

The Mark Borst Letter

Being Different ...Positive or Negative

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When I was a kid I hated that I had a common name. Not only was there other people named Mark in my class, my grade, my school but mark is a noun and mark is a verb in the dictionary along with multiple synonyms. In fact, I had such a strong dislike to my bland name that my sons both have unique names Xandru and Brogan - neither of which is 100% original but are very rare in the USA. At 14 and 9 years old they have both have infectious smiles and presence beyond their age, so with or without their unique names people do not forget my boys.

When you are 18, you worry what everybody is thinking of you; when you're 40, you don't give a darn what anybody thinks of you; and when you're 60 you realize nobody's been thinking about you at ALL.

- Dr Daniel Amen.

Let's examine this...as an adolescent and young adult I always want to "fit in," not to be noticed because being different is a bad thing (at least in my minds). I wanted to "blend in" I didn't want to be first picked in school by the teacher for being extra smart...but I didn't want to be picked last in gym class for the kid chosen team - a bit paradoxically I usually wanted to be the captain so I could pick the team!

Now being a bit into my 40's I can attest to having stopped obsessing on certain things. Most recently I bought a minivan, not for work use but personal use...and I must admit I LOVE IT. I have always been an SUV person because I'm not a "soccer mom" -and of course we all know that they are the only ones driving these minivans - and I have taken some heat from wife and few of my friends LOL. But the fact that I have kids very active in sports and a large dog I can say that it is nice having the functionality of the van and I don't care what other people think!

Although I have always truly felt like I have this 60 year old attitude and preach the "not caring" attitude I have to admit that I let public perception creep into my life, personally and business. Of course we have to live moral and law abiding lives but having an opinion on anything is NOT wrong. We all have opposition to our thoughts/beliefs but being a chameleon and appeasing the group you are with is not good for the soul. We need to differentiate ourselves, not just to be different



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but to stand up for what are true feeling are.

Parapraxis noun [par-uh-prak-sis]. 1. Psychology. A slip of the tongue or pen, forgetfulness, isplacement of objects, or other error thought to reveal unconscious wishes or attitudes

Don't let parapraxis creep into your being either written, orally or mentally. Be true to yourself take a position and be different from the crowd. You may just realize there are others with these same beliefs and convictions to start a tribe.

I'm going to take you back a few years. Brogan was born Feb 2007, eight weeks later Lisa was back to work and he was headed to a babysitter. Not the ideal situation having to leave a eight-week old baby with a stranger (it was someone we causally knew that had just started an in-home daycare for infants) but we had done it before with Xandru and all was well. By around September of the same year Brogan began to lose his baby hair like most newborns...but it was different, almost like a perfect circle of hair would fall out. Lisa and I weren't too worried about it, thinking maybe the babysitter had him on his back too long and it rubbed off that way. We asked she answered I don't think so...then the 1-2 circles in the very back of his head were starting in other areas of his head, and were getting bigger and 1-2 starting on the top of his heads. With our friend google we couldn't find much, partly because google was not nearly as powerful in 2007 as now but more because we didn't know what we were looking for. We still did not get frantic, in fact we really didn't do anything for a short time - looking back I think this was because we didn't want to "KNOW" if it was something really bad. At around one-years-old we took him to his yearly checkup and still didn't bring up to the check in attendant, or the admin nurse taking vitals etc.... Our Dr. walks in sat down and first thing out of his mouth was *the elephant in the room* "what's up with the hair?" Some questions back and forth and he concluded it might be Alopecia but he wasn't too sure... you need to go to a dermatologist to check it out.

Now we had something to type into our friend google...let me tell you if don't already know.... GOOGLE and anything medical are not a great combination unless you want to think you are going to die within

10 secs of reading...but we had something to look at, but still did not have a grasp on what it was...

Dermatology is a crazy profession(IMO)...A month had gone by waiting on the first available appointment to see the #3 doctor from the referrals from our Pediatrician (The #1 Doctor was not taking patients and the #2 doctor had a 6 month wait.) The diagnosis, "I have never seen anything like this before" are you f'ing kidding me (he appeared almost afraid to touch Brogan's scalp...I can see why he was #3) INCONCLUSIVE to the cause of your son's hair falling out. And we waited a month to see this clown...

