Findorff BUILDERS SINCE 1890

BRAND FORWARD 2020

STRATEGIES AND REFINEMENTS TO STRENGTHEN THE FINDORFF BRAND





TABLE OF CONTENTS

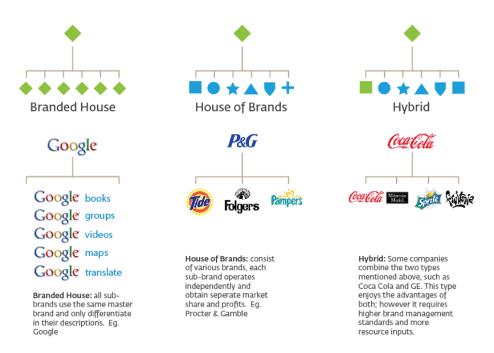
Building a Branded House	- 6
Accommodating Future Brand Growth	. 7
Branding and Brand Representation	. 8
Parent Brand DNA	10
Sibling Brands and Inherited DNA	11
Jobsite Branding	12
Distinguishing Between Message Types	13
Slogan Enhancement	14
Externally-Facing Messages and the Message Matrix	15
"We" vs. "You" Messaging	16
Branding and the Website Experience	18
SPG: Messaging vs. Branding	20
Diversity as a Brand Component	22

BUILDING A BRANDED HOUSE

Findorff owns more than one brand. Its expertise within specific industries results in real tangible value that is distinct from the main (parent) brand. Its expansion beyond southern Wisconsin creates an additional opportunity to sub-brand offices and establish a framework for future geographic growth within a consistent brand schematic.

These branding opportunities within industry sectors and target geographies make it not only appropriate, but advantageous, to define a family of brands that combines the parent with a handful of sibling brands. This allows the siblings to develop their own unique identities and core differentiators that distinguish them in the competitive field.

The first step in the construction of a brand family is identifying the appropriate Brand Schematic. As illustrated in this graphic, there are 3 primary options.



Because the parent Findorff brand owns considerable positive equity, as evidenced by its market leadership position and direct client feedback, it makes sense to give sibling brands the benefit of that equity, similar to the way the parent Google brand lends its equity to siblings in the graphic above.

Thus, we recommended that Findorff construct its brand under the **Branded House** schematic.



In this scenario, the parent brand is simply "Findorff" and the sibling brands center on areas of industry expertise and geographic distinction.

SIBLINGS MAY INCLUDE:

- Findorff Healthcare
- Findorff Education
- Findorff Science/Tech

- Findorff Corporate
- Findorff Wisconsin
- Findorff Residential

There are no steadfast rules about the number of siblings that can exist within the brand family; however, it's best practice to limit siblings to areas that represent true market differentiation. In other words, it's inadvisable to water down the family by adding siblings without a good faith effort to identify true, meaningful differentiation within the sector

See page 8 for additional guidance on future brand growth.

Within the Branded House schematic, there are 3 Rs to guide the foundational development of the brand family:



Rules



Roles



Relationships

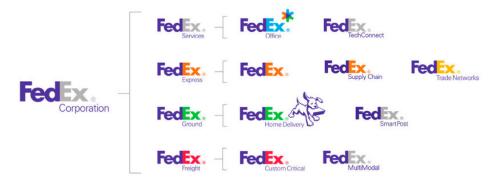
Within Findorff's Branded House, we recommend adopting the following rules:

- 1. The slogan (see page 13) must constantly lock-up with the parent brand;
- 2. In all communications where a sibling brand is present, the parent must also be present;
- **3.** Sibling brands cannot adopt their own slogans (instead, a message matrix will guide key messages and points of differentiation that each sibling "owns," but these may never appear in the logo lock-up position);
- **4.** It is the responsibility of the parent brand to maintain positive brand equity through purposeful strategic planning, and to regularly measure brand value via market research and voice-of-the-customer feedback loops;
- **5.** It is the responsibility of the sibling brand(s) to accurately portray both the brand value of the parent and the brand value of the sibling.

