



**Dimalanta**  
DESIGN GROUP

# SUCCESSFUL MARKETING



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

## 03 **CREATING A MARKETING PLAN**

MARKETING WITH A DOSE OF PSYCHOLOGY  
COGNITIVE TUNNELING  
REACTIVE THINKING

## 05 **REVISIT YOUR MISSION**

REVISIT. REDEFINE. RECONSIDER.  
REVISITING YOUR BRAND POSITIONING AND YOUR WHY  
REDEFINING YOUR MVVP  
RECONSIDER YOUR IDEAL TARGET AUDIENCE  
THE STEPHENSON MODEL

## 08 **DETERMINE YOUR OBJECTIVES**

CREATING STRATEGY PYRAMIDS

## 09 **A MARKETING BUDGET**

HERE IS HOW YOU CREATE A MARKETING BUDGET  
WHERE FLEXIBILITY IS POSSIBLE

## 10 **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

WHAT ARE YOUR GAUGES?  
THE BRAVING INVENTORY

Do you feel like you're spinning your wheels when it comes to marketing your company? You're not alone. Marketing can be a daunting task. One of the biggest keys to success in business is effective marketing. Marketing can be tough though - it's constantly evolving and changing, making it difficult to keep up with the latest trends. However, with a little organization and planning, you can create a successful marketing strategy that works for your business. Follow these five steps to get started.



## CREATING A MARKETING PLAN

### MARKETING WITH A DOSE OF PSYCHOLOGY

You've heard the expression, "practice makes perfect." Well, in the marketing realm, "planning makes perfect." There are so many new marketing trends, social media strategies, apps and new fangled tactics pushed our way every single day. A lot of businesses chose to "wing it." They fly off into the sunset with a week's worth of Instagram reels, crossing their fingers and hoping they'll reach marketing heaven inhabited affectionately by 15 new customers. But, this "wing it" strategy just isn't reliable.

Dimalanta exists as a guide to help businesses stay grounded in reality while achieving the success of their wildest dreams. In this whitepaper, we're going to unveil every core marketing philosophy we have within our company, beginning with the importance of a marketing plan. We want to offer you a few tips on how to, first, assess where your marketing weaknesses lie and then integrate that information within a consistent plan that is comprehensive and executable. In simple terms, we want to help you create mental models for how you approach marketing. These are strategies that can help you focus, work smarter, not harder, and, in the end, win. In order to help you win, we have to take a look at where you might have marketing difficulties...

### COGNITIVE TUNNELING

There are two types of "wing it" that we witness in working with different companies. The first is something psychologists call cognitive tunneling.

*"Cognitive tunneling can cause people to become overly focused on whatever is directly in front of their eyes or become preoccupied with immediate tasks. It's what keeps someone glued to their smartphone as the kids wail or pedestrians swerve around them on the sidewalk. When we are in a cognitive tunnel, we lose our ability to direct our focus. We latch onto the easiest and most obvious stimulus, often at a great cost."*

(Duhigg, Charles. Smarter, Faster, Better. New York, NY, Random House Publishing, 2016.)

What if you allowed this example to uncover some truths about your business? Maybe the reason you don't have a marketing director at your company is that...well...you've just never had one. In general terms, maybe the culture of your company tends to swirl around one main mode of marketing, the immediate tasks and urgent problems in front of everybody, or the intricate nuances of the product you're selling. But, what if your problems could be solved in a different, more present, more attentive, and, ultimately, more lucrative way? What if you stepped out of the tunnel and decided that just because "this is the way things have always been done" doesn't mean they have to stay that way. What if you exercised more effort and attention in marketing?

### REACTIVE THINKING

Episode Two of "wing it" arrives in the form of what psychologists have labeled, reactive thinking.

"Reactive thinking is at the core of how we allocate our attention and, in many settings is a tremendous asset." (Duhigg, Charles. Smarter, Faster, Better. New York, NY, Random House Publishing, 2016.) But, reactive thinking is essentially the process of outsourcing the choices and control that we could potentially wield in our lives that, in other settings, create motivation.

