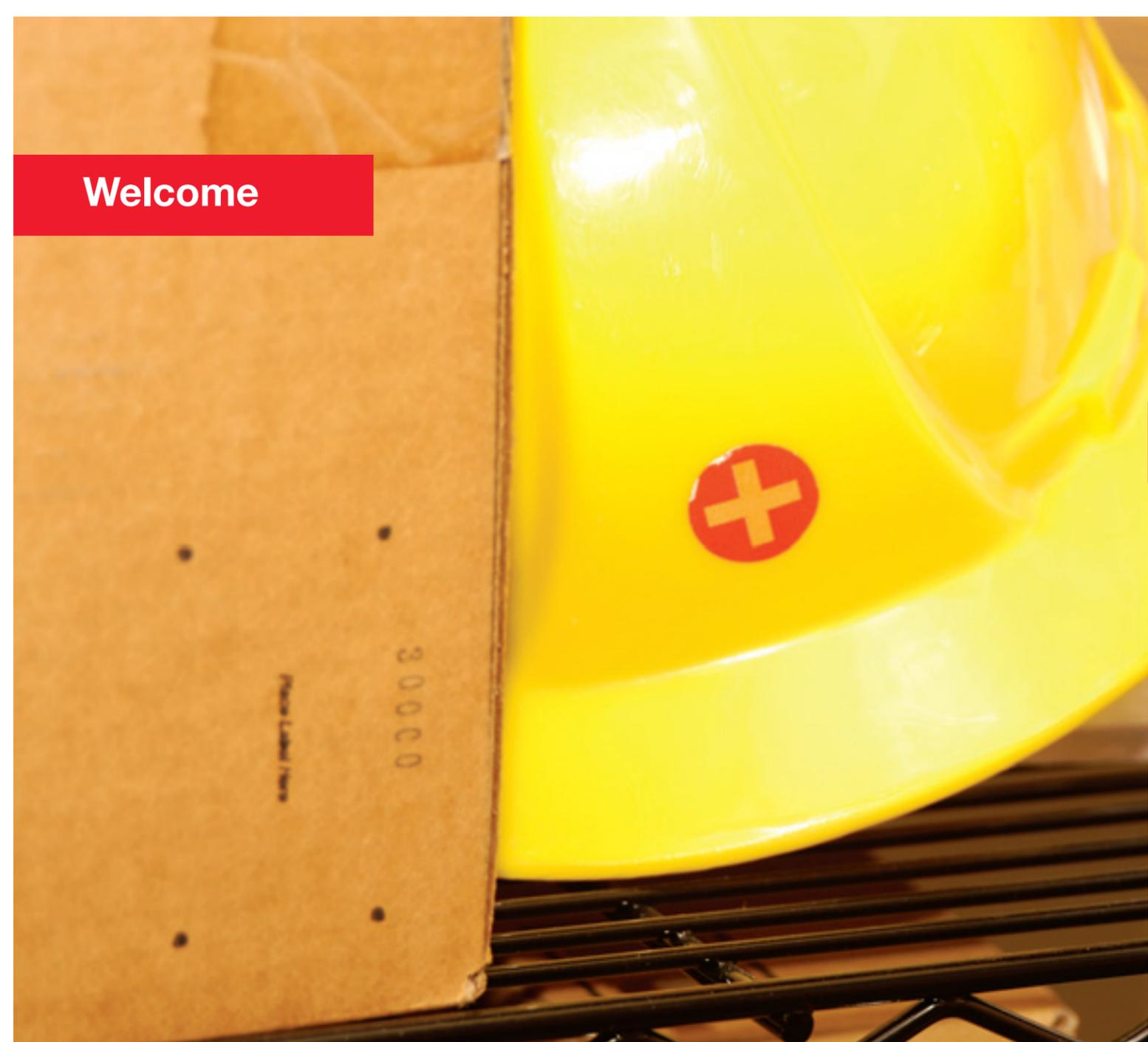




Employee Handbook

Crispin Porter + Bogusky





Welcome

WELCOME TO YOUR FIRST DAY AT CRISPIN PORTER + BOGUSKY.

