

Positioning

What is positioning?

Brand positioning is exactly what it sounds like:

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how a brand stands in relation to its competitive brands.

What is positioning?

All positioning for brands have primary territories.

Assets: What we own and control

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Assets: What we own and control

Offer: Our products and services

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Approach: How we do things

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Skills: The skills we apply

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Skills: The skills we apply

Mission: The ideals that drive us

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Assets

What we own
and control



Assets

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Assets
What we own
and control

Sample companies & territories



Assets

What we own
and control

Offer

Our products
and services

Sample companies & territories



Sample companies & territories



Sample companies & territories



Sample companies & territories



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Sample companies & territories



Sample companies & territories



All positioning for brands have primary territories.

A well-defined brand will primarily inhabit one territory (but may have aspects which spill over into other territories).

An organization positioned on assets does not have to operate without ideals. Nor does a company with a distinctive approach succeed without products and services. Positioning is the “*pointy end of the spear.*” It is the clear and sharp point of differentiation that audiences you target will associate with the brand.



...sourced only from carefully selected springs...

Poland Springs

Assets

What we own and control

...a range of flavored waters with added vitamins and minerals.

Vitamin Water

Offer

Our products and services

Solutions for better water.™

Brita

Approach

How we do things

The World's Foremost Water Conditioning Expert Is In Your Neighborhood.™

Culligan

Skills

The skills we apply

Advocacy for improving the quality and supply of water in North America and beyond.™

American Water Works Association

Mission

The ideals that drive us

Here are five water brands that have staked out their territory.

 Infiniti	 Mercedes-Benz	 Mitsubishi	 Buick	 Toyota	 Mazda
 Jaguar	 Dodge	 Chevrolet	 Cadillac	 Audi	 Volvo
 Opel	 Honda	 Porsche	 Volkswagen	 Renault	 Subaru
 Pontiac	 Hyundai	 Lamborghini	 Acura	 Peugeot	 Lexus
 Maserati	 Mercury	 BMW	 Saab	 Suzuki	 Fiat
 Vauxhall	 Citroën	 Chrysler	 Ferrari	 Nissan	 Saturn
 Bentley	 Daewoo	 Alfa Romeo	 Holden	 Aston Martin	 SEAT

Positioning Attributes

Positioning territories, like Offer, are big enough to hold many competitive brands.

The differences are in the specific attributes that describe each one.



BMW: The Ultimate Driving Machine.

Brand attributes: *Performance. Design & Style. Innovation. Luxury. High Quality. Social Status.*

Overall brand position: *Luxury performance car*



Volkswagon: Das Auto.

Brand attributes: *Reliable. Small. Affordable. Fun. Full Range of Colors. Good Value.*

Overall brand position: *Known as "The People's Car."*

How will we find our brand attributes
and positioning in class today?

List your company (*product*) attributes.

Develop a list of attributes that could be offered by your brand **and** by every competitor of your brand. The list of attributes would fill the territories (*Assets, Offer, Approach, Skills, Mission*) for your company's industry.

One attribute per Post-it note.

