

The Legacy Lounge Podcast with Tiffany Neuman
Season 1, Episode 13
The 7 Elements of a Legacy Brand Voice

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:

"It only takes one voice at the right pitch to start an avalanche."—Deanna Hardy

If you're listening to this podcast, I know that you are a hardworking entrepreneur. You want to make a massive impact in the world and leave behind a legacy. Not only do you want to leave it behind, but you want to live your Legacy while you're still here too.

That's why today we're going to talk about the seven elements of a Legacy Brand Voice. Figuring out your brand voice is a game changer when it comes to any written communications, but it's especially useful in copywriting and content creation. It's essential to nail down for businesses of any size to have captivating and consistent content, which of course leads to raving fans, repeat sales, the revenue you generate, and ultimately, to creating a ripple effect in the world.

If you missed the first episode in the series all about VOICE, I highly recommend that you either pause to go back and listen or go back to episode twelve after finishing this episode. In episodes 11 and 12 we went over all the basics: the five steps to determining your brand voice and why it's actually the most important element of your brand's foundation. I say this not only from my experience helping so many clients get results after nailing their brand voice, but also from watching my own revenue double year over year.

Now, of course, there are various elements that lead to doubling revenue and increasing profit each year, but numbers don't lie. Once I got clear on my own brand voice and trained my team on how to use my brand voice, magic happened. If you're ready for some magic to unfold in your business, let's dive into the seven elements of your brand voice.

If you've already done the journaling from the last episode, that's perfect because you'll have some context from where you are now with your brand voice, and this will help you dig deeper to solidify it. If you don't, it's totally fine. Keep listening, you can go back like I said and get that context later.

As always, we're going to create our voice by looking through the lens of Legacy. If you think you've done this type of brand work in the past specifically on your voice, this is going to be deeper and provide more clarity than ever before. Let's get started.

Brand voice is made up of seven elements: purpose, character, differentiation, audience, emotion, tone, and language.

What we're going to do today is look closer at each one, and I'm going to tell you specifically how to use them to develop your unique brand voice so that you can stand out, be known as a thought leader, and create the Legacy that you're hoping to leave.

Element Number One: Purpose. Many who teach about brand voice will teach this element last or completely exclude it. In fact, when I taught branding as a professor at my alma mater, even I did not include purpose.

Looking back, I can't believe I did that. But it's because when I was working in corporate, the purpose was already pretty clear in most brands. Yet when I moved into the entrepreneurial world, I have to admit that figuring out my own brand voice was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do as a brand expert. I had to shed that corporate mask that I used to have or the professor's speak and figure out who I really am. I get what it's like to find your brand voice. It's like having an identity crisis.

If you're feeling that, I 100% understand. Which is why I completely rewrote the process for discovering your brand voice once I had to do it for myself. So as far as I know, this specific method is completely unique and not like the way anybody else teaches it.

Now, I truly believe the number one element of a strong brand voice is a clear purpose. Too many people think, oh, shit, I haven't posted on social media for a while. What can I whip together so I'm visible? And yes, showing up and being visible is imperative. Otherwise, how do people know you exist? (I could talk about this all day. In fact, I will have a theme all around visibility in the future.)

But we are here to bring value to our audience and for them to care and to think, "wow, this person is legit, I need to work with them." In order to do that we need to hit them at least seven times with purposeful content before they really start to pay attention or take action.

So before writing any piece of content or copy, ask yourself, what is the purpose here? Why am I writing this? What questions am I going to answer?

Purposeful brand communications bring value. They also engage your audience, making sharing content and selling your offers a whole lot easier and more effective.

Every piece of content should perform one of these functions: sell, instruct, amplify, inform, engage, entertain, or educate.

Make sure to keep these in mind next time you're setting goals or planning out your content pillars. Now, of course, a single piece of content can do multiple things at once, but those are the main purposes for your content.

Element Number Two: Your Character.

(Now, I could talk about each of these elements all day. So I'm only going to touch on each one of these seven elements to make sure you're getting a well rounded and powerful brand voice. I'll be back in future episodes to dive deeper into each specific one on some level.)

Your character is all about you and your brand. Obviously, to shine and stand out to your audience, you've got to let your brand personality shine. After all, you are the brand these days. Even large corporations do best when they have a distinct spokesperson and a personal brand. Think about Oprah, Richard Branson, Sarah Blakely, Jessica Alba, all the influencer brands propping up left and right. I mean, they're everywhere, and they're doing amazing things because there's a distinct character tied to the service or product.

And I get it, when we think back to visibility, some of us would rather hide than be front and center. I can raise my hand to that, but I promise there are ways to be a spokesperson, even if you're an introvert. Again, stay tuned for future episodes.

Your brand character or persona will depend on the type of business you are. A solopreneur, such as a social media manager or a coach, will have a very different brand persona than a business with a team of 100 people worldwide.

When you're defining your brand character, you really need to dig deep and go back to the roots of your business. I have some questions to get you started on just that. It's time to break out that pen and paper. Here they are:

What inspired you to start your business? We talked about this a little bit in the last episode, going back to your why?

