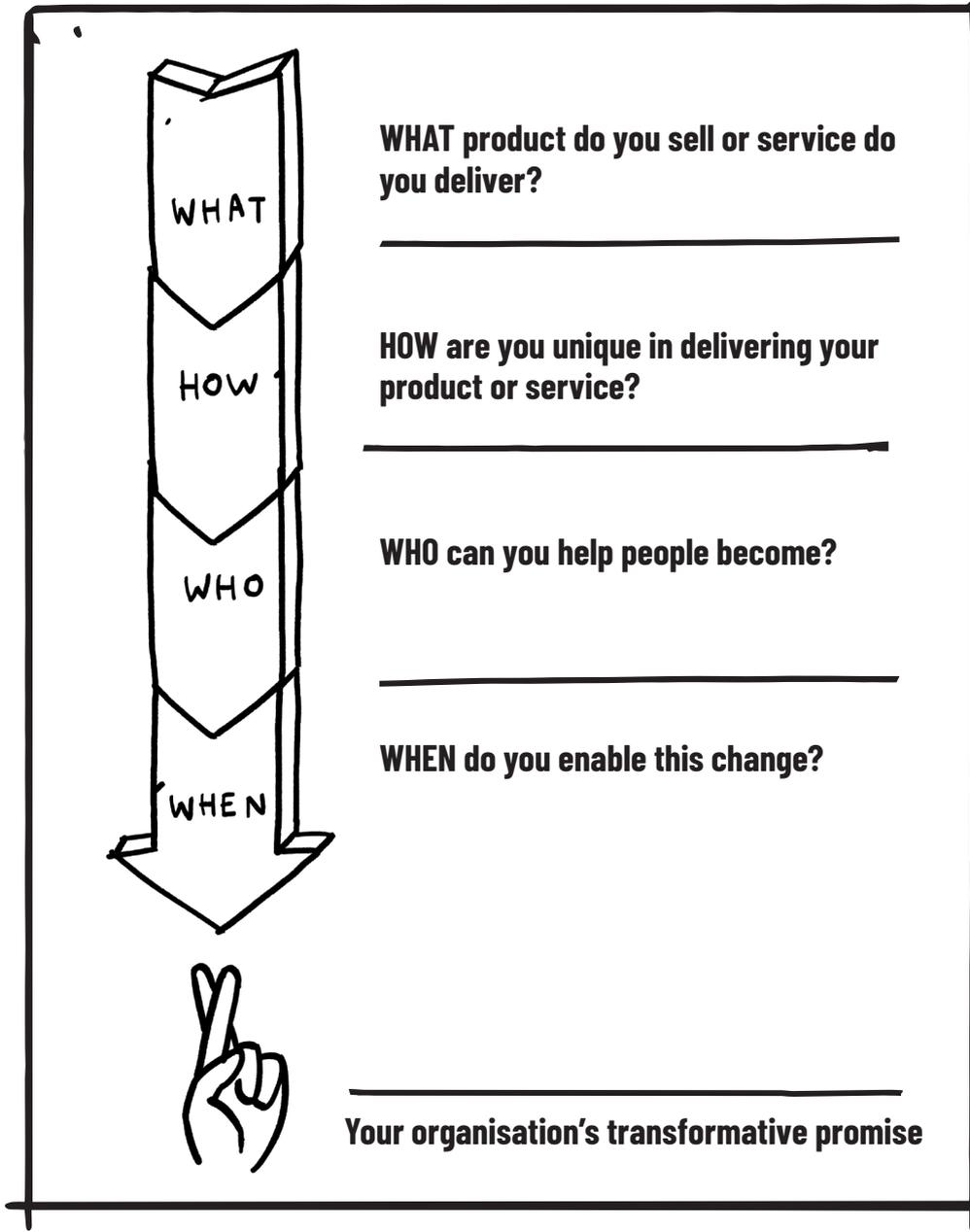
The end result, the delivery point of the Arrow process is what I call a transformative promise: it's a steadfast focus and a rallying cry as an organisation to enable better living for people. It's what people can expect from you, it's how you help them transform or get what they need. It's an organisational mission that matters, because it's ultimately about fulfilling people's goals, dreams and ambitions. Whereas most corporate purposes focus on the organisations goals, dreams and ambitions.

