



# HANNA FITZ



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO CREATING  
AN ICONIC BRAND NAME

## A NOTE FROM HANNA FITZ

This is an area of branding, that I know can be quite frustrating for a lot of new business owners or existing business owners looking to rebrand.

You can spend hours, days and even months trying to come up with the perfect name. I have personally experienced this.

It is definitely worth your time and effort to get this right because hopefully you will have this brand name for years to come! It also sets the tone of the brand and is your client's shortcut to choosing.

This is why I have developed this guide and video training, to help you through this exciting process with more ease, so that you don't miss out on the important factors to consider when creating your brand name.

Let's Get Started!

*Hanna*



## NAMING YOUR BUSINESS

Your brand name has a key role to play in the success of your brand. A great name will help you attract the right clients, send the right message about your brand and attract the right opportunities for growth and expansion. When naming your business it is important to consider your long term goals.

The brand name says a lot about the business. For instance, while sailing Bora Bora last year, I heard of a hotel with water bungalows called "Bungalove"; the mental image, an 80's looking Vegas hotel room with a heart shaped bed and lots of pink satin sheets sprung to my mind!!! (Yikes!) not exactly the Four Seasons image most people dream of.

Choosing a name for your brand is such a key part of building a world-class brand, yet so many people get this wrong. Even major multi-million dollar companies are prone to this faux pas.

Did you know that founders Larry Page and Serge Brin originally called the search engine "BACKRUB" but thankfully renamed it GOOGLE which is a play on the word "googol" a mathematical term for the large number 10 to the power of 100" is connected to Google's mission of organizing the world's infinite information".

I know Ralph Lauren made a great move when he dropped "Ralph Lifshitz" for a more upscale, "Town and Country" worthy name. Take the famous Barbadian World Class Performer for instance, a great business decision was using her middle name only "RIHANNA" as opposed to "Robin Fenty".

I was so proud of one of my private clients who totally transformed her brand by going from an obscure name like **"Senebti"** to **"Beauty in Bloom"**.

### **Here are some key factors you need to consider when naming your brand:**

If you are planning to create a business for the purpose of selling it, consider creating an impersonal name e.g. Microsoft. This makes the business appear larger and easier to transfer ownership.

However, this really depends on your industry, take for instance brands like Kate Spade, Giorgio Armani and Chanel named after the founders. You have to decide what type of business you want to create and if your name is suitable to brand it.

In service based industries like the coaching industry, the business name is often the founder's name, because these businesses are high-touch, personalized services. People are buying from a personality and the personality is the brand.

Another factor to consider, is not giving your business a name based on a city or town, so that you give yourself the latitude to expand. That is, unless your business is really location based and cannot be expanded outside your town, country or city. Your brand will evolve over time. You need a name that can expand with it.

## COMMON NAMING MISTAKES

Here are some of the things that you need to avoid when coming up with a brand name:

### **Imitating a well-known brand**

In many industries you see many people with similar names. It isn't a good idea to try to copy someone else because what you want is a name that will become iconic and synonymous with you.

Treating the name only as a creative project: Your brand name needs to be tied to your overall brand strategy. You need a name that will help position you as a go to expert and authority in your niche.

One that transcends your current niche and looks into the future of your brand. It's not about just coming up with a creative string of words. It's about this brand being the driving force of your competitive position in the market and attracting your ideal clients in an ocean of choices.

### **Fad names**

So ideas come and go and sometimes depending on where you are in your life a name might sound like a great idea and then you grow out of it. Test for legacy strength... is that the name that you want to be associated with your legacy?

When Larry Page and Serge Brin first came up with what is now Google they called it "BACKRUB". Backrub!!! Thankfully they changed the name to Google. Here is how they came up with the name Google. Googol is a mathematical term for the large number 10 to the power of 100. This is infinite so perfectly aligned to their mission of organizing the world's infinite information.

Avoid trending words and phrases. You want your brand name to be timeless and unique. You want a name that like Coco Chanel said "may my legacy live a long and happy life" You want a brand name that will live a long and happy life.

### **Too Niche Oriented**

Thinking you need to only use descriptive words: most people believe that if the brand name is descriptive it will open up doors to sales to their ideal clients faster and that people will understand it better.

