

Leveraging Level 1 to Strengthen Your “Brand”

By Wendy Kayser Kirkpatrick



Lasting Relationships, Sustainable Goods

My husband Jim and I were recently on a 12-hour transatlantic flight. After reading my last book, perusing a stack of articles, taking a nap, eating a snack, and exhausting my laptop battery, I was left with the [Delta Sky Magazine](#) as my only source of entertainment.

To my pleasant surprise there was an interesting article called *Advertising's New Attitude*. It talks about which consumer product companies have successfully (or not-so-successfully) adapted their advertising messages to target the increasingly elusive consumer dollar.

The article states:

“The impact of the recession on consumption and advertising isn’t just altering the way brands advertise, it’s purging the marketplace of brands that weren’t creating lasting relationships with consumers and sustainable goods in the first place”.



Says Piers Fawkes, co-founder of PSFK, a trends and innovation firm with clients including Apple, Target, and BMW:

“When you think about the companies that are closing – how many of them do you think, ‘That was such a great company, how unlucky’? Most of the companies in trouble had so-so products, so-so service and even the best of these were only ‘good enough’. We should remember that many of the powerful companies that we know of today rose in the ‘30s despite the Depression.”

How This Applies to You

Apply this thinking to your own company, department, and self. Consider the strength of your own “brand”, if you will. With significant numbers of learning professionals losing their jobs, some practical, quick, and easy ideas for how to increase your brand equity seem in order.

The ideas will focus on Level 1. The reason is that according to the ASTD 2005 State of the Industry Report, 91 percent of all learning events are evaluated at Level 1. The ubiquitous Level 1 Reaction measurement has earned names like “smile sheet” and “happy sheet” over the years, in part because it often lacks substance and only sometimes results in follow-through.

Take a look at some of your own Level 1 evaluation forms for a moment.

- Do they embody the “brand image” you wish training participants to remember?
- Are they part of your plan for solidifying lasting relationships with attendees?

Statistically, your Level 1 evaluation form is likely the last impression you leave with your “customers”. So it seems that even with some small enhancements, a big impact on the training participant experience (and your brand equity) could be made.

Level 1 Effectiveness

To maximize the impact and effectiveness of your Level 1 evaluations, read and then check your form against the *Eight Tips On Developing Valid Level 1 Evaluation Forms* by Ken Phillips. He offers solid ideas for building Level 1 tools that obtain meaningful feedback to help you to continually improve your “brand image” and secure a sustainable position for the future.



Everyone wants to be heard, and your training participants are no different. Offer them a well-designed evaluation form so they can speak,

Leveraging Level 1 to Strengthen Your “Brand”

By Wendy Kayser Kirkpatrick



and you can listen and implement their ideas.
Now that's a real relationship builder!

Value Is Timeless

For those with concerns about the timing, here's more from *Advertising's Attitude Adjustment*.

While the article discusses how companies are changing their advertising to reflect the current economic climate,



the article closes with a quote from Robert Passikoff, president and founder of Brand Keys:

“The brands that always had a sense of who they were and a sense of value for the dollar are just going ahead with the campaigns they'd do anyway.”

So if your Level 1 evaluation needs some cleaning up, get after it now! Become the brand you want to be as quickly as possible and stay the course. Be known as the brand that weathered the recession and then continued forward without missing a beat.

Wendy Kirkpatrick is the director of Kirkpatrick Partners, LLC. She is a certified instructional designer. Wendy conducts seminars, facilitates corporate meetings, and consults for companies to help them to achieve measurable business results.

Wendy draws on two decades of experience in the business world to make her training relevant and impactful.

Read more about Wendy at
www.kirkpatrickpartners.com and
[linkedin.com/in/wkkirkpatrick](https://www.linkedin.com/in/wkkirkpatrick).

Contact Wendy at
wendy.kirkpatrick@kirkpatrickpartners.com