YOUR STORY, YOUR BRAND:

Embrace Your Unique Story to Create a One-of-a-Kind Business

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Successful Coaches ENTERPRISE

Define the Core Principles that Drive Your Business Success

Do you worry that everything you teach or promote has been "done before"? Do you think you have nothing new to add to the conversation, or that everyone has "heard it all before"?

Stop.

This kind of thinking is the number one killer of new businesses, and it is absolutely not true.

- Wendy's hamburger chain was conceived long after McDonald's already had a huge piece of the fast food pie.
- Dominos and Little Ceasar's exist in the same niche quite well (as do many, many others).
- Marie Forleo, Carrie Wilkerson, Denise Duffield-Thomas and dozens of others all help online entrepreneurs find success.

Clearly, if there were only room for one superstar in any given field, many of our most-loved businesses would not exist today.

So, what's the lesson here? First, there is absolutely room for you.

But let's take a closer look. If you really think about it, these "competitors" are unique individuals. You won't find a Quarter-Pounder wanna be on the Wendy's menu. And Little Ceasar's sells itself as the less expensive alternative to other pizza places. Likewise, Marie, Carrie and Denise are not clones of one another.

They are very, very different, and because of that, they appeal to completely different audiences.

For new (or even established) business owners, this is a powerful lesson. In order to stand out from the crowd, you need to embrace your unique story, too.

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Step 1: What's Your Why?

The first step in your journey to your one-of-a-kind business is to discover your "why." This is an essential question that all successful business owners must be able to answer. Your why might be as simple as more money or more free time, or it might be as complex as wanting to start a charity or spend summers on mission trips.

Some ideas to get you started:

- I want to spend more time with my kids while they're little
- I want to home-school my children and I can't do that if I work outside the home
- I want to support my parents as they age
- I want the freedom to travel
- I want to support a charity that's close to my heart
- I want to live a certain lifestyle
- I want to write a book

What does any of this have to do with business? Everything!

Only when you can define your unique "why" will you be able to build a business that you truly love, and that you are passionate about. That's why so many heart-centered entrepreneurs feel like a failure at a job—they simply aren't passionate, and it doesn't feed their "why."

Only your own business has that power, and it's up to you to discover your unique meaning in life, so you can build a business that allows you to achieve your goals.

Exercise: Create a Vision Board

The best way to discover your why is to create a vision board. It's easy and fun, and gives creative entrepreneurs a fabulous way to visualize those dreams and help make them a reality.

Here's what you'll need:

- Colored pencils or markers
- Old magazines
- Colored paper, ribbon, or Washi tape

Begin by leafing through your magazines and cutting out any pictures that appeal to you. You can also gather pictures of your family, friends, favorite vacations or anything else that will help define what you want your ideal life to look like.

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Arrange your images on a large piece of paper. Get creative with notes, goals, favorite quotes, or anything else that helps inspire you. Then post your completed vision board on your office wall, where you'll see it every day and where it will serve as a constant reminder of why you do what you do.

My Vision Board

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Step 2: Your Story Matters

Along with your "why," comes your story. Your unique background will appeal to your ideal client in a way that no one else's will. Again, we're not necessarily talking about business here (we'll get to that story in the next step) but instead, we want to focus on your personal life.

- What struggles have you overcome?
- What hardships have you faced?
- How have you impacted someone else's life?
- How has another person impacted you?

Everyone struggles at some point, and when you meet your ideal client in Step 4, she will resonate with your story, and you might just become her inspiration. Where no other coach has been just the right fit, you will be.

Exercise: Write Your Personal Story

Using the questions above, spend an hour (or more) writing your story. Share the details of your life, why you chose this business model, and how that affects your clients and customers. What in your background makes you the perfect coach for your ideal client?

Please be as detailed and forthcoming as you can. No one will read this but you, but it's important to know what truly drove you to start your business. You'll be sharing bits and pieces of this story in the months and years to come, and it will help connect you to your ideal client.

Need some inspiration? Check out these heartfelt stories as an example:

http://timefreedombusiness.com/about-melissa/

http://luckybitch.com/about/

http://doinglifewithfaydra.com/

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My Story

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Exercise: Write your mission statement.