On top of that, what steps or key decisions brought you where you are today?

How would your friends, people on your team, your clients, describe your personality? This one is key. I actually have my clients do a survey so we can actually glean that information from others.

What are the values that you stand for as a person, as a brand?

What is the mission in your business?

Do you maybe have an alternative approach or view of your industry? And honestly, the more polarizing that is, the better.

Lastly, who are you really?

Well, I'm only slightly kidding about that last one. It's kind of a mind eff, right? It's very esoteric, so maybe you won't answer it, but if you can, you're a rockstar.

Who are you really? My favorite answer is I'm a spiritual being in a human body, which does speak to my voice. If you haven't figured it out yet, there is some spirituality woven into my brand voice, but it doesn't lead, and that's on purpose. So you want to find these little nuances about who you are and how that ties into your brand, and how much that ties into your brand.

What are you going to lead with? Obviously, I lead with legacy, but there's a little bit of spirituality that's there, too.

Taking some time to go through those questions will help you shape your brand voice in a way that stays true to your values.

Make sure to pay attention to the words that pop up again and again. Those will reflect the heart of your brand. Oftentimes we don't even realize the words that we're repeating because as I always say, you can't see the label from inside the bottle.

Now it's time to make some key decisions about your brand persona. Here are some jumping off points to think about:

Is your brand personable or corporate progressive and modern or traditional? Maybe it's classic? Are you funny or serious? Are you understated or bold? Are you exclusive or inclusive? Are you casual or professional? Maybe a mix of both?

It's worth noting that you might fall somewhere in the middle. For instance, casual? Professional? I like to do both. I love to dress up in my brand colors and have amazing branded photos on my Instagram feed. I also love to do stories that are just me in my backyard. With branding, remember that nothing is ever

black and white. Some of the most successful brands are both professional and approachable. The key is to get an indication of where you stand.

Then the fun part:

Who are you not? Sometimes it's easier to narrow down your brand persona when you consider how you don't want to come across.

Honestly, with most of my clients, they tend to say that this exercise is what provides them with the most clarity. Thinking about all the things your brand doesn't stand for and working your way backwards is a good way to gain clarity.

Consider the people that annoy you online. Now, I hate to say that, but it's helpful. For example, if you don't want to sound too complex, arrogant, or jargon heavy, you might go for a brand voice that's very clear and accessible. When you put this into practice using simple language and approachable tone of voice, then you have a brand voice.

This also applies to less negative traits. For instance, if you're not a naturally funny person, I can raise my hand to that. Then your brand voice doesn't have to be funny either. Let me tell you, I tried. I love to watch funny brands, but I'm just not inherently funny and you could tell when I was trying. Now when I first started my brand, it wasn't like I went over the top trying to be funny, but I put jokes in there and memes and it just wasn't me.

As I mentioned earlier, I'm a professor. I was a creative director. I'm a fairly serious person. I like to go really deep, and funny just isn't who I am.

If you're generally a shy, quiet person, you don't need to put on a loud voice every time you show up into Instagram stories.

I have a client now. Most of my clients are female, but I had this client, Philippe, and he knows I've shared this story before. He was actually from across the world and his audience was mostly American, so he felt he needed to show up in a specific way that he's seen other influencers show up online. He would try to be loud, cool and flashy, but it just burnt him out. He literally had to shut down his business for a while because he was not being who he truly was.

It wasn't until after that he realized that showing up inauthentically actually caused his burnout. When he came to me to work on his brand, we actually rebranded in his calm, subdued way. Now he's showing up as a leader in the way he truly is and it's working like magic because people can tell that's truly him. Nailing his brand voice gave him the confidence and the clarity to truly step forth as himself.

Now, you may be authentic already, and a lot of people are, but have you actually truly thought about what that looks like? Have you been able to teach your team how to do that? You might be a really loud

and extroverted person and been told to be quiet your whole life. So maybe you're actually coming through subdued and you shouldn't be.

It's just a matter of finding out who you truly are. The other thing is, if you send juicy memes to group chats all the time, bring that side out into your brand. Basically, that's what we're talking about when we talk about character and persona.

If your brand doesn't reflect who you are, your audience will spot it from miles away, especially if you're a solopreneur building a personal brand. I think we've all scrolled past those people on Instagram where people are doing the dance and you're kind of cringing because you're like you can tell that they don't want to be dancing, so why are they doing it?

That's actually part of your brand personality. Now that extends a little bit further than voice, but don't force yourself to do things just because it's popular. There are some people who love to dance on camera. Let them do it. Trust me on this.

Your people do want to hear from you. When you figured out your brand character traits, go ahead and amplify them across all of your communication channels and then share them loud and proud.

Element Number 3: Differentiation.

Now, if you're simply looking to grow your personal brand from six to seven figures, or maybe you just want a profit that brings you freedom and you don't have the seven or eight figures on your bucket list. Either way, the goal is to differentiate yourself in a way that creates a unique category in which you can thrive uncontested as the leading voice and expert.

