

VOVE

# The Growth Gap Assessment

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A diagnostic tool for businesses that have outgrown their brand.

# Most businesses reach a point where their reputation has outgrown their brand...

The work is excellent. The clients are loyal. But something feels off and it shows up in pitches that should have been won, in first impressions that don't reflect the reality, and in a nagging sense that the business deserves to look as good as it actually is.

This assessment exists to help you find where that gap is and what it's costing you.

There are five sections to this assessment:

**1.**

Who You Are vs How  
You Appear

**2.**

Are You Truly Different?

**3.**

Has Your Brand Kept  
Pace?

**4.**

What Is It Costing You?

**5.**

Your Next Steps

**It's very important to follow these instructions to get the most from this workbook:**

- Be honest - this only works if you answer for how things actually are, not how you'd like them to be.
- Work through it alone first, then share with your team.
- There are no right answers - only useful ones.
- At the end of each section, rate yourself using the scale provided.
- The meeting agenda at the back is designed to help you take this further with your team.

# Who You Are vs How You Appear

**The most common brand problem isn't a bad logo. It's a good business that looks like an average one.**

This section helps you understand the gap between your actual reputation and the impression your brand makes on people who haven't met you yet.

1. If a prospect Googled your business today, before any conversation - what would they find? Write it out honestly.

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2. Does what they'd find accurately reflect the quality and scale of what you actually do?

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3. Think of your last three new client wins. How did they find you? **Circle:**

**Referral / Cold Approach / Existing Relationship / Other**

4. Could your brand stand alone without your network? What would happen if referrals dried up tomorrow?

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5. When did you last look at your website, LinkedIn, or pitch materials as a stranger would - with no prior knowledge of your business?

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**Notes:**

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## How well does your brand represent your business to people who don't know you yet?

1	2	3	4	5
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### Next Steps

#### *If you scored 1-2:*

Your brand is actively working against you. This is the most urgent area to address.

#### *If you scored 3:*

You're in the awkward middle - not embarrassing, but not compelling.

#### *If you scored 4-5:*

Strong foundation. The other sections will show you where to push further.

# Are You Truly Different?

Ask most business owners what makes them different, and they'll say: **we're professional, reliable, experienced, and we really care about our clients.**

So does every competitor. This section is designed to find what actually makes you different - and whether your brand is communicating it.

1. Write down the three things you believe make your business different from your competitors.

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2. Now ask yourself honestly: could your three nearest competitors say exactly the same things? (Most can.) **Circle: Yes / No**

3. If a client were describing your business to a colleague over lunch, what would they actually say? Write it as they would say it in their words, not yours.

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4. What do you do - or the way you do it - that your competitors genuinely cannot or do not replicate?

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5. Does your brand - website, materials, messaging - communicate your real differentiators? Or does it default to the same language as everyone else?

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**Notes:**

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## How clearly and consistently does your brand communicate what genuinely makes you different?

1	2	3	4	5
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### Next Steps

#### *If you struggled with question 4:*

The problem isn't your brand - it's that your positioning hasn't been fully defined yet. That's the starting point.

#### *If you answered question 4, but struggled with question 5:*

The problem isn't your brand - it's that your positioning hasn't been fully defined yet. That's the starting point.

# *Has Your Brand Kept Pace?*

**Businesses grow. Brands don't** - unless someone makes them. The firm you are today is almost certainly different from the firm you were when you last thought seriously about your brand.

This section looks at where that gap has opened up - and how wide it's become.

1. When did you last make a significant change to your brand? (logo, website, messaging, visual identity)

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2. Since then, what has changed in your business? (team size, client calibre, service range, market position, fees)

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3. Does your brand reflect where you are now - or where you were when you last updated it?

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4. Would a new client, meeting your brand for the first time, accurately understand the scale and quality of your business?

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4. Rate each of the following on whether your brand currently reflects them accurately:

	Accurately Reflected	Partially Reflected	Not Reflected
Team Expertise			
Service Sophistication			
Client Calibre			
Market Positioning			
Fee Level			

**Notes:**

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## Overall, how well does your brand reflect where your business is today?

