

 **STORY PROMPTS** 

TIP . . . As you brainstorm ideas for stories, based on these prompts, be sure to capture ALL the ideas they spark. They are all stories for another day!

 **Who has inspired you to be more?**

Role models can be parents, a teacher, a mentor, a friend ... or someone who appeared in your life for just a moment.

It could be someone you are/were close to ... or someone you never even spoke to.

Here's a [story](#) I shared recently ...

See if it triggers an idea for a story you could share.

 **Do you have a musical instrument story?**

Maybe ..

How you were forced to learn one (like me)

How you found every excuse under the sun not to practice (also like me)

How you tried a few different instruments to find the one that was a good fit for you

Or anything you learnt about[fill in the gap]..... from taking music lessons?

And, if not a musical instrument, what about a language

Or riding a bike?

Here's a link to an email I sent out to my list - talking about how my parents made me take piano lessons.

You can read it [here](#)

💡 **What are 5 things you would never do as a ...** [fill in the gap]?

Here's an idea for a quick video you could post.

"5 things I would never do"

Here's an example of one on [instagram](#)

You can either do "5 things I would never do as a ..."

Or "5 things I would never do, having been in ... industry for ... years".

Here's a 60 video I did "3 things I would never do as a Storyteller". You can watch it [here](#).

 **What's a false belief that many of your customers have?**

... And what story can you share that helps people to change that belief?

For example

False belief: "My story's not that interesting"

Story: The photographer who told me his story was boring—he was just obsessed with photography...and then proceeded to tell me, among other stories, about the first time he stood in the dark and watched an image emerge from a negative. His lifelong passion was sparked in that moment.

Message: Your story is fascinating to others. (And, there's no such thing as an uninteresting story, just a story told in an uninteresting way)

💡 What's one challenge that you've overcome?

Share what it was, how it was making you feel and how you overcame it.

Then link it to what you do.

For example

Story: I lost everything in the property market crash in 2007. I had been building a property portfolio for a few years and had just taken all the equity out of five properties – including my home-to invest in a development in London.

Big mistake.

Overnight, prices plummeted, the developer disappeared, and I was left £250K in personal debt. I felt a complete failure. How could I have been so stupid.

But, it made me incredibly grateful for what I did have – a loving family, daughter was immensely proud of and my soon-to-be-husband, who was my absolute rock through the whole thing.

And, of course, I survived. We always do, right?

Message: Not everything you do will be a success. Your journey is made up of a million events and scenes, some of which you may wish had played out differently. Some you may even be embarrassed about. Here's what I want you to know. Everyone's Story is like that. No-one gets to be successful without collecting some battle scars along the way.

Before you dismiss those stories, think about who they might help. Being vulnerable and sharing your challenges helps those who've been knocked down to find the strength to get back up, dust themselves off and carry on. Just like you did.

💡 **Tell the story of a time you needed a coach or trainer or guide to help you find your way, or solve a problem and get the result you wanted.**

Link that to you helping your clients get what they want.

Here's an example of an email I wrote along those lines ...

[Who I've invested in](#)

💡 **Give people a glimpse of what's going on for you right now**

Personal posts almost always outperform 'business' posts.

Way more people follow Richard Branson, than follow Virgin the brand.

I posted on LinkedIn about my daughter's operation and, to date, it's had 463,163 views 😮

[View it here.](#)

Is it all about the views? Of course not.

But, 24 hours later my book was back up to no.3 in the Amazon charts.

Coincidence? I think not 🤔

People connect with real people, with real lives.

Stories are fascinating.

What glimpse could you give people today of what's going on for you?

Your business story - 'I believe'

In module 3 of the course - Your Business Story - you will have done an exercise where you wrote "I believe ..." at the top of a piece of paper and then started writing whatever came to mind.


The instructions were to "Let your thoughts flow. Don't strive for one perfect answer, just write. Aim for ten".

If you didn't do the exercise, I highly recommend you do.

Now go back to your notes and create a post about that.

Here's an example of one, created by The School of Self Love coach Katie Philips

I believe

Why not do something similar? It doesn't have to be a video, but let people know what you believe ... 

