

The Marketing Checklists™

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The Marketing Checklists™

Here are a few really useful checklists that will help you quickly strengthen your online business while staying completely true to who you are and what you do.

These checklists are for entrepreneurs whose primary goal it is to uplift, inspire, teach and generate powerful things in the world, without a whole bunch of hard selling talk.

Whether it comes to the overall message or positioning of your business or the same for a specific product or program, simply use these checklists to make sure you are creating a perception that is in line with who you are and what you hope to accomplish in your business.

The following checklists cover the topics of **positioning, pricing, credibility** and **copy**.

There's quite bit of information here so take it in chunks if you need to. Read a checklist a day for the next 4 days and see how it all lands for you or take it all in at once. This is your thing. Put it to work for you.

The POSITIONING Checklist

(Btw I really hate this word, positioning, as it relates to business but it's a universal term and I haven't come up with something better yet. Have an idea? I'd love to hear it.)

"I always wanted to be someone but I should have been more specific."
– Lily Tomlin and Jane Wagner

When it comes to running your own successful business, it is important to understand where you fit in the marketplace and how to stand out above your competition. Or better yet, create a totally new place for yourself where you are the ONLY one standing. If you want to make an impact, you have to tap into what makes your offering different because if you don't do it differently, make some type of memorable splash (I prefer the running can opener) and break through all of the noise, nobody will ever notice.

Positioning is power and how you position yourself will impact how quickly (or slowly) you are able to expand your influence, how much money you make, how you are viewed by your clients and your competitors, and your staying power.

The next time you are working on your website, preparing to reveal a product or program or just working on the overall message of your business, consult this checklist to make sure you're painting yourself in an effective way to your audience.

- Does your **outer persona match your inner** one? Are you marketing from a real place or is this a mask you put on for your "work"?
- Do your marketing materials **tell the story of who you really are** or someone you think you ought to be or would rather be?
- Are you doing everything in a way **that matches how YOU feel** or how other experts are telling you should?
- Does the message you think you're giving **match the perception** others have of your message? (Get opinions from trusted advisors who "get" your work.)
- Do you have a **clear message** about what you do and how you provide value and have you articulated that effectively?
- Are you **congruent** in that there is a **common thread** that weaves through everything you say and do?

- Is your message **consistent and** reliable?
- Do you connect with your prospects **emotionally**?
- Are you **motivating your prospects to buy** and are you doing it better than others in your market?
- Are you creating **customer loyalty**?
- Can you **over-deliver** on your promise?
- Do people understand exactly what you do and **your big WHY? Do YOU?**
- Have you made it clear about why your product or service is **worth trying**?
- Have you created a new category or a new way to **stand out** from the crowd?
- Is it clear **what problem your product or service solves**?

The PRICING Checklist

“It is undesirable to believe a proposition when there is no ground
whatsoever for supposing it is true.”
- Bertrand Russell

When it comes time to price a product or program things can get pretty sticky. I have seen people charge fees that make me pray to God they are delivering the cure to cancer and others that make me cringe because of how little they are valuing their expertise. I have seen people suddenly bump their prices up by 500% just because they had one successful program and some never raise their prices no matter how successful they have been. The trick is in finding the sweet spot – the fee that makes you feel excited and the fee you know is 100% justifiable based on the value they will get. It should also make you sweat a little bit or it’s probably not quite high enough.

So, the next time you go to price your product or program, consult this checklist and make sure you can answer all of these questions honestly. You want to value yourself and the value you have to offer but not get caught in the trap of severely overvaluing what you have to offer, which in the end, if integrity and truth are important to you, will make not only you but your client feel out of alignment with what you are promising.

- Do you know the **value of your product**, service or program to your client? (Meaning what is the value of what you do in their eyes?) Does this fee support that?
- Can you identify the **financial cost** to them if they do not invest with you? Does this fee support that?
- Can you identify the **emotional cost** to them if they do not invest with you? Does this fee support that?
- Can you accurately predict the **financial return on investment** if they do invest with you? Does this fee support that? (Let’s remember that you are the catalyst but not the sole reason. Your support is critical but implementation is the ticket. Does this fee support your realistic role in the equation?)
- Are you clear on **your costs to create** this product or provide this service? Does this fee support that?
- Are you clear about your **lower most and upper most limit** that you are willing to charge? How did you come up with those numbers?

