

Gerard:

The human side of branding and business success

Like most successful business people, Carolyn Gerard and her business partner and husband, designer Kenton Gerard, will tell you that they measure their company's success by the success of their clients. But to Carolyn, that means focusing first on helping the individual client succeed. Kenton explains, "Under Carolyn's leadership, we've grown by spending more time than most agencies getting to know our clients personally, seeking to understand how they like to work and striving to deliver results that help them shine."



CAROLYN GERARD :: Principal

DOING MORE WITH LESS

Gerard's award-winning work spans a wide range of branding and marketing projects for clients like OfficeMax, Tellabs and Navistar. Gerard approaches each project with a keen awareness of the economic times we live in. "Our mantra here is 'Do more with less,'" says Carolyn. "We're not necessarily the low-cost provider. The level of talent that we bring to the table isn't cheap. It's just that we always look for ways to over-deliver within our budgets."

This attitude extends to other aspects of budget management. Unlike many creative agencies, Gerard does not believe in marking up expenses. "That 20 percent does nothing to advance our clients' goals," says Carolyn. "In these times of tight budgets, eliminating the mark-up makes a significant positive impact on the value we're able to deliver."

THE HUMAN SIDE OF EXCELLENCE

Focusing on serving people rather than just clients has been a huge factor in the steady growth and success at Gerard. But not the only one. The people-first approach is also evident within the culture of the agency. Carolyn explains her philosophy as an employer. "I would rather be a leader than a manager," she says. "Set the vision and direction, hire great people and turn them loose. When you trust them, good people bloom."

And they don't leave. Just four employees have left the agency in the 20 years Gerard has been in business. At the office, on walls and shelves filled with creative awards, you'll see a number of "Best Places to Work" plaques recognizing the company.

THE BOTTOM LINE

But before you get too warm and fuzzy, Carolyn — and anyone else you talk to at Gerard — will remind you that this is a business. "There's always a bottom line," she says. "And it has to be excellence. Quality. Results. In the end, that's what makes our clients look good. We know that delivering the best results is the only way we'll continue to thrive."

One look at the work on Gerard's website gives you the impression that this is a firm that will continue to thrive for a long time to come.

"Gerard is the best company that I've worked with in my 20-plus years of working with agencies. I know that Carolyn and her team are going to make me look good, every time. And they do."

ROCK FRAIRE :: Senior Director of Brand Strategy, OfficeMax



info@gerardagency.com
www.gerardagency.com

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