"The downside of reactive thinking is that habits and reactions can become so automatic they overpower judgment. Once our motivation is outsourced, we simply react." (Duhigg, Charles. Smarter, Faster, Better. New York, NY, Random House Publishing, 2016.)

Here is where this concept shows up in a company with regards to marketing:

On a normal, average, gloomy Monday in the middle of November, the sales team of a company is informed they've slowly been losing customers to a competitor over the entire course of the year and that if they don't act fast no bonuses will be given in December. Each member of the sales team looks frantically at the other unwilling to own any of the failures. They, then, spill their newly brewed, winter blend coffees between blames, scoffs, and retorts. They also immediately begin throwing together desperate brochures, sending panicked emails, and posting 5 infographics a day on Instagram.

This is called reactionary thinking, not marketing.

So, at this point, you may be convinced that you need a marketing plan. Whether you hire a marketing director, have a marketing director, or decide to outsource your marketing, here are a few reasons you must have a plan:

1. In creating a plan, you are forced to look back and assess what is and isn't working well. This is a tedious process, which takes a lot of focus (especially if you have "winged it"), but it adds depth, authenticity, and value to your marketing efforts and, in the end, saves you time and money.
2. Once you create a plan based on this data, you can accurately evaluate and assess that plan and make subtle changes for the rest of the year. Without a solid plan that is calendared, you may not know why one marketing idea works better than others.
3. With a marketing plan, your company will begin to feel more centered and well-led. Without a marketing plan in place, a company may experience inner-departmental conflict. See the sales team failure example above.
4. A marketing plan encourages you to dream. When you decide to assess all the factors and see the whole picture of your company--the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats--you begin to create dreams and visions about what could be possible. Through these visions, you begin to hone in on the deep values of your company. From those values, you begin to set attainable goals or, in other words, you begin telling yourself stories about what a healthy, thriving company looks like. When something does go wrong, you'll know right away and help steer your team in the right direction.

Consider this example from the New York Times Best Seller, *Smarter, Faster, Better*, by Charles Duhigg:

One researcher named Beth Crandall, from Klein and Associates, a consulting firm made up of psychologists sought to understand why some individuals focus and make good choices amid the stress and some react poorly. She performed her research in a NICU critical care setting where stress and tension are often high. Nurses in these units have stressful jobs. It is not always clear which babies are sick and which are healthy. Nurses tend to have a difficult time deciding what voice to listen to first; that of the machines, a concerned parent, or their own intuitions. In most cases, the nurses defer to the machines, but that is not always the best choice. In one situation, a nurse named Darlene was going about her usual workday and passed a baby in an incubator who was assigned to another nurse. All the machines showed this baby's vitals were normal and the nurse attending to the baby said the child was eating and seemed unconcerned by what she saw. But, Darlene saw something else. She saw that the baby's skin was mottled instead of uniformly pink, the child's belly was distended and there was a blot of crimson on the bandage from a pinprick on the baby's heel. Darlene insisted that the baby be seen by the attending physician, that the appropriate tests be conducted, and that they start the child on intravenous antibiotics. When the labs came back, they revealed that the child was in the early stages of sepsis, a potentially fatal whole-body inflammation caused by a severe infection. Darlene saved the child's life. When asked later, how she knew there was something off about that child, Darlene replied that she constantly carries with her a picture of a healthy, thriving baby in her head and that when something is off she recognizes instantly that it doesn't match the picture. (Duhigg, Charles. *Smarter, Faster, Better*. New York, NY, Random House Publishing, 2016.)

The psychologists observed that "people like Darlene who are particularly good at managing their attention tend to share certain characteristics. They participate in a kind of habitual forecasting(...) they can create pictures in their minds of what they expect to see. These people tell themselves stories about what's going on as it occurs. They can visualize their days with more specificity than the rest of us. This is called "creating mental models" and it has become one of the most important topics in cognitive psychology. (Duhigg, Charles. *Smarter, Faster, Better*. New York, NY, Random House Publishing, 2016.)