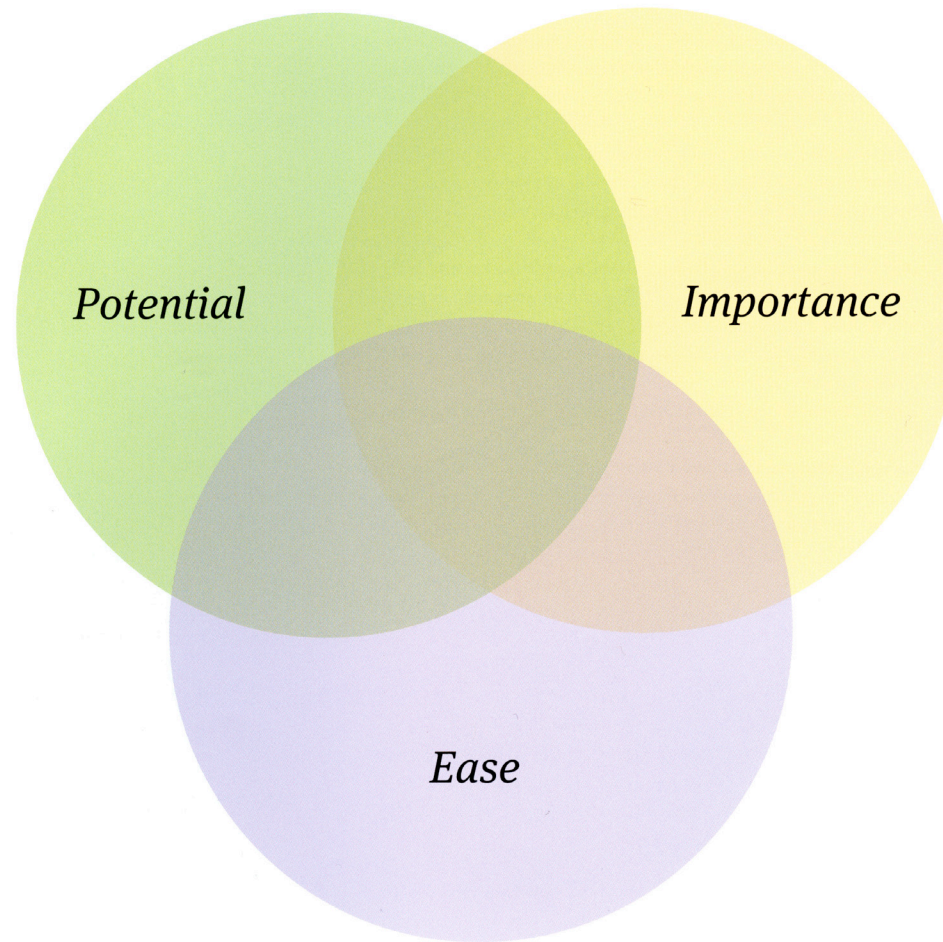
<p><i>Years in business</i></p> <p><i>Market cap</i></p> <p><i>Number of employees</i></p> <p><i>Number of locations</i></p> <p><i>Fleet</i></p> <p><i>Patents</i></p> <p><i>Reviews, testimonials, awards</i></p> <p><i>Number of clients/customers</i></p> <p><i>Technical infrastructure</i></p> <p><i>Public company</i></p> <p><i>Private company</i></p> <p><i>Certifications</i></p> <p><i>Large scale</i></p> <p><i>Tenure of employees</i></p> <p><i>Client retention</i></p> <p><i>Redundancy</i></p> <p><i>Network of suppliers</i></p> <p><i>Network of distributors</i></p> <p><i>Low-cost structure</i></p> <p><i>World-class facilities</i></p>	<p><i>Range of products/services</i></p> <p><i>Focus of products/services</i></p> <p><i>Reliable products/services</i></p> <p><i>Good value</i></p> <p><i>Cheap</i></p> <p><i>Premium</i></p> <p><i>Limited editions</i></p> <p><i>Size variations</i></p> <p><i>Flavor variations</i></p> <p><i>Packaging variations</i></p> <p><i>Look and feel</i></p> <p><i>Smell</i></p> <p><i>Sound</i></p> <p><i>Portability</i></p> <p><i>Bulk</i></p> <p><i>Tailored to age</i></p> <p><i>Tailored to lifestyle</i></p>	<p><i>Collaborative</i></p> <p><i>Treats you like a partner</i></p> <p><i>Flexible</i></p> <p><i>Relentless</i></p> <p><i>Right the first time</i></p> <p><i>Culturally sensitive</i></p> <p><i>“Green”</i></p> <p><i>Rapid prototyping</i></p> <p><i>Cautious, bulletproof</i></p> <p><i>Overbuilt</i></p> <p><i>Clear chain of command</i></p> <p><i>Collegial</i></p> <p><i>US-based</i></p> <p><i>Multinational</i></p> <p><i>Global</i></p> <p><i>Tight quality controls</i></p> <p><i>Encourages experimentation</i></p> <p><i>Constantly evolving</i></p> <p><i>Straightforward, simple</i></p> <p><i>Can quickly scale operations</i></p>	<p><i>Industry expertise</i></p> <p><i>Highly credentialed</i></p> <p><i>Continued training</i></p> <p><i>Cross-disciplined</i></p> <p><i>Diverse</i></p> <p><i>Specialized</i></p> <p><i>Renowned staff</i></p> <p><i>Relates well to leadership</i></p> <p><i>Able to engage the entire organization</i></p> <p><i>Great leaders</i></p> <p><i>Fast learners</i></p> <p><i>Proven/certified/licensed</i></p> <p><i>Rare</i></p> <p><i>Unique</i></p>	<p><i>Improve...</i></p> <p><i>Advocate...</i></p> <p><i>Advance...</i></p> <p><i>End...</i></p> <p><i>Enable...</i></p> <p><i>Fight...</i></p> <p><i>Defend...</i></p> <p><i>Preserve...</i></p> <p><i>Take back...</i></p> <p><i>Recast...</i></p>
<p>Assets</p> <p>What we own and control</p>	<p>Offer</p> <p>Our products and services</p>	<p>Approach</p> <p>How we do things</p>	<p>Skills</p> <p>The skills we apply</p>	<p>Mission</p> <p>The ideals that drive us</p>

These are examples of the kinds of attributes that might fit into the five territories. You may need to add/develop your own attributes as you work.

