



## People Branding

Employees as brand ambassadors

Vortrag im Rahmen des Best Brands College  
LMU München, Februar 2007

**Dr. Nina Specht**  
ServiceLust GmbH

servicelust.com  
info@servicelust.com

I ♥ NY®





1993



1996



1998



2000



2003



148 Sullivan St, New York

7 Bond St, New York

25 Prince St, New York





Nina, tourist and a bit uptight



— — — — — • Stan, hairstylist and a bit crazy





! What is your profession?



**! What was the hair style you liked best in your life?**

! ... do you trust me?



# Agenda

People Branding

Customers

Behavioral Branding

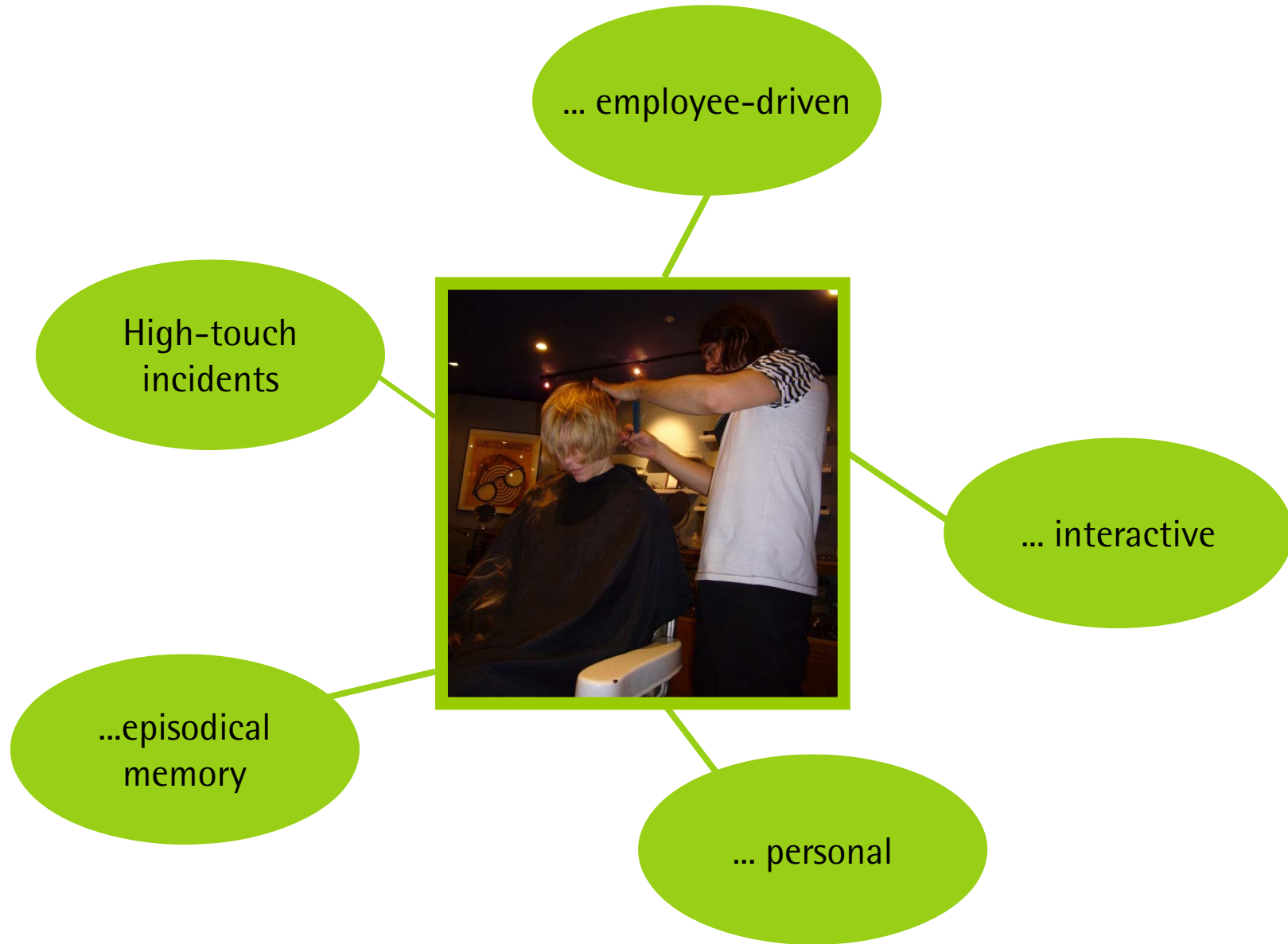
Interaction Experience

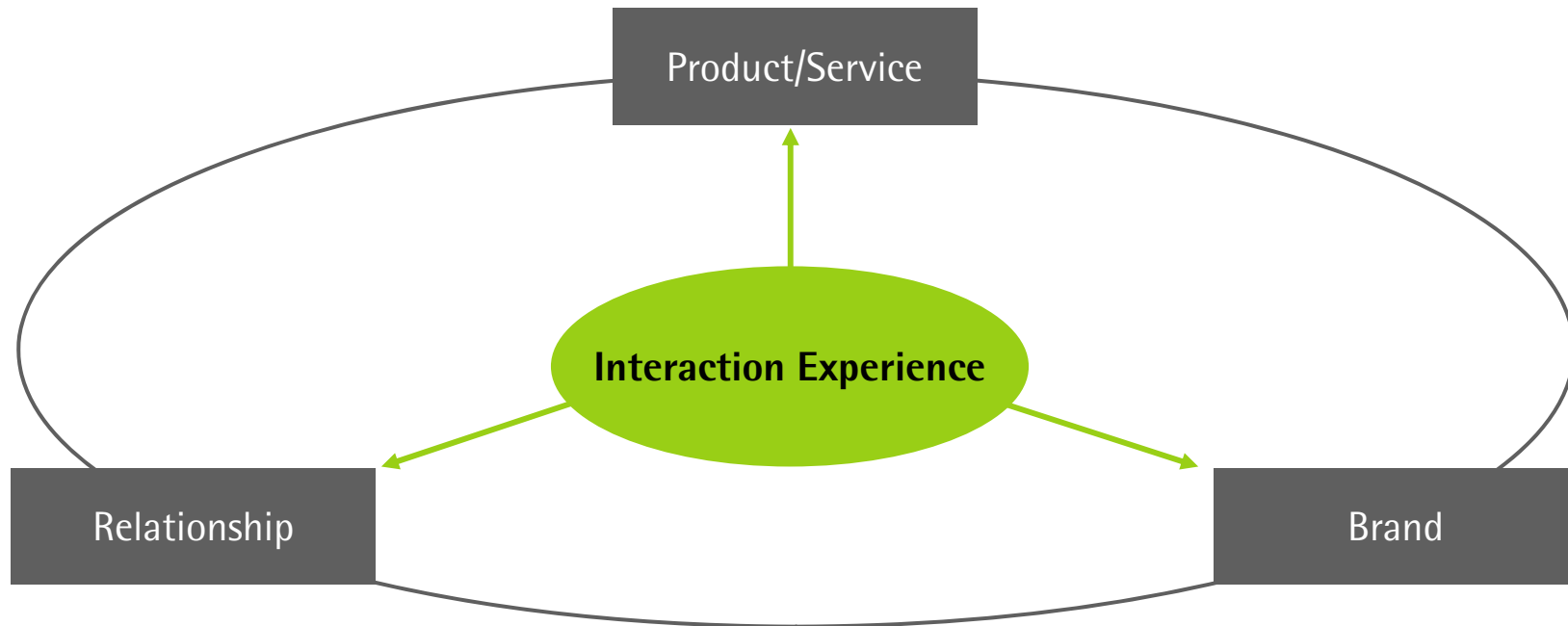
Brand Experience

Management

Appearance Branding

Innovative  
Research Methods





For the customer the employee is  
the service, the brand, and the company.

**PERSÖNLICH**  
HVB BERATERTUGEND N° 5



- HVB Beratertugenden
- AUFMERKSAM
- VERSTÄNDNISVOLL
- LEIDENSCHAFTLICH
- KREATIV
- PROAKTIV
- DIREKT
- UNTERNEHMERISCH 1 / 2
- VORAUSSCHAUEND
- ZIELSTREBIG
- PERSÖNLICH
- KOMPETENT
- INNOVATIV



Eine von  
über 26.000 HVB  
Mitarbeitern.

