

Company Culture and Your Brand

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July 25, 2017 By [Susan Monroe](#)

When you think about your company culture and its brand—if indeed you do—what comes to mind? If you're like many of us, nothing specific may pop into your head or perhaps you think more about culture than anything else. As in, "Well, we're fast-moving, a little crazy, but basically an OK place to work."

Denise Lee Yohn, who has worked with major brands for some 25 years, contends that your company culture and your brand should be tightly aligned. If they're not in synch, you can expect problems.

In a June 2017 article, "Why Your Company Culture Should Match Your Brand," Ms. Yohn offers some smack-you-upside-the head insights. (By the way, Ms. Yohn is a terrific writer.)



Here are five key ideas I came away with:

- A distinct corporate culture allows an organization to produce extraordinary results and contributes to a "strong, differentiated brand"—and vice versa.
- Whatever your culture may be, if it and your brands are driven by "the same purpose and values and if you weave them together into a single guiding force ... you will win the competitive battle for customers and employees ..."
- If your brand and culture aren't in synch, you may have happy employees, but they are not producing the results you want. (You're probably wasting money, too.)
- A disconnect between the employee and the customer experiences, is a "telltale" indicator that your brand and culture are not aligned.
- To synchronize your brand and culture, you need to identify and make explicit your brand aspirations.

I'm thinking that start-ups may skip the brand-culture alignment exercise because everyone is just too busy wearing multiple hats and trying to get a product out the door. The leaders at a start-up may think that the exercise is just not that important and that if they hire the right people, everything will fall into place. Likely it is established companies that may not want to spend time looking at brand-culture alignment, because they think they think it's long since been figured out and doesn't need to be re-examined. And they may not want to spend the time or the money.

In my opinion, brand and culture probably rest on unspoken assumptions that need to be surfaced and examined periodically—even if everything appears to be going well.

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