Your business journey

Businesses and brands don't just pop up from nowhere. There's always been a journey - of highs AND lows.

How about sharing what that business journey has looked like for you?


Here's a couple of timelines I have posted on Linked In ...

The last ten years

2015-2022


Dear Business...

Roger Federer recently wrote:

"Tennis, I love you. I will never leave you" 

And, although he's retired from playing, I'm sure he never will.

His message gave me goosebumps, as it read like a love letter to the sport that has been such a huge passion and important part of his life for so many years.

Also, because I reckon he read my book - and did exercise 2 in chapter 5, called Dear Business 

If you haven't done this exercise yet, I strongly recommend you do.

If you have, read back through your love letter and share something from it.

Who doesn't want to work with someone who's passionate about what they do?

Here's an example of a post I wrote that started, [Dear Business](#)

💡 When have the stars aligned for you in a way that made something awesome happen very easily?

I saw a post this morning about **serendipity** – and it reminded me of a story ...

The first job I ever got was at a TV station. I turned up for an interview, to be told the HR person had gone home sick. Instead, they sent me straight to the Director of Programmes office. He thought I had already been hired and took me to my new desk!

I had to ring home to say I'd be late - as I had started my new job! 🤪

Check out my post to see how I linked that story to what I do, [here](#).

💡 Have you got any travel-inspired stories?

In my book, I tell the story of Gandys, a company started by Rob & Paul Forkan. Everything about their brand is inspired by their story and their love of travel.

Here's a story I've just posted on Linked In about travelling. You can read it [here](#).

See if it triggers an idea for a story you could share.

 **When have you had to get over a fear to be the person you want to be?**

I've always had a fear of public speaking.

For years it was debilitating. I would shake so much I would feel like I was going to pass out! I would feel nauseous, and find it hard to breathe.

Many times I thought I would never get over it and I would just have to accept that public speaking wasn't for me.

But, deep inside I knew that, if I could just work out how to calm the physical symptoms of fear, I would LOVE public speaking.

Today, as you read this, I am boarding a plane to Barcelona. My flights are being paid for and I am being put up in a beautiful, 5-star hotel.

Tomorrow I will be speaking at an international conference - about storytelling. And tomorrow night, I've been invited to their gala dinner and awards ceremony.

On Saturday my two girls are flying out to join me and we are having a few days in a beautiful city.

If you had told me a few years ago I would be doing this, and feeling nothing but excitement about it, I would not have believed you.

What changed?

I stopped making it about me.

It was that simple.

I realised that all that mattered was that the people in the room get something to take away, that they learn something new, and feel inspired to start sharing stories.

That's it.

I can do that.

And I shall enjoy every minute of it.

What about you? What fear have you got over and how did you do it?

Share that story and tie it to what you do.

💡 Give people a little insight into who you are

How about doing a post like this one from Tej Lalvani?

Give people a little insight into who you are and what makes you tick.

This is not about what you've done, but *who you are*.

You could close with a little 'Take it from me' point, like Tej has 😊



Tej Lalvani  • Following

CEO of Vitabiotics & Dragon on BBC's Dragons' Den...

6d • 🌐

I have some truths to tell...

I'm naturally shy.

There are days when I feel unmotivated.

I get self conscious.

I'm not productive 100% of the time.

I've doubted my gut instincts.

I sometimes give in to distraction.

That said, I...

Have achieved things I'd never have dreamed of.

Am surrounded by wonderful people.

Know what makes me tick.

Enjoy what I do each day.

Found ways to keep improving.

And most importantly of all...

I am happy.

Take it from me: your weaknesses and insecurities do not need to define you.

Do a behind the scenes post

Images work well for this kind of story.

Here's one I did on [Linked In](#) when I was creating my online course.

What behind the scenes story could you share?

Your message themes

On a VIP day with a client recently, we were working on her message themes - and one of them was:

Little changes that make a big impact

(She works with parents who are struggling to have a good relationship with their teenager).

We then went through the stories she'd unpacked and looked for all the ones that we could tie to that message/theme ...

Including the story of what happened when one client started sitting with her son every morning for 15 minutes to have breakfast together ...