You may have already completed this from a previous lesson. That's okay enter it on this page. If not here's a basic template you can use, but feel free to write it your way, in your voice and style:

_____[company]_____ provides _____ [service or training] _____ to _____[market]_____ to assist with _____[goal]_____.

My Mission Statement

Need some inspiration? Check out some great mission statements:

http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/inspiring-company-mission-statements

http://www.alessiobresciani.com/foresight-strategy/51-mission-statement-examples-from-the-worlds-best-companies/

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Step 3: Your Unique Offer

Here's where a lot of new (and even established) business owners get stuck: Determining your "USP"—or Unique Selling Proposition.

In other words, what sets you apart from all the other coaches, service providers, trainers, and product sellers out there? Why would someone buy from you, when there are so many other choices?

The answer is simple, really: Because none of those other people are you!

None of them have your personality.
None of them have your experience.
None of them have your insights.
And none of them have your story.

Truthfully, it's that last one that will really resonate with your ideal client. By sharing your story in an authentic, personable way, you'll make an immediate connection with your audience.

Maybe you overcame a hardship and eventually found success in your field. This will encourage others like you to reach a little further. Maybe you taught yourself a complex marketing strategy through trial and error and can now share your knowledge with others who are also struggling. Or maybe you've had the privilege of training with high-end, well-known coaches in your industry, and now feel ready to lead as well.

Whatever your unique story is, there are those for whom it will resonate like no one else's will. Remember, we can hear the same advice time and time again, but it won't really sink in until we hear it in just the right way, from just the right person.

And for a certain audience, that someone is you.

Exercise: Share Your Business Story

Ask yourself these questions, and really think about the answers. Don't worry about saying the right thing or writing like this is a sales page. Just share from your heart. You'll eventually want to use this information in your sales pages and other marketing materials, but right here is just for you.

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1. What has been your biggest struggle in business? In life? How did you overcome it?

2. What was your biggest "win" in business? How did you celebrate?

3. What's your biggest regret in business?

4. What's your biggest business goal? Life goal? How do you plan to achieve your goals?

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Step 4: Attracting Your Ideal Client

Perhaps the biggest mistake new entrepreneurs make is in thinking that their product or program or service is “for everyone.”

That’s simply not the case. Your ideal client is as unique as you are. In fact, as counterintuitive as it might seem, the more narrowly you can define your audience, the more you can charge, and the higher your profits will be.

Here’s why: When you and your products perfectly resonate with an ideal client, you become recognized as the go-to expert in your niche. Your experience is focused, your education is laser targeted, and your products and coaching programs are exactly what is needed by your ideal client, making for a perfect no-brainer sale nearly every time.

The only question is: “Who is your ideal client?”

You’ve probably heard the often-repeated advice about gender, age, socio-economic status, family relationships, business models, and more. And those things are certainly important. After all, if your coaching programs are designed with “heart-centered women entrepreneurs” in mind, clearly you’re excluding men from your ideal client base.

But demographics aren’t enough. You need to dig deeper, and really get to know your perfect customer. Think back to your story questions from Step 2. How would your ideal client answer those same questions? What makes her heart sing? What drives her crazy? What does she struggle with? What comes easy to her?

When you can confidently identify your ideal client, everything you do—from writing a blog post to creating a five-figure coaching program—will become infinitely easier. And that includes building your product funnels.

Exercise: Create Your Ideal Client Avatar

If you have completed the Ideal Client Workbook enter your avatar below.

If not, think about those clients you most love to work with. Perhaps you have a current customer who truly fits the bill. You enjoy her business model, her personality, and would go so far as to call her your friend.

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This is your ideal client. Spend a few minutes (or even a few hours) and describe them. Give them a name, describe how they looks, how old their kids are, whether or not they attends church or volunteers at the animal shelter.

In short, tell their story, but tell it in their words, as they would. Put on your creative writing cap and really have fun with it.

[HINT: Revisit this description each time you create a new program or sales page, and ask yourself, "Would this program work for her?"]

My Client Avatar

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Step 5: Your Story Becomes Your Unique Products and Programs

Each and every one of us is unique, but many of us have shared experiences. Your story—the experiences you've had—will help connect you with your "tribe." Those life struggles you've faced are the same ones challenging your audience right now. Those business disasters you've overcome are similar to the difficulties your clients are working through.