Roles and relationships within a Branded House are summarized as follows:

	PARENT BRAND	SIBLING BRAND(S)	
BRAND EQUITY	Parent has positive brand equity and is purposeful about maintaining and measuring it.	Sibling borrows a portion of that equity to boost its own credibility (i.e., if it has the Findorff name on it, I already trust it).	
GENERAL APPEAL	Wide appeal within the industry, unspecific to any target audience.	Narrow but meaningful appeal to buyers and stakeholders within the brand's segment.	
CORE ATTRIBUTES	Based largely in "how we do it" – culture, values, innovation, customer service standards, relationship- building.	Based largely in differentiators important to the segment, but not in conflict with the parent's core attributes.	
BRAND DNA	Parent DNA may include behaviors, proprietary innovations, philanthropy, cultural elements, certain colors and trademarks.	Sibling will be recognizable as an offspring of the parent because it inherits pieces of the parent DNA, including its name.	

Maintaining sibling recognizability as a relative of the parent is often a function of the visual representation of the brand family. In this Branded House example, FedEx creates recognizability with the brand mark and the font and creates parent/sibling distinction with color and naming convention.



Source: https://blog.frankefiorella.com/identitywise/house-of-brands-branded-house-or-somewhere-in-between

See page 9 for a similar visual schematic of the Findorff brand family.

ACCOMMODATING FUTURE BRAND GROWTH

We recommend sibling branding of industry sectors because we believe that Findorff owns real, meaningful differentiation within those sectors, cumulatively creating a competitive advantage for projects within those sectors.

We recommend sibling branding of offices and locations because doing so communicates territorial breadth and organizational size. In this case, we recommend location branding by state (Findorff Wisconsin) rather than by city (Findorff Madison, Findorff Milwaukee)

It is these same justifications that become our "test" for future growth in sibling brands.

FUTURE GROWTH IN SECTOR BRANDING

As discussed on page 5, we must be confident that beyond simple volume, we possess sustainable, accurate, meaningful differentiation within an industry sector in order to give birth to a sibling brand.

> Sustainable, accurate, meaningful = the SAM standard of branding.

FUTURE GROWTH IN GEOGRAPHIC BRANDING

Because we are branding at the state level, Findorff must cover (or be willing to cover) significant portions of any state to identify that state as a sibling brand. In Wisconsin, coverage of the southern half of the state and the Northwoods represents good territorial dominance. In Illinois, our work in Champaign-Urbana does not meet that standard, so our work in Illinois would simply be done under the parent brand (and accompanying sibling brand, if appropriate).

Within this schematic, the only other allowable type of sibling brand would be a separate legal entity engaged in philanthropy, i.e., Findorff Foundation or similar.

Not allowable within this schematic are sibling brands referencing incomplete portions of Findorff's work, i.e., Findorff Pre-Construction, Findorff Concrete or Findorff Referendum Consulting.



BRANDING AND BRAND REPRESENTATION

Visual representation of the parent and sibling brands involves the use of a consistent logo mark with slogan (parent brand) and attachable/detachable descriptors (sibling brands), as in the FedEx example on page 7.

Optionally, Findorff may choose to "update" its main logo mark with slight modifications in the existing tagline and accent. Example designs:

Findorff

BEYOND BUILDING

Findorff

BUILDERS | PARTNERS | INNOVATORS

These more contemporary fonts keep the bold, strong and sturdy feel of the existing logo but freshen the typeface with a modern design.

Because of the close similarities between the existing logo and these updated "tweaks," Findorff could gradually move to the updated logo without abruptly pulling the existing out of circulation. This is a more cost-efficient approach to logo updating than a wholesale change.

From these, we can create the Findorff Branded House using a complementary color palette and sibling brand descriptors:

> **Findorff** WISCONSIN

Findorff **EDUCATION**

Findorff

CORPORATE

Findorff

HEAITHCARE

Findorff SCIENCE/TECH

Findorff

Using this approach to quickly and easily identify Findorff's presence in multiple sectors creates brand recognition and awareness that may currently be less apparent.

PARENT BRAND DNA

The DNA of the parent Findorff brand is made of **3 primary components**:

- **1. Core differentiators** that, independently and cumulatively, give Findorff a competitive advantage in a crowded marketplace;
- 2. Brand attributes that express "who we are" as a company, what we value:
- **3. Consistent behaviors** that make the differentiators and attributes always true, resulting in a purposeful, positive experience for clients, partners, the community and Findorff staff. We call this "behaving into the brand."

