



i appreciate good aesthetics. i feel that there is power in presenting an organized image. that my job is ultimately about curating an experience, an event, and it would be a disservice to those who trust me to leave anything up to chance. above all, my goal is to be useful. to be deliberate. branding is part of that process - we structure our image to draw people in, we showcase and summarize in an attempt to create a kind of shorthand, a talisman. we present our brand as a goal to the world at large and a touchstone to those in our care. as important as branding is, i feel that is very often misused, especially in our industry.

we live in an era of hype. of the silicon valley start up and the reality TV star. instagram models and people famous simply for being famous. the first step in starting a business seems to be to start the marketing machine - clever usernames and a dot com address. people start trying to drum up business before they have even asked if they deserve success. in training we always talk about objective, about the "why" behind what we do - how many of us put that level of thought into our brand? what are we presenting? what are we telling people? it may seem like a small thing - but training is nothing if not a study in the impact of small things. what does your brand do for you? what is the real world translation likes and "brand awareness"? and more importantly, what is it costing you? not just in time but in habit...

let me explain.

humans, despite our complexity, tend to have a bias towards the easy. the familiar. we tend to keep going in the direction we are already headed, and branding is in essence a practice. a prayer. a meditation on what we want to be. it is a mask we wear, and if we play a role long enough it eventually becomes our true self. so the question should be where are you headed? what is important to you? is it omnipresence and consistent messaging? elevator pitches and slogans? financial gain? personal gratification? growth? do you want to be right or do you want to be better? do you want results or do you want credit? do you want to educate or do you want to entertain?

also - saying both is a fucking cop-out. of course we want both. we want it all. but when our back is up against a wall we can only move in one direction and it is the direction we have been heading in

this whole time.

branding is necessary, we can only engage with those who come to us willing to listen – training is a business, but we need to be extremely careful with what aspect we put forward, and what is acting merely as a support. see, brands are funny things. a product we can hold, and because of that it has a flexibility, it is durable and receptive to change – of course you would put a better engine in a car, a faster processor in a computer – products are made to be improved upon, to grow and respond to changing world. research and development is never-ending – build and break and build again.

brands however are made of time and ideas, their ephemerality makes them fragile in a way, and makes us hesitant to change and sensitive to criticism. creating a brand takes time and energy, and that must be protected, right? but do we protect it because it is right, or just because it is ours? this would be different if we were in the business of selling sneakers – it would make sense to see this as primarily as a game of numbers and time on site, but if you want to be responsible for the health, safety, and wellness of others than you need to pay attention to the repercussions of your actions. to how your priorities ripple outward.

or not.

your brand is what you have made it. what you have chosen to show the world. the shorthand you have created. so what does it say? what are actually conveying? is it about who you are or what you have to offer? about how cool you are or what you have done for others? are you searching for followers or for challenges? for new ideas or validation to stay the same? we all want business, want some sort of recognition – but ultimately this is about ownership. about cost and benefit and the audience that we are trying to connect with, about what type of business we are trying to be. brands are fragile because they are so easy to change, the only thing it costs is willingness. the choice to face that discomfort head on, to be deliberate in the creation of your product, and to use your brand as a means to that end.

hype and posturing does not interest me – and some say that means i am in the wrong business. maybe they are right, or maybe i am just in a slightly different business than them. i have an objective. a will. and every action is bent towards that goal. undertaken deliberately. every decision puts me either closer to or further away from that objective. sometimes newer people in the gym will remark half jokingly that if they did a movement differently or undertook a task in a different order that it would be easier – my response is always the same: “staying home would be even easier. if easy was the goal than you fucked up the moment you decided to come here”

there are easier ways to make money.

easier ways to get likes.

there are easier things to sell than hard work and accountability.

so take responsibility for your decisions

or make different ones.

build your product.

build your brand.

to the end.

till the end.

-the station