- Do you **stick to your prices** even if people try to negotiate? If you set an appropriate price and someone tries to negotiate, you need to stick to your fee. If you feel good about it and are confident in the value you are offering, this won't be difficult.
- Do you **avoid deciding ahead of time what someone can afford**? When you make decisions for others about what they will and won't spend this often means you are putting your issues about money ahead of the potential client's needs.
- Are you willing to **actively discuss your fees**? Do you shy away from talking about money because you don't value what you do enough?
- Is your **package appropriate to the fee** or have you overloaded it because somewhere you think it's not good enough for the price point? (I see many people create a program, set a fee and then spend the next few weeks adding more and more to the program. This usually means there is some level of discomfort with the original fee set for the program. Go back and determine the value again.
- Do you make yourself **too available** at a low price point? If so, you may be questioning if you deserve this fee. Go back and determine the value again.
- Do you **charge less but then resent** the time you spend delivering the service? If so, you may be doing this because you care more about being liked than providing the service to your potential client. Go back and determine the value again.
- Is this **price based on someone else's ideas** of what this kind of service is worth or your own? Or is it based on a fee someone else charges for what you perceive as the same service?
- Would **you pay this fee to someone for a comparable service**? For example, there is no way I would ever pay 100k for a coach. To Warren Buffet? Yes. A heart surgeon? You bet. But a coach? No way. So, how could I ever expect a potential client to invest that much in me? I wouldn't. On the flip side, if I feel comfortable paying 10k to spend a day with a business consultant (and I actually do it) and I am certain I could provide my clients with equal value, then charging 10k is perfectly in alignment.

The bottom line on pricing is that it's a very personal thing. But, regardless of how you feel about money, you have to be able to justify the value to yourself and your clients when you set a fee for a program or service and feel 100% in integrity with it.

The CREDIBILITY Checklist

“Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.”

—John Wooden

Call me crazy but I still think that there is something to be said for “earning your right”.

When I wanted to be a counselor I didn't just hold out my shingle and pretend I knew what I was doing. (Lucky for me because if I had, I would have been sued and I would have lost.) I spent 2 years in graduate school studying, testing, researching and practicing. Then I took the exams to make sure I was qualified to work one-on-one with clients. When I was training to be a sociologist I didn't just read a book on the subject, I spent more years in graduate school doing research, testing theories and working with people under supervision. When I was coaching and teaching tennis I took the USTA exams and had already been playing for 20 years myself before I expected to have a significant impact on my students. Same goes for Yoga and everything else I do.

And, the same goes for my work today. I didn't start helping people with marketing and biz development then 6 months later, raise my rates so that only the top 10% of the industry could afford me. I continued to learn, work with clients, build up successes and over time I have earned more and more credibility. And, it's something I work at every day. I work to become more credible by speaking, writing, learning, and consulting with clients on a daily basis.

I am not saying that success is slow. In fact, I think it can happen very quickly in some cases but I am not one of those people that takes what I do lightly and I think credibility comes from training, practice and proven successes. For some that takes 6 months, for some it takes 6 years. Only you know where you are in the process.

On the other hand, you do not have to make a million dollars a year in order to consult with others at that level. The quote that “those who can't do teach” and now “those who can't do coach” was said by someone with an ego far too big to take seriously. I couldn't even begin to wrap my arm around how many times that has been proven to be untrue but honestly I think people repeat things without ever really considering if it makes any sense at all. That's herd mentality.

The facts is we all have strengths in different areas. You may be the best regional sales manager ever but maybe you weren't that great at selling yourself. You may be an incredibly effective marketing consultant for other people but you aren't that interested in marketing yourself. (I see this one a lot.) But, just because the person does not apply everything they know to their own business does not mean they can't be brilliant as a consultant for someone else. Promotion is as much about mindset and self-confidence as it is about strategy and tactics and if you feel more confident promoting someone else and you get results, more power to you. In the world of the entrepreneur, the trick is finding what you're brilliant at and monetizing it.

So, when it comes to building your business, credibility and honesty are key. Here are 4 ways to build and maintain your credibility.

1. Character

The power of unquestioned character is something that can't be underestimated. All of us are drawn to people who are of the highest character. Since in our line of work we are often seen as mentors and teachers and people of influence, strong character is critically important. In all of your actions, writing and marketing it would be helpful to remember what Thomas Paine said, "Character is much easier kept than recovered."

2. Experience

This is critical for a consultant, mentor, teacher or "coach" and it's nearly impossible to establish credibility in the market place if you can't demonstrate that you have created some results in your field of expertise, whether in your own business or through your clients. You have to know what it's really like to work in your field and achieve success in it and you can't get that through just reading some info products or joining a few mastermind groups. You have to be in the trenches, walking your talk and talking your walk.