Behaving into the brand – that is, identifying and training behaviors staff-wide, at the functional level, is often the forgotten essential that will collapse a brand. Unless everyone associated with Findorff understands his/her unique role in breathing truth and meaning into the brand, the differentiators and attributes have no value beyond mere words. We recommend initial (NEO) and ongoing training of these behaviors to build the strongest organizational brand possible.

Based on the audits, interviews, discovery and surveys done during the 2020 brand architecture process, we have identified the following as **Findorff's core differentiators**, in roughly this order of strength and importance:

History/Legacy: Few companies in any industry, nationwide, can boast of a continuous 130-year history, but the history in and of itself is not the differentiator. Stability, experience, market knowledge and methods/processes are the real differentiators that stem from Findorff's rich legacy.

Added Value: Beyond the craft of actual building, Findorff brings an extraordinary amount of added value to each client relationship – long before a project begins and long after the keys are handed over. This emphasis on meaningful "extras" makes repeat business a natural cycle, rather than repeated acts of "selling."

Industry Expertise: Findorff's ability to speak clients' language and understand below-the-surface nuances of specific industries relieves clients of the burden of "teaching" the contractor. With a handful of industry transplants on the Findorff leadership team, clients enjoy the comfort of partnering with an "outside-insider."

Size and Scope: Findorff's business model allows it to excel equally with projects of all sizes, without ever giving the impression that a project is too small or inconsequential. Its industry scope allows it to compete for a variety of projects across a wide swath of geographic territory, even "following" local clients from one city to the next.

Self-Performing: While some competitors also claim this differentiator, Findorff stands alone in its ability to deploy staff personnel, rather than subs, allowing it to better control quality, budgets and timelines.

Solutioning and Innovating: In an intense competitive environment, being a good builder is minimum table stakes. In conjunction with other differentiators outlined here, Findorff can anticipate project challenges; avoid mistakes that may be costly; add "wow" to its projects; and ultimately, over-deliver on client expectations. This, in turn, creates trusting partnerships that thrive long-term.

Additionally, we have identified Findorff's core brand attributes as the following:

ATTRIBUTE	WHAT IT MEANS	
QUALITY ABOVE ALL	Findorff will never cut corners to improve its bottom line.	
STANDARD-SETTING	Findorff is a clear industry leader that inspires copycat behavior in competitors.	
RELATIONAL	Findorff starts many projects with a relational advantage, thereby often reducing the cost of sale.	
HONEST AND EYE LEVEL	Findorff earns integrity through transparency.	
SMART	Organizationally and individually, Findorff and its team continue to learn (and teach) best practices and exceptional industry standards.	
SOLUTION-ORIENTED	Findorff defaults at "yes, we can" when obstacles arise and will only say "no" if it's not in the client's best interests.	
EMPLOYER OF CHOICE	Findorff's reputation and leadership position allow it to attract top talent; employees express a strong sense of pride in working for Findorff.	

We're often asked, "What's the functional difference between a differentiator and a brand attribute?"

See page 16 for distinctions between these and all message types.

SIBLING BRANDS AND INHERITED DNA

The sibling brands inherit certain characteristics from the parent brand, and they also exhibit some unique characteristics that may not be as prevalent in the parent. Defining inherited and unique characteristics is necessary for developing a disciplined message matrix.

As discussed in greater detail on page 14, the siblings automatically adopt the promise that is inherent in the slogan. The slogan/promise must be true for the entire family.

In the Findorff branded house, we have 3 classifications of "relatives" in the brand family:

- 1. Parent brand
- 2. Sector siblings (healthcare, education, science/lab, corporate, etc.)
- 3. Location sibling(s) (Findorff Wisconsin)

We recommend allowing leaders within sector sibling brands to whiteboard their own ideas about the differentiators and attributes they inherit, and how those are meaningful and motivating to target audiences and stakeholders. We recommend the following workflow for these conversations:



As a follow-up to this exercise, sector teams should brainstorm additional brand components that they believe are unique, and perhaps not prevalent in the parent.

From these exercises, the sibling brand's message matrix will be born to help inform both internal and external messaging.

JOBSITE BRANDING

Uniformity, visibility and brand alignment are the top 3 priorities for creating a library of jobsite branded materials.