It's important that every attribute is listed. Customers will consider all competitors in your company's niche for what they want and need — so you should not limit attributes to the ones that only your company has.

Start the listing with attributes that already exist. Then consider adding new ideas to the mix that may advance the industry.

Start making P.I.E.



Potential:

Does one attribute versus another drive choice among your key audience.

For example:

Does improving a brand's rating on "*puts my needs first*" win more business than "*locations near me*"? Or does becoming known for "*cheapest products in the marketplace*" deliver the best results for the effort?

You want to choose the attributes with the highest potential to move minds/markets.

Importance

Rank the attributes that influence choice from most to least. Look at the top 10 and you'll get a good sense of why your niche's leading brands are winning.

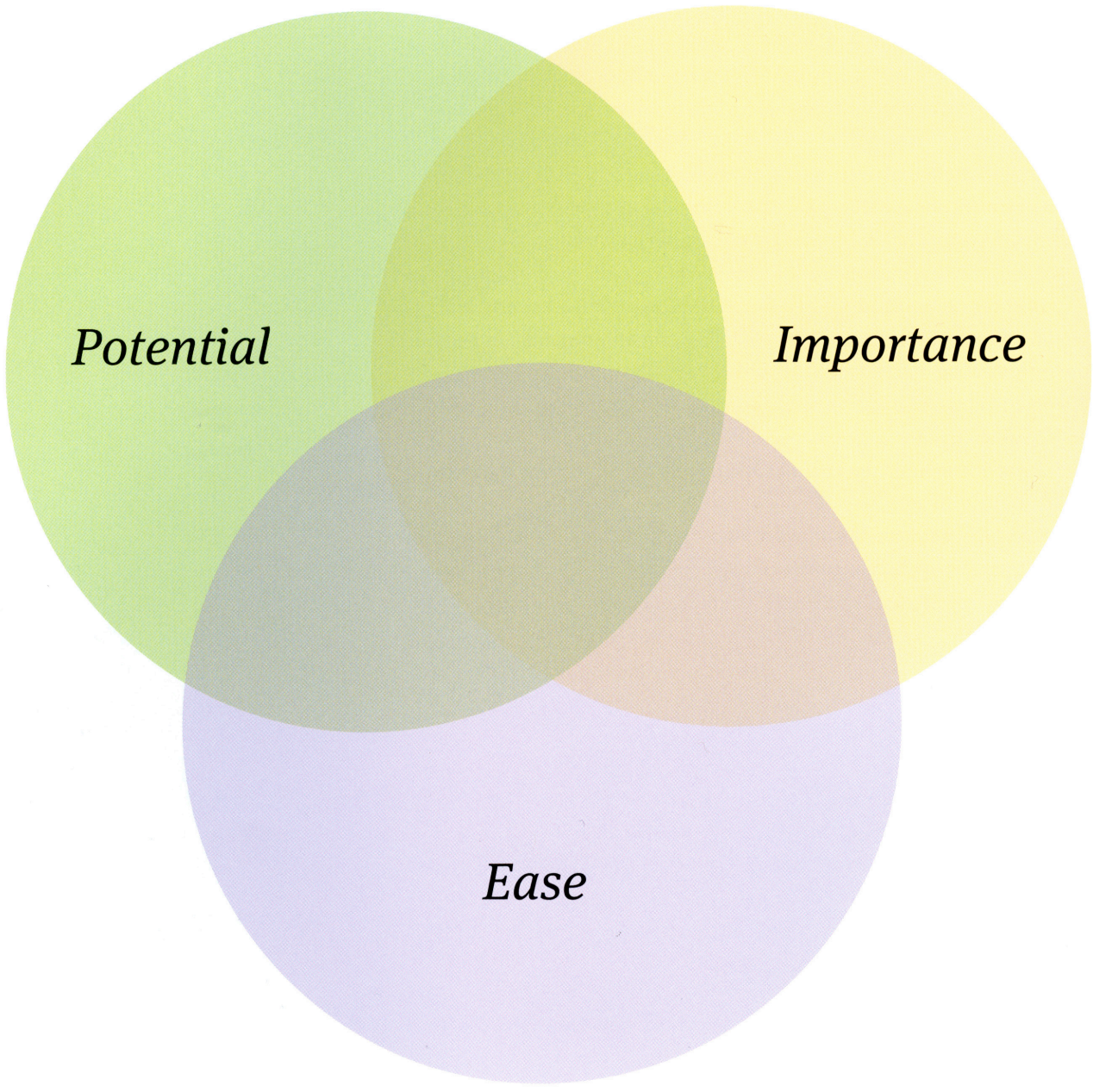
Ease

