

- 1 You can't separate **brand & strategy**. They're both about the sort of firm you are & want to be, who you want to work for, the work you want to do & how you're going to win it.
- 2 Don't even think about visual identity until you've nailed your **brand essence & positioning**. You can't communicate what makes you distinctive until you've uncovered what makes you distinctive.
- 3 **Under no circumstances use any of these words** anywhere: expertise, friendly, integrity, leading, pre-eminent, premier, professional, quality, strategic, unrivalled. They're boring & everyone uses them.
- 4 Everything you say needs to pass the RAD test - it needs to be **relevant, authentic & distinctive**.
- 5 Your **brand essence** is, well, the essence of what makes you distinctive. Your DNA. You should be able to express it in one or two words. If you can't, people won't remember it.
- 6 Your **positioning statement** is the big, bold declaration of what you want the world to think when they hear your name. It's your "The Ultimate Driving Machine" moment. Make the most of it.
- 7 Your **business purpose** isn't about who you are or what you do. It's about what you do for your clients & what they can do because of that. This is what your clients & prospects are interested in.
- 8 Can you pinpoint **real life examples** of doing specific things for your clients & people that demonstrate your values? If you can't, you don't have those values. Also, see point three.
- 9 You don't need more than **four messages** to support your brand. The more messages you have the less they'll be remembered. Messages can be personalised to different markets if necessary.
- 10 Make sure your **tone of voice** includes guidance for headlines & titles that grab the attention. They're a really powerful way to stand out.
- 11 Include a signal in your **visual identity** so people know something's yours without needing to see your name or logo (think the Burberry check).
- 12 Use the **fewest, boldest words** you can throughout. The whole point is to stand out.
- 13 Don't ask "do I like it?" Ask "**does it work?**". It doesn't matter how much you like something if it doesn't work - to know if something works you need a really tight brief, so have one of those as well.