

**how  
to  
brokaw**

## Introduction: How to Brokaw.

Well, that should wrap it up. You've already learned the most important lesson about this company. It was found in the title, "How to Brokaw." You noticed that "Brokaw" was used as a verb, not a noun. That's because verbs connote action, and we are all about action. Pow! Zing! Kerang! Brokaw! See? Action.

So if you're the kind of person who leads instead of follows, who walks instead of talks, and above all, who will bring us many, many donuts, then please turn the page. On the other hand, if this sort of talk makes you uncomfortable, please deposit this book in the nearest blender or garbage disposal, press the button, and Brokaw the hell out of it.

# chapter one: welcome to our humble, little agency.

That's Associate Creative Director Mark and Copywriter Aaron having an early morning conference call with a cup of joe. Or something.



**Whether you've just hired us, or we've just hired you, consider this your official initiation into our company.**

Things are different here, something you'll notice from the moment you step into our space. For starters, there is a bar right off of our lobby. Mysterious, you think. Maybe they're trying to attract millennials to work here and make them think, "Wow, Brokaw is super rad." Or maybe it's a tribute to one of the agency's oldest clients: legendary Great Lakes Brewing Company. Don't overthink it, Socrates. We just like beer. Don't worry, never during business hours. Seriously. There's too much to get done. And things move pretty quickly around here. That's why we created this book. To make sure some things do stay the same, like the culture and the work. And the free beer.

# chapter two: what is advertising?



Let's start with a basic definition of advertising:

**Any communication in a public medium to promote or sell a product or service to consumers.**

Sound good? Okay, then let's move on, because that was by far the low-down shittiest definition of advertising we've ever read. Just beyond insulting. Here's why...

## **1. Advertising is bigger than that.**

Much bigger. Paid media-driven advertising is just one galaxy in an "always-on" universe of ever-changing galaxies. Wait, what? Okay, how about three galaxies? Galaxy #1: Paid media. Advertising bought and/or placed by a marketer (traditional planets/stars like print, TV, DM, radio, and OOH, but also new ones like Facebook ads, promoted Tweets, paid influencer/blogger posts, paid search, and display ads/takeovers). Galaxy #2: Owned Media. The channels your brand directly controls (websites, mobile apps, your Facebook/Twitter/Instagram/Snapchat/Pinterest pages, company blogs, and your store—if you actually have a real brick-and-mortar store in the non-internet world). And Galaxy #3: Earned Media. Any communication about a brand NOT controlled by marketers (social posts, PR, customer opinions, third-party reviews, independent bloggers). Our goal is to boldly go where no agency has gone before, seeking out a custom-blend of all three galaxies for your brand, flexing up on some planets, and down on others, to create the greatest three-galaxy synergy of successful marketing to fit your budget. (FADE UP: *STAR TREK* THEME) "Kirk out."

## 2. Consumers are dead. Maybe even super dead.

Okay, not literally. But they have transformed or mutated into a whole new species known as the CONTROLLERS. These people are in charge of the conversation surrounding your brand now. They're your new collective boss, so hopefully you were nice to them at the last company picnic. And guess what? Your next performance review is today, and tomorrow, and every day after that. Because controllers are much more demanding than consumers. And who can blame them? We created these monsters. By empowering them with technology and connectivity, the controllers grew up with on-demand everything: from movies and TV shows, to microwave ovens, to social media apps, to video games, and free streaming music. But the good news is the controllers are avid content seekers and entertainment junkies. And they will absolutely pay attention to your advertising, provided you give them an experience that lives up to their delightfully fragmented, hyperkinetic, I-want-it-now lifestyle. Best news maybe ever: in the next chapter, we'll give you the secret. (SFX: EXPLOSION).

## 3. Advertising is not the same as selling.

To put it in perspective, let's consider a few variables in the purchase decision: price, packaging, perceived value, color/shape, shelf placement, celebrity endorsement, product features, distribution, word-of-mouth (referrals/blogs), salespersons, the economy, third-party endorsements (consumer reports), the weather, trial/experience, promotions/incentives, values/lifestyle match, ease of use, brand inertia, and many other esoteric factors, like what kind of day did you have? Obviously, advertising cannot carry the entire burden of sales. However, what advertising CAN do is even better. Advertising can set the stage for selling, by starting a relationship between the brand and the consumer. As any master salesperson will tell you, sales are built upon relationships.

So, with all this in mind, let's return to a better definition of advertising:

**Advertising is any opportunity for a blind date between a brand and a person.**



Let's face it: one of these parties does not want to be here. She's been set up (possibly by her mom), and she isn't in the mood to talk. Or listen.