This idea is exactly what we are proposing as the key to your marketing efforts: creating healthy mental models for your business through a marketing plan.

We want to help you begin to unlock the true potential of your creativity and “mental model crafting” capability. We believe this ability to see the whole picture of your company, dream the dream, and set goals around that dream will beam you to more success in business.

One way you can start creating mental models is through a SWOT Analysis. In this analysis, you will begin to see the whole picture...where your marketing currently exists and where you can go in the future.

First, you assess your company’s strengths and weaknesses by surveying data from your team culture and customer service. You then focus attention on your opportunities by looking at different tactics, platforms, campaigns, segments of the market, and new product launches. Next, you assess your company’s threats which is anything within or outside that may hinder your marketing. The goal of a SWOT analysis is to provide insight and clarity so you can see the whole picture and craft an ideal model.

Good marketing involves a good dose of psychology. Within these Marketing Minutes, we promise to provide you with some of the latest research in business psychology. Remember, don’t “wing it” either through cognitive tunneling or reactive thinking. Choose to be like our good friend Darlene who allowed her mind to beam to new heights of imagination and create the mental structures necessary to perform excellently at her job. Create a marketing plan and you will create your company’s future success.

## 2 REVISIT YOUR MISSION

### REVISIT. REDEFINE. RECONSIDER.

As you’ve begun developing your marketing plan and diving deeper into visions and dreams for your business, you may have noticed some questions arising...

Why do I get out of bed every day? Is it just to make coffee and a profit? Am I in this work for something more? Am I inspiring anybody? Is this just about checking off tasks? What makes my company unique compared to our competitors?

If you haven’t experienced these popcorn questions yet, consider taking a step back from your marketing planning to thoroughly answer them. A crucial aspect of an honest marketing plan will be revisiting your brand positioning and your why. You also must redefine something we like to call your MVVP (mission, vision, value, purpose), and you must reconsider your Ideal Target Audience.

Let’s dive in...

### REVISITING YOUR BRAND POSITIONING AND YOUR WHY

Brand positioning has been defined by The Brand Journal as “the act of designing the company’s offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market.” In other words, brand positioning describes how a brand is different from its competitors and where, or how, it sits in customers’ minds.

([www.thebrandingjournal.com/2016/11/brand-positioning-definition/](http://www.thebrandingjournal.com/2016/11/brand-positioning-definition/))

An integral aspect of brand positioning is uncovering your organization’s why. Your why is what motivates your company and your brand, outside of just making money. It affects what voice you use to communicate, what colors you choose for your website, the way customer service representatives answer the phone, and what design speaks your message through your logo.



In short, your why affects everything about your brand and your business.

About 12 years ago, Simon Sinek made this, why, discovery. He coded the difference between people like Martin Luther King, Jr., the Wright brothers, Apple, and everybody else. He said the difference looks like something called the golden circle. This circle, with “why” in the middle, “how” as the next ring, and “what” as the outer ring defines why some people and organizations can inspire and others can not. There are virtually no organizations that cannot define what they do. Most, if not all, organizations know how they do what they do. But, very few organizations know why they do what they do. By why, he did not mean, “to make a profit.” That is a result of what you do, not a passionate purpose. Sinek says, “the difference between leaders and organizations that inspire and flourish and those that don’t is that some understand their purpose, their cause, and why they get out of bed in the morning.” Sinek encourages organizations to think, act and communicate from the inside out—from their why out to their what.



---

People don’t buy what you do. They buy why you do it.

---

**Simon Sinek**

---

Sinek emphasizes that people buy from brands and stay loyal to brands that speak to their emotions. People buy identities, self-worth, “first place,” “above the status quo,” and things that “just make them feel better.” When organizations only communicate what they sell in facts, figures, and statistics, people literally go, “meh.” But, when for example, Apple communicates their why through messaging like, “We are here to make the best products on earth, and to leave the world better than we found it,” people believe they’re not buying just any ol’ computer, but the best computer. They are buying “first place” when they buy from Apple and they feel great about it too.

