

# instincts

instincts is a monthly publication on Branding for clients, associates and friends.

Our Mission: Support and challenge business leaders to maximize the potential within their Brand.



## Look Up: Way Up

*"I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to Earth."*

These words, spoken by President John F. Kennedy on May 25th, 1961, are perhaps the Western world's best known example of a vision statement. In a single sentence of sparkling clarity, JFK set out the success parameters for an enormously complex project that would consume billions of dollars and the dedicated work of many thousand Americans. His purpose was to unite the country by demonstrating supremacy over the arch-rival Soviet space program.

Kennedy's call contained the three elements essential to any effective vision. First and foremost, it was a *BHAG*: a Big, Hairy, Audacious Goal. By setting an ambitiously high bar that can just be reached by the most outstretched of hands, BHAGs energize people to perform at their peak but do not discourage them with the impossible.

BHAGs energize people  
to perform at their peak

Second, JFK's vision was a clear statement of *Where we are going* – "landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to Earth." While it may seem obvious that visions are about the future, the "visions" in place at many organizations are actually missions – that which we do to eventually achieve a vision.

The third essential element of a vision is *How we'll know we're there*. It's vital that stakeholders are able to agree on whether their vision has been reached – so they can unanimously continue pursuit of it, or define a new one. JFK had the nerve to set the purely objective standard of (not very much) time – "before this decade is out" – as America's yardstick.

## What does the Brand Coach coach?

In the 1960s, JFK united a nation – from the top NASA scientist to the average man in the street – behind his audacious vision. Today's business leaders must aim high if they hope to unify the Brand experience from the executive suite to the checkout line. Take it from a man whose dreams inspire 50 years on: ask for the Moon, and you just might get it.



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and Books for Business

**"Brand: It Ain't the Logo\***  
should be required reading for  
anyone who sits around the 'big  
table' and for anyone who seeks  
to influence their decisions."

**Ken Wong**  
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