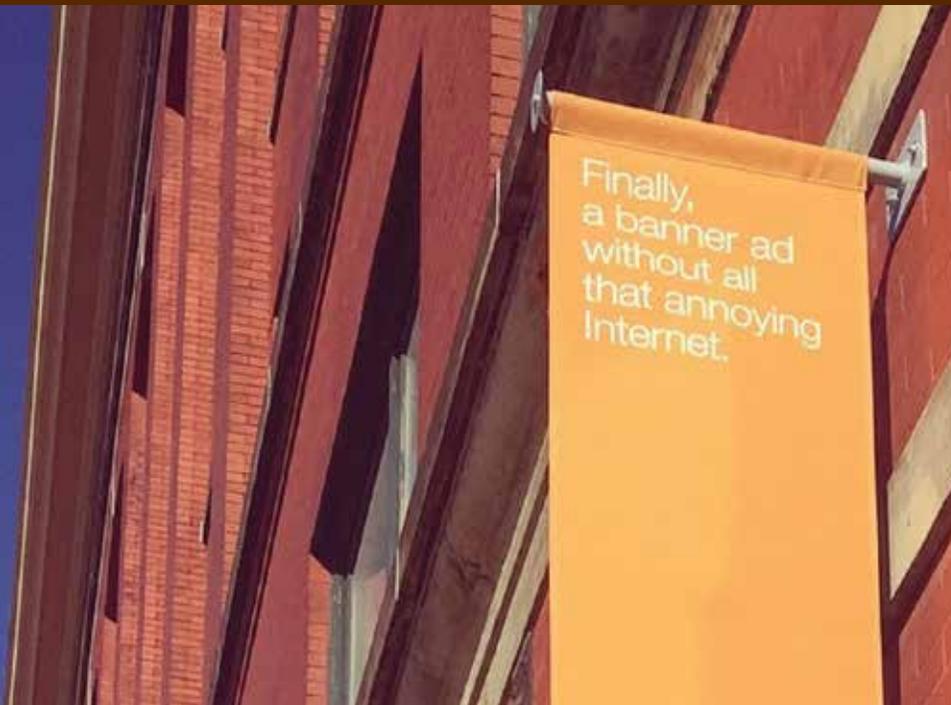
So how do we approach this situation? Or here's a better question: how did YOU attract your current partner or spouse? Did you walk right up to this person and ask them to screw? Did you try to address everyone else in the room while you were talking? And did you make your own logo bigger by shouting your name at the end of the conversation? Of course you didn't.

Instead, you were probably charming and interesting and funny. You probably asked this person a lot of questions about himself/herself. And you probably tried to remain a bit mysterious.

That's because instinctually, you know how to sell. Instinctually, you know when to send a text message, when to hit Facebook, and when to pick up the phone. Because instinctually, you know that effective selling comes from your gut and from your heart, not from your head.

Think about it. Actually, don't.

# chapter three: what is great advertising?



**Few agencies would tell you this, but the secret formula to creating great advertising is incredibly, astonishingly simple: just create something that doesn't resemble advertising.**

That's it. Period. End of story. Sounds easy, right? Sure. Try explaining that to your boss at the next budget meeting. We'll CMO you later. Because if it's not advertising, then what the Jenny Buck is it? (See below, yo.)

## Novelty

Great advertising gives people something they've never seen before. Or participated in, for that matter. They won't just appreciate it, they'll share it. Like it. Make a fondue with it. Do people still make fondue?

## Entertainment

Great advertising is great comedy or drama. Make the target laugh or cry. Make them FEEL something. Our goal is to out-entertain the entertainment industry. Because, hey, who's funnier than *The Big Bang Theory*? Honestly, a lot of people. But mostly: you are.

## Utility

Great advertising is useful. We're here to empower people with information and technology to help them lead longer, healthier, happier, more remarkable lives. Hint: when in doubt, INFOGRAPHIC.

## **Simplicity**

Great advertising is strengthened by everything that is removed from the execution. The simplest way to set off someone's BS-meter is by BS-ing. So KISS, or you'll be DOA. Like, FRFR (for real, for real).

## **Beauty**

Great advertising is beautiful. It contains original artwork, music, writing, and film. The more cluttered our lives, the more we seek out beauty, art, perfection. Like a really cool robot. Or that song we wrote at lunch. About what robots eat for lunch. (Spoiler alert: oil.)

## **Un-jerk-ness**

Thanks to hacks and blockheads, advertising gets a bad rap sometimes. That's why great advertising gives back to the human race. Ask yourself, what are we doing to make this planet a better place? How are we, specifically, being un-jerklike? This could be the deciding factor for a controller. So let's un-jerk it up!

