

1 Strategy

Overview

Without a beacon, it can be challenging work to uncover Valpo's true essence. So that's what this strategy is: a light that illuminates our mission and core values, so that we know how to express them to a variety of audiences. In a crowded marketplace clamoring for attention, it's more important than ever that we know how to tell our story well. And that story starts here.

The strategy is:

- **A hierarchy of critical ideas and concepts** that define an unapologetic story that's authentic to Valpo.
- **A set of frameworks for creating alignment** among stakeholders across the Valpo community.
- **A blueprint** for anyone who markets and communicates on behalf of the University.

The strategy is not:

- **An outward expression** of a campaign (like market-facing headlines, a tagline, or a slogan).
- **Meant to communicate everything** that Valpo is and does.
- **Static and finished.** It should be able to evolve as the market or the University changes.

About the Strategy

Our strategy has five main components. Our story becomes recognizably ours and we authentically connect with people when each is accounted for in our communications. Without all the components, our communications struggle to establish consistency and have the desired effect.

Audiences

Whom are we for?

Essence

What are we all about?

Positioning

What do we stand for?

Messages

What do we offer and **why** does it matter?

Personality

How do we look, sound, and feel?

Audiences

Our community is united by our values, but it also spans generations and perspectives. It's important that our communications be relevant

and tailored to every audience — from future Beacons to our greatest supporters.

Current Beacons

BRAND OBJECTIVE

Align around a "one Valpo" message that can flex for all



Share the refreshed brand message and encourage their participation and ambassadorship

Prospective Beacons

BRAND OBJECTIVE

Show relevance to drive interest and differentiate Valpo from competitors



Distill our messages to authentically reach each distinct segment

Prospective Supporters

BRAND OBJECTIVE

Raise awareness to improve our reputation



Lay groundwork for new partners to enter the fold to help push Valpo forward

Audiences

Though we communicate with many stakeholders, prospective students are a priority audience, and it's important to understand

their identities and their needs so that we can capture their attention and serve them well.

Prospective Undergraduate Students

WHO THEY ARE

- High school students
- First-generation students
- Students from underrepresented populations
- Access College for Success students
- Bloom Scholars
- Transfer students
- Continuing education students
- SAGE (Senior Adult Growth through Education) students

WHAT THEY CARE ABOUT

- Career preparation
- Quality of faculty
- Affordability
- An education that doesn't prepare you just for a job, but for a vocation
- Employability

Prospective Graduate Students

WHO THEY ARE

- Working adults
- Online and hybrid students
- Career up-skillers
- SAGE students

WHAT THEY CARE ABOUT

- Affordability
- Flexibility
- Upward mobility (career and life)
- Program reputation

Brand Essence

Our brand essence is the pilot light of our brand, the first flame that keeps us consistent and authentic across all our materials. It also keeps us true to our core principles and guides our decisions as an institution.

At our core, Valpo facilitates fulfilling connections that shape servant leaders so they can:

discover a deeper understanding in their lives,

discover their vocation — to lead and make a difference,

discover fulfillment in serving others, and discover joy in the success of others.

It's a process to ...

Discover Joy

Brand Positioning

Positioning is how we want to appear in the minds of our most important audiences. It's not what we offer or how we express it: it's what we want people to remember.

Brand Essence

Discover Joy

Statement

- WHO** Humble and curious servant leaders come to Valparaiso University
- WHAT** to explore themselves, their vocation, and their place in the world
- HOW** through a multifaceted journey of academic and spiritual awakening
- WHY** to discover joy through making a positive impact on society.

Messaging

To communicate effectively, we organize our key messages into a hierarchy, helping to ensure we're telling the brand story clearly. Grounded in the core value proposition, each point further proves and elaborates on what makes Valpo significant and distinct, while helping us decide what ideas to prioritize and when.

CORE VALUE PROPOSITION:

Our brand promise

The core value proposition is the higher-level offer that drives our brand – it's what Valpo is promising to the world.

