

A note from us:

Like everyone this week, we pause to remember the tragic loss we shared as a nation 5 years ago. We lost our feeling of being completely secure and have been left with wrestling between security and freedom. Remember the feelings of unity we felt in the aftermath? They might be harder to locate today but they're still there in many ways.

Today's issue of BrandReturn continues our discussion of delivering on your brand promise. Take a trip over to the blog and you'll read thoughts on how we deliver on our brand promise as a nation. Places are brands too.

On a lighter note, last week was Abiah Design's second anniversary! We've come far in two years and we've got a way to go, but our great joy comes in reflecting on the growth we've helped our clients achieve along the way.

Keep in mind we want to bring you content that will help you get a great return on your brand, so drop us a note and ask us one or two of those burning questions that have been in the back of your mind about building your brand. Your question could be featured in an upcoming issue of BrandReturn.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Winnie", with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Winnie Anderson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Guy Richards", with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Guy Richards

PS. We started a blog version of BrandReturn to share additional thoughts on building a strong brand. You can subscribe to that too and you'll receive an email every time there's a new post. That saves the hassle of trying to remember to check it out.

Do you deliver on your brand promise?

Recruit the right staff and coach them to deliver

For the past few years, the media has been sharing businesses' complaints about the lack of qualified workers. Recruiters and business leaders moan about poor work histories, poor skills, and poor attitudes. The labor pool is overflowing with poor quality candidates. What's a business to do?

Your brand is defined in hundreds of moments of truth each day. People used to tell an average of 13 people about their experience with poor service. The growth of technology gives them the power to tell millions through the use of email, social networking, and blogs. You can't afford one unhappy customer.

Retain the good people you have. If finding good people is difficult, you can't afford to lose the good ones you have. Think of them as customers and apply techniques to keep them just as you would create and execute a customer retention strategy. Treat them like the partners they are in growing your business: Reward them appropriately. Share information about the business with them. Develop a suggestion program and act on their ideas. You can't afford to take good staff members for granted any more than you can afford to take good customers for granted.

Identify a target market and a clear profile of the ideal employee. You've identified a crystal clear target market and have drawn a profile of your ideal customer. Do the same for your staff and develop a plan to proactively attract more top quality applicants that are similar to the great employees you have.

Commit to hiring only the best. Recognize that it takes two or three times as long as you'd like to hire good people; but that time investment is worth it when you think about the damage inflicted by a poor hire. Good employees would rather work harder than put up with rotten coworkers and poor employees will destroy the work you've done to grow a brand.

Make educating and developing your staff a priority. Complaining about what people aren't doing or don't know doesn't help. Never assume that someone knows or understands what you're telling them to do. Most people will pretend they understand what you're saying because they don't want to embarrass themselves by admitting they don't get it. Questions like "Do you understand?" or "Do you have any questions" are a waste of time. Ask questions about the information or process so the employee has to give you the answer or ask them to explain the process to you or to a coworker to verify they understand.

Screen for attitude and interests, train for the skills you can. Experts agree that the critical skills for success are the emotional intelligence skills that people should bring to the job. People do their best in a job that matches their natural personality and interests. Applicants that are late, appear uninterested, lack enthusiasm, or are rude to the person who gave them the application should never be hired no matter how good their skills are.

Your next step: Evaluate your current recruitment and retention strategy. Develop a plan now to make 2007 the year your business stands out from the crowd because your staff is exceptional, not ordinary.

About Abiah Designs

Abiah Designs is an international award winning brand strategy / full-service marketing firm whose unique, proprietary research process creates and revitalizes brands that resonate with their target markets, leads to increased brand awareness, develops strong customer loyalty and improved market share. Visit our website (www.abiahdesigns.com) to view our portfolio, read our case studies, and begin to imagine how we can help you.

To grow your brand call 609 653 2233.

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