Then a horrible thing started to happen, Lisa and I we were hard pressed to keep a hat on Brogan's head...so we wouldn't get stares, looks from people thinking does this kid have the mange?? We were beginning to be embarrassed of the way he looks... in public. This was partly because we didn't have the answers or even the cause. Not knowing is bad, but for a couple of control freaks the not being able to fix something is the worst.

We had this possibility from the pediatrician, alopecia, so Lisa started researching and researching to try to figure out if this was what he had? We found a specialist at University of Minnesota who was doing a large study to figure out if there is a genetic link for alopecia and/or what is the cause of it. We had some conversations back and forth with her and she generally diagnosed him but wanted us to come up and become part of the research group. Simultaneously Brogan's hair began to grow back, but not 100%, Dr. Maria Hordinsky was curious about the regrowth and family history and invited us up to the university to do some testing,



blood work and face to face meeting with us and have Brogan be part of the national database of her study. The staff, nursing students and Dr. were all awesome. In the End Brogan was diagnosed with an Auto Immune Disease called Alopecia Aerota.

As Brogan's hair continued to fill in, we were getting a great knowledge base. But it was very confusing... story after story from other people with this same disease... no 2 stories were even close to the same.

Being an auto immune disease we began learning that when you are diagnosed with one the possibility of developing more diseases drastically goes up. Not a good felling as there are 100's of auto immune related diseases.

In the Summer of 2010 we were thinking that maybe the alopecia was a one and done thing, there are cases like this, and Brogan was outgrowing this already with a fullish head of hair...Fall weather and a Fall cold changed all that, seemingly overnight Brogan starting losing hair in clumps. Surprising enough Brogan didn't seem to care or even really notice the change. Now three years old and in a preschool the other kids his age didn't seem to care or notice either. It was a strange phenomenon... kids, seemingly the meanest creatures on earth, did not seem to care that Brogan had weird patches of hair missing. So where is this behavior learned from and at what age because 3,4-year-olds don't seem to notice "differences"

But even as kids his own age didn't seem to mind both Lisa and I would try to keep that crazy ass hair covered at all costs. I don't know if it was embarrassment or just trying to protect our baby...but from who? Adults, mean older kids, ourselves? Are we exposing our own insecurities based on our 3 year old son??

During that summer, a neighbor girl around the age of Xandru had invited my boys to come and watch her play softball at the local park. I took them down to watch her play...or at least go so they could eat concession stand food, LOL. I was watching her play softball and my boys wondered off. The boys found a group of kids they didn't know that were messing around while their sisters were playing softball. I happened to look over at the boys & I notice there was something going on, one of the boys had knocked off Brogan's hat which had left his crazy patchy hair exposed. I stayed where I was and could not hear what was said but I'm sure it was mean... and the next thing I saw was Xandru push two kids off of

a 3-4step platform and say "that's my Brother leave him alone!" (For anyone that knows Xandru he is the most kind-hearted compassionate kid around.) At that moment I knew two things, 1) that the bond between my sons was sealed and 2) that while Xandru was around that he would Protect Brogan as much as Lisa and I...This story still gets me choked up thinking about it, writing it



Now October 2010 Brogan's hair is 80% gone and what is there is light and wispy, Lisa and I came to a hard hard decision that we would shave the last little bit of hair off. Up to this point Brogan still never realized or acknowledged that his hair was almost nonexistent. Not knowing how this would affect Brogan I decide I would shave my head as well.

Holy Cow do kids change a person's perspective. In my late teens and early twenty's, I spent a lot of money on my flo. It was my identity... But now I barely have enough hair to be cut.

I can't remember if I shaved my head first or his... Brogan looked in the mirror after I shaved his and he screamed "WHAT DID YOU DO"HEART BREAKINGbecause I knew there was a good chance it was not coming back. Rationalizing with a 3 ½ yr. old is never easy, but he felt like I took his hair from 100 to -0-. I know that it had to be done and would do the same thing again. Alopecia is not a life threatening disease but it is definitely **A LIFE ALTERING** Disease.



“Haircut” and “Naked Head” were the terms we used and still use to describe what sits a few inches above his infectious smile. We surely don’t like or use the term bald.