## **All of the above?**

The greatest of all the great advertising checks all these boxes and gives people an experience of indescribable value. Value times a billion, to be sure. How do we know? Because we see results. Crazy results. The kind you can measure. With a stick. For measuring.

**Real important.  
Maybe the  
most important thing  
in the whole book.  
Read the next  
page carefully:**

So, let's put this all together. Who or what is great advertising?

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**“Great advertising makes the quantum leap from intrusion to reward. From blind date to head-over-heels.”**

Wow. Fantastic. Let's go get some nachos.

# chapter four: the birth of brokaw.

Bill Brokaw, Founder.

Gregg Brokaw  
(Chewbacca),  
Co-owner.

Tim Brokaw  
(Stormtrooper),  
Co-owner.

Seriously.



**Bill Brokaw founded the agency on April Fools' Day, 1992. That should tell you something.**

And so should his three business goals: to do great work, to make money, and to have fun. As Bill is fond of saying, "Two out of three ain't bad."

However, Bill was able to finally bat 3-for-3 when he cashed in years later, after selling the agency to his two sons Gregg (Chewbacca) and Tim (the Stormtrooper) just weeks before the worst economic recession since the Great Depression.

Fortunately, the young Padawans were able to battle evil global economic forces and a rapidly changing media landscape to build a next generation agency. Together, the Brokaw brothers, along with an entire agency of brilliant misfits, have vowed to use their strategic, creative, media, digital (streamigital?) powers for good. And, well, the occasional bad YouTube video. (Because everyone needs a little dark side, right?)

# chapter five: our values.

## **We value talented people who happen to be nice.**

Gosh, this section is pretty short. You could probably even memorize it if you wanted to. Just re-read the first sentence a couple times. Or sing it. Up to you, chief.



# chapter six: man's got to know his limitations.

## what we're good at:

1. All things “streamigital” (strategic–creative-media-digital)
2. Solving tough business problems with fresh, un-blah 361.54° thinking
3. Bubble Boy Hockey

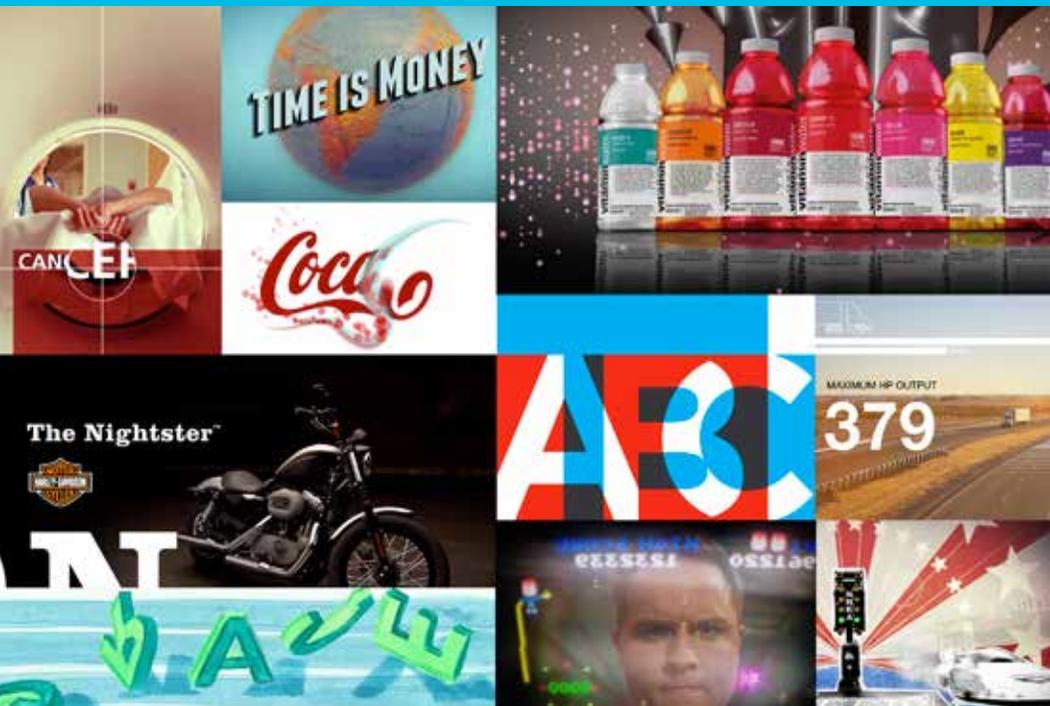
## what we're not good at:

1. Physics
2. All things blah
3. Racquetball



# chapter seven: our sister company.

(Or should we say “brother”?)