ATTRIBUTES:

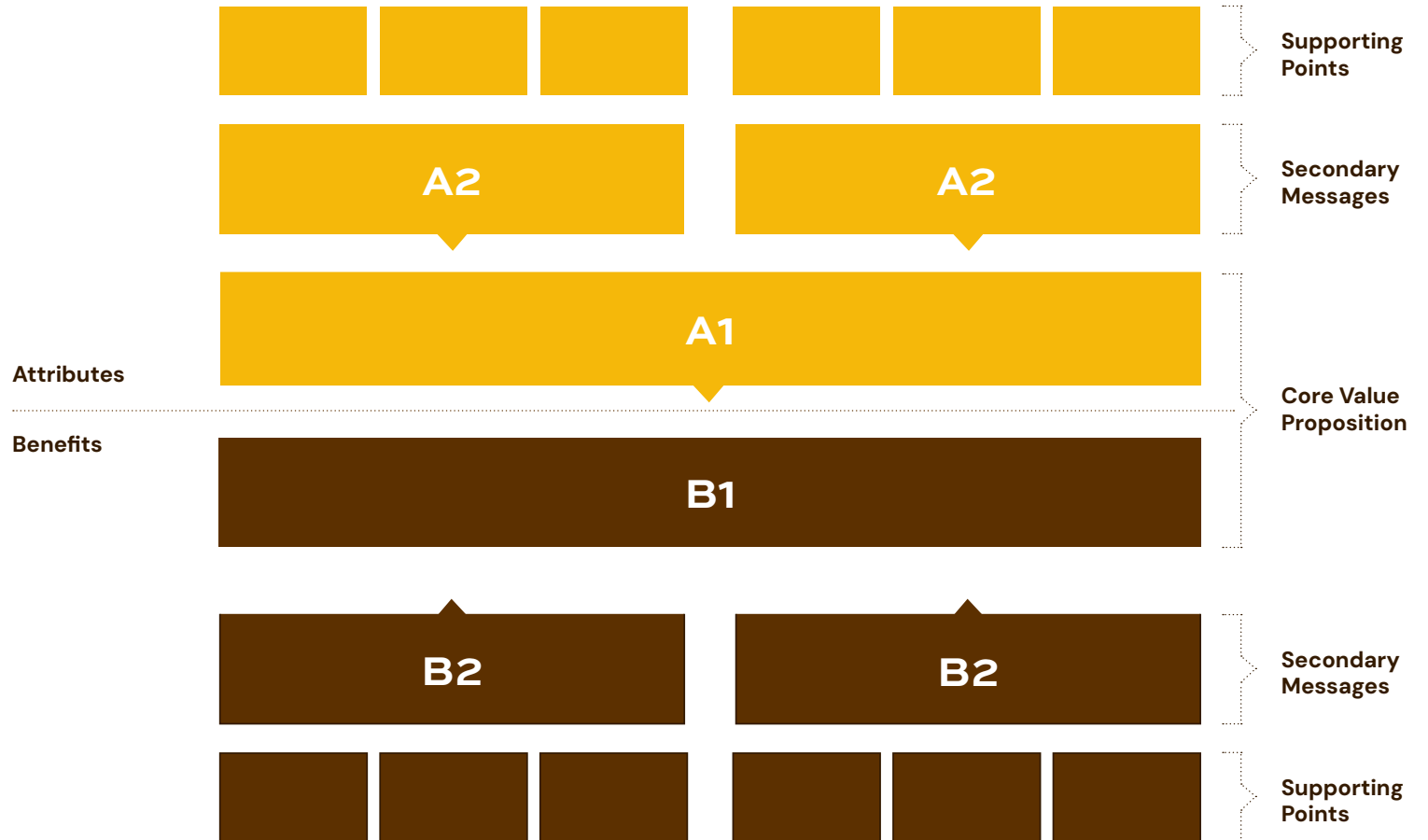
What we offer

An attribute is what we offer to our audiences. Attributes include things like programs, facilities, culture, and experiences.

