

The Legacy Lounge Podcast with Tiffany Neuman
Season 1, Episode 12
Voice: The Most Important Element of Your Brand

INTRO: Hi, I'm Tiffany and you are listening to The Legacy Lounge podcast. If you are a high achieving, mission-driven entrepreneur who wants to elevate your income, impact, and influence, you're in the right place.

I left my corporate career as a creative director for Fortune 500 brands to create a legacy with my work and to support entrepreneurs to do the same. I'm not talking about having your name on a building or statues in your image. I'm talking about leaving behind a positive impact and creating something enduring that can be passed on. You pour your time, energy and passion into your business, so let's make sure your efforts will create a ripple effect that reaches far into the future.

Each monthly series will guide you through the business leadership and life skills you need to successfully leave a legacy that stands the test of time, and each episode is totally valuable on its own. We are here to provide you with the tools and ideas to make massive shifts and quantum leaps in your business, transforming you from entrepreneur into legacy brand.

So sit back, relax, and let's get into today's episode:

TIFFANY NEUMAN:

The voice is the muscle of the soul.—Alfred Wolfsohn.

How many times have you walked away from a quick conversation feeling like you pretty much knew someone? When you meet someone for the first time, one of the first things you'll notice is their voice. Not just their voice, but also the way they use it to express themselves. Their accent, their mannerisms, the phrases they use, the gestures they make, and the the tone of their voice.

Our subconscious makes decisions based on these various pieces of information because we have so much information coming at us quickly. It's human nature. We make our assumptions in seconds and stick with them until proven otherwise.

So how does this affect your brand and business? You guessed it: a ton.

Because most online entrepreneurs are personal brands, we are also the spokesperson for our brand, and our voice is often what draws people in or tunes people out. A non-personal brand is no different. It might not be as obvious as a conversation, but one of the first things you'll notice about any brand is its voice.

I get it. It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the amount of work involved in creating a brand and running your business. There are visuals, graphics, sales tactics, website pages, and so many social media strategies to consider. And now I'm asking you to add brand voice to the list? You might be thinking, "Can't I just talk the way I normally talk?"

Of course you can. But here's the thing: Brand voice is not going to take personality away from your messaging. It's actually the opposite. It's going to enhance your online personality and make it shine through the online chaos. It will make it even easier to sound more like yourself, and even more importantly, less like everyone else in your industry.

So whether you're new to business or have been at it for ten years but never truly nailed down your brand voice, I've got you covered.

Today we're going to dive deeply into what it takes to make a great brand voice so you can ensure you're not driving people away, unintentionally of course. Seriously, I've seen this help people do a complete 180 within their marketing, from low engagement and low sales to tons of engagement and sold out launches after getting clarity on their Legacy Brand, and even more specifically, their brand voice.

If you're on a mission to create an authentic brand that connects with your audience, then you need a brand voice that's true to your values and communicates your identity in a consistent way.

Sound amazing? Keep listening, and I will dive deep into the following so when you finish this episode, you'll be fully equipped to begin to upgrade your brand voice. Because if you have not been intentionally creating your brand voice, it's been happening unconsciously. You have a brand voice whether you realize it or not. We're going to help you figure out the exact ways on how to up level that today. And as always, I'm sharing this through the lens of Legacy, of course, this is the Legacy Lounge Podcast. Stay tuned to hear: the actual definition of brand voice; why having a defined voice matters how brand voice ties in with the rest of your branding, such as visuals; and then we're going to talk about five steps you can take to actually define your brand voice.

I've helped a ton of people through this process, and I know it can feel daunting, so I'm going to make this as simple and easy as possible. Be sure to pull out a journal and take notes if you don't have one prepared already. Let's get into it.

All right, so first things first. If you are new to this concept, or perhaps you've dived in, but you really haven't thought about your brand voice intently, let's dig into what a brand voice actually is.

(And if you think you have it nailed down, stay with me because as we dive in, I will be sharing tips that you most likely haven't heard before that can truly transform your brand overall.)

Your brand voice is simply the way your brand sounds. This extends to all of your communications from social media posts, to your website, and even to customer service emails.

Just like your logo, your brand voice is a facet of your brand's unique personality. It makes your brand stand out rather than blend in to the endless online scroll or in the endless inboxes full of marketing emails.

