

what is your business mantra

Purpositioning your company

“How can you create a high purpose organization? A business mantra is a powerful way to communicate the essence of your organization. In this article you will read about appealing business mantras and the first steps you can take in purpositioning your business.”

When social responsibility becomes one of your organisation's 'reasons for being', you will need to position the company on who, what and why you are and want to be. Clients and employees go beyond products and services and want to know what you stand for. That's why your company's purpose should be part of its positioning: purpositioning.

It was Kees Klomp who first coined the term 'purpositioning'. Michel Barth and Inger Strietman of Better Future took this original thinker for a nice long walk to ask him about the full meaning of the term and to gain new insights into purposeful companies.

From statement to mantra

Kees gets right down to business: “Maybe mission statements should be abolished. They are sentences that people don't remember and these sentences only mention the organisation itself. They don't talk about what they want to contribute.”

Michel agrees: “I recognize that. They need to be statements about what companies want to add to society, what their unique impact is. So what can you replace mission statements with?” Kees' answer comes quickly: “We

need intention statements. An intention allows you to express what you strive for. You can describe what really matters to you.”

Your company's purpose and contribution to society should take center stage

But there's more. From the intention statements, Kees wants to distill mantras. Mantras in business? Kees is excited: “Yes! Mantras are very powerful. If you can create a good one from your intention statements, it really delivers. A business mantra will stay on your mind and can instill both your values and intentions.”

Good intentions

Inger would like some examples. Kees mentions Apple and Nike: “Everyone knows their slogans: ‘Think Different’ and of course ‘Just Do It’. But those are more than just slogans. They're mantras. Thinking differently is what Apple is all about. And Nike's mantra is the best sports promotion you can think of.”



Creating such a mantra is not easy. “These statements have to breathe what your company is all about”, says Kees. “And they have to be short so that you can easily remember them. In the US, a consulting firm uses ‘It is okay not to know’. Brilliant!”

Inger spontaneously starts to dream up new mantras for clients. Michel also thinks out loud: “For Better Future it could be ‘It’s in you’, because we believe that making a positive change and contributing to society is the kind of potential that exists in everybody; we simply inspire them to unleash it!”

From high performance to high purpose

Kees stresses that a mantra is more than just a nice phrase. “You will have to live it. Your intention statement should focus on your company’s contribution to society. But, to connect the true identity with the branding”, he warns. “You will no longer ‘do’ CSR, you will actually have to ‘be’ a socially responsible corporation.”

“We need intention statements: what are you trying to achieve?”

Michel agrees: “For many organisations, it’s been all about maximising performance and financial results. The other stakeholders have been ignored.” Inger states that the ‘shareholder value’ doctrine favours short-term gains and disconnects organisations from employees, customers and society as a whole. Focusing on the company’s purpose will lead to a better long-term performance.

It takes leadership to change from the inside out

Look in the mirror

So what steps can you take right now? The first question you have to ask is about your company’s purpose and contribution. Next up is your own role in that company. What’s your company about? What are you all about? If you need a mirror, you can always ring Better Future. They’ll be happy to help you along on your journey – because that’s their purpose.

Who is Kees Klomp?

Kees Klomp (1968) worked for over 15 years in marketing and advertising. He advised numerous leading brands on trends, positioning and branding. In 2006 he started his own company Karmanomics. The company helps businesses with commercial-idealism, a term that refers to the fact that more and more people are letting their ideals guide themselves and their purchasing decisions.

More information on this trend can be found in his new book *Verlichting in Business* (Dutch for: Enlightenment in Business) by Kees Klomp & Cor Hospes, ISBN: 9789077881828.