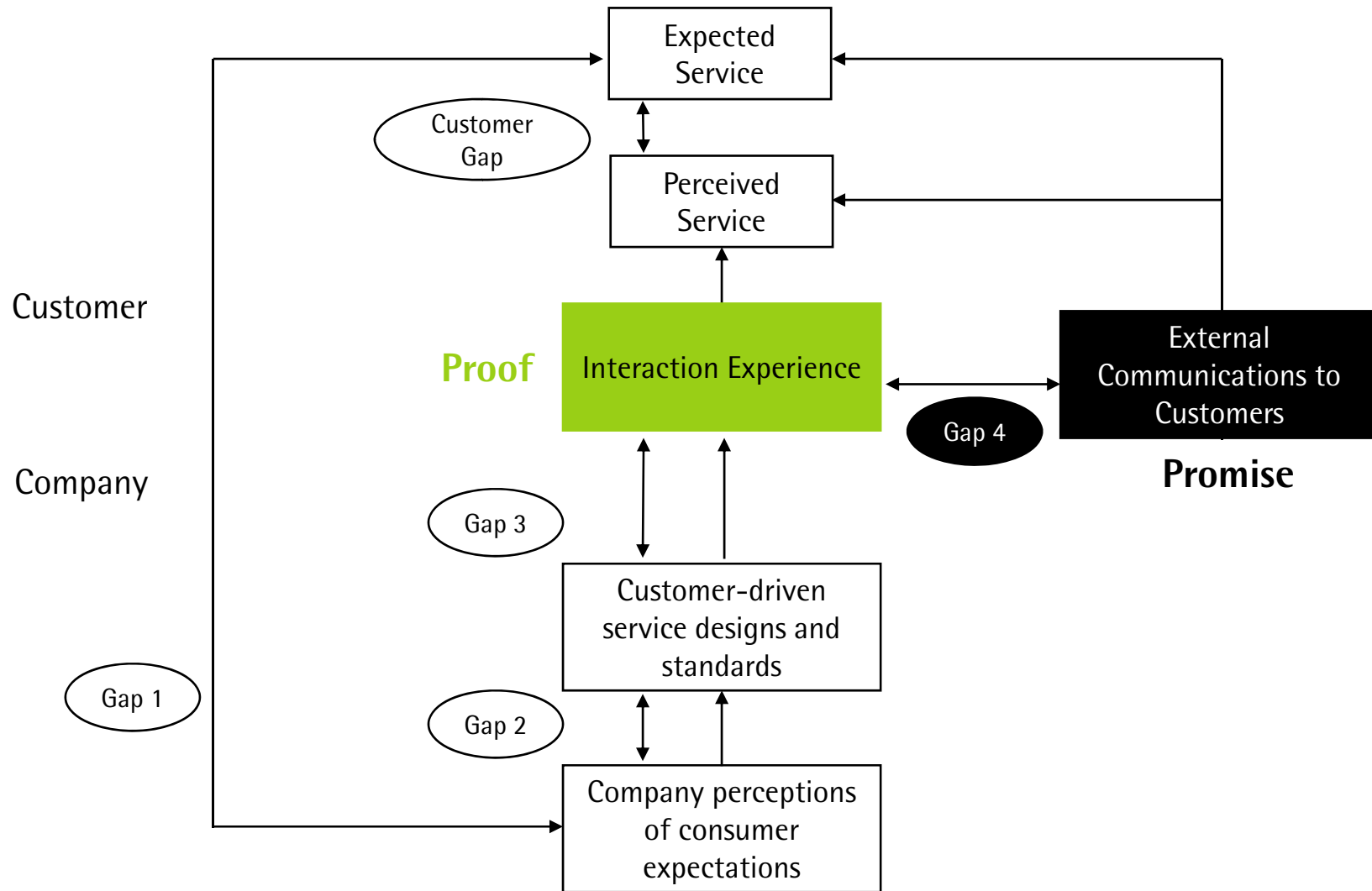
Alice Gräfin von Schwerin,  
Kundenberaterin Wealth Management,  
Standort Düsseldorf, steht  
für eine der HVB  
Beratertugenden. Und  
gibt Ihrem Erfolg damit  
ein Gesicht.

