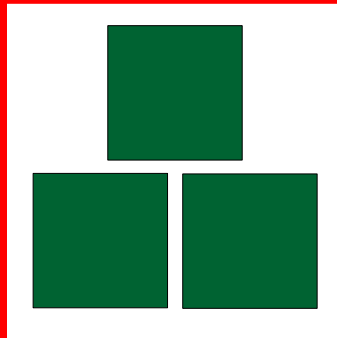


# VALUES, PURPOSE, AND DIRECTION - BUILDING ASPIRATIONAL ADVANTAGE



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## **VALUES, PURPOSE AND DIRECTION - BUILDING ASPIRATIONAL ADVANTAGE**

*Aspirational advantage is about building loyal relationships between employee, customer, supplier, and investor constituencies because an enterprise is values-based. Values-based means that stated values and enacted values are consistent. If the values display the notion of trust and integrity, then the enterprise is respected. If the values display the notion of quality, then the enterprise is perceived as predictable and reliable.*

When the management of an enterprise communicates aspirational and inspirational messages for values, purpose and direction, others follow.

An aspiration is a dream of a future state. It may be hard or impossible to achieve from the current state of affairs without higher-order effects kicking in.

Higher-order effects are events or situations that could not have been envisioned or anticipated at the beginning of an endeavor, but become apparent as activity proceeds. They provide additional opportunities or threats.

For example, the operator of a cafe learns after opening that it is necessary to establish a high volume catering business unit to help cover the fixed costs of the "on premises" business unit.

Higher order effects make it possible to achieve an aspiration through some activity that seemed unachievable when the endeavor was started. Conversely, higher offer effects can destroy any aspiration or vision from ever being achieved.

For example, continued advances in technology have transformed computers from requiring large air conditioned rooms to fitting in briefcases, with considerably more power and memory than could ever have been imagined when the first machines were developed. Many traditional jobs have disappeared as a consequence.

An aspirational statement is long-term statement of direction, augmented by a near-term vision. An inspirational statement is a highly descriptive and compelling message that impacts mind, body, and soul. A motivational statement communicates the four drivers of influence that create motions for action: association, opportunity to gain, influence, and fear of loss.

Followers are not limited to employees. Customers, suppliers, and investors are attracted too if an enterprise's aspirational and inspirational statements are influential enough.

A mission is an aspirational and inspirational statement of purpose, supported by a set of high level objectives. A mission statement addresses the core competencies of the enterprise - the activities it performs well.

A vision is an inspirational statement of a future state, which is reasonably achievable, within the context of the longer-term aspiration. Visions have external and internal components. The external component is what a community (local-to-global) can become as a consequence of the enterprise's activities, and the products and/or services that it offers. The internal component describes what the enterprise itself can become to its employees, customers, suppliers, and investors.

For example, an external vision could be "changing our community, one customer at a time" - the near-term vision could be the in local community; the long-term aspiration could be in the global community. Internal visions could include "best place to work," and "easy to do business with."

Strong aspirational, inspirational, and motivational statements define both enterprise and product and/or service brands. A brand is a collection of ideas, symbols, logos, images, tag lines, and slogans that represent a enterprise and its product and/or services. An enterprise can communicate to customers, suppliers, and investors through its brands and associated service marks, and trademarks, if they are memorable and recognizable.

For example, Apple, Inc. has created a strong following among its customers; its logo is memorable and instantly recognizable. HSBC Holdings, plc, defines itself as "the world's local bank," and Delta Air Lines, Inc. offers "a world of possibilities." The customers of Federal Express Corporation called it "Fed Ex," thus causing a name change to FedEx Corporation. The verb "to fedex" is a proprietary eponym, derived from the corporate name, meaning "to ship a package overnight."

Customers buy because they want to be associated with brands or earn incentives. Designer brands command loyalty among consumers for quality and perception of lifestyle. Customers, suppliers, and investors want to be associated with enterprises with strong aspirational and inspirational images and messages that suggest sustainability.

For example, Prudential Financial, Inc. uses the "rock" as its logo.

Both suppliers and investors perceive that defaults are less likely with enterprises that have loyal employee and customer bases that can generate and process transactions reliably on an ongoing basis.

Aspirational advantage tightens the fit between an enterprise and its employees, customers, suppliers, and investors. When an enterprise has constituency advantage, its position in the marketplace is strengthened. Constituents are loyal, and are less likely to switch to competitors.

Building aspirational advantage strengthens predictability and reliability, and is an enterpriship (entrepreneurship, leadership, and management) competency.

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*About Nigel A.L Brooks...*

Nigel A.L Brooks is a management consultant to entrepreneurs, business enterprise owners, executives, and managers, and the enterprises they serve. He specializes in developing the entrepreneurial, leadership, and managerial competencies that build sustainable advantage from vision to value. He is an author and a frequent speaker.

He obtained his professional experience as a partner at Andersen Consulting (now Accenture, Ltd.), as a vice president at Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc. (now Booz and Company), as a senior vice president at the American Express Company, as president of Javazona Cafes, Inc., and as president of The Business Leadership Development Corporation. He has been a contributing editor for the Bank Administration Institute magazine, and has served on boards of entrepreneurial networks. He was educated at the University of Exeter, Devon, United Kingdom.

His clients are in the financial services, food services, high-tech, manufacturing and distribution, pharmaceuticals, oil and gas, professional services, retail and wholesale, transportation, and government industries.

He has experience in North and Latin America, Europe and Asia-Pacific.

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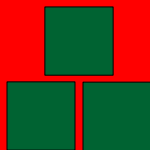
*About The Business Leadership Development Corporation (BLD)...*

The Business Leadership Development Corporation is a professional services firm that works with entrepreneurs, lifestyle business enterprise owners, executives, and managers, and the enterprises they serve.

BLD develops entrepreneurial, leadership, and managerial competencies that achieve performance excellence by *building sustainable advantage from vision to value*™ through:

- Strategic Management Consulting
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