

POTENTIAL - PASSION - PROFIT

CREDIBILITY

WEEK THREE

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Let's be clear about something from the start. Nobody is going to come and award you with credibility, expertise and validity in your field. No one is going to give you permission to be bigger, have more influence or the potential for more income. The people who you see as experts and leaders, the people you admire and follow in your industry have created their own credibility. They have, whether consciously or unconsciously, given themselves permission to be seen & heard.

No matter what point you are in your business, it is possible for you to do the same. The process begins with deciding that you are headed for the top: a successful business and a person of influence & connection.

What is Credibility?

According to the Oxford English Dictionary

'Credibility: The quality of being trusted and believed in.'

In terms of you, your personal brand and your business, carving out credibility is about telling the story of why you deserve to do what you do, to teach and share what you know and the many ways in which you are valid (even if you are right at the start of your journey, there will still be reasons why you have chosen that field, and a life time of past experiences to back up why you are capable and committed).

Why do you need Credibility?

Trust, loyalty and recognition within a field are the primary reasons someone will choose to initially follow you, and later choose to work with you or buy from you, whatever your service or product. If you want more sales, more bookings, more recommendations and more connections, establishing credibility and making this a key part of your ongoing marketing efforts is paramount.

Remember, you do not need to know everything in your industry to gain a foothold of credibility. You only need to know one or two levels of knowledge and experience above the people who look up to you. Sharing the learnings, struggles and challenges you have encountered are some of the most compelling ways you can draw an audience to you. You are not out of reach, you are a real human who is confident enough in what you do that you can share how you've overcome obstacles. Often your vulnerabilities and weaknesses are the best ways to attract people to working with you.

For a long time, it was believed by marketing experts that someone needed to have contact with a brand or individual a minimum of 7 times before they entered their awareness (NOT before purchasing). In these busy days of social media, that number is now thought to be close to 22-32 touch points before someone is aware consciously of you and what you do. So whilst you might think everyone knows what you do after posting a couple of social media posts, in reality, it hasn't sunk in or even been noticed!

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How can you build Credibility?

As I said earlier, credibility is something that you can deliberately build and craft for yourself. It is about telling the story of your personal struggles, challenges, validity, values, education and experiences (ranging from qualifications, credentials, life skills and technical expertise), together with your connections and relevant media exposure to lift your presence online, but chiefly in other people's minds. Every piece of content you create and post that you put out should be placed with the aim of establishing your credibility.

Credibility is not just about the online space though (although of course you can reach more people, more often that way). It is about what you say and how you behave when you network and meet people socially.

Storytelling is powerful, and from here on, I want you to start consciously telling the story of why you do what you do and what makes you valid, capable and well positioned to be able to do just that. If this makes you squirm, go back to the Limiting Beliefs work in Week Two.

Your Life Story

It's easy for us to recall our life story about the hardships and unfair treatment we have received in the past, to remember and often share with people around us all the reasons that have kept us stuck and why life isn't as we want it.

As I've mentioned in Week One and Two, these limiting beliefs are what have kept you running the same thought habits over and over. Now is the time to begin consciously and deliberately to carve a new life story. Every event in your past has brought you to where you are today: the good, the bad and the ugly have been part of your personal and professional growth and development.

You know that you want more success: impact, influence and income. The way to do it is through careful, considered, yet authentic positioning.

This next exercise is one that requires some thought.

I want you to write out all the parts of your life story that might be connected with your business, right from the very beginning that have brought you to this moment of knowing you need a change in direction. It may be that you include decisions you made in childhood. Or not. Look at the significant events that led up to now.

Use the following two pages to write this story.

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My Life Story ...

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My Life Story continued...

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Create Yourself as an Expert

When you stop listening to all of the limiting beliefs that you uncovered in Week Two, and you listen more closely to the part of you that knows you are meant for more, it becomes easier to begin to stamp your expertise in a given field, even when you are at the start of your journey. Remember that in order to become an expert in someone else's eyes, you only have to have one or two steps of knowledge and experience ahead of them. You do not have to know everything and everyone in an industry to be valid. You have to know where to find the next pieces of information & no more.

Often, the most appealing people that we see on social media are the ones who share their struggles, challenges and new learnings. If you are at the start of a new venture, how can you turn that to your advantage?

Every experience you have been through has brought you to this moment. There are ways that you are an expert without even realising it, because of the constant habit of telling yourself you don't know enough. Whether you have had challenges or achievements at school, work, in your personal life or business, these are skills and experiences that you can now translate into a positive learning for your future clients.

Below I want you to list out all of your achievements and then next to it write down how this can be transferred to your new/current business.

My life experiences	How I can transfer this to my business

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What are you a Powerful Stand for?

Next week we'll be looking more at your ideal client and who you wish to attract towards you. However, I'd like you to give some thought now to whom you might appeal to, in terms of being a role model.

What have you achieved, or experienced or learned, that someone else may be struggling with?

What have you overcome and now have a greater understanding and knowledge about?