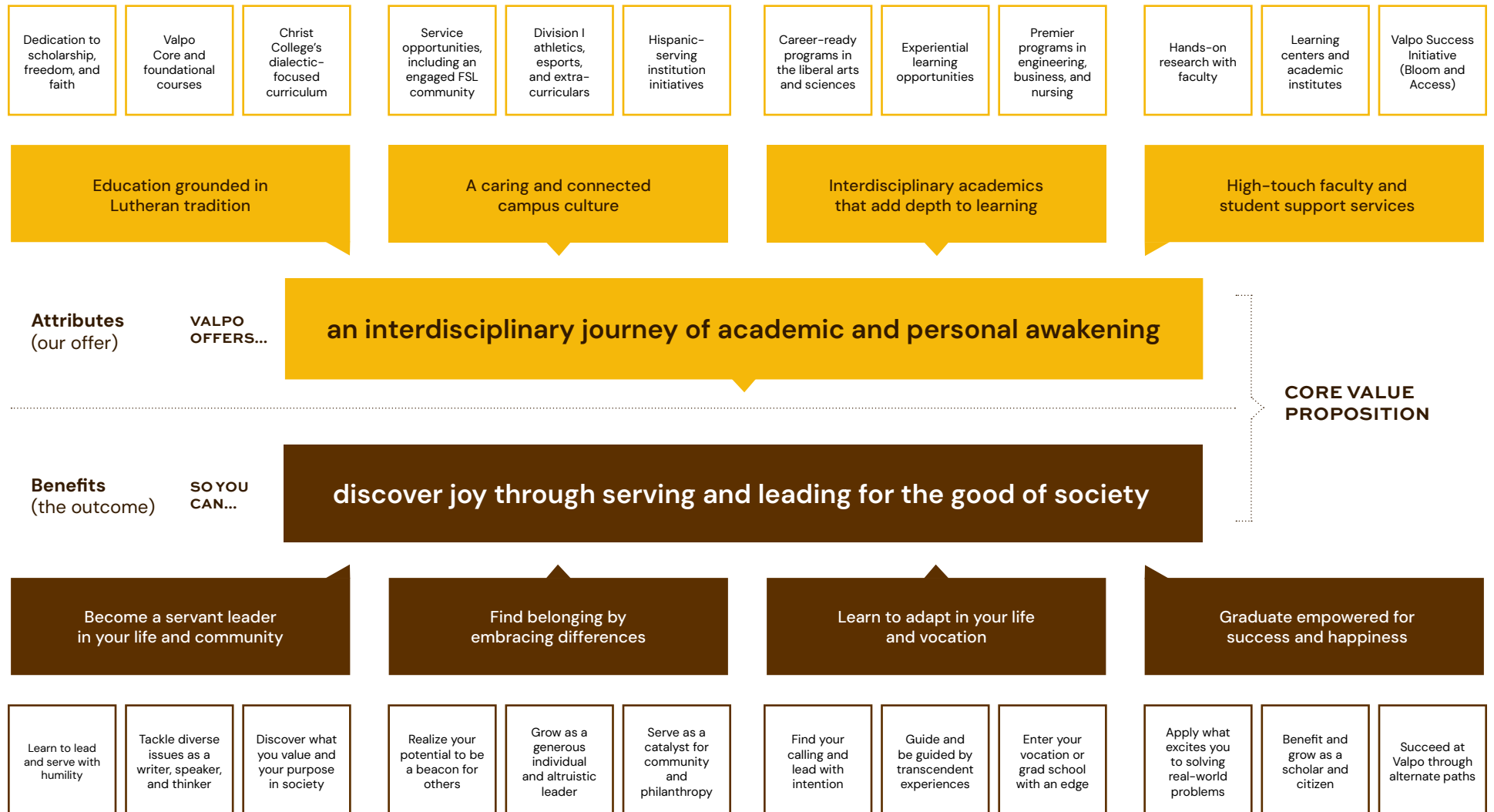
BENEFITS:

Why it matters

A benefit is what our audiences get. It's the value, outcome, or impact of the attributes that we offer.



Messaging



Personality

Think of the traits you love in the people of our community: those people and their values are what inspire our brand's personality. Our traits lend authenticity to our communications and guide the use of our voice and visual language. Consistently abiding by our personality leads to greater recognition, trust, and emotional appeal.

Inquisitive

We seek the truth. We ask questions.
We question answers.

Ethical

We work for the cause, not the
applause. Because we care.

Humble

We see humility as a beacon that
shines, always — through all of us.

Compassionate

Our differences, similarities,
and hardships are vehicles for
connection.

Faithful

Regardless of faith, we loyally serve
others, and that creates joy.

Active

We seek many diverse interests, and
we connect the dots.
