

Branding 1

written by

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INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

A boss is meeting with his four employees in a conference room. The company is Clips n' Stuff, an office supply chain-store. The boss has been trying to work with the team on branding in a modern way, but he doesn't seem to grasp the idea of what branding is actually about. The boss feels like the branding should be 100% personal in nature, all about him, and the other employees are having a hard time following along with his vision for the new marketing campaign.

BOSS (CARL)

(as Will Ferrell would
play the part)

All right, we're back at it again.
Thanks for meeting here again
guys...and gals. Not gonna get me
in a Woke scenario. I'll tell you
that right now. No sexual
harassment or discrimination of any
kind in my shop. Your ass, not for
my hands.

Everyone chuckles at the joke, but the room is uncomfortable.

BOSS (CONT'D)

So, new marketing campaign, I've
been at it all week, and I really
think I have something here that's
gonna put us on the map again.
Cutting edge stuff, really.

MALE 1 (JAKE)

(jumping in)

You know, I've had some good ideas
this last week too.

(starts taking out a
folder)

I think I'm on to something here.
My kids came in the room...

WOMAN 1

(nodding along)

I've seen what he's been planning,
and it's good.

The group seems interested.

BOSS

(taken aback, rolling his
eyes)

Really, Jake?

(MORE)

BOSS (CONT'D)

I called the meeting, spent a lot of time on this, I just kinda thought that we'd start with my idea, but...

JAKE

(holding up his hands)
Oh, no problem, Carl. By all means, have at it. We can wait on mine.

BOSS

(eager, but trying to be professional)
Are you sure, Jake? I'm not stepping on any toes here? But I mean, honestly, your kids? What are they like 4 and 7? Hardly our demographic here.
(thinking about it)
I'm a little embarrassed for your right now, frankly. You need to get your shit together.

JAKE

(shaking his head)
No. Absolutely not. Let's see what you came up with, Carl.

WOMAN 2 (ALY)

(jumping in, pointing to the covered easel next to the table)
Looks like you have a little presentation here.

The employees cheer and clap expectantly

BOSS

(excited)
Are you ready...well maybe, Jake you should...you know what, no, I'm excited here.

Boss walks over to easel and prepares to pull the cover off.

BOSS (CONT'D)

(holding the sheet ready to pull it off)
Are we ready...I put a lot of work in on this the last week...I'm really putting myself out there with this one. But I think this is the new direction to take our marketing.

The group cheers him on, urging him to pull the cover off.

BOSS (CONT'D)
(pulling off cover,
expectant)

The reveal is a caricature of the boss smiling and pointing at his own crotch, which has a big bulge popping out (a penis). The caption above the caricature reads "Clips n' Stuff... We got the goods." The group looks confused, looking around at each other. The boss is ecstatic.

WOMAN 2 (TINA)
(confused)
Is this a joke or?

BOSS
(surprised by the
reaction)
What? No, it's not a joke.

MAN 2 (TODD)
This has nothing to do with our
company or what we sell.

WOMAN 1 (ALY)
(agreeing)
It's just a picture of you pointing
at your crotch...and what is that
even...

WOMAN 2
And why is it bent like that?

MAN 1
(reassuring himself)
Well, that's actually very common,
,but. I mean some men do get it
like that...

WOMAN 1
This is really offensive, Carl.

BOSS
(stunned)
What are you talking about?
(reading the caption
aloud)
Clips n' Stuff, we got the goods.
It's catchy, it's short, to the
point. I mean, look at it.
(he points to himself)
We got the goods! It's exciting,
flashy.

MAN 1

What is the point? We sell paper clips and office supplies. It doesn't show that in any way.

MAN 2

I mean, maybe if we sold pants or something, or did hemming, but this, this makes no sense.

BOSS

(getting frustrated)

It doesn't need to make sense. It's a hook, a gimmick, that's what we've been brainstorming over the past week. It's 2021, people. Nothing makes sense. You throw a gimmick out there and see what sticks...

(looking at the drawing on the board, caressing the picture)

And this is good. It feels right. The curves, the line. It just feels good.

WOMAN 2

(shaking her head)

This just seems like you're trying to personally hint at the fact you have a big...

(awkward)

You know a big di...

BOSS

Ok.

(cutting her off)

Let's not get salacious here guys...and gals. Look, I'm sorry, but where is this even coming from? It's about the company. How do you not see that?

MAN 2

(skeptical)

Come on, Carl. It's a picture of you alluding to your pants with what appears to be a misshapen piece of...what is that, produce?

WOMAN 1

I think it's an eggplant?

WOMAN 2

No, that's definitely a zucchini.

MAN 1

Where did he find a zucchini that size this year with the early frost we had?

BOSS

God dammit people, we're not in here to review the fucking farmer's almanac. We're here to sell people office goods. And this ad clearly shows that we got 'em! How are you not seeing that?

MAN 1

Is this about what that customer said to you last week?

BOSS

(shaking his head, not wanting to relive it)
No, I don't even know what you're talking about, what ... this is just. Acorn dick is not a...you know what, can we just focus here?

WOMAN 2

This is creepy, Carl. Really, really creepy.

BOSS

Creepy? Is this not exactly what we've been brainstorming over the past week? This is what people are doing now. This is branding. This is it. TikTokking, Instagramming, this is what they do.

MAN 1

(arguing)
But it has nothing to do with our business. If someone saw this without knowing what we sold, it doesn't tell them anything.

BOSS

(getting angry)
Nike, Twitter, Coke. You think any of them mean anything. Nike is a god damn swoosh symbol, that's it. A swoosh.

(MORE)

BOSS (CONT'D)

You tell me the meaning in it! I dare you. It's not even on a keyboard.

(pretending to text)

Oh, I'm over here shopping for some...oh, wait, it's not there. Son of a bitch.

MAN 2

And this symbol you have here is going to be on a keyboard?

Carl looks around the room, confused why no one likes the idea.

MAN 1

Nike is at least iconic.

BOSS

Jake, you're fired.

The group is stunned.

MAN 1

What? You can't just fire me, Carl. For what? Because I didn't like your stupid branding idea?

BOSS

That's right, you're fired. Go clean out your desk.

MAN 1

This is ridiculous. You can't be serious.

BOSS

(aggressive)

Oh, I'm serious, Jake. I spent a lot of hours on this, and you just come in here and what, put it down? Like you have a better idea. Talking about Nike. This isn't 1992, Jake. Nike's old, it's lost it's mojo. This is a Tweeter world now. Dojo Cat, Peaches, Applebees going rap style. It's not kittens playing the piano these days, ladies and gents. And the sooner you figure that out, the better.

The room starts to come around on it.

WOMAN 2

(wanting to join in but
still taken back)

You know, Carl...the more I see it,
I think, yeah, I think it's good.
But does it have to have that weird
bend in it?

CARL

(looking down, reflecting)

That's as lifelike as I could make
it, Brenda. If we're not gonna be
true to ourselves here, than we
have nothing.