So now that we have a clear understanding of what your brand voice is (and it's pretty simple, right?), let's talk a little bit more about why it's important. This is where most people tend to tune out and just say they're going to show up how they actually are.

If we look at top influencers—those you admire—they've taken the time to truly look deep within themselves and pull out their brand voice.

Think about the great stories that you've heard told at campfires, around the water coolers if you were ever a corporate person, etc. You know the stories that could gather a crowd and really hold you at the edge of your seat.

I want you to think about why you were so invested in those stories? Was it the content of the story itself, or was it the captivating way it was told?

Here's a quick way to find out: would you still pay attention if your most boring uncle told the story? Probably not, right? That's because the way someone speaks is often just as impactful as what they say. The same idea applies to brands. This is often why you see one brand rise above the rest because what they say is important, but how they deliver it and their voice is actually more important to stand out and be heard.

Your brand needs to be memorable, and it's much easier to remember something when it speaks to us directly in a language that we understand and an engaging way that sparks actions, reactions, and ideas. Having a unique brand voice matters because it makes all of the communication you release memorable and recognizable for the people that you want to serve. It also helps you to effectively communicate your brand identity and really drive home all the different ways that you can transform your ideal clients lives.

Defining your brand voice will help you attract ideal clients, help you make meaningful connections with your audience, steer your content in the right direction, and create consistency. All of which are the key to having an amazing Legacy Brand.

A brand voice will make writing posts and captions way easier, saving you time. It will help your brand and business stand out in a busy social media feed. It will ensure every time you speak to your audience, you stay true to your brand values and it will prepare your business for growth as you onboard social media managers, virtual assistants, copywriters, and more.

How does a brand voice tie into your legacy? Can a brand voice help you create a legacy now, as well as one that lasts for a lifetime?

Of course, the answer is yes.

As business owners, we simply use a lot of words to communicate with our audience, right? You might as well streamline the process and be able to outsource it.

I remember the first time I tried to work with a copywriter. It sucked. I'm not even going to lie. She was a great copywriter, but I was not clear on my brand voice yet and all of the content for a new sales page that I invested in ended up sounding like her. It sounded cheesy, not like me. It did not resonate with my audience, and I was out of a big chunk of money.

Now you'd think that I wouldn't make that mistake coming from corporate and helping big Fortune 500 companies nail down their brand voice. But as I talk about all the time, creating the brand for yourself is a lot different than creating it for someone else. Now I have a marketing rockstar on my team (big shout out to Alix right now!) and all of my other team members who consistently keep the voice active and consistent. Although I write all of the content you're hearing right now for the podcast, she knows my voice almost better than I know it myself now, and she takes this content to help write emails and social posts. I also have a social media manager (shout out to Patricia!) and together they save me a ton of time and give me peace of mind knowing that my voice is still truly coming through with the brand voice intact.

It's truly a game changer when you're not the only one to be able to speak in your brand voice, you have to have consistency in the way you communicate. Consider the Legacy Brands of Apple and Oprah, two iconic brands that have iconic voices. Oprah and Apple cannot keep up everything they do and be the brand voice behind everything all the time, right? There's so much happening in these big brands, and my goal for you, if you're listening to this podcast, is that you become a big brand yourself if you're not already.

You need that clarity and consistency so others can help carry on the voice while you're working in your empire, like Oprah and Apple continue to do.

That's the true meaning of Legacy. Having a strong voice is a massive part of creating the foundation of your Legacy Brand.

Switching gears here for a bit, the next thing I'm going to share may be a little bit controversial. Your brand voice is much more important than your visual brand. I'm going to say that again: your brand voice is much more important than your visual brand.

I know, I know I'm a brand expert and yes, you just heard me say the visuals are not as important.

Now, of course visual branding is important. In fact, I'm obsessed with the way professional photography, color palettes, logos, and branded graphics lead the way in getting noticed online. We know for a fact that

visual storytelling is a great investment for beginners and season brands alike, which is why I have an agency that creates all of those assets.

But when it comes to connecting with your audience, you need to dig deeper. Brand voice is all about using language to create a bridge between you and your audience. It means showing that you care about their struggles and their values and why they should care about your brand too. The point is not just to sell, but to inspire, motivate, and empower your audience to make decisions. And to do that, you need a brand voice that's unique and can help you build that genuine connection.