1	2	3	4	5
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### Next Steps

*If your brand was last updated more than 3 years ago...*

and your business has grown significantly since, the gap is almost certainly wider than you think.

*The good news:*

this is the most common problem we see - and it's entirely fixable. The first step is deciding to look at it honestly. You're already doing that."

# *What is it Costing You?*

**A brand gap isn't just an aesthetic problem - it's a commercial one.** It shows up in pitches that should have been won. In price resistance that shouldn't exist. In first impressions that contradict the reality of working with you.

This section helps you put a commercial frame around the gap, so the conversation about fixing it becomes easier to have.

**1.** In the last 12 months, have you lost any pitches or new business opportunities where you felt your proposition was strong? How many?

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**2.** Do you ever encounter price resistance even when you know your fees are fair? How often?

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**3.** Have you ever had a prospect who seemed interested, then went quiet — without explanation? What do you think happened?

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4. When recruiting, do candidates sometimes seem surprised (positively or negatively) by your brand vs the reality of working with you?

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5. If your brand fully reflected the quality and scale of your business, what would be different about your new business conversations?

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**Notes:**

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## How much do you think your current brand is costing you commercially?

1	2	3	4	5
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### Next Steps

*The costs identified in this section are almost always invisible...*

you can't track what you've never measured. But the pattern is consistent: businesses that invest in closing the brand gap report stronger pitch conversion, less price resistance, and a clearer path to the clients they most want to work with. The question isn't whether to act - it's when.

# Your Next Steps...

## Diagnosis without action is just awareness.

This section gives you a clear set of next steps based on what you've discovered - things you can start doing immediately, with or without external help. At the end, there's a meeting agenda designed to help you take this conversation to your team.

## Do this week:

**Do the 20-minute brand review.** Google your own business as a stranger. Look at your website, LinkedIn, and any public-facing materials. Write down what a cautious prospect would think.

**Ask three clients:** "If you were referring us to a colleague, what would you say?" Their answer is often your best positioning - and it's probably not what your website says.

**Look at your top three competitors' websites.** What are they claiming? How do you compare visually and verbally?

## Do this quarter:

**Have the brand conversation internally.** Use the meeting agenda on the next page to structure it. Start with the data from this assessment.

**Define your real differentiators.** Not the ones you wish were true - the ones your best clients would confirm. Build your messaging around those.

**Decide: refresh or rethink?** A refresh updates the surface. A rethink starts with strategy. Be honest about which your situation calls for.

## Overall Summary:

*Section 1:*

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*Section 2:*

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*Section 3:*

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*Section 4:*

/5

*Section 5:*

/5

### **16-20**

Your brand has strong foundations in place. The focus now should be on amplifying what's already working and increasing visibility, consistency and impact.

### **10-15**

There are noticeable gaps between your current brand position and growth potential. Strategy and positioning should be prioritised.

### **Below 10**

Your brand may be limiting growth rather than supporting it. Action is recommended to improve clarity, consistency and direction.

# Team Meeting Agenda

A structured 60-minute meeting agenda for taking the assessment findings to the leadership team.

## **00–10 mins:**

Share your assessment findings.  
What did you discover?  
Where did you score lowest?

## **10–25 mins:**

The differentiation question.  
Ask the team: what do we believe makes us different?  
Then ask: would our competitors say the same?

## **25–40 mins:**

The growth gap.  
How has the business changed in the last 3 years?  
Does our brand reflect that?

## **40–50 mins:**

The commercial question.  
Where do we think we're losing ground because of brand?

## **50–60 mins:**

Decision point.  
Do we need a refresh or a rethink?  
What's the first step?

# Vove is a brand strategy, communications, and creative agency based in the North East.

We work with established businesses that are better than their brand suggests - helping them close the gap between their reputation and their appearance.

If what you've discovered in this assessment feels familiar, we'd be glad to have a conversation. No pitch, no pressure - just an honest discussion about where you are and whether we might be able to help.

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**Discover more or book a discovery call at [vove.agency](https://vove.agency).**

**Be Unmissable.**