The transformative promise forces you as an organisation to put people's needs first with a single-minded focus to make them happen. It's your promise to people, your organisation's raison d'être, this is why you exist, this is your mission, this is what should get you up in the morning.

If your brand's transformative promise is focused on motivating people to face their challenges and overcome obstacles, I argue that the chance of them crossing the purpose gap and buying your product will be higher. The Promise should answer all four steps along the Arrow: WHAT, HOW, WHO and WHEN.

Let's use the health insurance company Discovery as an example. Discovery sells health insurances (WHAT) and are always by my side (HOW), as I want to be healthy and live a long life (WHO) and they are always there to incentivise me towards a healthier life and protect me from accidents (WHEN). Discovery's transformative promise, then is: "to incentivise people to be healthier, and enhance and protect their lives".

The Arrow



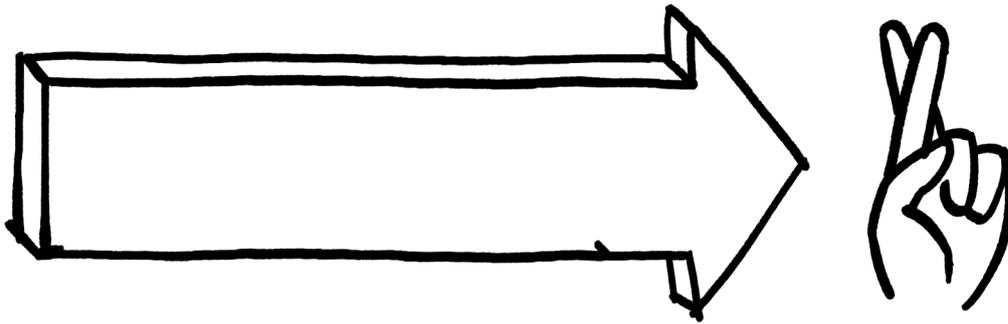
I see the transformative promise as an important and much-needed distinction between those organisations that have an internal purpose focus.

– ***"This is what we do"*** –
and those that serve people's passions;
"WHO can we help people become?"

Moreover, a promise is a declaration that one will do something or that a particular outcome will happen. It's goal-focused, it's people-focused. It's the difference between Discovery's vision "to incentivise people to be healthier, and enhance and protect their lives" and a thought-up example of an internally focused purpose from Company B: "We want to make the communities we operate in healthy and safe". Discovery acknowledges people's pivotal role in succeeding

and knows action is key by using the wording "to incentivise". Whereas Company B places itself as the agent of change and without addressing WHEN that change might or might not happen. Company B simply risk becoming too self-centred and too broad, forgetting who they're in business for. Your eyes should be on people's transformation or you'll risk being self-consumed by your own corporate purpose.

Def.: transformative promise



A transformative promise is a commitment towards a positive change an organisation enables in people's lives.

How to shape a transformative promise

Obviously, when you work your way through the Arrow and answer the WHAT, HOW, WHO and WHEN, you'll end up with a focused promise to people. But to assist you, I've have created these

five recommendations as reminders or pointers towards a transformative promise, which needs to be: people-centric, transformative, specific, active and operational.

How to shape a transformative promise

1. People-centric

Is the promise focused on an obstacle or benefit?

2. Transformative

Does the promise focus on a personal change or transformation?

3. Specific

Does the promise focus on a specific challenge or opportunity?

4. Active

Is the promise an active encouragement?

5. Operational

How is the promise enabling people across the business?

Oatly: *"Make it easy for people to turn what they eat and drink into personal moments of healthy joy without recklessly taxing the planet's resources in the process"*

Kind Snacks: *"Do the kind thing for your body, your taste buds and your world"*

Nike: *"Just do it"*

Pearson: *"Help people make progress in their lives through learning"*

Apple: *"Think different"*

LEGO: *"Inspire and develop the builders of tomorrow"*

RYU: *"We're here to help you achieve more than your gym goals, RYU is here for your life goals"*

Blinkist: *"Inspire people to keep learning"*

Examples of transformative promises

4.0 WHO VOID =

WHO void: Towards a blue ocean



In a time where products and services are essentially generic, brands are not. Your organisation's transformative promise should ultimately be differentiating and enabling individuals to achieve their goals. What you as an organisation should aspire towards is that position between what your products and services can enable, standing out from your competitors' positioning, and WHO people want to become. I call this a WHO void.