Even the best visual branding can fall flat, but when you pair it with the right words, you have yourself a well rounded personality that truly stands out.

A great brand voice grabs you with catchy phrases, hooks you with engaging content, and keeps you coming back for more. When it's done right, a brand's voice tells you everything you need to know about what that brand stands for, and quickly. It has the power to make a lasting first impression.

The last thing you want to do is leave that first impression up to chance because when created unconsciously, a brand's voice can send unintended messages.

You see, brand voice is all about finding that sweet spot between the way you speak and the way you show up for your audience. Defining that sweet spot can help you be more true to yourself in your messaging. The number one mistake I see people making is saying what they think people want to hear without truly actually knowing what that is. Knowing your brand voice will allow you to show up more intentionally for your audience, which of course, helps bring them more value.

Now that we're clear on what a brand voice is and why it's so important, how do we actually determine it?

There are five steps to defining your brand voice and seven elements to create a compelling legacy brand voice. Today we're going to talk about those five steps and then make sure you come back next week to hear about the seven elements. If I shared both of those items at once, your brain would explode and we'd be on here for way too long.

For today, if you want to fast track your way to a stand out legacy brand voice, here are five practical steps you can take right now to get started. (So literally, if you have not been taking notes yet, I recommend writing these down and then taking time to journal around each one.)

Step 1: Okay, so the first step is to review your values and your goals. Now, some of these things I'm going to say here, you've heard before but we're thinking about this through the context of your brand voice.

We really want you to think about looking at your mission statement and thinking back to your why. What is the reason you started your business? That spark had the power to change your life, so use it in your

messaging and to change other lives, too. How can you weave your values, your goals, your mission, and your why throughout your brand and your business and all of your content?

Step 2: Audit your current presence. I have all of my clients do this, actually reviewing their messaging, everything from blog posts to website pages to social media captions.

Do you sound like yourself? Or maybe you're being heavily influenced by competitors, by a mentor? Or you're showing up as somebody that you think you need to be rather than who you truly are. Do your words reflect your brand values?

Use these insights to guide your future messaging to reflect the kind of brand that you truly want to build and reflect who you truly are.

Step 3: Think about your target audience. Who are they and how do you want them to feel after using your product or engaging with your service?

You see, too often we spend time nailing down this one avatar and speaking to this one person. I actually think that does us a disservice. We do want to go a bit broader in our audience because if you're speaking to one person, you're not truly speaking to anyone. Now, it's also true that if you're speaking to everyone, you're speaking to no one. There's a sweet spot in the middle that we have to find to really nail your brand voice.

Now, this seems obvious and maybe you're already doing it, but you want to keep this audience in mind when you're writing.

Do you actually know what your audience wants, or are you simply guessing? Do some market research. When I was working with corporate brands like Adidas, they would spend millions of dollars on market research before launching a new product. Now, obviously, you're not probably in that position, nor am I.

But don't skip this step. You know what they say about assuming, right? This is so important that I bake it into the foundations of all of my branding programs and offers. We never complete a brand that has not gone through the market research process because we cannot assume what people truly want. And again, I'm going to talk about sweet spots a lot today.

You need to show up as your true, authentic self, but you also need to be resonating with what your audiences truly wants and needs to hear.

Step 4: Think about the stage that you're at in your business journey. What is your role in serving your audience? Are you a peer, a teacher, or an expert?

Think about how you want to show up for your audience through your brand messaging and adjust your tone to match. If you want to become a thought leader, begin showing up as one. Now, no one is going to

show up one day and give you permission or put a badge on you and say, "okay, you're ready to become a thought leader."

Remember the things that you're amazing at and feel easy to you are just that. Not everyone else gets it the way that you do. It's time to let that imposter syndrome take a back seat. It may never leave entirely, but you can tell your inner critic to chill. Thank her for her service and trying to protect you, but also let her know that she's done her job and you'll call her when needed.

Seriously, I know this sounds a little silly, but it works. It's time for you to step into the role that you truly want to be showing up as.

Step 5: All right, last but not least, think about everything that makes your brand stand out. Are you certified in something unique? Are you a woman or minority owned business? Which product or service makes you feel most proud? How can you shine a light on the things that differentiate you? Do you have a catchphrase that you love to use?