The Differential effect...now look for some affinity. Two weeks after the “Haircut” was Halloween, one of our first stops was our neighbor the Fire Chief, who happens to shave his head. Brogan ripped off his costume hood and excitedly say “LOOK I have your SAME haircut!” ...the fact that he found some affinity with his naked head was the beginning of a life long journey for him.

Now 9 years old there are ups and downs associated with this disease but Brogan is a Strong, Confident, Loving person that has accomplished so much already both acedemically being at the top of his class and athletically playing multiple sports being the go to player. Lisa and I no longer worry about Brogan being trapped by this disease, we are just standing with him growing into who he is and will be. To learn more about Alopecia and Brogan visit him at www.NakedHeads.org



Can being different be the driving factor that makes a person outstanding? – “Rising Above” by Gregory

Zuckerman spotlights 11 athletes that have used their adversity as a driving factor in their rise to the top. There was economic and racial strife but also dyslexia, amputee and Tourette syndrome that were overcome by what some say is their ability to hyper-focus on their goals. Sports became their outlet to differentiate themselves more than just their disability.

Like Sports for these 11, we can dream to rise to the top. To be the one of many in whatever we desire, weather sports, career, relationships, spirituality. The Key is to focus and not let the distractors get in your way.

Recently Taylor Swift embodied it best in Shake it off:

*Cause the players gonna play, play, play, play, play
And the haters gonna hate, hate, hate, hate, hate
Baby, I'm just gonna shake, shake, shake, shake, shake
I shake it off, I shake it off
Heartbreakers gonna break, break, break, break,
break
And the fakers gonna fake, fake, fake, fake, fake
Baby, I'm just gonna shake, shake, shake, shake, shake
I shake it off, I shake it off
I'll never miss a beat, I'm lightning on my feet
And that's what they don't see mmm, that's what
they don't see mmm
I'm dancing on my own (dancing on my own), I'll
make the moves up as I go (moves up as I go)
And that's what they don't know mmm, that's what
they don't know mmm
But I keep cruising, can't stop, won't stop grooving
It's like I got this music in my body saying it's gonna
be alright*

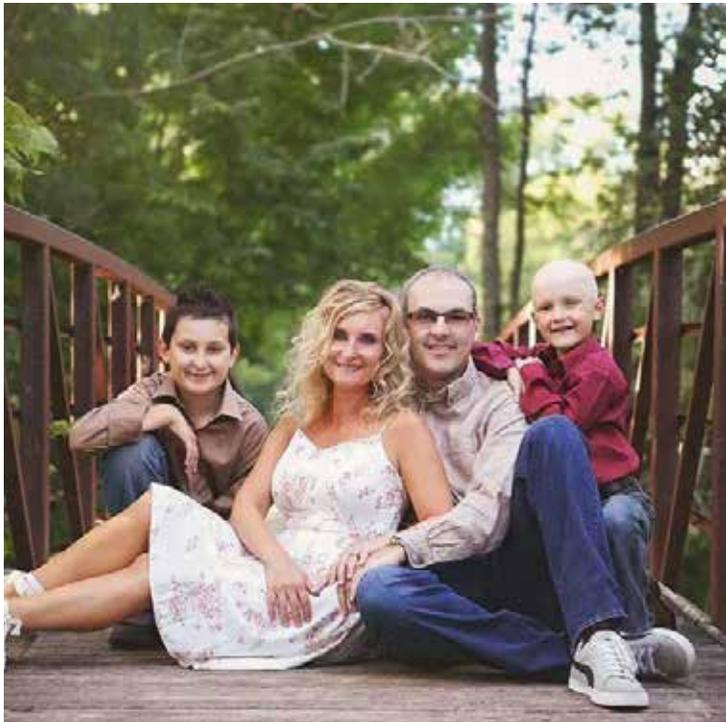
When I’m at Social gatherings and some asks me what i do, and if i say Real Estate its almost like i have a third eye or i’m purple...they either can’t get out of the conversation fast enough or they explain that they had their license and how horrible it was because all realtors are thieves/cheats etc.

Chances are you know a lot of people that have been or are real estate agents, whether full time or part time. I’m positive that they all have said “I’m different” or “I’m going to change your perception of real estate “. I know becasue I have said those things...and meant them whole heartedly.

