

Webinar 12 Handout:
STEP 1 TO BUILD YOUR BRAND

I often get asked for career advice, and the most common question is, “How did you make it to where you are?” I wish I had a quick and easy answer -- like a magic formula everyone could follow. How great would that be?! Unfortunately, it requires a little more work, planning and tenacity than that, but that’s what makes success so rewarding. I truly believe everyone can achieve whatever they put their minds to as long as they are willing to put in the time and effort, stay focused on their goals, and change course swiftly when opportunity knocks or challenges arise. And the best part? You don’t necessarily need investors or vast financial resources to take your business and brand to the next level. This is the part in this program where you can say, “ I am armed with the nutrition knowledge AND passion I need, so now I just need to establish my brand and execute my plan!”

Building a brand might sound like a daunting undertaking at first but really it’s just telling your story. The key is to have a compelling tale that leaves an impression. You have to find a way to stand out and amplify your message, especially in this age where there are so many voices trying to be heard. Think about people and brands you admire. What is it about them you like? What do you identify with? How do they make you feel? Why does their message stand out to you and how often are you exposed to that message? Figure out why those brands resonate with you and write the reasons down. You will reference this list later and incorporate some characteristics into your own brand.

If you do feel overwhelmed by this process and wonder how you could ever build your brand as big as you see in your dreams, remember, many of the brands that you love were once in the exact place you are right now. Everyone had to start somewhere (I remember my start!) -- your advantage is the roadmap outlined in this lesson. It may not be a magic formula, but it will provide direction. I am sharing with you all the things I wish somebody would have told me when I was first starting out.

My big picture advice is this: If you stay focused on your goal(s) and follow these steps, you will undoubtedly build a solid foundation for your business. If you have a solid foundation and clear vision, then all the twists and turns along the way will be much easier to navigate and you will be able to make better decisions to reach your goals. It’s like having Google Maps on a road trip: there are many different routes that could get you from point A to point B (the scenic route! the highway! back roads!), and lots of things can happen along the way that are out of your control (unexpected photo ops! meeting a stranger who becomes a friend! falling in love with a town! storms! accidents!) but it is nice to know you have your trusty navigation system that you can rely on to make sure you still know where you started and where your destination is.

Step One: Establish Your Expertise and Define Your Target Audience

Establish Your Expertise

Figure out who you are and why you are here. Just like an actor may do a complete character analysis when preparing for a role, you need to figure out exactly who you are, what your mission is, and what your goals are. You need to be able to answer the following questions with conviction:

What exactly do you want to accomplish? You need to establish a “mission statement”, and I cannot stress how important this is. Before you begin any business, you need to figure out your purpose in doing so. Do you want to help others live healthier lives? Do you want to help yourself live a healthier life? Do you want to be famous? Do you want to make a lot of money? Do you want to help others avoid a tough part of life you experienced? Do you want to be the next Oprah? Do you want to rule the world? Do you want a fulfilling job that lets you spend time with your family? I believe in thinking big, so don't be afraid to aim for the stars. This is your chance to write your own script in life -- there is no need to doubt or second guess yourself. You *can* achieve greatness and there are tons of people out there that need what you have to offer. I wrote my mission statement over a decade ago, and it has been my North Star anytime I have had a unique opportunity to weigh or a tough decision to make. Spend a good amount of time writing your mission statement -- you will come back to it time and time again throughout the years, so it deserves special attention.

Tips for writing a mission statement:

- Write your mission statement in pen (not pencil!), but feel ok if you need to use some white out on it periodically (okay, you'll probably type it, but you get what I mean). You want your mission to be a guiding document and be set in stone more or less. But the fact is, the world changes over time, and your mission might need a slight tweak or addition every now and then. It's a good idea to look over your mission and reassess every year or two, or anytime you are planning something new. If you find yourself constantly changing it, then maybe you need to take a step back and really ponder what your true goals were to begin with. Take the time you need here - don't rush this part.
- If you have had a business for awhile now and skipped the mission statement part, it's not too late! Take time this week to craft a really strong statement -- look at it not like you missed the boat from the beginning, but rather like you have been driving in the general direction of your destination and now you are going to pull over and get out the map, turn your headlights on, and continue with confidence.

- If you have had a business for awhile and have indeed had a mission statement, take this time to reassess. Is it still meaningful? Does it still convey your vision and goals? Is it usable and something you are proud of? If you answer yes to all of these questions, then rock on! You have this part down pat.

What are your internal values? Along with your mission statement, you want to think about the internal values of your company/brand. Internal values are your guiding principles that represent how you intend for your brand to behave. These values are not a description of what you do, but instead are the belief system or “rules” that you will live by. They are a constant in your business -- something that will not change in the future even if your mission does. When deciding what internal values are right for you, ask yourself, “What is important to my business, how do I want to act in order to reach my goals, and how am I different from everyone else?”

How would you like the public/clients to think of you and how do you want to relate to them?

There is a huge spectrum of personalities and genres people and brands fall on, and one end is not better than the other. There are all types of motivators: the no-nonsense drill sergeant on one end, the rah-rah cheerleader on the other, and all types in between. Different types of people will seek out support and guidance from different types of experts. Where do you fall on this spectrum? This should be innate to *who you are* -- it is not necessarily something you *want to become* -- but you need to spend some time reflecting on where you fall on the spectrum, and where others would say you fall on the spectrum. If the two answers are not the same, then you need to figure out why there is a disconnect and how you need to either change your perception of yourself, or change your communication style to others. You will be living your brand day in and day out -- it will be a living, breathing thing -- so it needs to be authentic to who you are and what you believe.

Define Your Target Audience

There are many reasons teenagers prefer to shop at different stores than their parents, and those reasons were carefully crafted by people behind the clothing brands. Just as those retailers built their brands around the likes of their target audiences, you need to do the same. Who are you interested in working with? Do you want to counsel a wide range of clients (think family practice doctor) or do you want to be an expert in a niche within your field (think spine surgeon)? When I first started my practice, I wanted to be an expert in *every* facet of nutrition. As I was building my clientele, I tried to make it a priority every day to be up on all the latest research in various aspects of nutrition including pediatric, diabetes, sports, eating disorders, etc. As much as I enjoy and value maintaining a well-rounded knowledge base, it wasn't realistic then, nor is it now to be an expert in all areas of

nutrition. Although it came from a good place from being over zealous about nutrition, it wasn't practical. As the years went by I decided to focus on weight loss and wellness. I grew my business and hired experts in various specialties to create a comprehensive private practice that indeed encompassed, well, just about everything. Leading a team of experts allowed me to maintain my original focus and eventually create a practice that met the needs of most nutrition related issues. It is also one of the reasons I have been able to feel successful in the nutrition field. Your goal may be to be the #1 expert in emotional eating or the #1 specialist in training triathletes, or you may have a passion for working with a range of clients -- one is not better than the other! You just need to figure out what suits your goals, and build your brand organically while keeping your target audience in mind.

My Mission Statement:

My Internal Values:

How would I characterize my personality/style?

How would others characterize my personality/style?

Who is my target audience?

Why do I want to target this audience?