A graphic design package will be completed after Findorff adopts brand standards, logo(s), colors, slogan and lead messages. This will include branding opportunities for:

- Parent brand
- Sibling brand: sector
- Sibling brand: location
- Partner marketing (architect or other)

At a minimum, our graphic design package should include:

- 1. Project identification (future home of) signage (minimum size 4'x6', preferably larger), to include rendering if available
- 2. Fence stand-alone signage (parent plus sector)
- 3. Building signage (parent)
- 4. Fence wrapping (parent, sector, partner visibility)
- 5. PPE and apparel (parent only)
- 6. Equipment, construction barrels, directional signage (parent only)
- 7. Vehicles, including trucks and trailers (parent only)
- 8. OSHA signage (parent only)



















We will also create standards for jobsite photography, video and time-lapse video to support promotion, marketing and collateral.

DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN MESSAGE TYPES

It's important to create a common understanding of the definitions and usage within the Findorff brand message tree, and which messages are appropriate for which audiences. We recommend the following baseline understanding of **6 primary message types:**

Slogan: whatever word/phrase is **locked up on the parent brand logo** (currently "Builders Since 1890"). The slogan should represent a promise to the buyer/client about the experience they should expect when they engage with Findorff. That promise must be true for the parent and any/all sibling brands. Note that the words "slogan" and "tagline" are interchangeable. They are not separate brand components but are one in the same.

(See next page for slogan recommendation)

Core Differentiators: as outlined on pages 10–11, the core differentiators are intended both as external marketing messages and as the internal basis for training and behaving into the brand. Differentiators are owned by parent and sibling brands.

Values: (currently identified by Findorff as: 1. the perpetuation of Findorff; 2. we value our people; and 3. a commitment to excellence). These central principles and beliefs are generally internal messages only and are frequently used as decision guideposts for strategic planning. "People" and "excellence" are messages that will also infiltrate the overall message matrix, but not within the context of values.

Brand Attributes: similar to values, brand attributes are meant to be internally and operationally important. Training and strategic planning around these will help to strengthen them over time and make it easier to maintain the core differentiators.

Headlines: Findorff's use of the "3 Cs" – Character, Community, Craftsmanship – amounts to a *headline* that can be used in both internal and external communications where supporting copy is present that relates directly to one or more of those 3 claims.

Lead Messages: in the message matrix, lead messages stem from a core differentiator or brand attribute and represent the most important point to be conveyed in a given communication. "Lead message" does not necessarily mean first sentence.

Branded Copy: also referred to as "supporting copy," branded copy is intended to lend strength and evidence to the slogan, differentiators, headlines and lead messages.

(See additional recommendations on pages 16 and 17)

SLOGAN ENHANCEMENT

In the Branded House schematic (see page 4), only the parent brand uses a slogan locked up on the logo. Sibling brands still own distinct differentiators, headlines, lead messages and branded copy.

We reviewed select competitive slogans to make sure a Findorff slogan wouldn't present a conflict or copycat.

	SLOGAN	LOCKED UP ON LOGO?
C.G. SCHMIDT	Your Trusted Building Partner	Yes
C.D. SMITH	Maybe: Proven. Adaptable. Solid. Bold.*	No
VOGEL BROTHERS	None	N/A
MORTENSON	Maybe: Let's Redefine Possible.*	No (but trademarked)
J.P. CULLEN	The Tough Job Experts	Yes
HUNZINGER	Builders Since 1907	Yes
STEVENS	Maybe: Working Smart. Building Better.*	No

*C.D. Smith, Mortenson and Stevens present these more as lead messages than slogans.

In a perfect world, slogans (promises) build upon an important core differentiator and provide the basis for two primary activities:

- 1. Informing the message matrix (giving it purpose and credence), and;
- 2. Becoming the center of gravity for behaving into the brand (as on page 10) in order to assure brand meaning and sustainability.

We recommend centering Findorff's slogan in the added value differentiator.



"Beyond Building" is simply meant to say: Findorff delivers great value beyond the project itself – in pre-construction activities, client consulting, industry expertise, innovative solutioning and community engagement and communications.