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When you look at yourself objectively - your hardships, your successes, your challenges, your wins - what/who are you a powerful stand for?

Who might be intrigued, moved or inspired by your story?

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Whatever industry you are in, it is important from the outset to work out not only how you are the same as everyone else, but all the ways in which you differ.

What qualifications, associations or affiliations do you have within your industry?

What courses have you taken? With whom have you studied or trained?

What has compelled you/motivated you to step up or change direction? What was the lightbulb moment?

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Who are you connected to in your industry? Who have you met? Who do you follow that inspires you?

What makes you different to other people in your industry?

What is unique about what you bring to your work?

Are there any well known brands or companies that you have been associated with?

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What makes you unique? How can you tell that story?

Why should someone choose to work with you, connect with you, follow YOU, rather than someone else in your field?

What do you know that others want to learn?
(Brainstorm and journal around this point, and add to this list - you will always be learning and growing, and pinpointing the next thing you can talk about and teach others is important in terms of positioning).

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Your Superpower

We're going to investigate the areas that you naturally can talk about, teach and share. The parts of your knowledge and learning that you are able to get in flow about and share your passion with others.

Write down the top 3 things clients/friends/general people ask you about.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What do you LOVE talking about and explaining to people about the most? What lights you up?

How can this feed into your business?

If right now, you had to talk about one topic for five minutes without stopping to think about it, what would it be?

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Visibility

Throughout the rest of this course, I'll be encouraging you to get visible online, in-person and in the media. That can be super scary, and I know that. However, to get your business to a point where you can have the impact, income and influence you dream of, there are some mental hurdles to cross.

The fear factor comes from those deep seated limiting beliefs we have begun to dispel in our work in Week Two.

In this section, we're going to explore them a little more closely, and acknowledge they are there. Why? Because by casting some light on them, these beliefs and fears are no longer so powerful and overwhelming.

My biggest fear about getting more visible is...

The reason I am fearful is...

The person/people I am most scared of judging me are...

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Speaking Up

Often our visibility fears are closely linked with our ability to speak up and share our truths. In fact, public speaking of any kind is believed to be the biggest fear most people have, beyond even dying!

Speaking your truth and being seen in the world as a mover, a shaker, a person of importance and relevance, is something totally within your capability. Speaking up about yourself, your work, your ambitions, your successes is all part of engaging content marketing. Every post you write, every blog you create, every word you say on a Facebook Live, video or podcast, is going to be about you speaking your truth and being authentic.

The fear is your obstacle: you are your greatest hurdle.

What is your fear about Speaking Up?

Why are you afraid to tell your truth?

What situation in your past indicated that it was not safe to do so?

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There will have been other times in your life where speaking up and being seen has been safe, comfortable and rewarding.

List those times below:

How I felt when I was recognised for what I achieved:

This felt good because I knew that I...

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Now that we've acknowledged the obstacles, let's investigate why it matters to you to increase your influence, income and impact.

I know that I have untapped potential because ...

The reason I am no longer prepared to settle for less is ...

When I have more income I will be able to affect a change in the world by ...

Connecting with people who respect and admire my work, both as peers and as potential clients means ...

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Social Media

The first place you're going to get more visible and speak up about your work and your capabilities is on social media.

Being strategic, deliberate and consistent in your posts makes all the difference to your credibility in your follower's eyes. You will attract your peers, those who look up to you, and those that you look up to.

I strongly recommend that you target just one or two social media platforms in the early stages. Once you have them nailed, (or you are in a position to outsource some of your social media) then you can move on to others.

The main thing is that your profile names and profile pictures remain consistent, either as your name (rather than the brand name) and if you prefer, or your name is taken, the type of work you do. You want all of your social media to have the same feel and look about them.

This course will focus mostly on Facebook. The reason being that Facebook provides a greater opportunity to connect and build community, which we will come on to next week.

Facebook Page

As you grow your personal brand, it is important to establish a FB Page that is in your name. That way as you develop and grow, it can evolve with you. You do not yet know what the future holds - your life may become very different to the one you are currently living. You want to make sure that instead of following a brand, it is clear people are following you and your work.

You will need a headshot, and a banner picture. These should be inline with your branding, and I highly recommend booking in a photo shoot as soon as you can, so that you have more than just one professional headshot.

The reason a Facebook Page is important is because from here you can create paid/ sponsored and boosted posts. As you develop your skills online, you'll be creating FB Lives, and having the option to achieve further reach to your audience and to new audiences is crucial.

Facebook Profile

Ensure that the image and name you use on your Facebook Profile reflects your brand and your personality. One key component of increasing your influence online within your industry is the ability to interact in other people's Facebook Groups, which you can currently only do from your profile. Your image becomes a strong piece of branding and association.

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Facebook Story

Facebook Story is becoming more popular, and works in a similar way to Instagram Stories. You can duplicate content between these two platforms here. Story content tends to be more fly on the wall and personal, although always give thought to your positioning.

Think to yourself before you post - 'Is this 'on message' & 'on brand'?'.