Choose one of your *themes, then think of a story that would help bring that message to life ...

**Themes are explained in The Storyteller's Content Framework training*

How about doing a poll?

Polls are a great way to get engagement and interaction.

Here's one I did that helped to get a little bit of my personality (and values) across ...

One of my [polls](#).

What could you do a poll on?

What was your first ever job?

How much were you paid?

Did you love it?

What did it teach you?

How did it start your *business journey?

*It doesn't matter if it has nothing to do with what you do now, it was still the start of your business journey.

What does it tell people about you? 😊

Do you have a story from school?

How did you do at tests? Did you get the grades you wanted?

What did it teach you about learning? Or leadership. Or friendships?

Did you flourish or flunk?

What's a story you can share about how it did or didn't prepare you for life, or what you do now?

What was your favourite book as a child?

Why did you love it?

Was it the plot? The characters? One particular character?

Did it spark your imagination? Open your eyes to something new? Invite you into a world you wanted to be a part of?

Is there anything about the experience of reading it that you can link to something about the present?

How it made you feel? What it inspired you to do? The book(s) you love reading now? Or simply how your love of reading has stayed with you all your life?

Here's an email I wrote to my list about my favourite book - [The Naughtiest Girl in the School](#)

Have you ever been bullied?

I reckon most of us have, at some point, experienced bullying ... and often we form beliefs and carry stuff into adulthood, based on that experience.

I saw my 12-year-old being bullied this week. She had posted a selfie of herself in some new clothes in a small group (that she considered a 'safe' space) and one of her classmates made fun of her.

She immediately took the post down and was really upset.

I went to bed that night wondering when she'll feel confident to post a selfie again ...

And it occurred to me, that so many of us hold back and are frightened to put ourselves out there, because somewhere in our past, someone bullied us, or made fun of us.

You may or may not have a story about that. And you may or may not want to share it.

But, I think it's something that a lot of people can relate to, so one to think about

Here's an email I wrote to my list about [bullying](#).

💡 What work have you been doing recently?

I bet you're all amazing at helping clients get great results, but not so amazing at talking about it ...

So, how could you use the story of what you've been doing with clients, to help bring something you talk about to life?

There's many ways to do this but here's one ...

Write a post on:

This is what happens when you DON'T [fill in what you help people do eg when you don't use storytelling in your marketing]

3-4 bullet points

And this is what happens when you DO [fill in the gap]

3-4 bullet points

For example, [then share your client story eg] I've been working with and by they were able to which helped them

And don't forget to finish with a clear CTA 😊

💡 Storytelling comes in all different forms

Long form. Short form.

A complete story, or a snippet.

A whole scene, or a moment.

It could also be an 'observation' about the journey you're on, and an invite for others to join in the conversation.

What's a short post you could do today, about how you're feeling, or what you're doing, or where you are on your journey?

Here's one I posted about the rollercoaster of a ride that is running your own business. You can read it [here](#).

💡 Post a testimonial

There is no more powerful way to share the transformation you help your clients get than their story in their words! 🥰

How many have you got, sitting in a folder somewhere collecting dust???

It doesn't have to be fancy. I have some nicely designed, branded templates that I use - but, honestly, screenshots can work just as well.

Or, sometimes I pop the screenshot into PowerPoint, add a coloured background and then use that

Here's an [example](#)

ps Further proof that it's not about the likes and comments ... I didn't get any comments on that post - but I got 2 DMs!! 😊

💡 Write a story using the simple structure: Someone. Wanted. But. So. Then.

One of my 1:1 clients was struggling to know how to talk about the fact that since she started taking Fridays off, her business has grown!

Here's what we came up with:

Once upon a time ...

A brand strategist wanted to grow her design business, but she was always so busy working with clients, and through her endless to-do list, she never had the time to work *on* her business...

So, one day she decided to take Fridays off ... and (then) a magical thing happened. She suddenly realised that giving herself that time and space to step out of the 'doing' actually allowed her to be WAY more energised, creative and productive on the days she was working with clients!

This meant she could grow her business, her income, and have more time to do the things she wanted to do.