While this may be true in some cases but what is important is that you need to understand the role you want your brand name to play.

So for example The Container Store or Bed, Bath and Beyond are descriptive brand names which work but you also have similar brands like Ikea are successful too. Youtube.com could have gone for videos.com and ebay could have said auction.com but they went for more expansive creative names as the core products or services may change depending on the founders long term strategy and vision.

## **Global Challenges**

Many people do not take into consideration the cultural challenges that can occur in relation to selecting a brand name. Many companies have encountered major PR crisis when they entered a market where the name meant something different. Like the Chevy Nova which meant “doesn’t go” in Spanish.

This is why you will notice with a lot of car models or even household products, in different countries it has an entirely different name. You have to take this into account when naming your brand and try to be as universal as possible like Apple, Amazon and Google.

Be aware of potential cultural slangs, idioms and translations that could give your brand name a whole different meaning.

## **Must Match Domain**

Thinking the Domain has to match the business name: While this is the ideal situation, many big brand names were forced to get substitute names instead. When Tesla first started it was TeslaMotors.com because Tesla.com was unavailable. They were later able to acquire the domain name from a Nikola Tesla admirer. Nissan is still trying to acquire the domain name Nissan.com, for now they have to settle for nissanusa.com

## **It’s hard to say or spell**

It is very important that your brand name is easy to pronounce and say. If you have to spell it out to people all the time it will get tiresome very soon. Otherwise your brand may need to invest heavily in marketing to familiarize people with the pronunciation and spelling. On the other hand, we see a successful brand like Versace which an unsuspecting consumer could call Versace. If you are short on time and money to invest in building memorability, avoid this.

So now that you know some of the mistakes to avoid, here is what you should know about naming your brand for global success:

There are six different categories for naming a brand or product. So what I want you to do is create six columns on a sheet of paper for each category and decide which two or three will you explore ideas to come up with the perfect name.

There are six categories of names:



**Generic:** generic phrases or terms are not great choices because you are unable to trademark them. Essentially the law does not allow a company to claim a generic term as its proprietary mark. So you can't call your apple farm, Apple. However if you apply a generic term to an arbitrary product or service, it is a strong trademark e.g. Apple computers, etc. You can also add a word to a generic term to make it protectable. You should get an attorney familiar with the laws within which you operate to guide you through this process.

**Descriptive:** names tells you what products and services are being offered by this business. Some examples, *Chocolate Factory*, *General Motors*. These are a bordering generic and can be just as difficult to trademark. They also offer a narrow scope for expanding with the business as its products and services expand over time.

**Suggestive:** this type of name is not descriptive but rather suggestive. It is a creative name that has it's own personality, using a metaphor to evoke the experience of the brand. These names are great differentiators e.g. *Nike*, *Fast Company* and *Virgin*.

**Arbitrary:** This is when a generic term is used for a business entirely different from the original use of the word. The challenge here is to teach people to associate this term with your brand and not it's original meaning e.g. *Apple computers*, *Orange network*.

**Fanciful:** There are invented names that are strong trademarks because they did not exist before you created it. However, this doesn't mean that they are easy to come up with and you run the risk of your clients not being about to relate to some weird, hard to pronounce invention. When done well, they can become timeless e.g. *Kodak*, *Verizon*.

**Founder:** This is where the brand is named after the founder which is very common in Fashion, Coaching, Consulting and Service-based business. This is because of the personal nature of the service. Some examples are *Coco Chanel*, *Giorgio Armani*, etc.



## NAMING YOUR BRAND

The first step is to decide whether you will be using your name or not. What are your long term goals for your brand? Do you want your brand to be in your own name? Are you building this brand to sell it?

You can also get creative with this. A great example is Adidas. It is a made up word combining the founder's names His first name was Adolf (Adi) and last name Dassler (das). Be careful with this though you don't want to come up with anything too weird, awkward or hard to pronounce and remember.

Do you plan to expand outside of your current niche in the future? If so stay away from a descriptive name like Vegan Life.