So what is your why? What is it about what you do that drives you? What are the underlying emotions in all of the different aspects of your work? What are some of the feelings you associate with your work that go beyond language--that reach beyond facts, figures, and 3 point plans?

### **REDEFINING YOUR MVVP**

Inevitably, revisiting your brand positioning through the evaluation of your why will lead to redefining the mission, vision, values, and purpose of your organization. Lean into this process! This is a natural and important effect of revisiting your brand and your why.

### **MISSION**

The mission of your organization is the compass that sets your team in the right direction. It is discovered by reaching into the heart of your why and pulling out all the important factors that support and are involved in your why. According to Forbes Magazine, an effective mission statement must be a clear, concise declaration about your business strategy.

([www.forbes.com/sites/patrickhull/2013/01/10/answer-4-questions-to-get-a-great-mission-statement/?sh=4edd086067f5](http://www.forbes.com/sites/patrickhull/2013/01/10/answer-4-questions-to-get-a-great-mission-statement/?sh=4edd086067f5))

### **VISION**

Your vision statement is simply where do you want to be 5 to 10 years from now and more closely aligns



with your marketing plan. You can expect the marketing plan or “mental model” (see previous Marketing Minute article) you’ve begun creating for your company to cultivate your vision statement. A good vision statement is an expansive view of how your company is going to leave a positive impact on customers and the greater community.

### **VALUES**

Your values are also formed largely based on your why, your past experiences, and your bravest dream about the kind of character and integrity you hope to lead with. If you are the leader of your company, your personal values will inevitably shape the values of the company as a whole. It is still vital, however, that you allow your employees to develop and share their personal values with your team. Your values keep your company firm, strong and honest.



---

A value is a way of being or believing that we hold most important...Living into our values means that we do more than profess our values, we practice them. We walk our talk—we are clear about what we believe and hold important, and we take care that our intentions, words, thoughts, and behaviors align with those beliefs.

---

**Brené Brown, Ph.D., LMSW**

---

Research professor Brene Brown in her book, Dare to Lead, emphasizes that in values work, “we can’t live into values that we can’t name.” This is why establishing values and voicing them to your team is so important. When you name your values publicly, you are held accountable for living out those values. Here is another important note from Brown, “We have only one set of values. Our values can’t shift based on context.” Woof! This means we are called to live a certain way that runs parallel to what we hold most valuable regardless of the setting or situation.

We recommend you name 2-4 values and ask your team to do the same. Then, name the values of your company and consider how you and your company are living-out those values through behavior.

### **PURPOSE**

We won’t spend much time on this, nor do we need to. Your purpose is simply your why but as a whole sentence. It is important that you formulate that sentence, however, and take great care with it. When you feel run down as a leader or the country hits an economic crisis that affects your company, you will need to remember a clear, concise statement of why you are in this work. It doesn’t help you to hold a foggy, vague idea of what you are passionate about. State your why as a clear sentence and plaster it all over your organization.

### **RECONSIDER YOUR IDEAL TARGET AUDIENCE**

You are almost there! You are almost ready to dive head-long into marketing planning. You’ve stated your why. You’ve revisited your brand positioning using that why. You’ve redefined your mission, vision, values, and purpose. Now you need to reconsider who your audience is. Get specific and ask yourself and your team, what are the variables that define our target audience? Below is a tool we highly recommend as you reconsider your ITA.

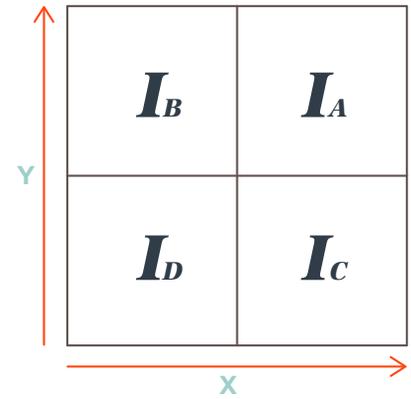
### **THE STEPHENSON MODEL**

The Stephenson Model is a great way to mentally grasp who you are trying to reach. Through this tool,

business owners can identify the primary characteristics of their ideal client.