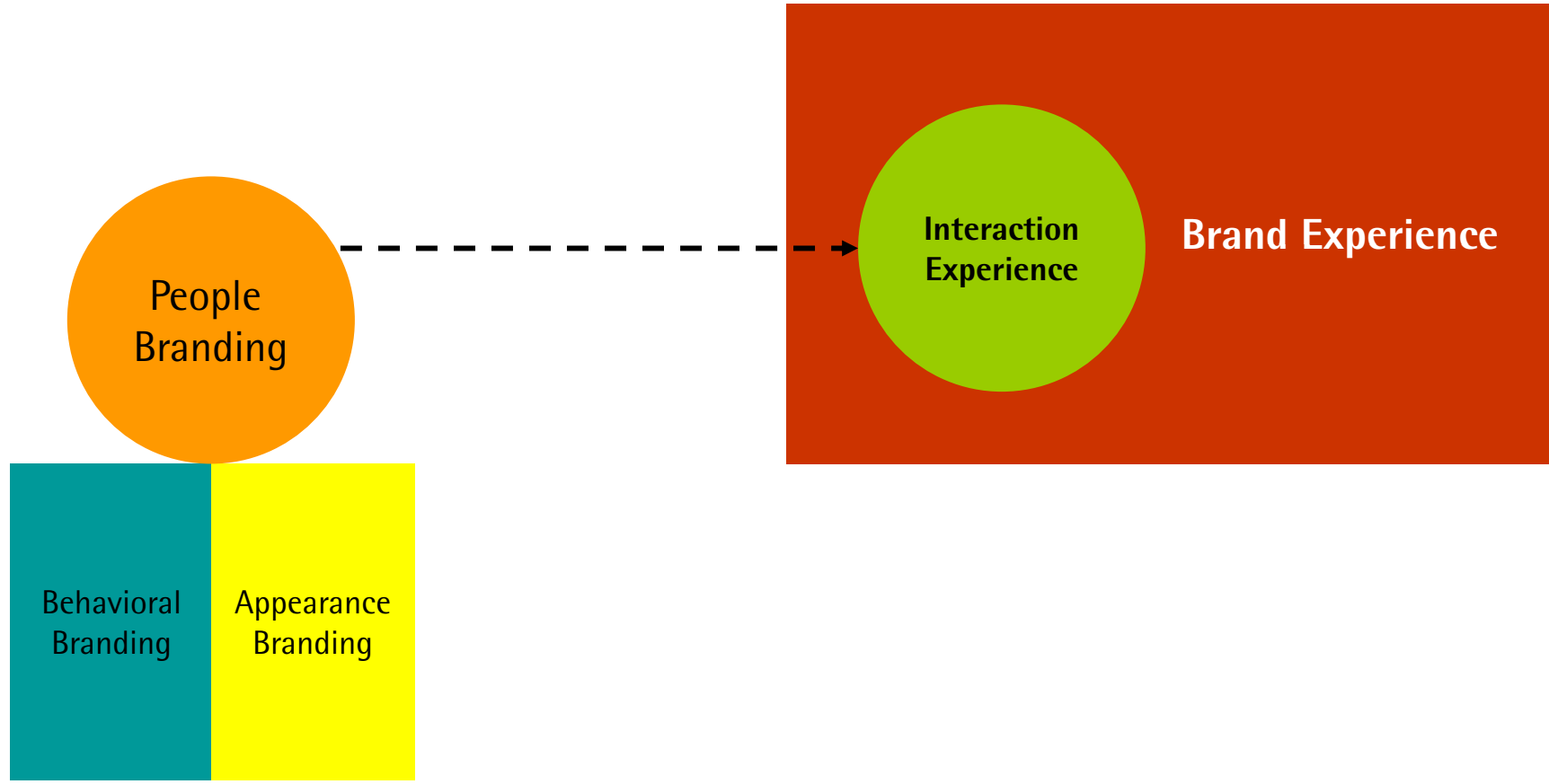
In diesem Moment denkt Alice Gräfin  
von Schwerin an Sie.

Sie tut dies häufig, denn als Top-Führungskraft bei HVB Wealth Management geht es ihr vor allen Dingen um eines: Eine langfristige, persönliche und vertrauensvolle Beziehung zu Ihnen aufzubauen und mit Ihnen private Vermögens- und Finanzierungslösungen zu erarbeiten, die normale Banken Ihnen nicht bieten. Natürlich ist Gräfin Schwerin nicht allein. Überall in Deutschland haben wir Teams mit hoch qualifizierten Mitarbeitern, die Ihrem Vermögen alle Möglichkeiten eröffnen, die es verdient.



**It's one thing to promise a brand experience  
and quite another thing to prove it.**





# Behavioral Branding

**Behavioral Branding is defined as any type of verbal or non verbal behavior that directly or indirectly determines brand experience and brand equity.**

Tomczak, Herrmann, Brexendorf and Kernstock 2005

**Behavioral Branding means strengthening the brand experience of all external stakeholders, especially customers, by showing brand adequate employee behavior.**

