

A soft-focus photograph of a desk with a silver laptop, pink notebooks, a succulent in a gold pot, a pink vase with flowers, a pencil holder, a stapler, and various desk accessories. The background is a light pink gradient.

BUILD YOUR BRAND BY SHOWCASING YOUR TEACHER TALENT

"Money won't create success, the freedom to make it will." - Nelson Mandela

YVETTE TEMPLE

Showcase Your Teacher Talent

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Your Credibility and Experience is the Key to a Growing Business

Think about the last time you hired a contractor, either for your business or to do something around your home. Did you look for the lowest price, or did you look for someone with experience? Did you check the contractor's references, or just take his word at face value?

You likely have heard the old adage, "you get what you pay for," and usually, when you hire someone simply based on the lowest price, you'll get someone who's not as experienced as the higher-priced contractor. Lack of experience can lead to mistakes, and sometimes they are costly. And let's face it, not everybody is as honest as you are, so if you're not checking references, you might get scammed.

What's the lesson here? Successful businesses stay afloat when they gain years of experience and build their credibility with their audience. These business owners learn from their own mistakes, adjust the way they do business when something doesn't work, and are willing to share their knowledge with their clients prior to being hired.

Now let's put YOU into this equation. You should always charge what you're worth because if you undercut your competition, that will bring in the *FREEBIE HUNTERS* who aren't serious customers and may still ask you for a discount. This is not the audience base that will allow your business to grow.

You should also showcase your expertise online and offline. Never be afraid to market yourself because you can't control the search engine rankings and you don't want to depend on 'hope' marketing. That's a very passive way to run your business; HOPING that people will find you. Be visible online and offline, be vocal, tell people what you do, share your experiences, offer advice. THIS will build your credibility and you will gain more visibility, thereby gaining new followers and potential new clients.

No matter what stage of business you're in today, whether you just opened your doors or have had a string of clients for years, today is the day to concentrate on building your credibility and sharing your expertise with the world. This is no time to be a wallflower, especially if you have big aspirations and dreams (BADass goals) of growing your team, hitting a certain income milestone, selling a certain number of products, or booking a guest appearance on The Today Show. Be proud of your success and plan on sharing it with your audience.

STEP ONE: IDENTIFY YOUR ZONE OF GENIUS

How do you want to be perceived: as a Jill-of-All-Trades who helps everyone under the sun and offers generic, one-size-fits-all solutions? Or as a specialist who has experience in a certain field with customized advice and proven results?

You should want the latter.

While it's tempting to want to help everyone and you may think this is the best way to reach your income goals, being a Jill-of-All-Trades will not build your credibility and will spread your time and experience too thin. It's virtually impossible to know everything about everything, and doing hours and hours of research on multiple topics isn't cost effective. Just accepting clients to fill your calendar is a disservice to your clients and to yourself.

However, when you are a specialist in your chosen field, your credibility increases and you can identify your target market and joint venture partners more easily. As a specialist, you already have years of work experience. You enjoy the field, so you'll want to stay up-to-date on the latest news and technology. You may even publish a book or produce a signature program, thereby increasing your revenue, your reach, and your name recognition.

Based on your extensive experience in the classroom, you may even hear from media contacts for interviews or quotes for a news story. Just look at where former preschool teacher Tiffany "The Budgetnista" Aliche is now, multiple six-figures. And Kayse Morris of Teaching on Less! Both of these former educators have been featured on numerous media platforms, which help to build their credibility and brand visibility. Simply put, media exposure leads to even bigger reach, name recognition, and possibly more revenue than you had before.

Yes, it's much better to be known as a specialist.

Think of it this way. Albert Einstein was an undisputed genius in physics and math. Based on the fact that he was constantly questioning and doing research, if anybody ever had a question about physics, no doubt they would be told to, "go ask Albert." He was the go-to person of his time.

Could Einstein answer questions about music, writing, or other sciences? Possibly. But his passion was for physics; it's what brought him to life every day, and it's what possessed him to continue doing research in his spare time after college. It's what earned him the Nobel Prize in 1921. His specialty in physics is what earned him a place in history to this day.

Aim to be a specialist.

How do you choose your specialty or niche? Start off by asking yourself a few simple questions about your passions and your education, what you like and dislike, and what topic could you talk about all day long. Also acknowledge the work that you're currently doing and analyze if you enjoy it or if you need a change.