We hope that your time here will be everything you ever hoped for. For some, this will become home. For others, it will be a step along the way to something else. Most of you will love it. Some of you will hate it. But few will forget it. This place has a way of burrowing inside your skin and taking up residence there. But one thing is for sure. If you stick around for any length of time, you will be convinced that the denizens of our hallways know more about creating advertising than just about anybody.



WHAT IS ADVERTISING?

When most people think of advertising they think of magazine ads, television commercials and billboards. We think it's anything that makes our clients famous. That is our job. And we make creative content that makes that happen. Then we think of ways to distribute that creative content. It might be through an online film, an event on the street, a book or something we can't even imagine yet.

Every person here and every client we have needs to be aware that while traditional media advertising is important and will get done, what's arguably more important is the stuff that orbits around the traditional stuff. Like the message on the company voice mail. The T-shirt we mail to every employee. The idea for a great new product. The bumper sticker every customer gets handed to them on a certain day. The cool new website flashpage. The letter to every member of Congress petitioning for a new national holiday. This is how brands are built now.

To us, it's all advertising. So now when you read the term "advertising" in this handbook, you know what we mean.



This is an ad

THE SECRET TO GOOD WORK.

Most advertising agencies are different. But we're different than most. We have a strong culture that we all are very proud and protective of. It is the reason why it's easier to do great work here than at the majority of other ad agencies. Doing great advertising is not complicated. In fact, it's simple. Extremely hard and time-consuming, but simple. The hard part is removing the complications and obstacles that get in the way. We do everything we can to minimize the things that block the creation of great advertising, but the reality is, there will be many days when advertising feels like a hard punch in the gut. It takes a special person to succeed here, one who has a passion, confidence and work ethic to believe in their ability to come up with more great ideas if and when their original great idea dies. And ideas do die here. On every account. In every department. Great, groundbreaking ideas die horribly sad deaths. But what makes us better than most is our ability to go back to the well and come up with more, better and even greater ideas. There. Now you know our secret. Go ahead and tell everyone you know. Because the fact is, most agencies and companies are not willing to expend the effort it takes to be great. They look for shortcuts when there are no shortcuts. People who understand this and have the aforementioned passion, confidence and work ethic tend to have very successful careers here.



WE ASK THAT YOU DON'T:

Throw sand.
Be selfish.
Disparage others.
Talk shit.
Duck responsibility.
Play the busy card.
Leave others hanging.
Make excuses.
Disappear.
Make promises you don't keep.
Say it can't be done.



JUMPING ON HAND GRENADES.

There is usually a fairly large portion of work on each and every plate here. Getting all that work done in the time allotted can sometimes be a challenge, but our unwritten policy has always been to drop whatever we're doing when somebody needs our help. Maybe they will come right out and ask for help. Or maybe you just notice that something isn't getting done so you pitch in until it is done. The reason we do this is simple. The person you help today may be the person you need help from on that fateful day when a hand grenade rolls into your office.



HENRY FORD DID NOT INVENT THE MODERN ADVERTISING AGENCY.

We are a factory. A factory that makes marketing products. No matter what department you are in, you are in the business of making these products. Although there are aspects of service in everything we do for our clients, we don't think of this as a service business. Some advertising agencies, perhaps even one you've worked for, do describe it that way. And maybe that's why they are so willing to create faulty advertising if that's what their client wants. We call that malicious obedience. Our dedication to creating a strong product has to be even stronger than most manufacturing companies. People who work at car companies know that the car they will build today will be exactly like the car they built yesterday. That's not the case with us. What we did yesterday has no bearing on what we'll do today. Some days we're pretty good. Other days, we're an unstoppable force. The trick is to string together more of the latter. To be successful, we have to approach every single day like it will be our defining moment. Because that is the reality.



WE DO STUFF.