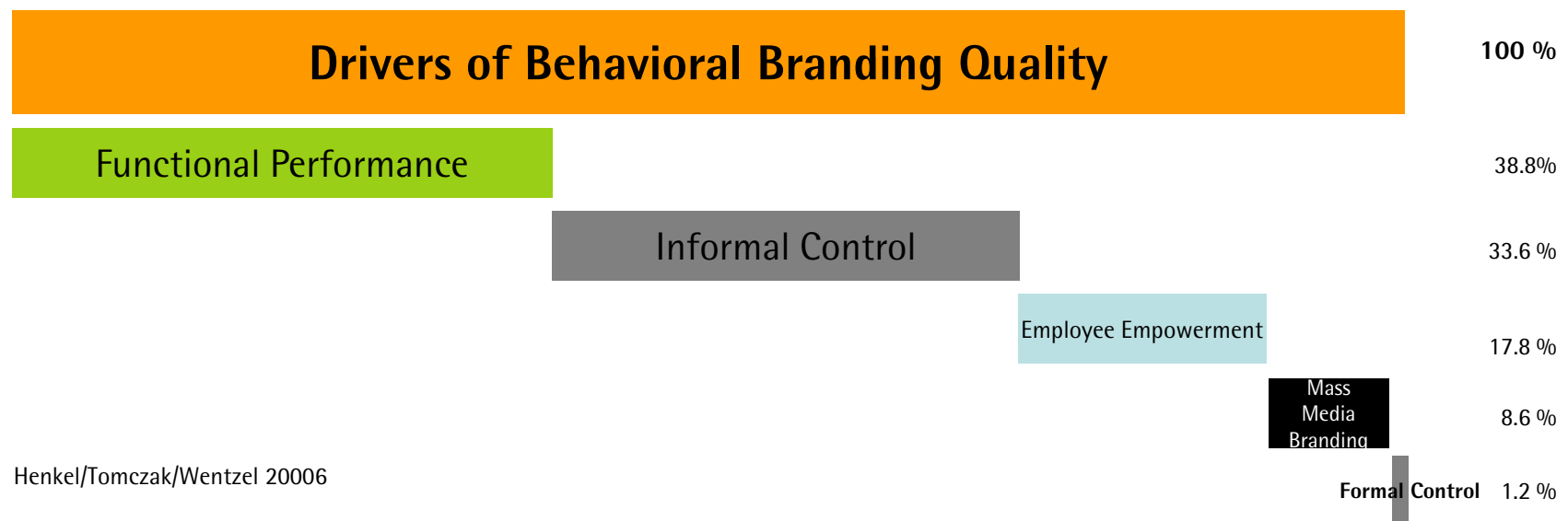
**In so doing the positive brand experience and the explicitly and implicitly communicated brand promise strengthen the brand image.**

[http://www.markenlexikon.com/glossar\\_b.html](http://www.markenlexikon.com/glossar_b.html)

**What managers think...**

# Empirical Findings

Questioning: n=167 Marketing Managers of Swiss and German Companies  
 Industries: Consumer Goods (20.7%), Services (40.8%), Industrial Goods (20.7%), Other Industries (17.8%)



