

TEST YOUR BHAG

WHAT IS THE UNITING FORCE IN YOUR BUSINESS? RUNNING AND WORKING IN HIGH GROWTH COMPANIES IS HARD WORK AND WE ARE OFTEN LOSING SIGHT OF WHAT WE ARE ALL ABOUT.

Daniel Pink in his book 'Drive' outlined three core drivers for people: Autonomy, Mastery, and Purpose. (Note: For those who have not read this great book watch www.youtube.com, Dan Pink - Drive: The surprising truth about what motivates us.

Nothing binds a business like a clear and succinct BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal) and a clear purpose. I am not talking about the traditional boring mission statements that line the walls of corporate offices, full of: Corporate blah blah... typically lots of words taken from a corporate speak bingo competition.

What I am talking about is a mantra or Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG) that is worth waking up in the morning and going the extra mile.

Have a look at some of the founding BHAGs for some of industries great companies noting this is what they started with...

- **Microsoft:** "A computer on every desk and in every home"
- **Amazon:** "Every book, ever printed, in any language, all available in less than 60 seconds. Also: Earth's most customer centric company"
- **Ford:** "Democratize the automobile" (1900's)
- **Twitter:** "To become "the pulse" of the planet"
- **Giro Sport Design:** "Become the Nike of the cycling industry"
- **Nike:** "Crush Adidas" (1960's)

Brian Gaynor spoke at Springboard this month citing "New Zealand business owners, in comparison to Australian counterparts, lacked ambition".

Check your BHAG against the list in the takeout panel. Do not fall into the trap of being another conservative Kiwi company without big ambition.

Here are a few ideas from local examples (note: not their actual BHAG)

- **Biomatters:** "Tools on every biologist's desktop"
- **E-spatial:** "THE location intelligence behind all major New Zealand enterprise solutions"
- **Sale finder:** "New Zealand's ultimate consumer research tool"

When it comes to purpose statements - these are just clear concise versions of your value proposition in the language of your clients. More on this later – a topic for another blog post. In the meantime, you can read value propositions revisited, creating succinct messages, No value proposition = No business from old posts.

Example Purpose: Spike mail: "Creating qualified and engaged buyers versus creating lists" - note no reference to their core craft of email marketing.



Ingredients of BHAGs that work are:

- **Compelling and gripping:** people understand straight away
- **Action orientated**
- **Bold:** bordering on arrogant and unattainable
- **Clear:** who, what, where, by when
- **Types:** Target, common foe, role model, internal transformation
- **SUCCINCT:** The power of message is inversely proportional to its length

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