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## brand as business brief -- leadership

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# brand as business™ brief

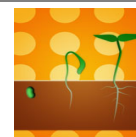
brand as business briefs are periodic emailed briefings about how companies can operationalize their brands

from denise lee yohn  
10.12.10 vol 029

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in this brief:

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### Hello friends and colleagues!

As we head into the season of political elections, leadership is on my mind. But don't worry -- no pontificating about politics here! This brief is about **leadership in business**:

- marketing leadership dna** -- "We found successful marketers play four roles -- instigator, innovator, integrator, and implementer," explains Beth Comstock, GE's Chief Marketing Officer, in the October issue of the Harvard Business Review. The [article](#) describes how GE re-invented its marketing function and outlines each of these four pieces of a "marketer's DNA." I provide a "Cliff Notes" version below.
- leadership lessons** -- World, business, and thought leaders including Jim Collins, Jack Welch, and Al Gore shared insights about leadership at two conferences I had the privilege of attending recently: the [World Business Forum](#) and [The Retailing Summit](#). I've pulled together [key quotes](#) for you.
- brand priorities for board members** -- I'm introducing a new presentation for Boards of Directors. It speaks to the role of board members as brand stakeholders and outlines the brand responsibilities board members should embrace. [Contact me](#) to book me to speak to your board.

[Let me know](#) what you think!

## Marketing Leadership DNA



When Beth Comstock, Chief Marketing Officer and Senior Vice President of GE, and her team set out to build a new marketing engine for GE, they realized success would require three factors: **principles, people, and process**. A Harvard Business Review article entitled, [Unleashing the Power of Marketing](#), describes their undertaking in all three areas.

I found their discussion about **getting the right leaders in place** most instructive. They learned that four fundamental roles are needed to transform marketing into a strategic function: instigator, innovator, integrator, and implementer. They call them a "marketer's DNA." Here's a brief summary of each:

- Instigator: pushing change**  
"Marketing leaders need to think strategically and **challenge the status quo**, using their unique external vantage point to see what may not be apparent to others in the business. Sometimes this entails moving beyond preaching about marketing's merits to imagining scenarios that business heads might face -- perhaps marketing's most important role."
- Innovator: shaping the company's innovation agenda**  
"We had to expand our thinking beyond product features and functionality to include pricing, delivery, customer engagement, complicated risk-reward sharing, and new business models -- all part of commercial innovation...Innovative marketers use unique marketplace insights to come up with products, services, or solutions based on untested ideas...Marketing leaders need not only the courage to **pursue bold initiatives** but also the **persistence and political skills to overcome naysayers**."

### what is denise doing?

- o working on a re-design of my website [deniseleeyohn.com](#) -- look for the launch in the next month or two
- o talking with several QSR and fast-casual brands which have reached out to me after having read my column in [QSR Magazine](#) -- latest topic: fostering customer loyalty
- o interviewing business thought-leaders like Dick Lynch, Chief Marketing Officer of Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen, for my blog -- subscribe to the [RSS feed](#) so you don't miss out on gleaming valuable insights from folks on the front lines

### service spotlight

This brief's featured service is:  
**Brand Priorities for Board Members**

3. **Integrator: uniting multiple organizational silos and functions on a single path**  
 "Sometimes he or she must act as a 'translator,' **making outside customer insights relevant and meaningful** to those inside the organization...to unite customer-facing functions with back of the organization and enable the company to cross-sell bundled products. In other cases integration may simply mean **bringing disparate groups in the organization together** to collectively assess market dynamics."
4. **Implementer: execute and deliver results**  
 "Marketing leaders have to build coalitions and persuade others, using functional expertise, insights, and teamwork rather than authority [because they often don't have much organizational clout]. They have to mobilize people, and quite simply, **get things done.**"

The article explains that although all four components of a marketer's DNA are essential, it's rare to find them in a single marketing leader. So oftentimes the functions are shared by a team of leaders.

But those select few who do have all the right DNA are considered "rock stars" -- something any leader should aspire to!

## Leadership lessons

Recently I had the privilege of attending two outstanding conferences and a common theme from many of the speakers was leadership.

At the [World Business Forum](#), over 4000 attendees from 60+ countries gathered to hear phenomenal speakers like Jim Collins and Jack Welch. I was thrilled to be invited as a guest blogger so I [blogged](#) and [Twitter-ed](#) my way through the days.

Texas A&M University's [Retailing Summit](#) attracted nearly 300 senior executives from the retail industry and featured presentations from the leaders at great brands like Best Buy, Target, and the Container Store. In addition to soaking up their wisdom, I addressed the group about how to "Align and Integrate Your Customer Experiences to Build Your Brand" ([let me know](#) if you'd like a summary of my presentation.)

Here's a collection of the best quotes from both conferences.

### Leadership lessons

world, business, and thought leaders shared the lessons they've learned about leadership at

**World Business Forum**  
([www.wbfn.com](http://www.wbfn.com))

and

**The Retailing Summit**  
(<http://retailingsummit.org>)

**here are the best bits** ➔

The list of responsibilities for Boards of Directors is long -- from Sarbanes-Oxley compliance to succession planning to shareholder accountability. One area which is often overshadowed is the brand.

But **board members are critical brand stakeholders** because they significantly influence the way the organization uses its brand. Through their strategic, high-level guidance and decision-making, board members can ensure company leadership does more than give lip-service to its brand. **Board members should advocate and advance efforts to operationalize the brand and nurture that perspective among others.**

In this new presentation, learn:

- o why board members are **leading brand stakeholders**
- o how Boards of Directors can **assess how well the organization is leveraging its brand**
- o three ways boards can **nurture and protect the brand as a tool for value creation**

[Contact me](#) to book me to present this unique perspective to your Board of Directors.

[Check out](#) other ways I help companies achieve their brand and business objectives.

### send to a friend



**Got a friend or colleague** who could use briefings about how companies can operationalize their brands?

[Forward](#) this email on and share the insights.

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**denise lee yohn** has been inspiring and teaching companies how to operationalize their brands to grow their businesses for over 20 years. World-class brands including Sony, Frito-Lay, Burger King, and Nautica have called on Denise, an established speaker, author, and consulting partner.

for more information, visit [www.deniseleeyohn.com](http://www.deniseleeyohn.com)



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