The Stephenson model is a 4 quadrant figure with an x and y-axis.

1. Start by asking yourself, what is the primary characteristic (revenue is a great place to start) of our ideal consumer? Place this answer on the y axis.
2. Next, identify the second characteristic of an ideal prospect. This could be personality, location, or type of business, such as a family-owned business. Place this characteristic on the x-axis.
3. Now that you have both x and y-axis, prioritize your ideal to less-than-ideal prospects using your quadrants and find your most ideal spot. Here is where you shoot for the bullseye! Inevitably, you will also hit other potential clients that are outside your ideal prospect but aim for that bullseye--that target client--first. In marketing, you have to give your business the opportunity to hit the ideal target.
4. After you've established your bullseye, sharpen your aim even more. Make a list of even more ideal variables; be as specific as possible and dive deeper. Maybe you identify the main decision-maker in a business you're trying to reach. Ask yourself, what are they like? What capacity are they working in? Isolate and determine even more variables. This can go on and on...



In a game of darts, you can never aim too accurately. What do you have to lose? So, you hit the ideal target every time. That'd be ok! You're bound to hit some of the outside numbers even if you aim perfectly. But, if you don't sharpen your aim, you may not even hit the board. Defining your ideal target audience is always the best way to win in marketing and the process will help you define your marketing plan even more!

Revisit. Redefine. Reconsider. This is such brave work, but the pain and process are worth every minute. If you jump into this work honestly and clear enough space for the appropriate amount of discussion and reflection your team needs to implement these strategies, you WILL experience flourishing growth both personally and professionally. What could be better than that?!

## 3 DETERMINE YOUR OBJECTIVES

### CREATING STRATEGY PYRAMIDS

Wherever you find a business owner or entrepreneur you will also find a dreamer, a creative, a visionary, and a BIG thinker. The problem with dreams and visions is they can only take an entrepreneur so far. After the idea has been pushed through to production, nothing will sell without a hefty dabble in some marketing. But, marketing just becomes a giant source of stress and confusion without a marketing strategy that works from BIG vision out to the corners of the vast market. From the sunny dream down to grounded practical tactics and back up again. A business needs more than an idea. A business needs a flow--a model that can help perpetuate a rhythm of focus, stability, and prosperity.

In ancient Egyptian society, kings held a unique position. It was believed that kings were chosen by the gods as mediators of the earth and occupied a space somewhere between human and divine. Because of this belief, early Egyptians sought to preserve the king's majesty even after his death. During the third and fourth dynasties of the Old Kingdom, Egypt experienced tremendous economic prosperity and stability and was, therefore, able to construct giant, layered tombs with which to protect all that the king was about. The large, excessive structure symbolized the wealth and power of the kings. The tombs themselves were chock-full of intricate pieces of history, art, and treasured belongings. The pyramid's smooth angled sides symbolized rays of the sun and were designed to help the king's soul ascend to the heavens and join the gods. (History.com Editors. "Egyptian Pyramids." History, 30 Sept 2019, <https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/the-egyptian-pyramids>)

No matter what our personal opinions are of these early Egyptians and their gargantuan displays of wealth, pyramids are an incredible visual tool. They can help us build strategies that are stable, focused, and

ultimately prosperous. There is stability to be discovered in the idea of layering and organizing the prized ideas of a business from big visions at the top to practical tactics and programs at the bottom. A heavenly sense of focus is found when managers can look back up to that original vision for guidance and support. Lastly, marketing structures that successfully flow out to the very edges of the market are usually very prosperous. So, let's dive into how to create and use strategy pyramids.

## **FOCUS**

Strategy pyramids place the main vision, idea or strategy at the top, supported by tactics in the middle, and programs at the base. Pull out a piece of paper and start drawing out your pyramid with or have a graphic designer start laying out some ideas with your team members present. Place your vision at the top of the pyramid with some ideas about your strategy. This will help you focus on specific markets, market needs, and product offerings. This will provide focus and intentionality where there was only the whiff of a dream. Focus is how a dream comes true. You weed out all the unnecessary emotions and distractions associated with an idea and actually get down to business.

