



Branding Your Nonprofit's Mission – Six Items To Consider Before You Start

Nonprofit organizations have a myriad of issues they need to deal with on a daily basis, leaving them with little time to focus on branding their mission and organization. However, it is important that they allocate some time and money to branding, as good branding will establish a solid identify, making it easier for clients and stakeholders to recognize and grasp the organization's mission. In addition, recognition helps organizations to solicit clients, raise funds, and improve collaborative relationships. This article provides six items to consider in branding your organization.

1. Assess your organization's current brand. Do you have a logo? What colors do you use? Are your logo and colors on all of your marketing materials, including your website? Do they complement the mission of your organization? If you are not happy with your current branding, perhaps it is time to invest time and money in creating a brand that reflects your organization's mission.
2. Hire or barter with a graphic artist. Graphic artists can help you develop a logo that best reflects what your organization does, choose colors that represent the "feel" of your organization, and ensure that your branding is consistent on all marketing materials.
3. Choose a logo that represents the mission of the organization. For example, if your organization serves children, you may want a logo that includes children, represents the services or products provided to them, or reflects the image of what your services can do to help children. Look at United Way's logo. It is a hand that has a human figure in it. Over the figure's head is an orange arch or rainbow. The feeling that this logo conveys is that the organization is extending a hand to help and support people, with the overall goal of personal empowerment and growth.
4. Choose colors that complement your mission. For example, if you provide bereavement services, you may want to avoid bright and bold colors. Instead, your focus may be on deeper or more soothing colors, such as blue, dark green, or burgundy. Regardless of the colors you choose, make sure they are consistent on all materials. In others words, you don't want a light green color on one document and a dark green color on a separate document, if your sole color is dark green. In branding, consistency is key to recognition.

5. Prior to developing or revamping your brand, solicit ideas from your clients, staff, board members, and other stakeholders. Some people are extremely creative and have a knack for developing images that represent a specific cause or mission. You might consider holding a contest to see who develops the most creative and applicable logo. You could then announce the winner via your newsletter, website, or at a specific function.
6. Once you design and select a draft logo, share it with your internal and external stakeholders for final input. Not only does this effort get them involved in the process, but it helps to keep the logo fresh in their mind, making it easier for them to share it and what it stands for with other stakeholders and the community.

Branding is critical for consumers and the public to easily recognize your organization and its purpose. Therefore, it's critical that you commit the necessary time, energy, and resources upfront to developing a brand that will serve you well into the future.

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If you want to make positive changes in your professional life, and create the job or career you desire and deserve, then working with Executive & Life Coach, Sharon L. Mikrut, is the solution. Although her specialty is in partnering with nonprofit executive directors and managers to maximize their resources in a competitive environment, she is passionate about working with all individuals committed to personal and/or professional growth. Visit her website (<http://www.createitcoaching.org>), Nonprofit Professionals blog (<http://www.createitcoaching.com>), or Empowerment blog (<http://www.createitcoaching.net>) and sign up for her free nonprofit or life coaching newsletter.