

**A note from us...**

My favorite time of the year is finally here! No, not spring...NCAA tournament time!

My close friends know I'm wild about college basketball, and especially my beloved Duke Blue Devils. They've had a tough year but I still love 'em. I've been a fan even before Coach K arrived on the scene. One of the most exciting things about the tournament is that on any given day, anything can happen. No one's team is out until the buzzer sounds.

The tournament is exciting on so many levels. Not only is every game full of drama, but there are life and business lessons to be learned too.

Bring a TV to the office to watch all the action and you can tell people you're studying the leadership and business lessons.

In the meantime, here are 5 lessons you're sure to learn while watching this year's tournament.

Go Duke!

Winnie Anderson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Winnie". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

## 5 tips to help leaders take control and start to grow a strong brand

When a company decides it needs to grow its brand, the common reaction is to design a new logo. That's just not enough to turn the business around or get it on solid footing.

Here are the top 5 things a company's leadership can do to prepare to stop the decline the business is experiencing.

1. Know your role. The executive team should not be making tactical decisions. That's what the managers and supervisors are for. If you're caught up in deciding where an office will relocate to or what award will be given to the employee of the month winner, you are not leading. You're supervising.
2. Stop trying to do too much. You should help to create the company's vision and move towards accomplishing it. No matter what your title is, if you're on your company's executive team you should be creating global business objectives, addressing the company's weaknesses, analyzing the competition and how to beat it, and learning about your target market, among other high level activities. You should be delegating as much as you can to others and coaching them on performance improvement.
3. Go beyond the Golden Rule. Treating people as you want to be treated is a mistake. You should be treating people the way they want to be treated. Maybe you don't mind being yelled at. Well other people do, so stop doing it. To learn more about the best way to interact with your team, observe them. Talk to them. Ask what they like and don't like.
4. Say what you mean and mean what you say. Staff members recognize any inconsistency between what you say and what you do. If you tell staff members service is king but you don't give them the level of respect you insist they show customers, they'll lose respect for you.
5. Don't cut the marketing budget when times are tough. A common response to a dip in business is to cut back on the amount of marketing you're doing. It's common but not logical. While there are changes that should be made, it's not the time to stop marketing. It's usually the time to increase the amount of marketing.

Turning a brand around is hard work. The hardest work must be done on the inside while the physical brand image is being changed too. Just enhancing the logo won't be enough to prepare the business for the long road ahead.



**Stuff our lawyer makes us say:**

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