

A person is shown from a high angle, typing on a silver laptop. The laptop is on a white desk. In the background, there is a framed sign with the text "ALL I HAVE WORDS". A pair of glasses is on the desk. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent grey filter.

WRITE YOUR OWN BIO

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Hi, I'm Monica!

I'm not here to talk about me, but I do want you to feel confident that you're learning from someone who has the creds to back it up. For over 10 years I've been helping all kinds of businesses create stand out copy and share their brand story. This includes solopreneurs and small businesses through to corporates and multi-national organisations.

My clients tell me that my greatest skill is evoking emotions through my writing - and that's what I'll help you do, too. I know it's hard to write about yourself, but I hope that these questions will help provoke some thoughts that you can turn into an incredible story about yourself!

I'd love to see what you create by using the prompts in this book as inspiration! Connect with me online, or send me a link and let me know how you get on!

Monica
MONICA SHEPHERD
Founder of markmywords.co.nz



WRITING YOUR WEBSITE BIO

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been in a social situation and someone you don't know asks you 'what you like to do for fun', and all of a sudden you have no idea about who you are and what you do and whether you actually do any 'fun' things in your life, or if the things you think are 'fun' actually make you sound like a bit of a weirdo?

Writing your professional bio for your website can feel a little like that - awkward and confronting and a little embarrassing and suddenly like you're on the edge of an existential crisis! So you say something flowery and a little untrue because you think it sounds like the right thing to say. It might be over-inflated or under-inflated, but whatever it is, it doesn't feel quite... right.

For small business owners and solopreneurs a genuine 'about me' page can be the clincher that gets a new customer over the line. It's a page that needs a bit of love and attention.

There are plenty of articles about what you should write in your bio - that's not the hard part. Be authentic! Cool, thanks for the advice generic blog post!

So, how?

Unfortunately there are not many articles that tell you how to actually find the best words for YOU. And while this guide won't write your bio for you, it will pull together an outline of ideas that are hopefully unashamedly 'you' to give you the inspiration you need for a brave and honest bio.

Before we go any further, let's get this one out of the way: Rule number 1 - write in first person.

What are people looking for on your 'About' page, bio or story?

This page is your chance to shine a light on everything that makes you great. But here's the thing: this page might be *about* you, but your CUSTOMER remains the hero of your story.

I know it's HARD to write about yourself. But keeping this perspective in mind when it comes to crafting your own story can help - because if you think about what matters most to your customer, then it's easier to align parts of your journey to the things they REALLY need to know. It becomes less about listing out your history, and more about demonstrating why you're so good at what you do, and why you're the right person FOR THEM to work with.



Here are four things you need your story to include:

Empathy

How do you relate to the position your audience is in? Showing you see and understand your customers is important.

Identification

Your customers want to find something in you, that resonates with how they see themselves. Using what you know about them, how can you show up in a relatable way?

Authenticity

Being human isn't about having hobbies outside of work. Bring in human touch points by talking about your choices, your values, your failures and successes, and how they've shaped your journey or influenced your decisions.

Credibility

Experience is important, but a qualification is likely the least interesting part of your story. Talk about experience and creds in context that tells your audience how and why you're putting your knowledge to use.

With that in mind, let's get started!



SHOWING UP

1

"Always be a first rate version of yourself, instead of second rate version of someone else" - Judy Garland

The starting point for thinking about your bio needs to be: who am I?

NOT: who do I need to be? Or what will sell?

Maintaining an image that isn't really you is exhausting, and will never work in the long-term. Let go of any preconceived ideas about what is 'right', or what you think your audience will like, or what your competitors are doing.

Being you will allow the right people to find you; if you're not a little polarising, then you're not fully showing up.

Be unapologetically you. Not everyone is going to like you, or want to work with you, and that's OK - you don't want to work with them either!

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STEP 2

STEP 3

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STEP 5





QUESTION #1: WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR?

[Empty text box for answer to Question #1]

ASK YOURSELF

QUESTION #2: WHY DO YOU DO WHAT YOU DO?

[Empty text box for answer to Question #2]

QUESTION #3: WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO SHARE THIS KNOWLEDGE?

[Empty text box for answer to Question #3]

QUESTION #4: WHY SHOULD READERS TRUST YOU?

[Empty text box for answer to Question #4]

QUESTION #5: WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT TO OTHERS IN YOUR INDUSTRY?

[Empty text box for answer to Question #5]

ZOOM OUT

2

"If you tell a true story, you can't be wrong" - Jack Kerouac

Let me tell you a short story of three stonecutters...

When the first stonecutter was asked what he was doing, he said: 'I'm cutting stone into bricks to make a living'.

When the second stonecutter was asked what he was doing, he said: 'I'm cutting stone, I intend to be the best stonecutter in town!'