**Based your long-term plans and the six categories of naming on the previous page, which one would you like to use to guide the naming your brand? E.g. Founder, Fanciful, etc.**

### Set Your Principle Criteria

I love the story of the founder of Kodak who said that he and his mother came up with the name while playing with an anagram set. The first thing they did was established three principles for selecting their perfect name:

- 1) Short
- 2) Cannot be mispronounced
- 3) Should not resemble anything or be associated with anything else except for the business that would eventually be called by that name.

Here are some other factors to consider which can be part of your criteria:

**Must be meaningful to the purpose or philosophy of the brand.**

Apple selected its name which was symbolic of two historic and cultural symbols. First was that Sir Issac Newton discovered the law of gravity when an Apple dangling over his head fell and led to scientific history. The colours the brand has used for its products over the years is said to be symbolic of Newton's Separation of light theory. Apple is all about discovery and innovation.

The other symbolic meaning behind the name Apple is from the story of Adam and Eve "biting out the fruit of knowledge", the forbidden fruit. Making computers which were in a way off-limits to the masses, more accessible.

We also have a brand like Tesla which is inspired by the great electrical engineering pioneer Nikola Tesla.

*What event, fruit, flower, thing or person in history inspires you or the philosophy of your brand? Make a list.*  
Blackberry – was named after the fruit because the keyboard buttons on the first phone looked like blackberry fruit.

**What subjects or topics excite or inspire you?** So for Founders Steve Jobs and Elon Musk, they were inspired by scientific events (Newton and the apple) and personalities Nikola Tesla.

**Are you inspired by greek mythology?**

Something or some word in your own culture which has meaning to you and is easy to pronounce, remember and spell?

**What about the stars or planets** *e.g. Adastra.*

**Is there a latin word that has meaning for what you do?**

**e.g.** Sony comes from the latin word Sonus which means sound. It also came from American slang "Sonny" which means "bright youngster". They chose the name because it was easy to pronounce in any culture.

**Is there a person in your family who might inspire you're your brand name?**

E.g. grandmother, Uncle, father, mother, etc.

**What about an item you grew up with, a favorite movie, song, toy, etc.?**

Sohia Amoroso started the whole GIRLBOSS movement inspired by an old foreign film.

**A place you visited or feel connected to that can be your brand name and may not necessarily be associated with the name of the place?**

Co-founder of Adobe lived in a house in front of Adobe Creek. Notice he didn't use the entire place name. Just Adobe to make it more generic.

One of Jeff Bezos guidelines for a name was that it needed to start with "A" to be at the top of listings. He named it Amazon which is the largest river in the world. Isn't one of Amazon.com the largest market places online?



The founder of Lancome was visiting a castle called Le Chateau de Lancome where there were many roses. Enthralled he named his perfumery Lancome and used the rose as it's symbol.

**What subject or field inspires you and you feel connected to?**

Fashion, music, art, etc. Are there any words from those industries or disciplines that are easy to remember, spell and pronounce that may be a good fit for your brand?

**How can you combine two words in a way that won't be weird, hard to spell, pronounce or remember?**

E.g. Evernote comes from combining **"Forever and note"**.  
Integrated Electrical was shortened to create **"Intel"**

Based on these ideas, what are your three or four features will be part of your principle criteria for selecting your (must-haves) a great brand name for your business.

**What do you want people to associate your business name with? What kind of symbolic meaning do you want it to stand for?**