Ease is a combination of factors. Cost is one. Is it expensive to improve your rating on this attribute? For example, if you want to rate best on “*location near you*” it might require a massive real estate effort.

Not easy.

Ease is also a measure of how an attribute fits your company character. Even if the attribute, “*collaborates well*” is important and has great potential to win customers, if your company character is more “*outlaw*” than “*caring*,” it won’t be easy.

Finally, ease is a measure of “*permission*.” Will your audience believe it’s possible for you to deliver? If it would be hard for your audience to believe it, then implementing it won’t be easy.



Potential

Importance

Ease

LONGSHOTS are pure potential—attributes that are not important today in driving choice, will significantly add market share if improved, and are difficult and costly to move.

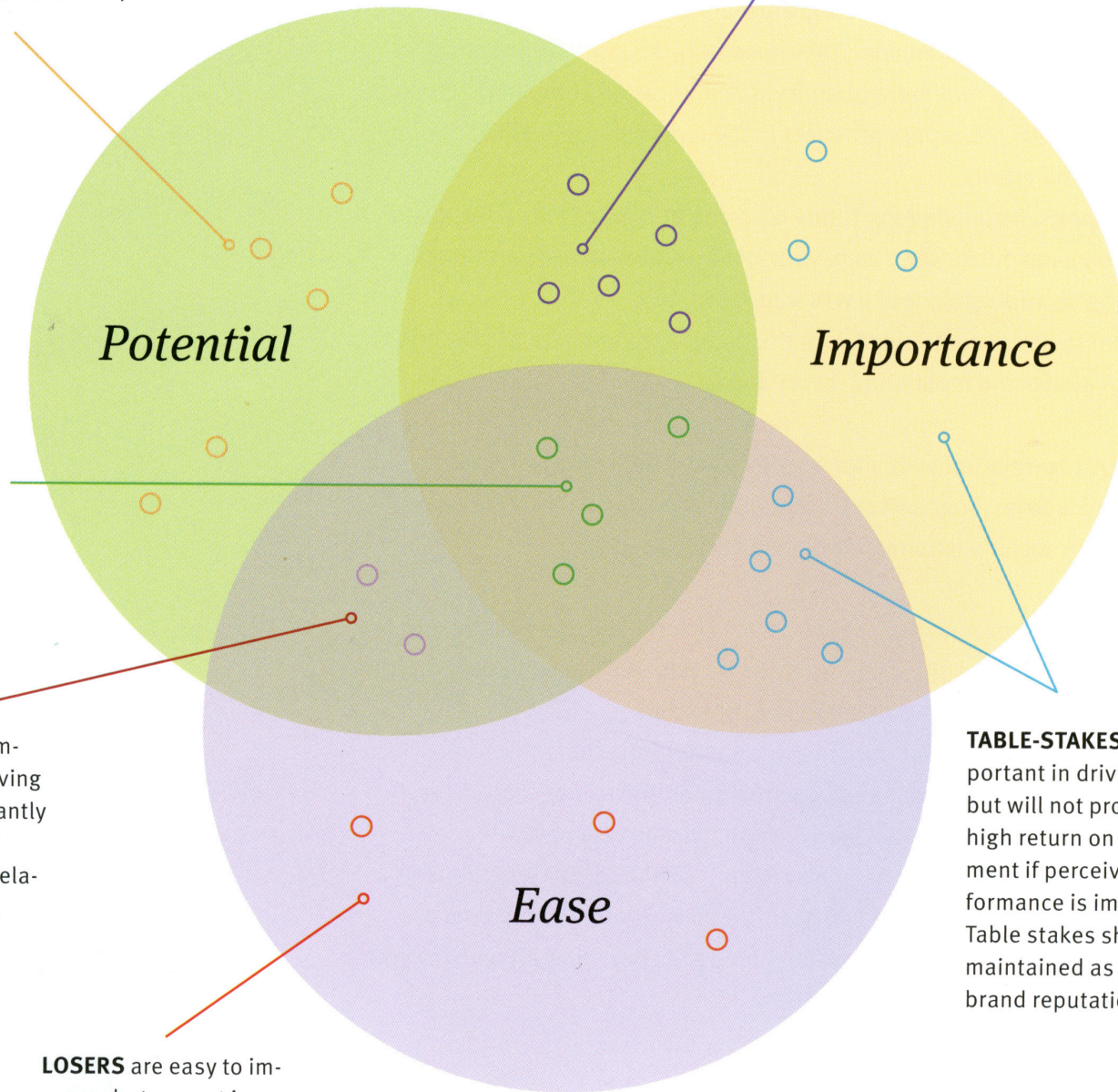
SEEDLINGS are important today in driving choice, will significantly add market share if improved, but are difficult and costly to move.