When the third stonecutter was asked what he was doing, he said: 'I'm building a cathedral'.

See the difference? Stonecutter number three knows that his work is changing his world; it's having an impact. He's using his skills for the good of those around him, he's making a difference.

It's beautiful and it's big and it's something to believe in.

You have a bigger story around what you do - find it.

Zoom out from the tasks you do on the daily to look at the results of your actions.

What is the experience that you give to better the lives of other people?
Let's find out!

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ASK YOURSELF

QUESTION #1: HOW DOES YOUR SERVICE / OFFERING MAKE PEOPLE FEEL?

QUESTION #2: WHAT DO PEOPLE THANK YOU FOR MOST OFTEN?

QUESTION #3: WHAT RESULTS DO YOU ACHIEVE THAT REALLY MATTER TO PEOPLE?

QUESTION #4: WHAT ABOUT YOUR WORK MAKES YOU PROUD?

SHARE YOUR WHY



*“The market for something to believe in is infinite.”
-Hugh McLeod*

What you need is buy in, to capture the hearts of people you most want to work with.

So, give them something to believe in.

What is your sense of purpose? What matters to you? What is your WHY?

Sharing your story, your journey and your goals is what is going to connect with people who want to help you and work with you.

How did you get to where you are today? Did you hit rock bottom, lose your shit, hate your boss or want to have an online business so you could live in the middle of nowhere with a cute menagerie of animals and only work on Tuesdays (same, btw).

Be brave enough to answer honestly; there's no right or wrong.

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QUESTION #1: WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO START YOUR BUSINESS / WHAT MOTIVATES YOU NOW?

QUESTION #2: WHAT IS YOUR VISION / BIG GOAL FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

QUESTION #3: WHAT WORDS DO YOU WANT PEOPLE TO ASSOCIATE WITH YOUR WORK / BRAND / WORK ETHIC?

QUESTION #4: WHEN DO YOU FEEL MOST PASSIONATE / INSPIRED / EXCITED ABOUT YOUR WORK?

QUESTION #5: WHAT ARE YOU MOST PASSIONATE ABOUT OUTSIDE OF WORK AND HOW DOES THAT INFLUENCE YOUR BUSINESS

ASK YOURSELF

LEVERAGE YOUR CREDS



*“Image is a fragile thing. Sincerity is rock solid”
- Danielle LaPorte*

Unless you are in an industry where outlining specific qualifications is absolutely necessary, then refrain from mentioning them in your first paragraph.

I know a degree is an awesome achievement, but it’s usually not the coolest part of your story.

And if you don’t actually have formal creds, don’t sweat it. There are other credentials that speak louder volumes - passion, results, ambition, hard work. Self-taught is saying that you have natural talent, got off your ass, and worked effing hard to make it happen - it says drive, open mindedness, innovation and desire to keep learning.

Shout that loud and proud because THAT is a much more interesting story. Trying to present yourself a certain way gets hard. Be honest about who you are and how you got there - sincerity is rock solid.

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STEP 5





QUESTION #1: WHAT ASPECTS OF YOUR WORK WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE RECOGNISED FOR OR ARE MOST PROUD OF?

QUESTION #2: WHAT ARE YOUR VICTORIES, BOTH PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL?

QUESTION #3: WHAT WORDS DO YOU WANT PEOPLE TO ASSOCIATE WITH YOUR WORK / BRAND / WORK ETHIC?

QUESTION #4: WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST FUN, MOST EXCITING OR MOST MEMORABLE PART OF YOUR JOURNEY?

QUESTION #5: WHAT ASPECTS OF YOUR BACKGROUND STRENGTHEN YOUR CREDIBILITY OR PERSPECTIVE?

ASK YOURSELF

WHO IS YOUR IDEAL CLIENT?

5

Finish up by talking about who you love to work with - who is your ideal client; who would you like to see walk through your door?

What kind of work makes you kinda jiggle with secret excitement when an email pings into your inbox?

Talk about what kind of work or client really floats your professional boat so you give readers something to identify with.

You know what can really help with this process? Creating personas. A buyer persona is a fictional representation of your ideal customer. To help you out, I've also created a guide to help you build those personas in a way that is inclusive and relevant to our diverse world.

You can check that out here.

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Did those questions get you thinking?

Now it's time to pull it all together!

There's no right or wrong way to craft your brand story - but keep in mind that framework of 4 critical considerations in your story.

How can you use the thoughts you've pulled together above, and pull together a story that ticks those 4 boxes. A quick reminder about what they are:

- Empathy
- Identification
- Authenticity
- Credibility

Good luck! Go forth and write with confidence. Don't forget to share your brand story with me. I can't wait to see what you create!



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