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Exercise: Identify your Zone of Genius

| |
|---|
| What Type of Work Tasks Do I Enjoy? |
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| What are My Passions? |
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| My Educational Background |
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| Do I Need Continuing Education? What Kind? |
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STEP TWO: UPDATE YOUR BIO WITH SPECIFICS

Your professional bio is more than just listing where you live and where you went to school. Your bio is a sure-fire way to build your credibility and authority in the short amount of time people read or scan it.

Start by listing your most recent accomplishments. Did you make the New York Times bestseller list? Are you an Amazon bestseller? Were you featured in a magazine or newspaper article? Were you a keynote speaker at a live event? Did you become an international speaker? Were you inducted into the Clickfunnels' 2 Comma Club? Did you compete in a triathlon? Run your first marathon? Form a foundation to help your local community? These are just some examples of worthwhile achievements people want to know about.

If you graduated college 10+ years ago, that achievement should make its way toward the bottom of the list (even if you're still proud to be an alum). People want to know what you are doing now or most recently, not where you were more than 10 years ago.

Do you have a title? Whether it's a Dr. in front of your name or a series of impressive letters after your name, use that title in professional circles. It's not bragging; it's building your credibility and authority and proving to others you meet that you are educated and know what you're talking about.

Why do you need a professional bio? You're looking to grow your business and your credibility, right? So publishing a bio to your website tells masses of people all about you and why you're an expert. Bios are also printed in event programs if you're a speaker, and parts of it will be read by the interviewer when you're giving an interview. Articles that you write and publish on other sites will likely include an author's bio.

Professional bios that are published online also assist the media and anyone who may be searching for experts in your field. After doing a quick Google search and seeing your bio, they will know you're the expert who can answer their questions or who can speak to their group.

In short, people want to learn more about you and your experience, so there's no better way to inform the masses than creating a professional bio.

Exercise: Create or update your professional bio

| Dates | Accomplishments |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Within the last 12 months | |

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| Dates | Accomplishments |
|--|-----------------|
| Within in the last 2 years | |
| Within the last 5 years | |
| What makes you unique? | |
| Schooling or education (especially if you have an advanced degree) | |

STEP THREE: A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Have you noticed how almost every post on Facebook has a photo attached? There's a good reason for it: visual content grabs people's attention and will make them stop, react, and possibly leave a comment on your post.

Instagram is all about photos. The more beautiful the settings and/or colors, the more people will stop to react to it, thus gaining even more attention for your profile and hopefully gaining more followers.

The more people who react and comment on your photos and posts, the more social proof you gain, convincing the social media platforms and your followers that you are an important person with great authority. You engage with others, and therefore they should show your posts to more and more people.

Outside of social media, photos are a way to save precious memories. Did you speak on the same stage as one of your mentors? Get a photo with that mentor and post to your blog and social media. Are you a fashion blogger who nabbed front row seats at a New York fashion week runway show? Better snap a few photos to showcase on your blog and social sites, which will certainly impress your readers and social followers.

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Not a fan of attending live events? No problem. Snap selfies in your home office. Share proofs of your latest photo session. Showcase your newest website design with logo and color palate. Invite your favorite pet into a few pictures for immediate engagement (people love seeing pets and children in photos!) or document your travels to other states or faraway countries that show your audience how you enjoy spending your free time.

Even though these may not be “business-related” photos, you’re still interacting with your followers and showing them that you’re a real person. Plus, those who wisely invest in photo shoots and professionally-designed websites and logos are already perceived as “experts.”

These simple snapshots are proof positive that you’re serious about your job, have the connections to get into exclusive events, care about serving your audience, and you’re not a fraud. Anybody can create an online persona in any field or related to any subject, so improve your credibility by sharing these great photos and do so without guilt. You’re the real deal, so share that with your readers and followers.

Exercise: Organize your photos and brainstorm what type of photos to take/share

| Question | Ideas |
|--|-------|
| Organize all EVENT photos into folders in Dropbox, labeled with event name + date + subject name | |
| Do I have any before/after results I can share? (i.e.: home office redo, website redesign, weight loss) | |
| What shows my audience that I'm an expert? How can I portray that graphically? | |
| Are there any things I do in my day-to-day living that I should be showing my audience? (i.e.: healthy living, hobbies, pets/family) | |

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Exercise: List where these photos are kept and where you will share them

| File Name/Location | Where to Share |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: Link to hard drive/Dropbox/Cloud, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> Blog <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Press Release |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: Link to hard drive/Dropbox/Cloud, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> Blog <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Press Release |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: Link to hard drive/Dropbox/Cloud, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> Blog <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Press Release |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: Link to hard drive/Dropbox/Cloud, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> Blog <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Press Release |

STEP FOUR: BRAG A LITTLE

Add more social proof to your professional bio by listing television and radio appearances on your website. Much the same way that photos catch people’s attention, showing the logos and/or names of television programs you’ve been on proves that you’re an expert and shows other reporters or media hosts that you know how to handle yourself in an interview or panel discussion.