EXTERNALLY-FACING MESSAGES AND THE MESSAGE MATRIX

Every good message matrix starts with the basics of communications planning:

1. What (brand/service/differentiator) are we trying to promote?

- a. Parent brand
- b. Sibling brand

2. Who's our audience?

- a. Prospects
- b. Clients
- c. Community
- d. Industry/talent
- e Internal stakeholders

3. What do they need to hear from us?

- a. Motivators in decisioning
- b. Differentiation from the competitive environment
- c. The introduction of something new
- d. A success story or case study
- e. Community involvement
- f. Something proprietary that we've discovered or invented

4. What are the best channels to reach them?

- a. Broad reach
- b. Earned media
- c. Online
- d. Direct-to-target, one-on-one
- e. Street-level or events

5. How will I know if my message was communicated and understood?

- a. Metrics and measurability
- b. Unique calls to action
- c. Conversions

Generally, the most difficult of these is number 3 – where messages get crafted. Like many businesses, Findorff is guilty of crafting messages that are *about Findorff*, rather than communicating an audience benefit.

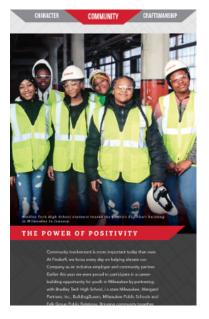


THERE IS A SIMPLE 3-POINT "BULLSH*T METER" TO HELP GUIDE MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT:

- Why should your audience care?
- What do you want them to do or feel?
- What do you want them to remember?

"WE" VS. "YOU" MESSAGING

Here's an example of how to take the focus off of Findorff, and put it on the industry, the subject matter or the audience/reader. From a recent postcard:



Consider this revised approach to message development, which is not about community, but diversity:

A New Generation of Talent

Creating opportunities for young people in the skilled trades is vital to the construction industry's long-term health. Luckily for Findorff and its clients and partners, a diverse group of talented and eager professionals waits in the wings.

Nurturing diversity isn't just about strengthening our communities and creating life-long career opportunities. Findorff is better and our industry is better when we mentor and embrace a multicultural workforce. New ideas and perspectives are brought to light. New lessons are learned. New voices are heard.

And when Findorff is better, the work we do for you is better. Never stop growing. Never stop reaching **Beyond Building**.

Back to our test.

Why should your audience care?

- Because we're discussing a topic that often goes unspoken in the industry.
- Because we're making an effort.
- Because ultimately, clients benefit from this effort.

What do you want them to do or feel?

- Proud to partner with us.
- Think about diversity in their own business.

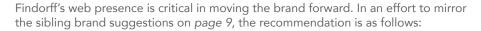
What do you want them to remember?

• When we're better, we're better for you.

In most businesses, the owner of the **BULLSH*T METER** is the last point of approval.

Constructing messages matrices in this way helps to ensure audience relevancy and benefit.

BRANDING AND THE WEBSITE EXPERIENCE



Highlight Industry Specialties

- Create a visual hierarchy on all pages. Top industries or offerings are given more real estate and are prominent on the homepage (see examples on page 19).
- Make the information above the fold more direct.
- Create a clear path in the primary navigation.
- Incorporate the secondary color palette.

It is equally important to consider how clients may search for or learn more about Findorff. Web copy is critical to successfully explaining who Findorff is and what they offer, in addition to aligning your SEO. Following the brand messaging strategy on pages 16 and 17, here's what we recommend:

Align Copy

- Use branded copy based on the slogan and differentiators throughout the site.
- Add in robust copy that aligns with your industry specialties.
- Focus on "you" messaging.

As Findorff looks to move forward, keeping your website fresh is another great way to do that.

Constant Updates

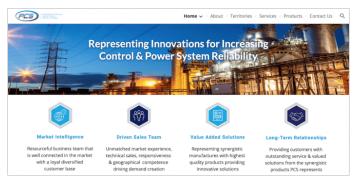
- Archive news articles over 6 months.
- Swap out project images every 3 months.

Consider the website as people's first impression. It should be neat, orderly and thorough, while conveying a sense of trust and integrity that makes people take action.

Creating clear paths for each user (or industry as it pertains to Findorff) helps clearly define what your core strengths are upfront. It creates a trust that while you build for a variety of industries, you **excel** in specific areas and industries.

See example below of service based company websites below that highlight their top offerings or what sets them apart.

