



# How to Gain Executive Buy-In to Break Your Brand's Status Quo

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Are you ready to free your brand from the five paradoxes of branding but can't seem to figure out how to get your leadership team's buy-in? Take the following steps to build a logical business case for breaking the status quo.

## 1.) First things first: Do you really need to break the status quo?

Don't fall into the trap of being different just for the sake of being different. You must have a strong reason to break with your brand's existing conventions. Start by asking yourself the following questions:

- Is your brand differentiated (is it uniquely positioned in a way that your market understands and appreciates)?
- Is your brand relevant (does your audience truly want or need your services)? 3.) Has it been 10 or more years since you last updated your brand?
- Is your brand sustainable (can you sustain your differentiating factor over the long haul, or can competitors swoop in and steal your "unique" feature?).

If the answer to one or more of those questions is no, then your first order of business is to revisit your positioning. But if your answer to all three questions is yes, then it's time to assess whether your brand is being undermined by any of the paradoxes of branding.

## 2.) Gather positive and negative impressions about your brand.

Next, gather positive and negative impressions of your brand from inside and outside your organization. Plan to interview members of your team as well as a sampling of customers to get their impressions (a third-party research team may yield more useful feedback). In addition, collect and assess your company's reviews on third-party sites like Glassdoor and the Vault. Take an honest look at the negative impressions and ask yourself whether that might be tied to one of the five paradoxes of branding. For example, does your brand come across as stodgy and outdated because it falls prey to the paradox of conformity?

## 3.) Put together a visual reference of your vertical.

Collect a visual sampling of all of your major competitors' logos and website homepages. What design trends pop out within your industry, and where does your brand fit in? You might immediately see that your brand, well, looks like everyone else. And you may also immediately see opportunities to create a bolder identity simply by exploring a new set of colors or typographic choices.

## 4.) Remember your strategy.

In light of your research, revisit (or refine) your brand's overall strategy. To what extent does your current brand support that strategy? How might breaking the status quo move your brand forward? Do you need to do a reset? Modernize and move forward? Or make a conscious effort to stop trying to "fit in" within your industry?

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**5.) Present your case.**

Finally, present your research and recommendations to your leadership team. Define what's holding your brand back, and make a business case for breaking the rules. The more you use strategy to drive your discussions, the more you can [build consensus and gain executive buy-in.](#)