No matter how short or how long the segment, if it’s work that you’re proud of, and especially if the name of the show is nationally recognized, take the credit, invite people to view that clip, and list it on the media page of your website.

Don’t shy away from this exercise because you haven’t been featured anywhere big yet! Everyone starts at the bottom; it’s up to you to climb your way up and showcase your expertise. This process certainly doesn’t happen overnight; consider each step along the way as a baby step leading to a big interview or speaking engagement.

Marketing yourself and increasing your visibility and credibility will lead to great things, but you have to put in the work by planning which outlets to contact. Start small to get your feet wet. Start with a few podcast interviews (heck, some podcasters have many thousands of listeners for each episode, so don’t discount all podcasters as small time) or contact a local media outlet and pitch a

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story idea. Register with HARO ([Help A Reporter Out](#)) as a source and be on the lookout for relevant and time-sensitive leads that come to your inbox.

One Big Tip

If you are positioning yourself as an expert and want the media to contact you, please include clear contact information on your website! If it's not clear how to reach you within one minute, producers will move to the next person on their list. Media producers are often under tight, tight deadlines, so avoid using only a contact form. Include an up-to-date phone number and make it as easy as possible for producers to contact you.

Exercise: List podcasts you want to be featured on

| Podcast + Host Name | Application Link | Follow Up Date |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------|
| | | |
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Exercise: List TV programs you want to be featured on (think local and national)

| Program + Producer Name | Application Link/Process | Follow Up Date |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| | | |
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| | | |

Exercise: List radio programs you want to be featured on (think local and national)

| Program + Producer Name | Application Link/Process | Follow Up Date |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| | | |
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| | | |

STEP FIVE: SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Showcasing your expertise doesn't mean sitting quietly in a corner, waiting for someone to ask you a question so you can explain your point of view. Building your credibility and increasing your visibility are ongoing processes that just don't stop until you want to retire.

One way to get your voice heard is to speak to live audiences. Yes, that may be a daunting task, but the more practice you get, the easier it will become. And don't think you need to book a concert hall your first time out. That likely won't happen, but look for local opportunities right in your hometown.

- Schedule a book tour in your state and speak to your readers or share a chapter of your book in a live reading.
- Start a Meet-Up groups in your community to speak about your passion and to answer questions from the audience.
- Join a networking group and/or your local Chamber of Commerce and take advantage of speaking opportunities within those groups.
- Find a local Toastmasters International club where the primary goal is to prepare people for a life of public speaking.

As you become more comfortable with these smaller venues, you'll hone your speaking skills as well as your story and you can then search for the larger venues and opportunities.

Once you have that first speaking gig under your belt – no matter how small and local it may be – add a speaker page to your website. Essentially, this is a web page that is selling YOU to the event planners who need speakers at their events.

Like the media credits we spoke about earlier, adding the speaking venues and events to a separate page, along with contact information, video clips, and topics on which you speak will build your credibility as an expert, as well as aid event managers and producers. As always, make your speaking page clear on the home page navigation so organizers don't have to search high and low for the information.

Other things to include on this speaker page are:

- Calendar of upcoming events
- Testimonials from audience members or meeting planners
- Download link to a speaker one-sheet that organizers can print

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Exercise: Find local and national speaking events

| Type of location | Specific location |
|---|--|
| <p>List eight local events or clubs that offer speaking opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do a Google search <input type="checkbox"/> Ask your business acquaintances <input type="checkbox"/> Call your Chamber of Commerce | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. |
| <p>List eight national events that are looking for speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do a Google search <input type="checkbox"/> Ask your business acquaintances <input type="checkbox"/> Ask your social media followers | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. |
| <p>List eight virtual tour options (summits, guest interviews, appearances)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do a Google search <input type="checkbox"/> Ask your business acquaintances <input type="checkbox"/> Ask your social media followers | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. |

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Exercise: List the event names, organizers and speaker application process

| Event + Organizer Name | Application Link/Process | Follow Up Date |
|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
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STEP SIX: GATHER TESTIMONIALS

Testimonials from those who have worked with you – either on a one-to-one basis, as a JV partner, or as an event organizer – is more proof that you are a professional expert who can handle themselves under pressure. Think of these testimonials as you would online reviews for a product. The more positive reviews a product receives, the more comfortable you are making that purchase.