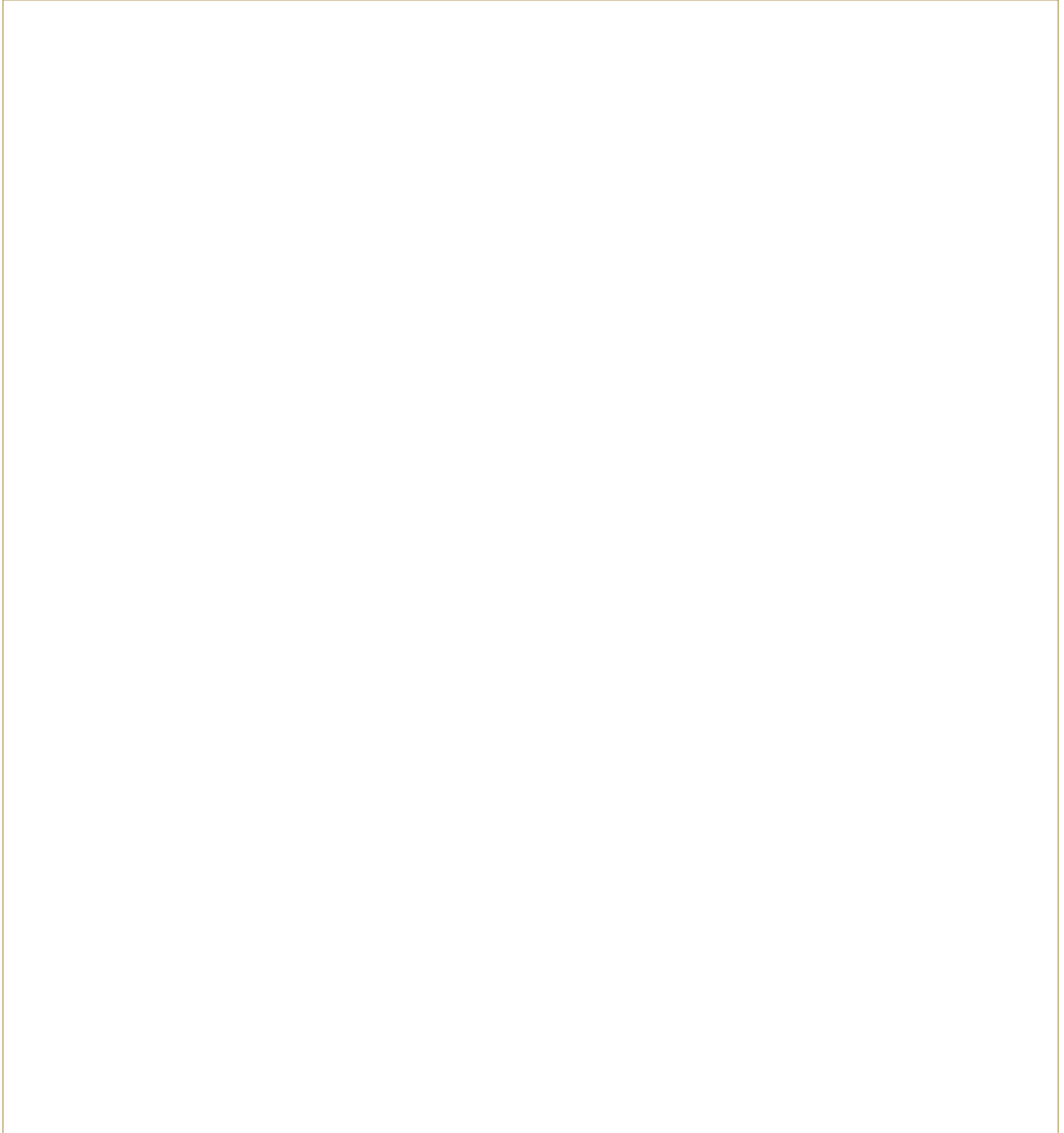
**How do you want people to feel when they hear your brand name?**

## KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

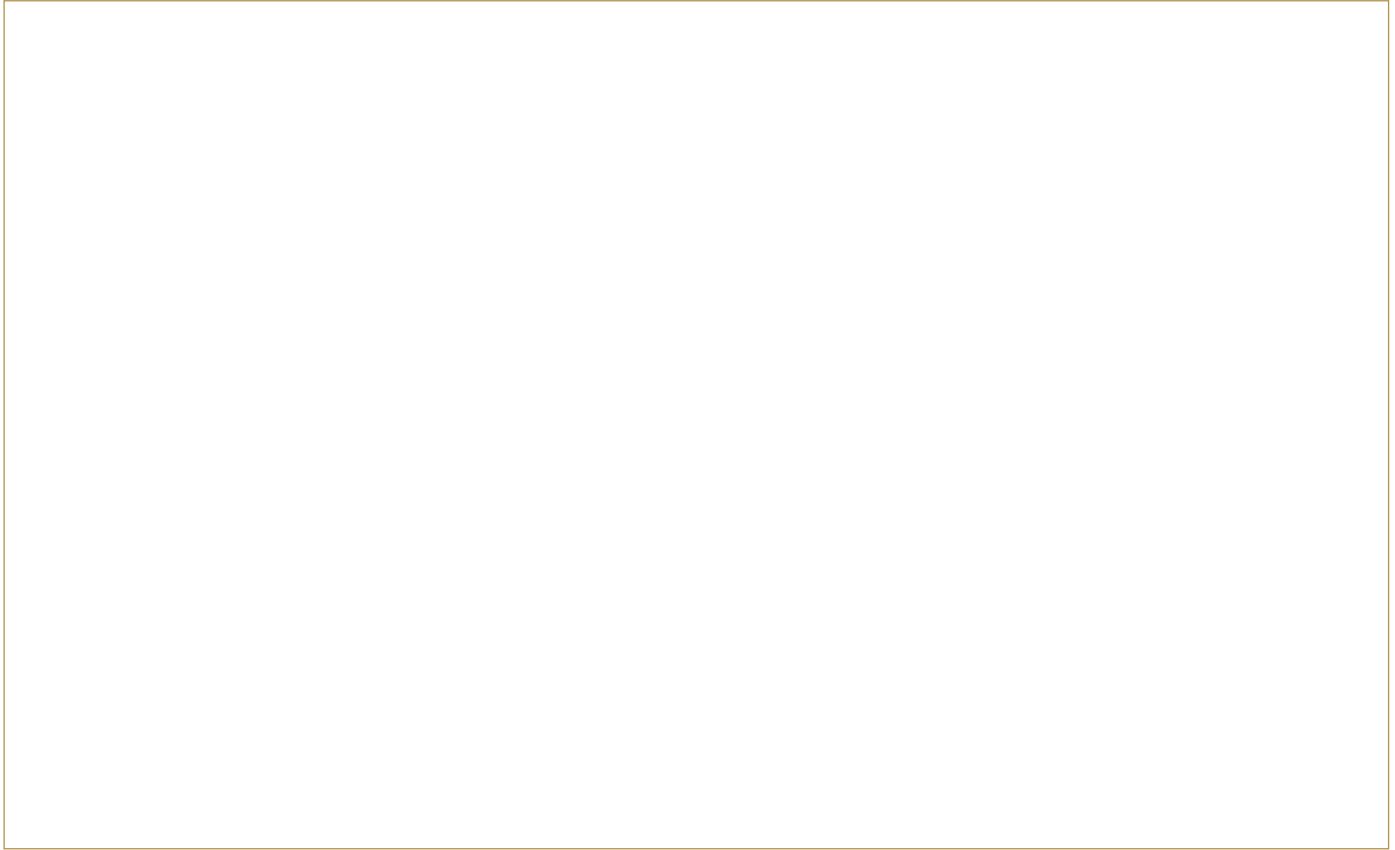
- Is it easy to spell?
- Is it easy to pronounce?
- Can you trademark it?
- Will people remember it?
- Will they be intrigued by it?
- Is it global?
- Is that the name that will be your legacy brand?

**Make a list of some keywords or phrases that best reflect the core values and unique characteristics that you have identified for your brand.** You may want to use the words in your core values and brainstorm synonyms and phrases that are a reflection of them.

