

## **Top-of-Mind Positioning is Center of Your Business Universe**

**by Lillian D. Bjorseth, president  
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No matter the size of the company, marketing is one of the key skills that has to be mastered. It continues to intrigue me that people hire accountants and attorneys (as they should) to help them set up and maintain their business, yet seldom budget for help (as they should) in the marketing arena. They may have built a better mousetrap, yet they don't know how to let the world know they have built it ... and continue to build it. Could that be why countless companies never celebrate their first anniversary?

Most of us know the standard 4 Ps of marketing: product, price, place (distribution) and promotion. I'd like to introduce you to the 3 Ps of marketing that have helped me build two successful businesses: Positioning, Packaging and Promoting. Let's look at each of them more closely.

### **Positioning**

It is essential that you establish yourself as an expert in your field so that when people think of (you fill in the blank), they think of (fill in your name). The first blank is all-important. It needs to be a business/job function/service or product that is commonly known. It needs to be stated in lay terms rather than industry jargon, i.e. you want as many people as possible to instantaneously think of you and, therefore, they have to understand what you do. Stay away from terms like good customer service, quality, commitment or reliability. I've met few people who don't think they excel in those areas. Actually, these words are a useless promotional tool if people don't know what business you are in.

Start with "what" you do to zero in on your top-of-the mind positioning. For instance, if you are in real estate, are you in real estate investment, real estate relocation, residential real estate, commercial real estate or 1031 exchanges? Apply this same example to your business.

Think of your top-of-the mind positioning statement as the center of your business universe and all your marketing efforts as spokes emanating from that wheel. Those spokes, in turn, are what help establish you as the subject matter expert. The same principle applies if you're employed corporately. Your positioning statement helps you plan your personal marketing within the company, which is vital for lateral moves, promotions and for establishing your reputation in your industry.

### **Packaging**

This "P" involves you personally (and your printed image if you own the company.) People decide 10 things about you within 10 seconds of seeing you based on your image, a combination of your appearance and behavior. Every color you wear elicits a conscious and unconscious response from others. Know what colors say responsibility, authority, power, success as well as which one say stability and dependability, but not power. And, which ones cause people's blood pressure and pulse

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rate to increase or feel nurtured and soothed and which one can cause people to feel anxious and uncomfortable.

On the behavior side, learn how to make your posture “say” confidence, give a professional handshake, have good eye contact and use positive gestures that coordinate with your words.

I call this concept Impression Management. Know what impression you want to make and then how to make it to market yourself successfully since your personal brand and image are inextricably linked with your company and your job.

### **Promoting**

This involves your publicity strategies, vehicles and messages. First of all, decide on three or four major marketing messages. By the way, this is essential if you are in transition. You can separate yourself immediately from others who are interviewing by succinctly articulating your strengths, benefits and selling points.

Your vehicles can include networking, media releases or articles online or in print, a website, e-mail signature, ezine or newsletter, advertisements, promotions, sponsorships or direct mail. Once you have established yourself as a subject matter expert, the media will seek you out for interviews.

Many of these tools are free and involve only your time and expertise. Some of them cost money if you do them yourself or hire someone to assist you. Be sure to budget for them based on the order of importance in letting the world know about your better mousetrap.

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**The *Chicago Tribune* calls Lillian D. Bjorseth a networking expert. The Association Forum of Chicagoland dubs her a business networking authority. Since leaving AT&T in 1990 after a successful career in public relations, Lillian has helped tens of thousands of people built high-value relationships by improving business development, business networking and communication skills. She’s a speaker, trainer, skills coach and author, whose published works include *Breakthrough Networking: Building Relationships That Last*. 630-983-5308, [www.duoforce.com](http://www.duoforce.com), [lillianspeaks@duoforce.com](mailto:lillianspeaks@duoforce.com).**

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