The same is true for testimonials. The more rave reviews people give you, the more likely you will get new clients or booked for another speaking event. These are your positive reviews that you delivered what you promised, that your clients experienced tremendous growth, and that your message was well received.

Never be afraid to ask for a testimonial. Doing this may not be foremost on someone’s mind nor are people prone to write reviews or testimonials without being asked, so ask gently in an email or a private message on social media. Follow up after two weeks if you still haven’t seen it. How much longer you follow up really depends on the relationship you have with this person. There’s a fine line between asking and following up on a testimonial and being annoying or perceived as a pest who won’t go away.

Exercise: Gather names + numbers of clients who might give testimonials

| Contact Name/Number | Testimonial Received? |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
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More Ways to Get Great Testimonials

While you can – and certainly should – be asking your clients for testimonials on a one-to-one basis, you can also easily automate the process as well. The simplest way to automate is to add a review request email to your autoresponder sequence.

Several days after a purchase, buyers should receive a short email asking for a review of your program. This works well for eBooks and other short-format product, and can be a part of every new product set up.

For longer programs or one-to-one coaching, consider adding an “exit interview” appointment via Zoom. You’ll gather valuable information for improvements to your program, and be able to record and edit for a testimonial, too.

Here’s another fabulous way to gather video testimonials: interview your graduates on a Facebook Live. Showcase them in your groups and on your business page, and post the recording on your testimonials page.

Exercise: Automate your testimonials

| Action | Products/Programs |
|--|--|
| Add testimonial requests to product autoresponders | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |
| Schedule exit interviews with clients. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |
| Schedule interviews with successful program graduates. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |

STEP SEVEN: THERE'S MORE TO LIFE THAN BUSINESS

One of the easiest ways to encourage people to like you (which is the first step towards finding clients, booking speaking engagements, and selling your products) is to be social, share parts of your personal life, and relate to people.

People are obsessed with social media, but sometimes get caught up in the media part: how their photos look; what graphic editor they should use; which font looks prettier, etc. Step back for a moment and remember that being social – engaging people on their posts and answering their questions – is actually more important than how great your graphic looks. You can post the most gorgeous graphics in the world, but if you don't interact with people, you're putting a vibe out to the world that you don't care about them and don't want to be bothered.

Ask people questions in your posts. If you're trying to decide which book to read or what movie to watch, ask your audience for opinions. Headed out to the county fair? Take some pictures of the amusements, food vendors, or concerts. Just because you are growing a business does not mean you don't have fun. Let your followers know that you're just a regular person who's balancing a business with their family time and social lives.

Being social in real life situations is also vitally important, especially when you're at business functions or networking events. Even if you're with your family at the fair, if a follower starts up a conversation, engage with them. A quick two-minute conversation will earn you new followers if that person then boasts about how they met you and how gracious you were. If you decide to ignore them, that bad news will get circulated around the social media world pretty fast, too.

Authenticity is a buzz word that is spoken about quite a bit, and it's very important to be authentic in everything you do. Don't create a fake persona; you're not an actress looking to win an Oscar. You're a business person and a regular person, so come across that way. Honesty and integrity and authenticity will all play a large role in how successful your business becomes.

One Note About Sharing

Sometimes people share too much and it makes for uncomfortable situations. Stick with your common sense and avoid any kind of negativity, religion, politics, or other hot-button topics that lead to nasty name calling. The same is true for sharing too much of your personal life. Nobody wants to follow or hire someone who is constantly complaining, so keep your vents off Facebook. If religion or politics are your area of expertise, then you already know how to handle yourself in a debate and probably have pretty thick skin from the name calling.

Similar concerns arise when sharing family photos or pictures of your kids. Some avoid it at all costs, others post kid pictures every single day. Use your best judgment, especially since kid pictures are usually a prime source of engagement on social media.

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Exercise: Be more social on social media

| Action | Action Need |
|---|----------------------------|
| List five social media platforms you enjoy using | 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |
| Which days will you post to these platforms? | 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |
| What topics will you share that are NOT business related? | 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |
| Do you want to share family photos? Do you have your spouse and family members' permission to post pictures of them? | |
| Which NON-business photos do you want to share? Where are they located? | |