It's an unused or underdeveloped position - a void - where you can play a transformative difference in people's lives. Potentially it's a blue ocean that goes against conventional positioning, competition or category-thinking and opens up for new possibilities. In the world of branding, Red Bull owns that the-sky-is-no-limit role in people's lives, pushing them further and elevating a caffeine-enriched drink to a transformative positioning. It's a distinctive WHO void, no other energy drink - or no other brand for that matter - has been able to compete with.

Def.: WHO void

A differentiating position in the market where an organisation can play a transformative role in people's lives

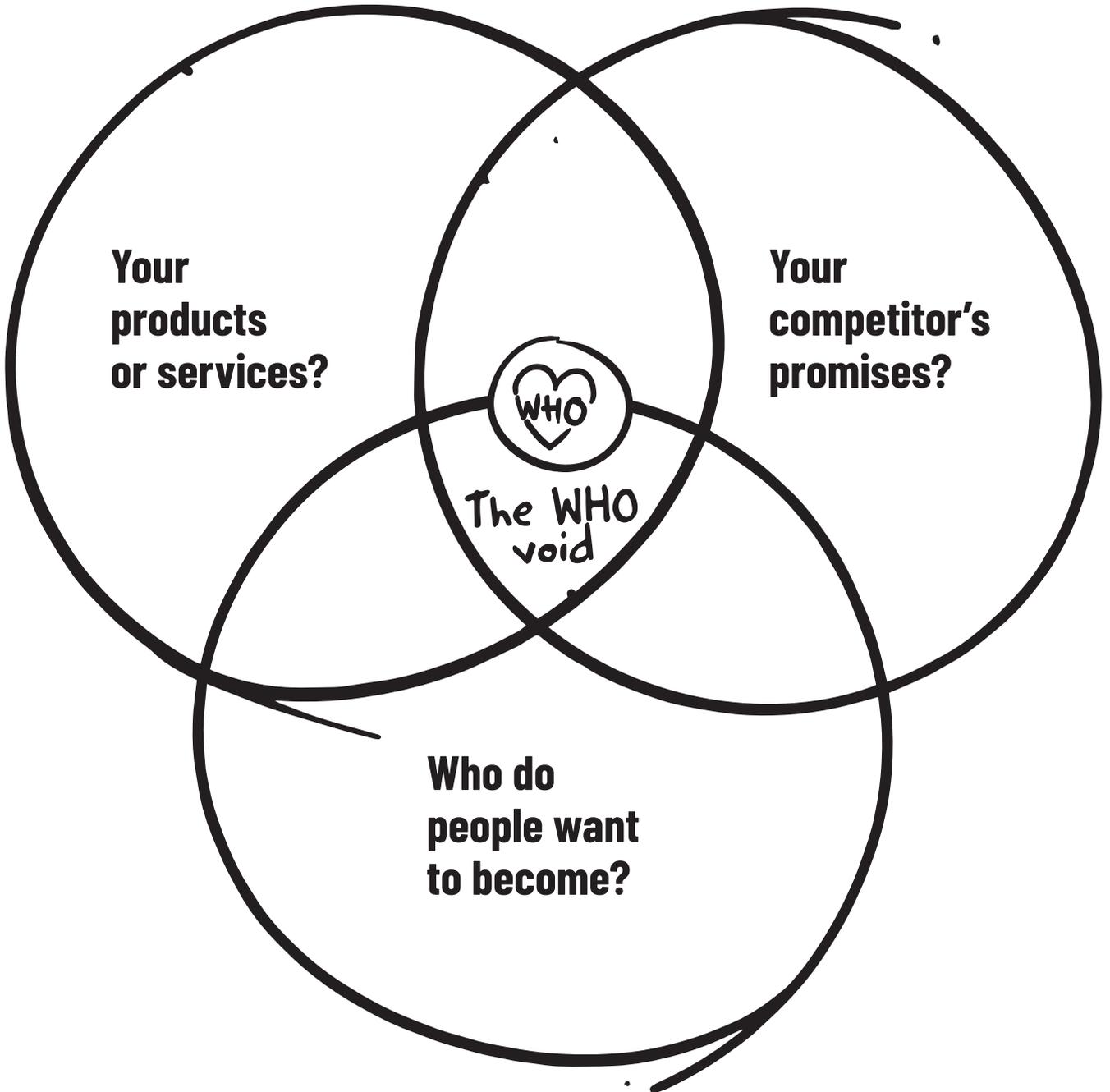
The answer to your company's success isn't necessarily found in the lab or by one of your truck drivers' ingenious ideas to pack more goods into a load, but by looking at your people's lives as a positioning canvas. Where can you matter? What can you make people achieve? Where can your products and services play a meaningful role in transforming people's lives?

