

EXPLORE YOUR ENTHUSIASM

EPISODE 94: 4 STEPS TO SOUND LIKE A HUMAN, CONNECT WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS (AND SELL MORE STUFF)

Do you feel nervous about sharing your work on social media or your blog? Do you worry about sounding too sales-y and end up sounding too much like a robot? You're not alone. Welcome to Explore Your Enthusiasm episode 94, with me, Tara Swiger

In today's episode you'll learn:

- ★ Why it's important to sound like a human online
- ★ The two mistakes people usually make with social media
- ★ 3 steps to sound like a human and connect with your customers (without getting too uncomfortably personal)

Being a real person and not sounding like a robot online, especially in social media, is important. And we don't usually have much problem acting like a normal human being in person, but when we get online... things get weird. A charming, hilarious person can turn into a stilted, awkward person on social media. Or, they sound weirdly sales-y.

And I get it: it can be hard to translate who you are into limited words and pictures online. It can also be hard to feel COMFORTABLE being yourself, especially if you don't feel confident in what you're doing - in the fact that you're selling your art.

But figuring out how to be a person who connects with other people online is important for your business. Not only will it help you use social media to sell more stuff, it will also build more and deeper relationships with your customers. It will help a potential buyer understand the awesomeness of what you offer and how it's different and special.

And yet, when you feel uncomfortable, it's easy to get this wrong. I see this happen in two main ways. When people are nervous to share their work, they usually default to two extremes of a continuum:

You get super formal or you automate it too much

"This is new in my shop. This is available." Maybe you set Etsy up to automatically tweet when you list a new item... and that's it. Or maybe you set your blog to tweet. Or you just post a picture of your product to Instagram, with just a bunch of hashtags. You don't do this to be spammy, but because you feel awkward and aren't comfortable saying more. But, no matter how much you might share (and let's face it, if you have to force yourself to share your work, and you feel like a robot, it'll always feel like you're forcing it - and you're going to be less likely to do it, because who wants to spend time feeling awkward?) - if you do it like a robot, it won't be effective. And that means you're forcing yourself to do something you don't like, and that your potential customers don't like or maybe even pay attention to, AND it won't be effective. That sucks.

Using your biz tools like you would a personal tool

I know a lot of makers fall into this because their personal hobby has transformed into a business - so perhaps you started your blog or Instagram before you had a business, so you're used to sharing it for personal reasons, to connect with your friends. And now that you have a business, you're using it the same way and wondering: Why isn't this getting me customers?

There is a third option, which is not saying anything or sharing your work at all because you're not sure what to say or you're afraid that you'll mess it up.

But I want you to avoid all of these, because, well, they just don't work.

Now, I want to be clear, when I talk about being a person online, and not sounding like a robot, I am NOT talking about sharing every detail of your life, or, as we talked about in episode 81, being a "hot mess" online. If you want to know more about how to be your authentic self without over-sharing, [listen to episode 81, "how to be authentic without being a hot mess."](#)

What I'm talking about is genuinely connecting with people; I'm talking about sharing the parts of your personality and experience and ideas that help THEM - ideally, that help them use what you sell or understand its value. Remember, the goal isn't to sound like a human to make YOU feel better, but to offer more value to the community of people who would LOVE what you're selling and who could truly benefit from it.

So that brings us to the four steps that you can take to sound like a person online (and sell more stuff).

1. Be intentional with how you use your tools

In other words, decide what your intention for that tool IS - how do you want to use it? What do you want it to do for you?

It's perfectly fine to just use a tool for personal reasons, but KNOW that's what you're doing. If you use your Facebook personal page to keep up with your college roommates, then do that. Don't be upset when it doesn't send you lots of sales. (Btw, this is my main problem with the "businesses" like JamBerry, and Stella + Dot - based on how the women in my life are using them, they seem to promise you can have a business just by selling to your friends, on the platforms you use with your friends. When in fact, to create a steady income from ANY business you need to actually create a platform for that business + treat it like a business. If you want to use something for fun, that's fine, but be honest with yourself about the difference.)

This goes back to knowing what you want with your business as a whole - what is your goal? What are you building? If you're not sure if you're truly building a business or just making some money with a hobby, check out my video: [Do you have a business or a hobby?](#)

Once you know what you want from your business, think through what you want from each tool: how do you hope it helps you reach your bigger biz goal? We talk more about this process in [episode 89: Mission, Strategy, Tactics](#).

2. Decide where it is on the Customer Path

Once you know you want to use this tool for business purposes, think about where it fits on your Customer Path. Your Customer Path is the journey customers take to find you, fall in love and buy from you. Each tool fits somewhere on the Customer Path - it either introduces you to them, or tells them more about you, or makes the sale.

So think about this tool: Are you using it to talk to people who just found you? Or people who have been following you and like you?

THAT is going to determine how personal you get and how informative you get.

3. You set the parameters of how much you share

Remember - what we're talking about it sounding like YOURSELF, not sharing everything you think. There's a spectrum and you can move from the "never share anything" side of the spectrum to the "overshare everything" side in small steps. It's not a slippery slope, you're not going to accidentally slide from one end to the other.

Instead, decide what you're going to share, decide how you're going to be yourself in a way that is of service to your buyers.

I think of this, how personal you get, as layers.

- ★ In the top layer you have: "I make and sell this thing."
- ★ In the layer right under it, you may say, "I make it because I'm inspired by x and y."
- ★ In the layer deeper than that, you may share what inspires you to make it, or how you learned the craft as a kid.

Deeper layers would involve more personal stuff like your marriage, or your kids, or your childhood... but you see, you don't have to share any of this to share a bit of yourself and your story. YOU set the boundaries of your layers.

The thing to keep in mind is that the first layer is just factual and not that personable or friendly. The next layers aren't about YOU as much as they are about your thing. But by sharing a bit about how you relate to your product, or why you make the product, you aren't talking about yourself - you're giving your potential buyer value - you're showing them why the product matters, what its story is, or how it fits into their life.

4. Practice

The final step is to practice. Practice writing Instagram descriptions that sound more like you. Rewrite your descriptions to use the words that you and your customers use most often. Just like with any aspect of sharing or making your work, you're going to get better with practice.

If you want to dive into what you can say and talk about with your work, and how to share it effectively, check out my book *Market Yourself*; you can [find it on Amazon](#) or you can [get a signed copy directly from me](#).

If confidence in your product and business is what's keeping you awkward and ineffective on social media, [sign up for the free Biz Confidence Challenge!](#)

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Thank you so much for listening and have an enthusiastically non-robotic day!