



The Brand Establishment

**CASE STUDY**  **MANUFACTURING/INDUSTRY**

# How

Brand Discovery  
helped a  
major chemical  
company turn around  
employee perceptions  
by aligning  
intra-company  
communications

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## From Brand Discovery came the birth of "Real HR"

### The Situation

Great Lakes Chemical Corporation initially came to us with a single project – a redesign of their employee benefits enrollment package. Several concerns were expressed: previous packages were difficult to understand; employees were expected to contribute a greater percentage of the overall cost of the benefits and they had to be able to easily decide the package that was right for their family and their personal finances. These factors were exacerbated by the fact that the company as a whole had recently come out of a difficult period and intra-company relationships were somewhat strained.

### The Challenge

In our challenge meeting with Great Lakes, we found that one of the issues facing their Human Resources department – who were responsible for administration of the benefit packages – was a perception among the employee population that they were the “the people who fire people.” We jointly determined that it was time to reposition the department within the company to improve morale and strengthen their position within the business.

### The Process

In conjunction with development of the enrollment materials, we conducted an in-depth brand development program that included a discovery session and thorough research. In the end, we discovered that neither end of the HR/employee equation was connected to the other – the employees didn't realize that the Human Resources personnel were really making decisions that included themselves. They didn't see the reality that HR was determined to create benefit programs that served both the interest of the company and its employees.

### The Insight

The result was the birth of the “Real HR” concept. The word “real” is used in combination with other nouns (Real benefits, Real people, etc.) to “humanize” the department and underscore that they are working for the betterment of all.

The Real Benefits package we developed simplified the complexities of the benefits program, making them easily understandable. The booklet and folder design allowed quick reference and access to the pertinent pieces for the employee. For new employees, the Real benefits package also included an informative overview of the company.

### The Results

The HR department has found that the Real HR tools have helped them to communicate in a more organized manner. The clarity of the materials have decreased the number of calls the department had to field concerning benefit packages and the consistency of the look of their communications with employees has underscored their importance to the workforce. Most importantly, the Human Resources department has used this as a stimulus to look more critically at the messages they deliver, based on the discovery session and the department vision that emerged. According to Wendy Chance, Corporate Communications manager for Great Lakes, *“In the end, these tools will help us as each HR person begins to live this identity in their actions and behaviors.”*