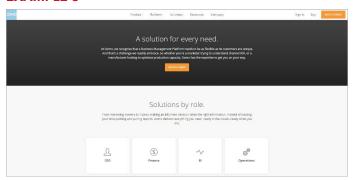
EXAMPLE 1



EXAMPLE 2



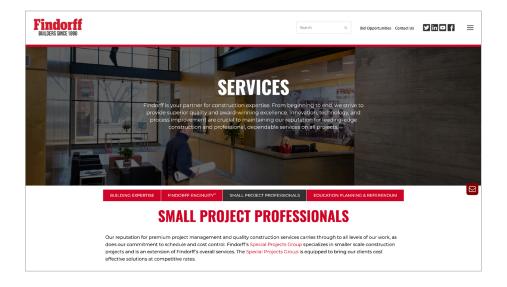
EXAMPLE 3



SPG: MESSAGING VS. BRANDING

In an effort to make the company accessible to clients with projects of all sizes, Findorff has sub-branded the *Special Projects Group (SPG)* to focus exclusively on projects under a million dollars in total costs.

Some competitors have adopted the same language. C.G. Schmidt has a "Special Projects Group." So does Vogel Brothers. C.D. Smith brands these projects as "Project Plus."



The spirit of this is fully appropriate; the branding and execution, however, need rethinking.

There is a danger that the words

"small" and "special"

– both of which currently appear on Findorff's
website and in collateral – create a segregated
category of work that is perceived as
not as important as larger jobs.

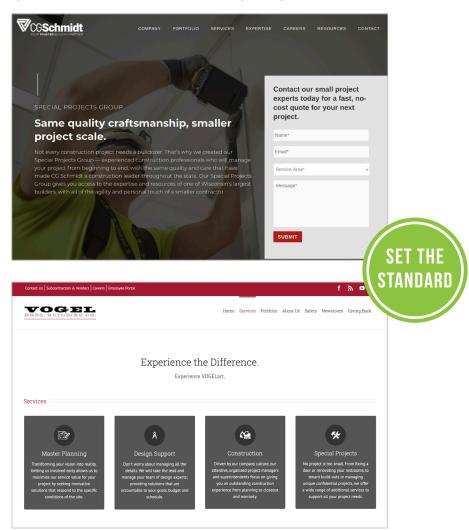
.

Certainly, the owners and developers of projects under \$1 million view their jobs as large and important. But our language can create the perceptual equivalent of a pat on the head – "Oh, isn't your project cute?"

Of course, that's not what we mean.

What we mean to say is that Findorff gives equal attention to, and excels equally in, projects of all sizes. And, we can say that without using words that can come across as condescending to the exact prospects we're trying to win over.

Excelling at projects of all sizes is simply part of who we are as a company. It's not special, it's not an add-on, and it's not separately branded.



While it's fine to continue referring **internally** to this team as the *Special Projects Group*, all externally-facing references should be omitted from our brand language.

DIVERSITY AS A BRAND COMPONENT

DEI initiatives (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) are not a Findorff problem; they are an industry problem.

According the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018 data):

AFRICAN AMERICANS



ASIAN AMERICANS



WOMEN



Only Hispanic Americans are over-represented in the construction industry, comprising 30.7% of the total workforce.

Ethnicity and gender are not the only considerations in a diversity plan.

A well-rounded DEI program will at least consider these 6 major components:

Age
Ability/Disability
Gender
Language
Ethnicity/Race
Gender identity and sexual orientation (LGBTQ+)

Because diversity is increasingly seen as a central component to a company's brand and culture, it's a good idea to begin developing a DEI initiative that can grow and expand over a period of time.

General contractors all over the country have found ways to tackle the diversity problem, both in the office in the field. See the summary of case studies provided separately.

Here are 5 initial steps in developing a Findorff DEI strategy:

- 1. Start with the list of 6 diversity categories and rank them in order of importance. Ask yourselves, "what areas do we need to emphasize to better reflect the communities we do business in?"
- 2. Based on that ranking, **examine the available industry talent pool** (both at the office and field level) and determine where proactive measures can begin reshaping the pool.
- 3. Develop a small set of proactive initiatives that help **balance and reshape the talent pool** in your market(s) (i.e., attract and retain a more diverse set of
 future professionals). Can scholarship programs, apprenticeships, tech school
 relationships, association memberships, mentoring activities and job shadowing
 opportunities start to move the needle on your diversity priorities?
- Set incremental, reasonable goals for expanded diversity within the company starting at the top (Board/Executive) level and extending to the skilled trades in the field.
- 5. **Identify a team** of internal (and/or external) champions who can stay focused on these initiatives and hold the company responsible for activities and results.

Allow yourselves some time to develop and measure these activities before including them in brand language or externally-facing communications.