## **STABILITY**

After you place your vision at the sunny top spot of your pyramid, tactics follow which set the ground rules for your marketing message and the way it should be communicated. Programs are at the base of the pyramid and provide specifics for implementation. These can include milestone dates, expense budgets, and projected sales results. You develop your specific programs within your milestones so you can track progress by assigning a program lead to each one, with a budget, and milestone goals. It is vitally important to track and measure the expense of the programs for each tactic and match the emphasis of the spending with the emphasis in your vision. This process will increase the likelihood of implementation and progress, which will add stability to your big, wild idea. We recommend using SMART objectives to assess the progress of your tactics and programs. Make sure your programs and milestones are...

- Specific
- Measurable
- Actionable
- Realistic
- Timely

## **PROSPERITY**

By implementing strategy pyramids you will start to find a flow within your company and usher your dreams into being. The chaos of a BIG idea sounds thrilling in the beginning, but only leads to frustration and stress. You have to find a strategy to grasp and let it lead you to success. Just like the sleek sides of our economic symbol for prosperity, your mindset when focused and stable can lead you upward to the economic heavens you desire.



## **A MARKETING BUDGET**

Let's be honest, most of us saw our marketing budgets completely blow up in the year 2020. Organizations not only faced an enormous amount of pressure financially but also lost reliability on historical data to help predict the future. This left all of us in a disorienting position. Why? Because marketing budgets are more than cells in a spreadsheet. Marketing budgets are a mindset.

In this step, we want to discourage you from pretending that everything is fine. In fact, we suggest that you "embrace the suck." By living in reality, you can begin to adjust and shift your priorities. This shifting unleashes your creative power and will assist you in creating and executing an effective marketing budget for the future.

The key to unlocking a world of marketing budget success rather than marketing budget stress is flexibility, curiosity, and adaptability. Here are three mindset shifts we suggest for a successful digital marketing budget:

1. Budgets are more than cells in a spreadsheet

2. The future is unpredictable
  3. You cannot just create it and neglect it
- We already discussed the first shift so let's blaze on to the next...

**Shift two:** The future is unpredictable. This is why we have to begin normalizing change within our organizations, especially within our financial departments.

**HERE'S HOW**

- Praise flexibility, curiosity, and adaptability as valued character traits. This leadership strategy is incredibly necessary if we want our marketing budgets to remain effective in the year 2021. When we lead our teams to take on the character trait of curiosity, for example, we are more successful at planning for changes in the marketing landscape without basing our predictions on fear. This will create secure, positive outcomes for the budget leaving stress at the door.
- In our current era, a digital marketing budget is vital. The problem is social media algorithms are constantly shifting. We have to urge our teams not to marry editorial calendars and digital marketing budgets. They must, instead, circle back every month and assess what has changed and where they need to scale up to capture demand.

**Shift three:** You cannot create a budget and then neglect it. You have to allow space for changes and alterations. Again, we are driving the concept of flexibility!

**HERE IS HOW YOU CREATE A MARKETING BUDGET WHERE FLEXIBILITY IS POSSIBLE**

- Set aside 10% to launch a new product or new branding using a digital marketing strategy.
- Set aside 4% for maintaining visibility and credibility.  
\*A GOOD TIP: visibility + credibility = profitability
- Set aside 1% for little extras. These are new campaigns and or training opportunities that you expect will pop up.

This budget strategy is the blood, sweat, and tears of marketing work. You work hard to craft a beautiful budget but look for it all to combust and change. This strategy is the only way we've discovered you can be successful in the year 2021 with an unpredictable future and a digital marketing game that changes daily and demands you pay attention.

Marketing budgets are hard work, but, as Brene Brown says, "We can do hard things." So shift your mindset and go with the flow. Marketing budgets are more than rows and spreadsheets and we have no idea what's next, which is why we must constantly circle back and create space for change.