If done right, you unlock business value by putting people in the driver's seat and aligning their goals with the organisation's goals. In the case of Discovery the more people that live healthy lives, the less Discovery have to pay in premiums. Or take Nike, pushing you towards becoming an athlete in life, which inevitably translates into more equipment (or services) needed for your sport endeavours. Branding is essentially about creating a distinctive position in people's minds, and transformative organisations enforce that brand by always playing a role in people's lives – not just in their minds.

Think about the majority of reality TV gluing millions to the screen every day. It's essentially a story of transformation, from 'Survivor', where it's about facing your own limitations to 'The Biggest Loser', where it's about overweight contestants battling to lose weight. Or take the TV program called 'The Luxury Trap', where ordinary people with bad or irresponsible finances are helped by two financial experts to save their private economy. When your organisation plays a similar part in people's lives and can own that position, you can potentially charge for the outcomes people achieve, like better health, finance or skills.

It pays to use the WHO void as a positioning canvas: look at your competitors' position, look at your products or services, look at WHO people want to become – and you'll potentially find your WHO void. The idea that somehow an organisation has to dominate our world, have a strong opinion or shape our world in its own image, that's an old view. A brand should first and foremost play a meaningful role in our lives.

The WHO void



The Brand Transformation Canvas

We all have something we want to see changed, improved or even removed from our lives.

What we seek to improve is often connected to what we view as a good life: as the Good Life survey, mentioned in an earlier chapter, shows, there's a pivot away from status and money towards simpler living, better health and better connections with friends. Do you relate to this in your own life?

There are as many challenges and personal struggles as there are people in the world, so for the purpose of overview, I've deducted the complexity down to a framework of 12 overall triggers for personal transformation. These can not only work as an inspiration for you as an organisation to help transform and enable people, but equally importantly, as a way to position your company against your competition or to discover new untapped market potential, e.g. how LEGO is fuelling their customers' self-development and creativity through play (Personal development) whereas most other toys go for Friends or Passion, fun and excitement.

The most iconic brands are often built on a strong human insight like LEGO that's tapping into our inherent human ability to play. An insight is like a looking glass into your thoughts and feelings, a voice formulating an unmet need or an indistinct feeling. Through my advertising career, I have always worked hard to unlock insights like these as they are the emotional building blocks of a strong and lasting brand platform.

In the fast-paced world of marketing we often forget the most basic element: playing a meaningful role in people's lives. If done right, it's not a gimmick, a short-lived mass-marketing message or an activation, but a relentless drive towards growing people. It's an outcome people can feel which will inevitably lead to a transformation, a change in their lives. Let's take a look at the 12 triggers described below, and how they can serve as an inspiration to create relevance.

5.0 THE PEOPLE TRANSFORMATION CANVAS =



Home

Providing people with a safe and secure environment for themselves and significant others.

Example: Lifestyle brand, KonMari, is on a mission towards simpler living: Tidy your space, transform your life.



Family

Nurturing deeper connections with family members.

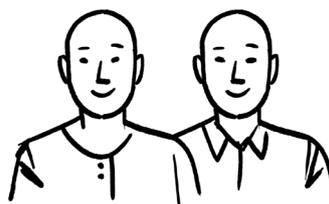
Example: The upscale hotel Wyndham offers a digital-detox program, called Reconnected, addressing the vital need for quality family time over screen time.