Think about it this way: Who is better able to help a single mom build a coaching business than another single mom? Who knows better the difficulties of bootstrapping a business startup than someone who lost everything and was forced to start over?

Even more important, these "character building" setbacks are the perfect inspiration for your products and programs. By keeping in mind that others have shared your same difficulties, it's easy to design products that solve the exact problems your ideal client is facing, and to present it to her at just the right point in her journey.

Exercise: Using your experiences and story and what you know about your ideal client to brainstorm at least 20 problems they will face at some point in their business or life.

These don't have to be huge, life-altering problems. In fact, it's best if you have a good mix of small issues (these become opt-in gifts and other low-cost offers) and catastrophic dilemmas (these are your high-ticket coaching programs).

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12. _____
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Pro tip: *Got your list? Now rearrange them in the order your idea client will face these challenges. That list becomes your marketing funnel. It will present to your follower the exact help she needs right at the moment she's most likely to need it, making it a no-brainer to turn to you for help, since you're obviously so tuned into her needs!*

Step 6: The Best Marketing Comes from Sharing Your Story Authentically

Here's the truth about business, whether you're a coach, a service provider, a seller of digital products, or the owner of a local grocery store: not everyone will like you. If you're posting updates in an effort to never offend, or to attract the largest audience, you likely won't attract anyone at all.

But when you're consistent and authentic in your marketing efforts, enough of the right people will absolutely love you.

That starts by being bold and telling your truth everywhere you go. There's nothing quite so bland or disingenuous as a solopreneur who spouts corporate marketing messages in an effort to sound like a larger company. It's much better to just be yourself (just like your mother advised you all those years ago).

That means infusing your personality and story into all your marketing pieces:

- Your blog posts
- Your YouTube channel
- Your Facebook page
- Your Instagram photos

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- Your Periscopes
- Your email marketing

Invite your audience to have a candid, backstage look at your life and your business, and most importantly, keep it consistent.

This will come across to your followers in:

- The words you use
- Your political and social beliefs
- The funny posts you share
- The good deeds you do
- The photos and anecdotes you share

Exercise: Spend some time studying the social media accounts of those you most admire and connect with. Pay attention to how their personalities shine through. There's a reason these superstars have huge followings—and it's all about their stories and authenticity. You can build the same kind of rapport with your tribe, too.

Coach I Admire:	What's their story?:	How do they share it?:
Kimra Luna	*Broke mom living in her in-law's basement builds 7-figure business online*	*Language, style and shared beliefs*

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While you're at it, pay attention to your own social media updates. Which ones get the most engagement? I bet you'll find it's the ones where you really "let your hair down" and share from the heart.

Step 7: Unique Stories Turn Competitors into Colleagues

As we've already discovered, no one shares your unique story, beliefs, personality or goals. Likewise, you don't share your competitors' stories or goals either.

And that makes for ideal collaboration options—even among those you might consider your competitors. Here's why:

We all reach a slightly different audience, and some in that audience won't perfectly resonate with us—but they might with a well-thought-out JV partner.

So rather than dismissing others in your niche as competitors, instead consider pooling both your unique stories in a way that will speak to those members of your audience who don't quite click with you?

You might choose to:

- Invite competitors to host you on a webinar promoting your non-competitive product
- Invite competitors to email their list about your unique offer (with an affiliate link, of course)
- Create a new program with your competitor as a partner—with the right mix, this will appeal to both your audiences!

And while you're at it, think about which programs your competitors have that you can promote to your audience? Why reinvent the wheel, when you can simply profit from work that's already been done?

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Exercise: List Your Top Competitors and Brainstorm Ways to Work Together

Competitor's Name:	How we're different:	How we can work together:
Jane Coach	*She works with younger clients than I do*	*Cross-promotion of each other's programs*

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Accomplished coaches and service providers know that true success is found in that magical space where your passions, your goals, and your personality meet. Only when you take the time to get to know yourself well—when you do the "internal work" necessary to discover your unique story—will you find business growth to be nearly effortless.

Not only that, but when you are able to define what makes you unique, you'll find you naturally appeal to just the right clients at just the right time. Marketing will automatically become easier, your funnel will fill itself, and sales will be painless.

And for a coach, that means a business you love, working with people who are more than just clients—they're friends, too. Imagine the joy of waking up each day looking forward to "work." That's exactly what you'll find when you uncover your unique story.

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