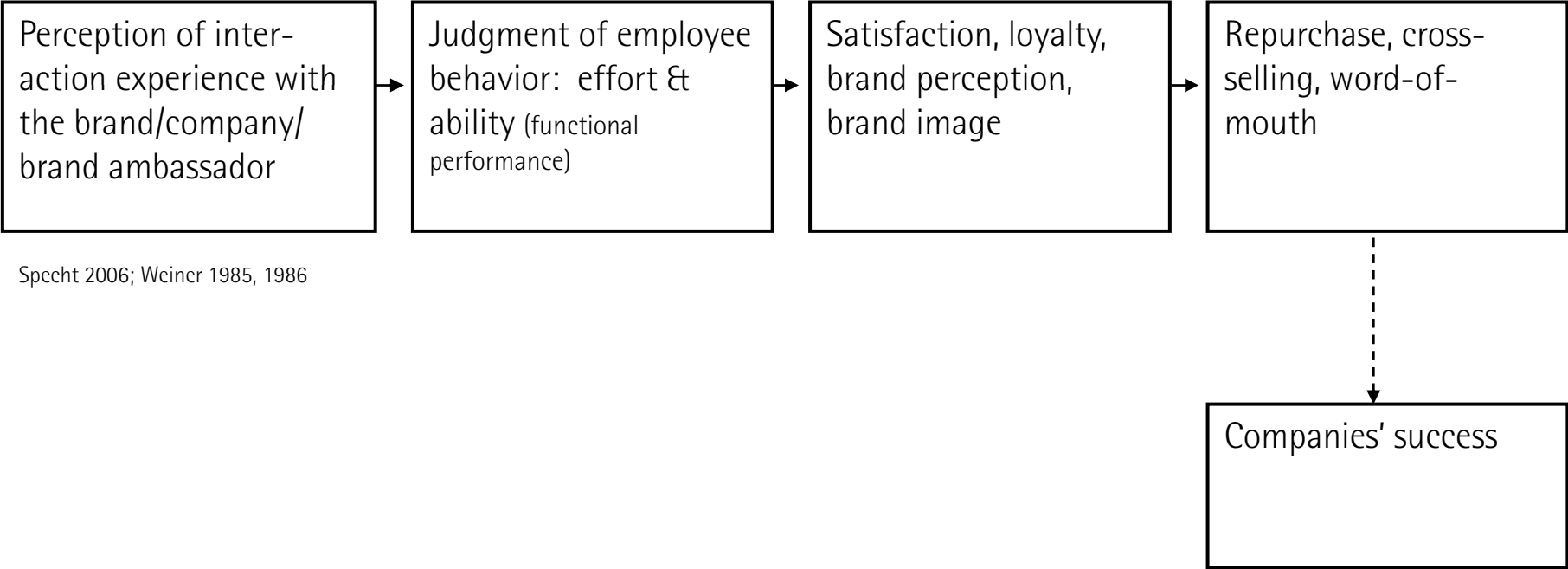
**What customers experience...**

## **Fundamental Error of Attribution**

Tendency of individuals when perceiving and judging the behavior of others to ignore external causes (e.g. environment, IT) and to attribute behavior to internal causes, that is perceived effort and abilities of a person.

a.f. Jones/Davis 1965; Miller et al. 1981; Miller et al. 1990

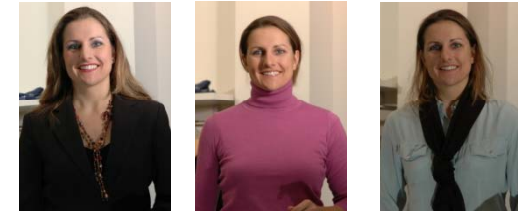
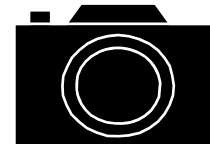
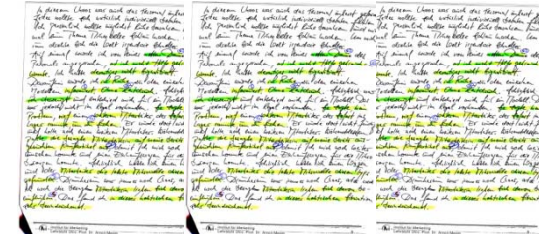
# Attributional Process of the Customer



Specht 2006; Weiner 1985, 1986

# Innovative Research Methods

Brand	Collage Techniques	Written/photo/video Experiments	Story Telling
Services	Critical Incident Technique	Written/photo/video Experiments	Mystery Shopping
Customer	Customer Odyssey	Written/photo/video Experiments	Critical Incident Technique