👉 Then show your clients how you could help them get the same happy ending to their story ...

For example, my client above could end her post/email with a CTA like, If you want to grow your design business in a way that serves you, as well as your clients - so you can work less and achieve more - I can show you how.

Hit reply/comment below and I'll send you some info on how we could work together.

👉 Have a go 🥰

Your Epiphany Moment story

In his book Expert Secrets, Russell Brunson talks about your Epiphany Moment story ...

He says:

"You need to share a story that takes people through the emotional experience that got YOU excited about the new *opportunity you're now presenting to them".

(*the opportunity to do something differently, to get a different result).

So ...

Share the story of what happened to you, at some point in your life, that caused an epiphany.

Maybe you thought, "Wow. There is a better way to do this! I've been making it so hard!"

Or "If only I knew this x years ago. This is a game-changer"

Or "I can't believe how different I feel now"

Share a story about that moment, when you got excited about doing the thing that you now do

...

ps I tell one of mine on p.7 of my book

Do you have a hobby?

Do you have a hobby?

What do you love to do when you're not working?

How do you recharge your batteries?

Do you love being outdoors?


Are you sporty?

Or an avid reader?

Do you ride a motorbike?

Or take them apart in your spare time?

Is there a topic or activity you geek out on?

Share something with your audience that is nothing to do with work, but a big part of who you are 

Facebook Memory Story Post

How about doing a story-post based on a memory that comes up on Facebook?

I particularly love memories that show how far you've come, how you've evolved or how things have changed for you.

Here's a [post](#) I did this week, when a memory came up about my previous business, The Business of Mums.

💡 What is something about your ideal client that you could share today?

What is something about your ideal client that you could share today?

Maybe ...

- Something about the journey they're on right now
- How they're feeling about their progress
- What's worrying them today
- What they wish they could change
- How they're showing up vs how they're feeling inside
- Or what they want that feels out of reach

Showing that you get them, that you know the conversation going on in their head, that you understand how they're feeling and you know what's getting in the way are powerful ways to demonstrate empathy, your value and your expertise.

Here's a post I did, as an [example](#)

💡 What's the smartest thing anyone has ever said to you?

Did it change your perspective?

Or maybe it's something you read in a book?

Why not share it in a post, and talk about the impact it had on you.

💡 When were you wrong about something?

It could be anything.

Many years ago I worked with Chris Tarrant, and when he told me about a pilot he was making for a show called **Who Wants to be a Millionaire** - where contestants could see the answers and phone a friend - I said ...

"I'm not sure that'll work!" 🤣🤣🤣

Thank goodness he didn't listen to me.

Here's the idea for a post ...

Talk about the thing you got wrong

THEN ...

Talk about what you help people get RIGHT!

eg. So, if you've got an idea for a TV gameshow, I'm probably not the person to ask.

But ... if you want help with using storytelling in your business - you're in the right place.

That I DO know.



💡 Do you have a favourite song?

Is there a way of using it to talk about what you do?

Have a think ...

👉 Maybe there's a line in the song that you could relate to what you do or what you help your clients do ...

👉 Maybe it's a song that holds a special memory for you, that you could make relevant for your audience ...

👉 Maybe you saw it being performed live, and there's a story there that you could share ...

👉 Or maybe there's a nice analogy you could use, or a way of connecting your love of music to the 'thing' you want to get known for.

Here's a post I wrote about how your core message needs to be like the chorus of a song.

You can check it out on Linked In [here](#).

💡 What moment on your business journey would you love to go back to?

... So you could give yourself some much-needed reassuring encouragement?

Here's a story I told on [Linked In](#) some time ago - about a moment on my journey, and what I would say to myself if I could go back there.

💡 **What's a conversation you've had that you could relay in a post.**

Feel free to edit with poetic licence, to keep it short and snappy.

The goal is to help people see what you're about and what you stand for.

Maybe you talk about pricing. Or perfectionism. Or self-love. Or overthinking.

Maybe you reframed something for a client, challenged an assumption, or saw something differently to how most people see it?

Here's an example of one I posted on [Linked In](#) - that I turned into a poll - and got 45 comments