Romance

Enhancing the ability of people to find love and discover new meaningful connections.

Example: Dating platform Bumble challenges female users to make the first move, basically eliminating the bro-culture of other dating platforms.



Friends

Improving friendships and connections and giving a sense of belonging.

Example: Kind Snacks says; "do the kind thing for your body, your taste buds & your world".



Mindfulness _____

Unlocking the possibility for people to discover new deeper meaning of altruism, self-esteem, forgiveness, ethics, dignity and respect.
Example: The app Calm is on a mission to make people happier and healthier through mindfulness.



Personal development _____

Making people understand their motivations and fears and helping them realise their goals.
Example: RYU says: "We're here to help you achieve more than your gym goals, RYU is here for your life goals."



Work _____

Adding to people's professional development.
Example: LinkedIn says: "To connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful."



Passion, fun & excitement _____

Helping people explore new horizons, new experiences and follow their passions.
Example: Red Bull's relentless focus on "giving wings" to daredevils.



Finances _____

Providing people with the skills and resources to feel economically secure.
Example: Next bank enables young people to achieve their financial goals no matter what they are.



Societal contribution _____

Providing people with a possibility to contribute to something greater than themselves and experience community care and service.
Example: Precious Plastic's fight against plastic pollution.



Health _____

Improving people's physical health and wellbeing.
Example: Discovery incentivises people to become healthier.



Emotional wellbeing _____

Giving people increased confidence, security, vitality and emotional wellbeing.
Example: Always is committed to empowering young girls and women around the world.

There is a friend for your many sides

You probably recognise how your friends play different roles in your life and also brings out different sides in you. It's potentially the same with organisations. Sadly, most purposes I come across are rather industry generic, like a soap company fighting for hygiene, or a bank believing in financial empowerment. When you build your organisation's promise around the transformative outcome, you expand the possibilities and can potentially create your own blue ocean and leave your competitors outcrying each other. From a branding perspective, it also makes sense to aspire towards playing the biggest possible role in people's lives as a greater interaction strengthens the brand's distinctiveness and affinity.

Look at people's lives, the competitive landscape and see where there is a potential for transformation. It's not who people are, it's who they can become. As an organisation you're answering people's call – and there is a lot brands can help people achieve, because life is a constant battle to become a better version of ourselves. You've seen that in the real stories shared by people throughout the book as well from the many organisations already playing their part.

I call the organisations who strike the right balance 'transformative organisations' as they're setting a new agenda for leadership, a new agenda for personal and organisational growth. They don't ask people to believe in them or their corporate why, but to believe in their own ability to bring about change. As an organisation you have to change the perspective from "What you deliver" as an organisation to

how you enable people towards "Who they can become". Transformative brands sow the seeds and deliver the platform (from products, services to whatever you as an organisation can think of) to enable people to create the needed change. As more and more organisations are on a journey to find their higher reason to exist and build relevance with their customers or communities, it's about delivering a tangible change and not cheap words. Who is it you can truly help people become?

This outcome will be felt and valued, like Nike helping me rediscover my motivation for running with NikePlus. It's a move away from the last decades of mass-marketing and brand centrality "You get this" to enabling people with a promise saying "You can do this". Any organisation can sell stuff, but very few can help people achieve their goals, moving the relationship from transactional to transformational and enabling people to feel more, see more, do more, become more!

The transformative organisation connects people's heart with the head and hand, pushing them towards action: *"This is what we're doing for someone else."* Everyone in the organisation can see how enabling people in turn drives sales and brand affinity. The organisation's North Star is action-oriented towards driving people to self-actualisation. We are our own biggest enemies of change, so if any organisation wants to move people it begins with the individual "you" as this quote assigned to the religious leader Hillel the Elder simply states: "If not you, who? If not now, when?"

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- ① Are people living or acting on your purpose?
- ② Does your company's mission convert into better lives and increased sales?
- ③ What role do you play in people's life?
- ④ How does your offering change people's lives?
- ⑤ When do you enable this change?



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