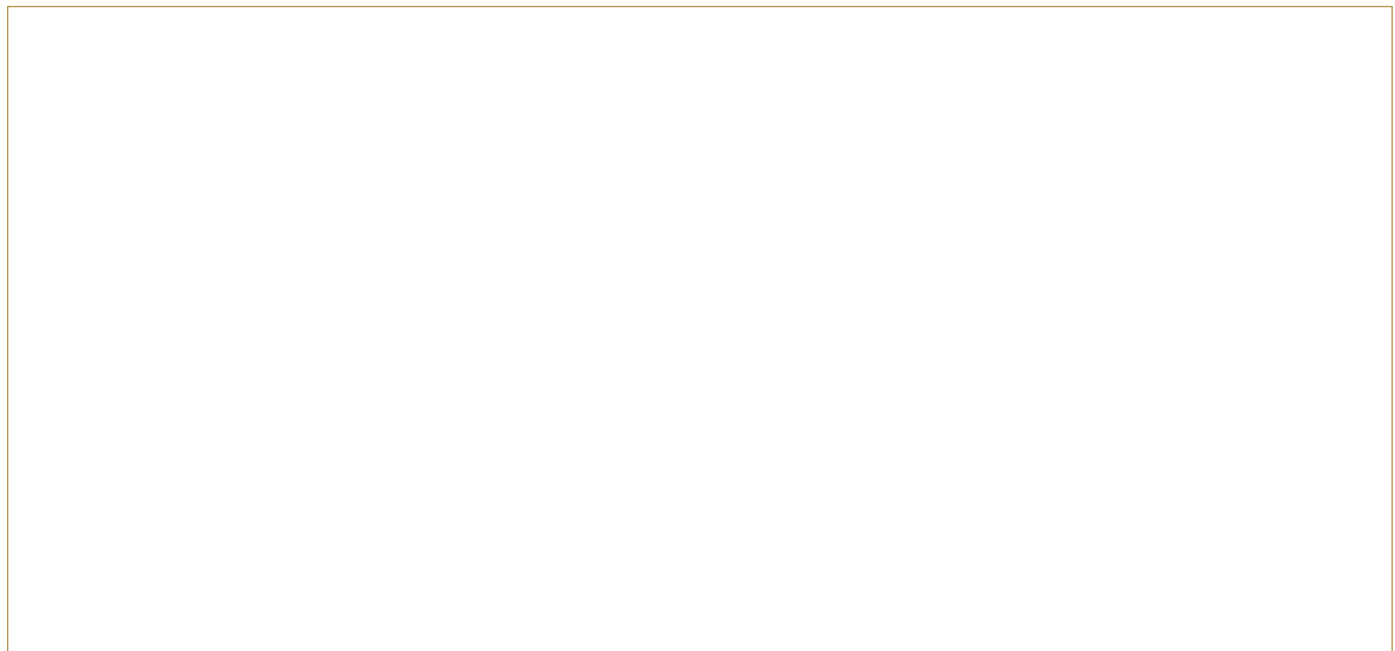
Consider the criteria you have set for what are the three or four must have features of your name. Keep brainstorming and writing down ideas as they come.















**Select Your Top Five**



**Which top three names best communicate the mood, values and long-term goals of your brand?  
How do they look collateral? *e.g. mugs, pens, etc.***



**Test your top three names using the following criteria:**

-  Is it timeless? *(will this name stand the test of time or is it just a fad?)*
-  Is easy to remember?
-  It is easy to pronounce and spell?
-  Will it mean something to my target audience, will it appeal to them?
-  Is the domain name available? *(If not can a word be added to the URL that is not too long?)*
-  Will you stand out with this name?
-  Is it unique or am I imitating a well-known brand *(does it sound like a copycat name?)*
-  Is the name plain, descriptive and too safe?
-  Are the words too obscure that no one will know what it means?
-  Does it bring up a pleasant memory or feeling?
-  Is this a name I can trademark? *(Do a trademark search in Google type Trademark search + Your Country to find out whether this name is already registered in the country you will register your business)*
-  Does it sound like a tagline instead of a name?

**What does this name mean in other cultures or languages that you may end up doing business with?**

Puffs started selling its tissues in Germany, they discovered the name "puff" is German slang for "brothel". So please check Google translate because you will be operating on the web attracting a global audience.



**Is the URL available for this brand name?** *You can use any domain register to check like godaddy.com, etc. If not what variation can be purchased? Once you have decided purchase it immediately.*

Once you have a few options you love (like three good ones), I would recommend not asking your family and friends but rather some potential clients to select their favorite. Your family may be well-meaning but they may try to take the caramel out of your ice-cream and leave you with plain ole vanilla.

Say the name out loud and see which one gives you a more positive feeling.

**Now its time to write down your new brand name and why you absolutely love it!**

Once you are happy with your new memorable and iconic brand name, it's time to build a world class brand online. Learn more about working privately with me to build your high-end world class brand at [www.hannafitz.com](http://www.hannafitz.com)