**5 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

**WHAT ARE YOUR GAUGES?**

This is our last piece in the series of 5 steps on our DDG vision for branding and marketing. Wew! We explored what it means to make marketing plans when we let go of perfection and, instead, step into psychology. We revisited, redefined, and rediscovered the big MVVP. We created strategy pyramids to successfully determine goals and objectives. We discovered new ways of thinking about marketing budgets. Now, we're going to combine all of this knowledge and reveal ways to measure stability through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

First, ask the question, what does success look like in the various facets of our business? What is success going to look like on social media? What does success look like in terms of revenue? What does success look like for team culture? How will we measure whether or not our entire marketing plan is built for success? The answers to these questions are called, Key Performance Indicators. As you collect your answers, glance over your MVVP statements and assess whether or not your ideal answers align with them. After you complete this assessment, find some tools that will help you evaluate your success. Here are some that we love!

Our team is just beginning to use Brene Brown's Braving Inventory tool as a KPI for team culture. Brown explains how the tool works in her book, *Dare to Lead*. "Each person fills out the BRAVING Inventory independently, then meets one-on-one to discuss where experiences align and where they differ. It's a relational process that, when practiced well and within a safe container, transforms relationships."

## THE BRAVING INVENTORY

**Boundaries:** You respect boundaries, and when you're not clear about what's okay and not okay, you ask. You're willing to say no.

**Reliability:** You do what you say you'll do. At work, this means staying aware of your competencies and limitations.

**Accountability:** You own your mistakes, apologize, and make amends.

**Vault:** You don't share information or experiences that are not yours to share.

**Integrity:** You choose courage over comfort. You choose what is right over what is fun, fast, and easy. And you choose to practice your values.

**Non Judgment:** I can ask for what I need, and you can ask for what you need.

**Generosity:** You extend the most generous interpretation possible to the intentions, words, and actions of others.

(Brown, Brene. *Dare to Lead: brave work, tough conversations, whole hearts*. New York, Random House, 2018.)

If your team can answer these questions honestly and discuss them together, your team culture is *very healthy!* Maybe you want to come up with your own inventory that is more suitable for your culture. The point is create one and use it to measure how everyone is performing in ways that matter. This work will cause a positive ripple effect on every other facet of your business.

Another way to gauge how your business is thriving is to carry out a SWOT analysis. A SWOT analysis is a tool to help businesses hone in on key factors that affect the success of their strategy. SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors like your team, intellectual property, and marketing strategy. Opportunities and threats are about external factors, like market fluctuations, competition, price of materials, and consumer trends. Set a clear goal when diving into a SWOT analysis. In this case, we recommend the goal: to *discover* where we are thriving and where we need growth. A SWOT analysis helps unlock your business's potential and utilize your business's strengths to cultivate opportunities.

### We suggest using these questions from Miro to begin your SWOT:

1. List your organization's Strengths: what do users like best about your product or process? What do you do better than competitors? What unique advantages does your organization have?
2. Find your company's Weaknesses: what problems or complaints do you hear most from customers? What do you see as your biggest current obstacles? What advantages do your competitors have that your company does not yet have?
3. Next, list Opportunities you can potentially pursue: how can you improve your customer service? What messaging resonates most with your users? Are there resources or tools you could further leverage to your advantage?
4. Threats can be wide ranging: specific or emerging competitors, high staff turnover, or market volatility, for instance.

As you do this work, remember, if you are reading this article right now, you're on the right track. In *Dare to Lead*, Brown writes, "*There's a saying from the Asaro tribe in Papua New Guinea that I love: 'Knowledge is only rumor until it lives in the bones.'*" Work your KPI's until they live in your bones and your business is guaranteed to reach success!

A successful marketing strategy has many moving parts, and it can be tempting to try to boil everything down to a simple formula. However, in reality, marketing requires a lot of campaign launches, examining and pivoting. Take risks. Try new things. Assess how well they worked and keep altering your strategies to get closer and closer to capturing your target audience. Be sure to revisit your mission statement on a regular basis to ensure that your marketing efforts are aligned with your brand's core values. The successful marketer always keeps their finger on the pulse of their audience and is constantly adapting their strategies to stay ahead of the competition.