# Empirical Findings

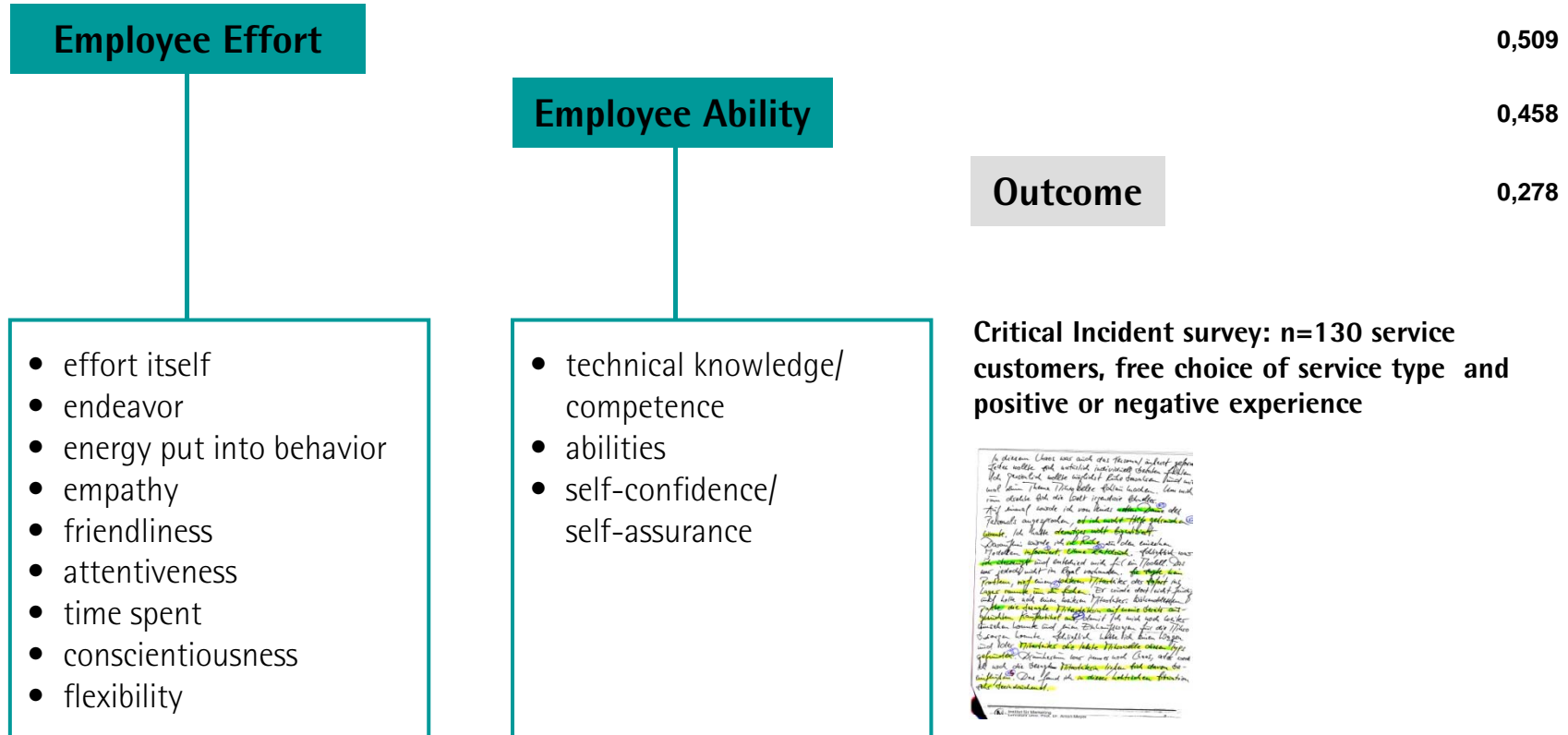
Video experiment: n=400 students



## Drivers for Customer Satisfaction with the Interaction Experience

R<sup>2</sup>=0,669

β-value



# Appearance Branding

5th Avenue, New York



# Abercrombie & Fitch



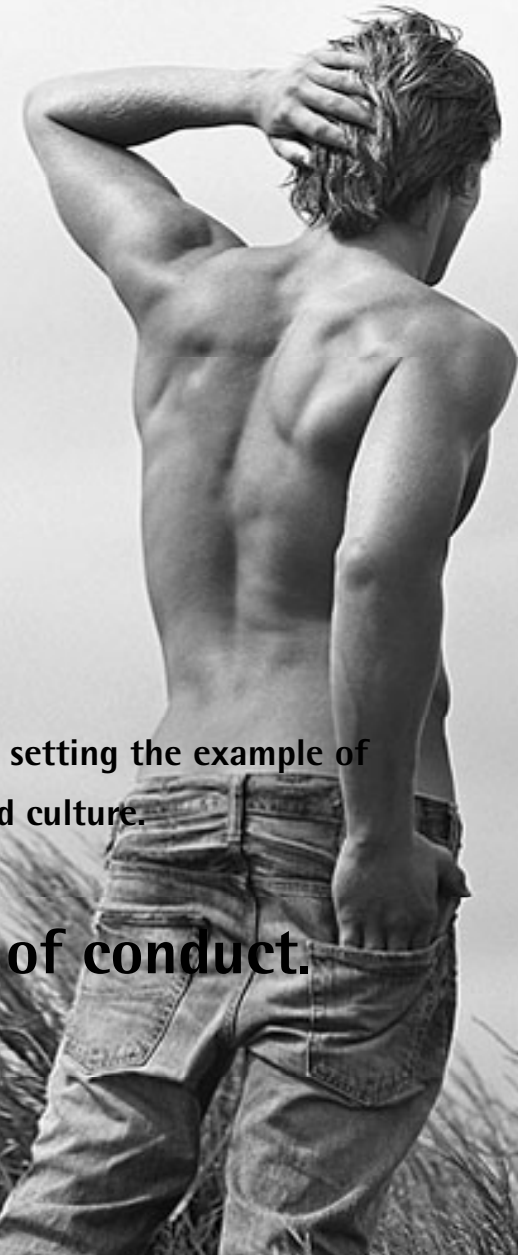
## **Represents the brand**

Creates a fun and engaging environment by upholding Abercrombie vision and setting the example of enthusiasm, integrity, commitment, and passion for the Abercrombie brand and culture.