Make a list of power words that you want to shine through in all of your communications and repeat these words throughout your messaging. The point is to make your brand memorable, so don't worry about being repetitive.

Being a broken record is actually a good thing. For instance, I talk about Legacy all the time, and maybe some people get sick of it, but the people who resonate, they get it and the people who don't, they'll move on. But when they start talking about Legacy Branding they're helping me market, because I own the trademark. When people really resonate with it, they talk about creating a legacy brand.

So what terms can you coin and own to create your own?

All right, so once you've taken those five steps, I want you to remember your brand voice is not set in stone, but you can create the foundation and create that consistency. Consistency is key to an impactful brand.

However, it can be slightly fluid, moving and changing to adapt to your business and the changing times. We're on warp speed right here. If you haven't noticed, we're already partly through 2022, right? Things are shifting and changing, and fast. You also want to set that foundation. But while it's important to create your brand voice guidelines, it's important to remember that you're not tied down to them forever.

This is also a problem that I've seen with people. They're afraid to nail something down because they feel like it's set in stone. Just know how important it is to do this. But regular reviews of your brand vision, your offerings, your voice will help adjust this voice as needed.

For instance, if you're pivoting your niche from social media management to coaching, your brand voice probably will need a slight refresh. You are still you, but you might choose to be a little bit more assertive, empowering and motivating in your messaging, rather than encouraging and making things sound simple.

As you grow and gain experience, the way you communicate may change slightly, but you'll move through the ranks and feel a lot more confident in your style if you determine what that is now.

If a brand voice still seems a little bit daunting and unfamiliar to you right now, don't worry. You're setting the foundations and you'll grow into your brand voice over time. Don't force yourself to adopt phrases and tones that don't feel right right now in your journey, even if everybody else in your niche is using them. Instead, give yourself the space to find out what works best for you. Like all good things, it comes easily with practice and a good mentor. The key is to put yourself out there as often as possible and show up for your audience, because showing up imperfectly is better than not showing up at all.

Using the lens of legacy and creating your brand voice will ensure the foundation is so solid that any evolving or pivoting that unfolds for you means you simply have to tweak it, not completely reinvent it. I've actually had clients come through this week to let me know that they're pivoting in their business.

I think a lot of people are shifting online, and I could probably create a whole episode around this topic. The social media, the online courses...really being an online entrepreneur is shifting and changing. As I'm speaking right now, I'm seeing a lot of people pivoting and even a lot of people closing down their businesses, so it's really a great time for you to set your brand voice in motion.

If you can get more clarity and really drive it home there's room and space for the next generation of powerful and tactful thought leaders to rise up, and if that's you having this foundation is really clear and you can always come back.

I have a few clients that have come back and one was like, "okay, I'm pivoting I'm going from a health coach to a business coach. What do I do, Tiffany?" The cool thing is we revisit their brand manuals and pretty much everything remains the same other than a few small tweaks. So making this investment for yourself is going to be a game changer. Okay, that's where we're going to wrap for today.

Be sure to subscribe and tune in next week where I'm going to be going through the seven elements of a Legacy Brand voice that I mentioned earlier. To truly fine tune your unique brand voice, make sure you take the time to go ahead and Journal the five steps today so when you come back next week we can take an even deeper dive.

At this point you might have realized that a brand voice is definitely a big deal.

If you're vibing with this and realize you need support in creating your brand voice, I'd love to be your guide. We are currently enrolling early bird spots for the next round of the Legacy Brand Foundations in

September. This is my signature program where I help you nail your brand voice brand story and truly move the needle in your business.

If you're ready to move into legacy brand status go to your legacybrand.com/earlybird and get on the waitlist.

OUTRO: That's it for this episode. Thank you for listening to The Legacy Lounge Podcast. Connect with me on Instagram [@tiffanyneumancreative](https://www.instagram.com/tiffanyneumancreative) I would also love to hear your feedback to see what resonates with you and what you'd like to hear in the future.

If you love this episode, please provide a review and we will be forever grateful. You can always find links and resources shared on the show by going to yourlegacybrand.com.

Remember what you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others. What are you doing today to pour into others and to leave your legacy?