But the industry as a whole doesn’t let you differentiate yourself... because the individuals that try are ridiculed and outcast of the “group” called

REALTORS. The number of very smart business savvy people that get into and then quickly out of real estate sales is in the 90% range...why, because their new way of doing it shunned before it is ever given a try.

This is one of the reasons i do not go around glad handing telling everyone in site "if you or anyone you know is in search of their next dream home, give me a call..." I can not try to "convience" anyone in 20 seconds that i'm different...so i don't try and never really have. It has never been worth it, its like trying to sell a steak to a Vegan. My personal connection to people is much more important. Although I have been doing it differently for almost 10 years now with success with my approach to real estate, i finally was able to document it so i could help more poeple in the real estate industry but also in my mission to charity work through my recently released book The Value-Driven Approach to Sell Real Estate. Want a copy? Get one for Free at www.OurFreeBook4Charity.com



The Group of Misfits i created

Photo credit to Jamie Skripac check out her work at www.JamieSkripacPhotography.com

MARK's Corner of Incitement

Recommended Reading

Miracle Mornings by Hal Elrod

Recommended Podcast

Tim Ferris on itunes or stitcher radio

Recommend Videos

30 day of genius

www.creativelive.com/30daysofgenius

Rant of the Month

Driving in the left lane - It's Illegal unless Passing - Stop IT!



COMING SOON! We will be helping local businesses get their story out!! We will be interviewing Northwest Indiana Business Owners, Entrprenuers, and Thought-Leaders To Bring Northwest Indiana Residents The Best Advice From our Community's Brightest Minds. If you would like to get your story out, visit www.LakeCentralPlusBooking.com

True Differentiation:

How it impacts profit and dictates strategy when selling a home.

By Mark Borst, author: *The Value-Driven Approach To Sell Real Estate: A practical guide to protect yourself from REAL ESTATE GREED & bank an extra \$30,000*

I realize the image to the right may look a little Howard Hughes-ish, but there is a method to my madness. And this sketch, if you're thinking of selling your home, may have a profound and direct impact on your bottom-line profit. You'll also want to share this with friends and family members that you care about too.

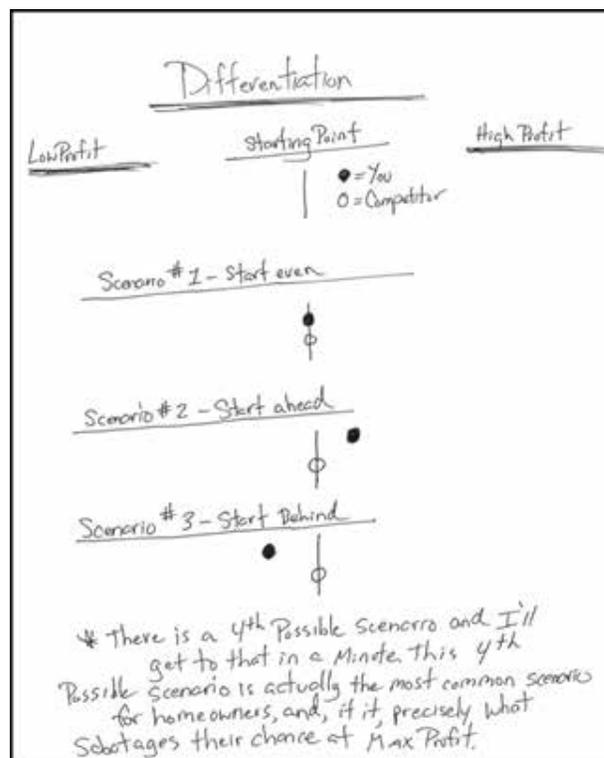
When I set out to study Warren Buffett, his investment philosophy, to find out what made him the world's greatest investors, and, ultimately, how his methods could be applied to my clients' home sale—I came stumbled upon a book called *Differentiate or Die*. This book changed my entire perspective on real estate. Jack Trout was the author. In the book he laid out the fundamental reasons why a business must differentiate from competitors, not just to be successful, but as the key ingredient to thrive in our current era of Killer Competition. Now, admittedly, from a business perspective, this is common sense. Every entrepreneur knows he must differentiate his business. As a mentor once told me, "Nobody needs two left shoes." In business, if two businesses are the same, then one is dispensable.

But, this got me thinking.

Business, and the fight for new customers, really, is no different than real estate and the fight for homebuyers.