WINNERS correlate with choice, strong potential to improve share, and are easy to move.

SLEEPERS are not important today in driving choice, will significantly add market share if improved, and are relatively easy to move.

LOSERS are easy to improve, but are not important today and have little potential in the future.

TABLE-STAKES are important in driving choice but will not provide a high return on the investment if perceived performance is improved. Table stakes should be maintained as part of the brand reputation.



When you pull out the most powerful attributes from the winners,
you distill the essence of what's relevant to your audience
and what's within reach for your company.

Don't expect many attributes make it. In fact you're best off
with a handful that fit easily with your brand character.

Craft an idea out of your elements.

It need not be totally unique.

The goal is to connect with key audiences.

How to write your first positioning statement:

For (customers/audience), (company brand) is the
(offering) that (key benefits).

Our brand is chosen because it (key difference).

Company Promise:

We believe (PHILOSOPHY).

That's why (ACTION).

(This is what the company will deliver to its customers)

Classroom example:

Link Light Rail

Brand Positioning

e.g. For the traveler, LINK is the Puget Sound region's only public transit service that provides a smart transportation solution that is affordable, reliable, and effortlessly independent of traffic.

Brand Attributes

e.g. Rail line that is independent of traffic, with a growing number of locations, Reliable timed schedules, Affordable local travel, and Clean

Brand Promise

e.g. We believe that changing the way we move is the only way forward.

LINK is a smart, first-rate network of trains that meets the transportation need of our growing region. We're providing avenues that are free of traffic. We are committed to affordable rates and well-maintained trains with frequent service. That's why you can count on never waiting longer than 15 minutes for a train.



(Our brand is chosen because *key difference* = key difference/brand attributes)

Brand Positioning

Out of the five major territories, most of our brand attributes fell under the “offer” category so we chose to focus on showcasing our efficient transportation services.

Brand Attributes

Rail line that is independent of traffic, with a growing number of locations, Reliable timed schedules, Affordable local travel, and Clean

Real world example:

Target

Company Promise:

We believe (PHILOSOPHY). That's why (ACTION).

Target's tagline is **Expect More. Pay Less.**

Target's tagline summarizes their brand promise. Their promise explains

how/why people should "Expect More. Pay Less." at Target:

We believe in great shopping, anytime, anywhere, design for all, and more for your money. That's why we provide friendly service, fully stocked products and a speedy checkout process; innovative digital experiences that take your trip to the next level. It's our belief that great design is fun, energetic, surprising and smart—and it should be accessible and affordable for everyone. When we talk about our dedication to good design, we don't just mean how something looks, but also how it satisfies a need, how it simplifies your life, and how it makes you feel. We think a lot about your budget and how to give you the best value every time you shop with us. In addition to our already low prices, we offer other ways to save you money, including price matching in our stores and an additional 5% savingslink opens in a new window when you shop using your REDcard®.

Company Promise:

We believe (PHILOSOPHY). That's why (ACTION).

Target's tagline is **Expect More. Pay Less.**

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Philosophy

how/why people should "Expect More. Pay Less." at Target:

Action

We believe in great shopping, anytime, anywhere, design for all, and more for your money.

That's

why we provide friendly service, fully stocked products and a speedy checkout process; innovative digital experiences that take your trip to the next level. It's our belief that great design is fun, energetic, surprising and smart—and it should be accessible and affordable for everyone. When we talk about our dedication to good design, we don't just mean how something looks, but also how it satisfies a need, how it simplifies your life, and how it makes you feel. We think a lot about your budget and how to give you the best value every time you shop with us. In addition to our already low prices, we offer other ways to save you money, including price matching in our stores and an additional 5% savingslink opens in a new window when you shop using your REDcard®.

Primary Territory

Offer

Assets

Approach

Skills

Mission