Having said that, experience comes from many places and people often don't give themselves enough credit for what they have been through and accomplished in their life already. Just be real about who you are and what you have to offer.

3. Consistency

Being consistent in your message and in your leadership is one way to show your clients and potential clients that you have their best interests as your priority. The best advisors and teachers let their work speak for themselves.

4. Certification/Training

Getting certified in your area or participating in specific training along with a lot of practice are other ways to establish credibility with your clients. While there are many routes to mastery, regardless of what path you take, winging it is not an effective strategy for building credibility in your market. The most credible teachers, trainers and consultants in our industries are those who are committed to integrity, values, learning, practicing and personal growth. They think of themselves as educators and mentors—not just marketers or entrepreneurs trying to earn a big buck.

The following checklist provides reminders to you when it comes to assessing your credibility factors and how you're making others aware of them so that you are able to minimize even more resistance when it comes to hiring you.

- Have you received some sort of **training** to do what you want to do?
- What is a credential or type of expertise you have that **none of your competitors can claim?**
- Do you have a list of past or current clients that are willing to **speak on your behalf?**
- Do you have **case studies** you can direct potential clients to?

- Are you **walking your talk** rather than just talking about what you've read or heard others do?
- If you haven't built up a long history of work in your field yet, do you have some story you could share that would explain to readers **why you're qualified to talk about and coach or teach on your topic of interest?**
- Are you only promoting tools or programs to your peeps that you have actually used and **achieved great results from yourself?**
- Are you **leveraging and communicating** all of the experiences and training you have had that makes you great at what you do? For example you may be new to running an online business but if you spent 15 years in corporate America as a project manager, you certainly have some credibility in the industry already when it comes to organizing, efficiency and follow through.
- Are you being **totally honest** about where you are in the process? The fact is your credibility is likely to be lower today than it will be a year from now or 10 years from now. (All things being equal). And, that's okay. Just make sure you are not overinflating how credible you really are just to make a sale. For example, if you're using past experience to show your credibility, don't say you've helped hundreds of clients if you've only had 50. (I might get pulled over by the marketing police for telling you to be honest about it and stop hyping up yourself but I'm willing to take that risk.)

The COPYWRITING Checklist

“A copywriter’s first qualifications are imagination and enthusiasm.
You are literally the script writer for your prospect’s dreams.
You are the chronicler of his future. Your job is to show him in
minute detail all the tomorrow’s that your product
makes possible for him.”
- Eugene Schwartz

This is a super straightforward and really useful checklist I’ve put together that will help you make sure your message is congruent with everything else you are doing and saying in your business. After you have written something, read over this checklist to make sure you haven’t missed something that could impact the message and how well it converts.

(Please be aware that this checklist deals primarily with the overall feel of your message. You can refer to it when you are writing sales copy for a specific product or just the overall copy for your website. However, if you are looking for more specifics, there are many copywriters who have very specific checklists for sales letters and marketing pieces like that. One that I highly recommend is Ryan Healy’s. You can find it on his site at <http://www.ryanhealy.com/>. Also, check out [CopyBlogger](#) for one of the best blogs on the Web.

- Is the copy about you or **your readers**? (If so, you need to get out of your ego and into your readers.)
- Will this copy **create a reaction** from your readers because of the mental pictures you plant in their minds with your words?
- Does your **personality come through** without making it all about you?
- Do you call out to your audience by reminding them of why they are on your site in the first place – to **solve a problem**?
- Do you **make promises you can keep**?
- Do you **provide proof** that you can make good on the promise? (Lots of case studies and testimonials)
- Can you answer **these 5 questions** about everything you write? 1) Who cares? 2) So what? 3) What’s in it for my readers? 4) Why should they choose me? 5) Why now? (When you know what your readers really care about, that puts you in a position of power so that you can help them.)

- Are you clear about what **you want to accomplish**? Does your copy support that goal?
- Have you anticipated your **reader's potential questions** and addressed them? (Interrupt your readers where they are.)
- Have you used the element of **curiosity to draw them in** and make them want more?
- Have you made your reader wrong? (**I sure hope not**!)
- Have you **used videos or pictures** to make the page come alive and capture your readers' attention?
- Have you identified the **core benefits** and referred to them multiple times?
- Have you included case studies that share **specific results** to back up any claims you make?
- Is it perfectly clear **what you want them to do**? (Test this by having your friend or mom or someone out of your industry read it and see if they can tell you what they are supposed to do.) Even if someone lands on your website, you want them to do something. The action of merely landing there is not enough.

I hope you find these checklists helpful as you strive to create more success in your marketing and create a thriving business, aligning who you are with what you do.