Your home is a home, yes, but analogously speaking, it is also product no different than Tide laundry detergent, where you are the owner of that product, no different than Proctor & Gamble is Tide. And see, when you look at your home through this lens—the profit from your home sale; its ability to compete in the marketplace—comes down to your ability to differentiate.

Is your home no different than the many other



homes on the market? Is it just a commodity? Or is it different, and could it be judged superior?

In my sketch above, you'll notice there are three scenarios. Each scenario describes the starting position of your product, your home, in relation to other competing homes on the market. Each of these scenarios can also be thought of as a race.

The more and better you differentiate your product, the faster you move forward toward higher profit. And of course, the less you differentiate the faster you move backwards toward lower profit. All the while the other homes on the market, in your neighborhood, in your price range, with similar square footage, amenities, etc., are competing in the same race.

In scenario #1 – you, your home, you start even with your competitors. You are neither ahead of behind. There is no discernable difference between your home and others. No apparent advantages and no apparent disadvantages.

In scenario #2 – you, your home, starts out ahead of the competition. This could be for a number reasons. But through some means of differentiation, you have the advantage of a 5-second head start. So as long as you run the race appropriately, and don't trip over your feet or make a fundamental mistake,

you have increased odds of winning.

In scenario #3 –you, your home, starts out at a notable disadvantage to the competition. You are now the underdog, not the frontrunner. And to win, and bank the most profit from your home sale, you'll have to run the race of your life.

Part of my job then becomes, prior to creating the actual “race strategy,” is to determine where a clients’ home’s starting position is.

If you’re running the 800-meter dash, for example, someone running on the inside lanes—from a strategic standpoint—must run a very different race than the runner who runs in the outside lanes. Similarly, the runner with a known disadvantage, like Aimee Lee Mullins who I wrote about last month, who set multiple NCAA records despite having her lower legs amputated as a child, must run a very different race than the runner who doesn’t have that handicap.

Now you would think that every home, given the three scenarios above, either a) starts out even, b) ahead or c) behind the competition, right? Wrong. There is actually a 4th possible scenario.

In scenario #4 – you, your home, starts out ahead of the competition but...only “in your mind.” For obvious reasons, this is dangerous.

When a homeowner is blinded to their true starting position in relation to other competing homes on the market; due to pride of ownership, ego, arrogance, lack of understanding of how true differentiation works, how value is created, etc., almost always, in my experience, they sabotage their chance for maximum profit.

There is, by the way, nothing wrong with starting from behind. The fabled underdog story exists for this reason, to upset the odds-makers. But the underdog, to win, must realize he is the underdog and, through strategy, offset his handicap.

David versus Goliath: An apparent mismatch, but in this fight Goliath’s size is no match for a

small well-placed stone, shot from a distance, out of reach of Goliath, from David’s high-tension slingshot. Bing! One stone upside the head, and Goliath is out.

This is why, in my book, *The Value-Driven Approach to Sell Real Estate: How to protect yourself from Real Estate Greed and bank an extra \$30K in profit*, I talk about the importance of getting an accurate and comprehensive diagnosis—for this very reason—to identify your homes’ true starting point.

The last scenario in the world you ever want to participate in is scenario #4.

One interesting tidbit too, about how true differentiation works, when done correctly and effective, you not only control whether your home moves forward or backward “in the race” toward higher or lower profit, you also control whether other competing homes (with yours) move forward or backward too.

I suppose its kind of like cheating, that is tying a rope around your competitor, and anchoring him to a tree before the start of the race, but hey – that other homeowner should have hired someone who understands true differentiation, then they wouldn’t have been in that position, chained to a lower potential profit.

The biggest secret, though, for maximum profit, you must know your “product’s” starting point in relation to its competitors. Without this, nothing else really matters, as the details are fiction and hypothetical, and not reality.

But with reality, we can get to true strategy.

If it turns out that we’re the underdog, so be it, we’ll run the race of the underdog and in accord to the facts, to strive for the upset.

For a more in-depth discussion on this topic, go to: www.OurFreeBook4Charity.com. There you can request a FREE copy of my forthcoming book “*The Value-Driven Approach To Sell Real Estate: How to protect yourself from Real Estate Greed & bank an extra \$30K in profit*.”

