

## **For the Corporate Executive: How to be a Great Client in Ten Easy Steps**

1. Create a spirit of partnership: Equality versus superiority.
  - a. Superiority/subordination is manifested by:
    - Lack of respect
    - Intimidation
    - Threat of dismissal
    - Mediocre/safe advertising
  - b. Equality produces:
    - Honesty
    - Risk taking
    - Great results
    - Ability to admit failure
    - Mutual respect of intelligence and expertise
2. Do not be imitators: Be wary of change for change sake.
  - a. Be skeptical of trends; defy and question what is hot now.
  - b. Tune into the consumer.
  - c. Understand the changes.
  - d. Develop a smart position and stick with it.
3. Make sure your agency is making a fair profit.
  - a. No business operates at a loss.
  - b. If you are fair with them; they are fair with you.
4. Immerse your agency in your product, people and culture.
  - a. Explore weaknesses, secrets, failures: they will probe for the strengths.
  - b. Concrete (positive) facts make great claims in advertising.
  - c. Good advertising is a by-product of understanding.
  - d. Virtually all companies are proud of their personality.
5. Encourage experimentation and be prepared to pay for failure.
  - a. Risk aversion produces off-target and mediocre advertising.
  - b. Great clients want great advertising (ads that stand out).
  - c. Back up this desire with open minds.
6. Treat the agency people well.
  - a. People work harder for their friends than business acquaintances.
  - b. An “attaboy” nets you a bigger, better, effort.
7. Agree on a clearly defined objective for your advertising.
  - a. Do due-diligence with thorough, up-front research and analysis.
  - b. Scrutinize advertising strategies, not the executions.
  - c. Make creative direction precise, unambiguous.

8. Keep approvals simple and disapprovals kind.
  - a. Do not have the approval process go through layers upon layers of the organization.
    - Do not debate every copy/art nuance.
    - One layer is best.
  - b. On disagreements:
    - Be honest.
    - Be specific.
    - Be kind.
  
9. Give the agency responsibility for the advertising and give them the authority to be responsible.
  - a. Your responsibility is to be involved in the process:
    - Share responsibility at the beginning.
    - Do not deny the approval empowering the agency to realize the vision.
  - b. Work together toward achieving certain goals.
  
10. Give the agency a formal evaluation every year.
  - a. Good clients reflect on whether advertising is better or worse for the year.
  - b. Draw up the evaluation in partnership with the agency.
  - c. Review the evaluation with agency management.