



Donald Cooper, MBA
Certified Speaking Professional

Donald Cooper is respected by clients in over 40 industries as both a “thought leader” and a passionate visionary in the areas of marketing, service and business excellence. Drawing from his real life experience as a world-class manufacturer, award-winning retailer and business speaker, he has helped thousands of businesses throughout the world to add more real value to their customers’ lives...and more dollars to their bottom lines.

To subscribe to Donald’s thought-provoking, idea-generating, FREE monthly electronic Newsletter, email us at newsletter@donaldcooper.com.

His website, www.donaldcooper.com also offers free articles and business tools.

The power of a clear & compelling “Positioning Statement”!

Every business needs a BIG IDEA as that...

- a) Defines your value,
- b) ‘Grabs’ your target customers,
- c) Clearly differentiates you from your competitors,
- d) Focuses your staff...and,
- e) Grows your bottom line.

Once you’ve created a BIG IDEA for your business, the next step is to create a clear and compelling Positioning Statement that will be an important part of your total Brand communication in this age of the 10-second sound byte. To be effective, your Positioning Statement must quickly and clearly achieve some or all of the following objectives...

- a) **Explain** clearly who you are or what you do...better than your competitors,
- b) **Promise** some specific functional, emotional or financial value that is compelling to your target customers,
- c) Clearly **differentiate** you from your competitors
- d) Make you **memorable**...and,
- e) Make an **emotional connection** with your target customers.

Let’s look at some examples, good and bad:

1) When Dairy Queen wanted to reposition themselves as more than a soft ice cream store in order to grow their “share of stomach” and to be less seasonal, they added burgers, hot dogs and fries to their menu. The challenge, then, was to reposition themselves in their customers’ minds in a way that didn’t take away from their traditional strength in the frozen dairy product category

One possibility would have been to change their actual name but this would have been a hugely expensive disaster. What they did do was to create a very clever and catchy Positioning Statement to explain who they now were. The statement is...“Dairy Queen...HOT EATS...COOL TREATS!”

2) When Honda first entered the North American motorcycle market they wanted to clearly differentiate themselves from the Motorcycle Gang segment and they did it brilliantly with this simple Positioning Statement, “You meet the nicest people on a Honda!”

...Continued on Page 2

The power of a clear & compelling “Positioning Statement”! (cont’d)

3) Years ago, **Hallmark Cards** did research that showed that nobody looked at the back of a greeting card to see who made it. They didn’t care! And if nobody cares who made it, it’s impossible to create Brand preference and customer ownership.

So, Hallmark came up with an emotionally powerful Positioning Statement that got both purchasers and card recipients looking at the back of the card before they even read the message inside. This Positioning Statement, that made them the preferred brand and the market leader, was...“When you care enough to send the very best!

4) **Creemore Springs Brewery** in the sleepy little town of Creemore, Ontario clearly and whimsically differentiates itself from the “big guys” and makes emotional connections with their target customers who long for a simpler, less stressful lifestyle, with the statement, “100 years behind the times”.

Now that Creemore Springs has been bought out by one of the ‘big guys’, it will be interesting to see how their positioning might change.

5) There are so many more great examples. **Smuckers** Jams have become memorable, promise quality and poke fun at themselves with the memorable statement, “With a name like Smucker’s, it has to be good.” And **Oscar Meyer** has kids all over North America singing, “I’d rather be an Oscar Meyer weiner.”

6) **M & M Meats**, the very successful Canadian retailer of quality prepared meals, clearly positions itself as the ‘hero’ to ultra-busy consumers with the slogan, “Hundreds of meal ideas...just one aisle.” They know exactly who their customers are and what kind of help they need...and they’ve put that in one powerful sentence. This is brilliant.

7) And then there are some Positioning Statements that simply don’t work! The stupidest one that I’ve ever seen was from a paper towel company that came up with this one; “We care about the same things you care about!”

How comforting that there’s a paper towel company out there that actually cares about your mortgage, the cost of your kid’s braces and whether or not your car will make it through the winter. This is just goofy!

Hitachi’s Positioning Statement is “Inspire the next.” This might be a good internal statement to encourage staff to be more creative and innovative but I think as a consumer Positioning Statement, it just doesn’t work. For consumers, “Hitachi...creating the next!” might have worked better to position them as an innovator of cutting edge technology.

For years **American Express** positioned itself as “the” credit card with the statement, “Don’t leave home without it.” when, in fact, over 25% of all merchants in the world did not accept American Express cards because payment was too slow and AMEX took too big a percentage.

Here’s another “goofy” Positioning Statement...**The Bank of America...”Embracing ingenuity”**. What the heck does that mean?

So, what clear, compelling and memorable Positioning Statement could your business create? Sit down, this week, with a few of the best hearts and minds in your business and start getting creative about how you can create a short, simple statement that will explain, promise, differentiate and make powerful emotional connections with your target customers.

For more information on how Donald Cooper can help you redefine and reinvent your business to create, deliver and communicate compelling, customer-owning Value, visit our website at www.donaldcooper.com email us at info@donaldcooper.com or contact us by telephone in Toronto, Canada at 1-(416) 252-3704.