★★★★ FAVORITE ★★★★★  
**BROTHER**



**Meet Favorite Brother, our very own  
world-class motion graphics, design,  
and production studio.**

Favorite Brother does all kinds of cool stuff, like 2D/3D animation, live-action shooting, illustration, typography, editing, sound design, color correction, video compositing, and special effects. And while we could go on and on about our amazing sister/brother, we'd rather SHOW you (on the interwebs: [favoritebrother.com](http://favoritebrother.com)). Trying to describe it here is like teaching karate to a dolphin. What's that? Hmm, you're right. Dolphins are pretty smart. How about teaching karate to a snake? Snakes don't even have elbows. Dumb snakes.

How to explain Favorite Brother to your Boss: incredible, dynamic video content without the mandatory two-week LA production, Hollywood shoot budget, and traffic pile-up on the 10.

How to explain Favorite Brother to your Mom: they make stuff move (words, pictures, ideas).

# chapter eight: ruling.



SMALL AGENCY AWARDS  
**SMALL AGENCY OF THE YEAR**  
**CULTURE: BROKAW**

**Since the beginning of time (or 1992), people have asked us, why do you rule so hard?**

Well, this chapter will give you some tried and true advice on how to rule within any organization. How to break the bonds of suckiness that imprison much of the marketing and non-marketing world. And above all, how to use your newly found ruling powers for good. Um, grasshopper?

## **1. Do the work.**

Stay late until it gets done. Ask others to help you. Work from home. Work on the weekends. Whatever it takes to get the work done, on time and correctly. This includes self-promotion and new business. We are here to create and produce the best marketing in the world. The work is our greatest priority. Let's get it done.

## **2. Learn from your mistakes.**

We fully expect you to make mistakes. In fact, we encourage it. Only by screwing up can we hope to improve. So screw up early and often. But just as important, learn from your mistakes. Don't make the same mistake twice. THAT is inexcusable.



### 3. Shoot first and keep shooting until you're out of bullets.

If you wait for permission/input, you will receive delays and obstacles. We expect you to make bold decisions. To take risks. And above all, to self-motivate every day. You are the very best at what you do. You wouldn't be here if you weren't. So swing for the fences. Dream big. And start shooting.

### 4. Do what you said you'd do.

There's no quicker way to undermine teamwork and trust than failure to follow through on a promise. So be a person of your word. Especially if your word is something sweet, like "hobo dog clown."

### 5. Follow the Rule of Five.

Never invite more than four people to your meeting. If you can't solve a problem with five brains, the problem cannot be solved. Our clients deserve efficiency and common sense. Not a room full of dummies. (For an example: see Congress.)

### 6. Find the positive.

If you don't like something, by all means tell us. Don't let things fester. But sometimes, the harder thing is to identify what you DO LIKE. And what IS working. Let's focus on that. And for the stuff you don't like, offer your ideas on how to improve it. In short, "Don't bitch, pitch."

### 7. Use email as a last resort.

Don't try to manage a project by email, don't hit "reply all," don't cc: the boss, and above all, don't use email to flame on something or someone. Instead, use email to spread information (industry trends/articles), to follow up, to schedule, and to share documents.

### 8. Have fun.

Play Bubble Boy Hockey. Throw darts at mustard packets. Draw on our whiteboard walls. Whatever it takes to float your boat. Fun that YOU initiate has proven to be 7.4 times better than fun the management team initiates. So play your music. Color your hair. If we're not having fun, what's the point?



# chapter nine: cleveland rocks. mildly.

**Fact is, you have to be resilient to live here and have a good sense of humor to thrive here.**

And that's not just because of the bone-chilling temperatures that lash in from the shores of our sheephead-filled buddy to the north, Lake Erie. We're tougher than most because we've managed to endure some pretty, well, trying times. Like the River Fire. The Blackout. The Forbes rankings. And pretty much anything embarrassing that's happened in sports for the last 80-some years.

By now, you might be asking yourself, "So why does Brokaw make its home in Cleveland?" Because it's anything but boring. Plus, we love a good underdog story. And believe it or not, Cleveland's actually winning these days and on the rise, which inspired us to retire the most infamous jersey in "The Land."

And besides, we like Cleveland.



## Conclusion: How to Brokaw.

Why do anything unless you're going to do it really well? So you can see, "How to Brokaw" isn't just about working here. Or even about advertising. It's about doing one thing and doing it well. It's about walking the walk. It's about working hard and playing hard—and not complaining to HR about everyone saying "hard" all the time. It's about a bunch of brilliant, goofy bastards (who happen to be nice), marching along toward the Promised Land. It's about sharing, growing, achieving, and improving. It's about courage. It's about love. It's about life. And above all, it's about laughing so hard, you poop your pants. Then laughing some more, because you just said the word "poop." Who says poop? Weirdo.