We don't talk about it, or have a meeting about it, or e-mail each other about it if we're not going to do it. Brilliant thinking not executed is literally worthless. No amount of PowerPoint presentations can substitute for work not done. People who do things are the people who change the world. You are in the game here. There are no sidelines.



The Factory





Surfboard

WE ARE A WORK IN PROGRESS.

Our culture is strong and resilient but it is by no means finished. We believe we can be better and if we didn't believe it, there would basically be no reason to get out of bed in the morning. The point is, we want to change for the better and simply by being here, you are a part of our culture and an agent of change for our future.



THE DEFINITION OF A GOOD MEETING.

A good meeting is one from which you leave with a clear understanding of what to do next. Sometimes it's more work. More ads. A new media plan. A slightly altered strategy. Additional research. These are all good scenarios. Having to do more work is not a failure. Work is what we do.



THEN AGAIN, WE DON'T LOVE MEETINGS.

And we absolutely hate long meetings. Most agencies are really good at having long meetings in the conference room with lots of people in attendance, and really bad at having spontaneous meetings that spring up when a few people pass in the hallway and start talking about an idea for a client. We tend to be the other way around. If we could, we would do away with meetings but sometimes they are necessary. The problem we have with meetings is that the actual doing can't start until the meeting stops. And meetings have a way of dragging on. It's simple physics. An object in motion tends to stay in motion until acted upon by an outside force.

So we like meetings that are short and to the point. The shorter the better. If you're in a meeting that's dragging on and keeping you from the important business of doing something, say the word "pineapple." This is the official agency code word that means, "Let's wrap this up." Now you know another one of our secrets.



YOUR SENSEI.

When you begin here you will be assigned a sensei. This is a Japanese word that means teacher and that is what you can expect from your sensei. It is up to your sensei to make sure you are as successful as you can be during your time here. Your sensei has been selected based on his or her knowledge of the CP+B culture. Most importantly, your sensei will be in a different department than you. We have found that departments are necessary to get the work done, but we have also found that the more people ignore departmental boundaries, the better it is for the work. That's why it is always a good idea when media people come up with creative ideas, and creatives come up with planning solutions, and production people come up with media ideas, and so on and so forth. For this cross-pollination to happen, you will have to become comfortable in the other departments and what they do. Your sensei will help with one department but the rest is up to you. Use your sensei. Call them when you don't know the best way to get something done or how to deal with a specific person and they will help. Ask them to teach you karate and they will be of no use. Soon, you'll be wise enough to take the pebble from your sensei's hand and the student will become the teacher.



Guide

AD PEOPLE.

These are the weird and wonderful people who are at the core of any great agency. Just because you work at an ad agency doesn't make you an ad person. First, ad people really love ads. They like to talk about them. They like to read about them. They like to see them. And they love being involved in their creation. Second, ad people are deeply interested in the advertising industry. They know which agencies have what accounts, they know which people are doing great things at other agencies. They know what the trends are and they follow accounts on the move. They are emotionally involved in what they do. If you're an ad person, you have a career here. If you're not an ad person, you have a job. Whichever one you are, it's worth taking the time to learn about the ad industry. It's like the old saying goes: the worst day in an ad agency beats the best day a bank ever had.



WORK IS A BAD WORD TO EXPLAIN WHAT WE DO.

If what you are doing seems like work, you're either in the wrong industry or you're not doing it right. Talk to your sensei. Your time here should feel less like digging a ditch and more like a challenging game of chess.



THE BEST IDEA IS BOSS.

This is something that you will often hear in the hallways at CP+B. It means that an idea is judged solely on its own merit. A good idea can come from anywhere, from any person in any department at any level. If you've been here a long time, if you're overdue, or if you've worked on that account longer than anyone, that doesn't matter. And just because a person's title is associate creative director or management supervisor doesn't necessarily mean their ideas are automatically weighted more toward the good end of the scale. We hope that this attitude creates a wonderfully liberating environment where great ideas gush forth freely from each and every person. Or at least an environment where you feel like you can contribute even though you're not running the place.



SUPPLIERS ARE IMPORTANT AND SHOULD BE TREATED WITH RESPECT.