Instagram

If your ideal client is here, you should be too, even if this doesn't become your main platform. Some people opt for planned, beautiful layouts as this is a visual media. It isn't necessary though if you don't have the time to focus on that yet. The main thing is to establish up to 30 hashtags (#) per post that are of interest and relevant to both the image you share, the story you attach, your ideal client and other industry interests.

If you are time short, the best way to use Instagram is through Insta Stories.

Many people use predominantly Stories to follow what the people they connect with are up to. These can be quickly recreated either as images, quotes or videos.

LinkedIn

Depending on your ideal client, this may be a good platform for you. The key here is professional consistency and authority, which we'll talk about more next week.

Twitter

Again, your Twitter account should have the same look, feel and branding as your other social media profiles. It may be that your ideal client isn't on Twitter so much (we'll be exploring more on ideal clients next week), however when you start to want to connect with journalists and press to gain more credibility and exposure, having a presence here is important. I would advise cross-posting from Facebook to Twitter in the early stages of your business so that you have at least some content visible.

Scheduling

If you don't know what you are doing and why, social media can become overwhelming. There are tools to help you streamline the process and help you to push content into different places with no additional work.

Consider using scheduling apps such as Buffer, Hootsuite and Later & Planoly to create posts in advance, all in one go. This will mean that you can automatically 'cross-post' content to Facebook pages, groups, Instagram and Twitter all at the same time. You can even directly schedule posts in Facebook too, and the algorithms prefer this type of scheduling.

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Attraction Marketing

Attraction Marketing is where you are leading with value, knowledge and expertise. You are giving to your audience before you are asking anything from them. You are putting your insights and experience into the marketplace in order to attract people to you.

Why?

★ *Aim to Educate and Share Knowledge.*

Attraction Marketing is about educating and giving value. Before you are anywhere near asking people to buy from you, or even creating a service or product for them to buy, let them LEARN all about you and what you do, and why it matters. You'll spread your knowledge, expertise and the value of your products/services, and how that can positively affect your ideal client and their pain points.

★ *Earn Trust By Being the REAL You.*

Trust and loyalty are what sells, every time. Clients will only want to buy from you or work with you if you are showing up consistently in an authentic and trustworthy way. It's important from the outset to make sure you align your core message with your audience, so that every post you share is underpinned by your key values.

★ *Be Authentic.*

The way you tell your story, and share your vulnerabilities is EVERYTHING. People are drawn to and respect those who have authenticity. Do some research on how Apple do their marketing campaigns. There is a great talk on Youtube by Simon Sinek about Apple and 'Finding your Why'.

★ *Be Responsive and Engaged.*

Love it or hate it, social media can play a big role in increasing your reach and following (and therefore your impact, influence and income!). Communicating and connecting with your audience, however big or small, is one of the most fundamental rules of building a tribe. Make each individual feel valued by prioritising responses to each comment.

★ *Create Valuable Content.*

Blogs, creative images, videos, FB Lives, even long story posts can be considered valuable content. Using different forms can quickly establish you as a leader or rising star in your field. This does not have to be overwhelming. For example there are many ways to repurpose content. A FB Live can be shared on Youtube, or a podcast, or turned into a blog series. People want to know 'how' and 'why', so break down your knowledge and expertise into tiny, incremental steps that you can spread across many blog posts.

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Useful tools

When you begin sharing content regularly, you'll need a stock of photos and images you can use.

- I strongly recommend going for a branding/lifestyle photo shoot with a good photographer to position you as someone worth watching! These images will create a strong sense of identity with you for your audience. Good images are valuable.
- Post a combination of selfies, FB Lives, professional images, stock photos and quotes.
- Canva & PicMonkey are excellent tools for image creation and re-formatting for size purposes (FB & Instagram have different size requirements & preferences for images). You can start with a basic, free package initially.

What to post

The most compelling content that you consume on Facebook will be the personal stories people share around their work and their lives. The more you share about your work, your mission, your struggles (whilst positioning yourself consciously as a being one step ahead), the more people you will attract to you and your work. This is as a result of the trust factor, established through the continued professionalism combined with vulnerability that you share.

Photos of yourself get more attention than ones that you are not in.

Posts that contain information about you in story form are more likely to be read rather than scrolled past.

Videos and particularly FB Lives on replay get more eyes on them, and the current Facebook algorithms push them to more people. It's about connection, vulnerability and the story you weave about yourself as a person of influence in your field. Ultimately if you are going to put content out into the world, you want to maximise the chance of it being seen!

Go back to your Life Story around your credibility.

See if you can break down sections of it into ideas for Story Posts or FB Live Content. They don't need to be long sagas, just created with purpose.

Once you have begun to establish your identity on social media, you'll begin adding a 'Call to Action' or CTA on many of your posts. For example, you'll provide a link to your FB Group, a link to your Freebie/Opt-In/Lead Magnet, a request to share your post or blog. Gradually, you'll incorporate clear instructions to your followers/audience on how to interact with you further. We'll cover more of this in the following weeks.

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Life Story Event	Idea for Social Media Post

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