

## John Deffenbaugh blog – Brand management

**David Moyes** has been busy lately, clearing out the backroom staff at his new club. We're not surprised, are we? Ok, if there was a case for keeping a winning team together, then this was it. But Moyes wanted his own team. Those of you into footie will know this is pretty common, and though it made the news, it raised few eyebrows.

There will be a new person in charge of NHS England soon. Will they clear out the current team and bring in their own? This happens in the NHS, but it's difficult and expensive to move someone on who is well entrenched late in their career. There is a balance to be achieved between change that suits the new boss, and the rights and respect of those on the receiving end of a P45.

Getting your jotters when a new person takes charge can be a shocker – imagine the feelings of United backroom staff who in the space of weeks went from security of future to dismissal. As Harold Macmillan observed, "Events dear boy, events".

So what do you do in these circumstances? You'll of course have the period of bereavement, but then comes the opportunity – to reinvent yourself, to review and reshape your brand. Moving to a new place gives the opportunity to do this – to be the leader you want to be.

There are three areas of your brand that you can focus on: mindset, body and voice.

**Mindset** – This is about getting your head in the right place. There will be learning to do, and some introspection. However, taking an appreciative approach allows you to look forward. You'll have achievements, and you need to talk about them. There's always a hesitancy to blow your own trumpet, but as the legendary major league pitcher Dizzy Dean observed, "If you done it, it ain't bragging". You'll also have a chance to reflect on your leadership style. There is strong evidence from leaders who have been through the Diagnostic that leadership style can change in a different context. The point is that you can shape your own environment, rather than being the hostage.

**Body** – This contributes to presence. What impact do you want to have when you walk into a room? People will judge you in seconds, and if their judgement is wrong or you give them cause to judge wrongly, then the game is up. The acknowledgement is made by Lord King, chairman at the time of British Airways, commenting on the result of Richard Branson's successful suit for libel in 1993, "If Richard Branson had worn a pair of steel-rimmed glasses, a double-breasted suit and shaved off his beard, I would have taken him seriously. As it was I couldn't . . . ". What you wear, how you look, all go to make that presence. Along with mindset, this is in your control.

**Voice** – This is about not only your projection of confidence, but also what you say. We're not talking elocution here, but more about the stories you tell, the narrative leadership you give. John F Kennedy summed up his approach to leadership: "By defining our goal more clearly, by making it seem more manageable and less remote, we help all people to see it, to draw hope from it and to move irresistibly towards it". Going into a new place and being able to tell stories about what you want to accomplish is pivotal to getting people to follow. These stories come from the heart, and if your head is in the right place, and what people see makes them pay attention, then your stories will get a fair hearing.

So if events get the better of you, then get the better of events. We've all been in bad places at times, and to help you get into the upswing on the transition curve, then do some proactive brand management.

**John Deffenbaugh 10 June 2013**