One thing that bad agencies have in common is their tendency to bully and beat up suppliers. Perhaps it is a natural reaction to pick on someone smaller than you after you've been picked on. We tend to treat suppliers like fellow employees. The advertising business is contained within a small, small circle and word gets around about how you behave within that circle. We want to be the kind of agency that suppliers want to work with, regardless of budget, or timing, or scope of the job, just because they've heard we're great to work with.





Clipboards

IS IT SOUP YET?

We feel that we excel at the big things, like coming up with great ideas and then executing them brilliantly. What we sometimes fail at is the little things, like meeting deadlines. Which is too bad, because if you allow this to happen, you undo all the good. We need to focus on deadlines from the start and do whatever is humanly possible to meet them. And if that fails, we need to alert everyone as far in advance as possible that a looming deadline is in danger of being missed. A client will understand if they're called a day or two before they're expecting work to say it's not brilliant enough for them to see. They won't understand if they're called five minutes before they're expecting work to cross their desk. Undoubtedly, they've alerted their bosses and coworkers to the existence of this deadline and they don't appreciate us making them look like chumps.

During the Civil War, there was an infamous POW camp at Andersonville, Georgia. Due to a wartime shortage of building materials, the camp had no fence around it. So to keep the prisoners inside, the general in charge drew a line in the dirt around the camp. He told the prisoners that this was the "dead-line" and if anyone crossed it, they would be shot and killed on sight. Now that we know the serious background of the word "deadline" maybe we can treat our own deadlines more seriously.



GOAL-ORIENTED PLAY.

We are a loose organization without a lot of rules. Many agencies will say how fun and casual they are, then hand out a thick binder filled with all sorts of things you're forbidden to do. That's not us. The trap some may fall into is seeing the

casualness around them and mistakenly interpret that as permission to approach their job with less than 100% focus and effort. When, in fact, the total opposite is true. We prefer a casual atmosphere because we feel it makes our work better. The scientists who split the atom at Los Alamos were always playing practical jokes on each other. But please don't go off splitting atoms or anything.

THE THEORY OF MONEY RELATIVITY.

There is a tendency in our business to have amnesia when it comes to the value of money. A lot of people tend to think advertising money is less like real money and more like Monopoly money. It's truly bizarre for someone to work night and day for an entire year to earn a salary of \$50,000 and then remark that they "only" have \$50,000 to shoot a photo. We constantly remind ourselves to keep money in context. With \$100,000, you could build a very nice house and live in it forever. Or, with that same amount of money, you could shoot a TV spot that's 30 seconds long and will run for a few months and then go away forever. Don't lose perspective. It is never just a number. It's real money.



Movement

Doll Head



SPEND, BUT SPEND WISELY.

This is a true story. For MINI, we had an idea to insert an unscented air freshener into magazines. It would be shaped like a MINI and have a little string attached to it, just like the little pine-tree shaped air fresheners you see at the car wash. So everyone is pulling together to make this unscented air freshener in the shape of a MINI until someone noticed that the little loop of string was going to cost \$100,000. And that person asked, was this the smartest way to spend \$100k? Would the string do \$100k worth of work for MINI? Would that \$100k be put to better use somewhere else? And the answers turned out to be no, no and yes.



ADS ON THE WALL.

Although it's not uncommon for agencies to have framed ads decorating their hallways and lobbies, we don't have any. The reason is simple: by the time we got around to framing an ad, we would already have newer ads, and since you're only as good as the most recent thing you've done, the framed ad would not represent our "best" work. And so, according to the law of infinite regression, our best work would, by definition, be impossible to display. If you want to see good work, don't look in the hallway, look on your desk. Hopefully you'll see some there. If not, look on a desk near you.



COMPANY SECRETS.

The only advantage we have over the agencies we compete with, is the strength of our ideas. And those ideas ultimately become the advantage our clients have over the companies they compete with. And while it's good to be excited about our ideas, letting your excitement power your lips is about the worst offense you can commit against yourself, the people around you and your clients.



Onward