**Adheres to and upholds staff to Abercrombie**

**guidelines in personal appearance, and rules of conduct.**

<http://www.abercrombie.com/anf/hr/jobs/careers.html>





Wenn neun von zehn Mädchen\* mindestens einen Aspekt ihres Äußeren ändern möchten, stimmt etwas nicht mit den Schönheitsidealen in unserer Gesellschaft! Wie sind diese einengenden Vorstellungen entstanden?

\*Quelle: "Jenseits von Stereotypen", Dove Studie 2005

# Bad News #1

"There is nothing we can do against our addiction to well-formed subjects and objects. That has been proven by brain research.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF AN ATTRACTIVE PERSON LOOKS AT US?

In an ancient part of our brain – the emotional center – systems power up and fire off messengers that make us feel good. On the other hand we get in a bad mood if an unattractive person looks at us. If she averts her eyes the bad mood disappears.

This might be the reason why it is easy for attractive people to sell a product or close a deal. But even a handsome electrical engineer can be valuable for a company. If he can't convince by his skills at least he raises the work climate."

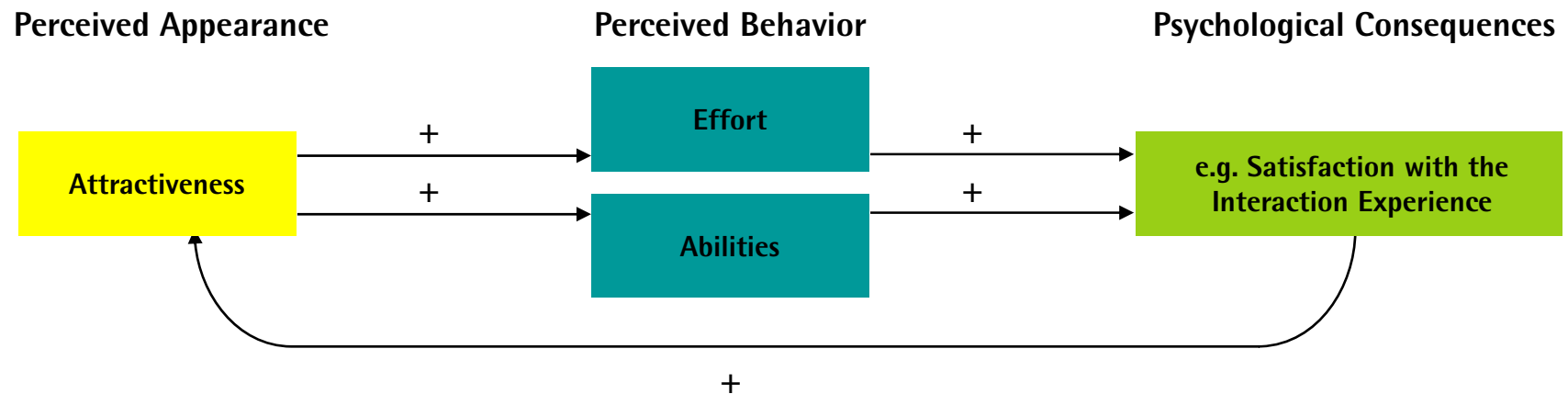
FTD, 11.09.2003

## Bad News #2

WHAT IS BEAUTIFUL IS GOOD: We attribute all kinds of good characteristics to attractive people.



**The consequence:**

Customers attribute higher effort and higher abilities to attractive employees and this leads to higher satisfaction/loyalty.







# Good News





- #1 The impact of perceived attractiveness on customer satisfaction depends on the objective quality of employee behavior:  
The power of attractiveness is maximized in case of high quality employee behavior.  
In case of low quality employee behavior, attractiveness is not relevant.

Video experiment: n=200 students  

- #2 Attractiveness is intra-personally variable – not only ,god given' beauty counts.

Photo/Video experiment: n=600/200 students    

- #3 Perception of attractiveness is subjective and context dependent –  
if you are a grocer, you do not need highly attractive models as employees.

Photo/Video experiment: n=600/200 students    



**Computer-Spezialisten  
findet man in Indien.  
Lebensmittel-Spezialisten  
direkt um die Ecke.**

Wir lieben Lebensmittel.



**From LOW TOUCH to HIGH TOUCH Branding**  
**People Branding as a neglected Field of Brand Management**

# Status Quo in Management: What about People Branding in your Company?

1. Do you believe that your employees represent your brand in the points of interaction?
2. Do you think that your customers recognize brand specific behavior and appearance at all? And if so - what would be brand specific behavior and appearance for your brand?
3. How much attention, time and money do you invest so far in analyzing, optimizing and managing "high touch" people branding?