The number one mistake I see people making is only focusing on differentiating themselves from their direct competitors. Now, if you know me, you know I believe in collaboration over competition and dwelling on competition does nothing positive for our mindset or comparisonitis (if that's a word).

Just like not doing market research, not spending time on competition can truly harm your business. I do recommend knowing who your direct competitors are and ensuring your voice is different from them, but not to dwell on that.

As we look through the lens of Legacy, what will truly move the needle is finding the gaps in the marketplace to actually help you identify new market segments, also known as blue ocean opportunities. (If you don't know what blue ocean opportunities are—I could spend a whole episode on that—Google it). Basically, this is where you can stand out and excel as the dominating leader in your marketplace or one of the dominating leaders.

Again, it's about collaboration, not competition. A good example of this is Uber, right? Uber competes with Lyft now in the ride sharing space, but when it first entered the market, it created an innovative concept

for which there was no competition. It was actually going against taxis. Uber dominated until Lyft came along but it's still known as the leader because it created the space.

For another example, if you are a life coach, think about how you can actually disrupt your industry and then use your brand voice to attract people. It's not easy, but when you create a whole new lane for yourself, you're in the driver's seat.

That was my goal when I created and trademarked the Legacy Brand Method. Although it's still fairly new, my clients actually tout having a Legacy Brand, not just a regular old brand.

Your goal here should be to create something unique and different that truly stands out, that's marketable, and really allows other people to share and get excited about it as well.

Element Number 4: Audience.

Now, if you've been in business for any time, you've done audience work, so just stick with me.

Obviously, your audience are the people on the other end of all your communications. Since nobody wants to listen to a monologue (unless you're on a podcast) because there's really no way to interact other than send me messages (I'd love to hear from you by the way), your communications should invite a dialogue and conversation. On Instagram, on social media, even via email, inviting that dialogue is key.

That's why a brand voice must be built to engage and include your target audience. Not just to speak at them. To make sure that your words speak directly to your people, you've got to know who the heck they are in the first place.

You've probably got a good idea of this if you're somewhat of a seasoned entrepreneur. But I want to do a quick recap and just fill you in if you are new, or perhaps there's some golden nuggets in here that you haven't thought about or you haven't revisited lately.

Of course you want to think about demographics. Use that market research I was talking about earlier to verify the general gender, age, occupation, and geographical location of your audience. Another key thing is to think about the people that you love working with already. What keeps them up at night? Think about their greatest struggles, desires, and obstacles that they're facing that are preventing them from reaching their goals.

Then think about how you can help. Really, this is your brand story. (I'll probably be doing a whole episode about this as well. There's so much to talk about in creating your legacy.)

But from this perspective, these things are what keeps them up at night. How can your products and services help them overcome those struggles? How would it make them feel to overcome their struggles?

This is what they need to hear right now.

Are they looking for educational or inspirational content? Are they super serious about building trust? Or do they just want a brand that gives them a giggle? (This is what I was talking about last episode in finding a sweet spot between who you are in your brand voice and what your ideal clients truly want to hear.)

The easiest way to make sure that your brand speaks directly to your target audience is by looking at who you're already serving and who you love serving. The goal, of course, is to attract more people that you love, not people that drain you. A good majority of my clients come to me because they are getting clients, but not the people that they truly want to work with.

Once you shift your brand voice to attract those who you align with, it's magic. Like attracts like.

And not only that, your energy and your vibration also becomes part of your voice. Imagine a person who matches all of the characteristics of your ideal client. Picture what they look like, how they go about their daily life. Whenever you're writing a page of copy, a new email, or a social post, write with this person or these people in mind.

This will laser focus your message, giving it power. Of course, there's a ton more to really nailing down your ideal client but that's enough for today.

Element Number 5: Emotion.

Do you want to know the real secret of building an engaged audience?

It's all about emotion.

Your brand has to make your audience feel something. After all, if they don't feel anything, how can they care about buying your products or services? What you want to ask yourself is how you want your audience to feel after engaging with your brand; after they are scrolling through Instagram and seeing your post, visiting your blog, or booking a call with you. How do you want them to feel once they've actually signed your contract and secured a spot in your calendar?

Your customer journey isn't just before you work with them, but throughout the process, and afterwards. Now, if you're a fan of visual branding, you'll already know a little bit about color psychology and how branding can make us feel.

This is why I want to pull in the marriage of your visual brand and your brand voice because, as I stated earlier, they're both important. But your voice actually trumps your visual brand when it comes to how to make your clients and prospective clients feel. (However, the visuals is really important too.)

For instance, most fast food restaurants use the color red because it invokes hunger, but brand voice takes it one step further. Deciding how you want your audience to feel can help you create content that fulfills that emotional need.

If you want your audience to feel empowered, you might create educational content that arms them with the knowledge that they need to feel more confident, along with uplifting motivational quotes that empower them to take action. If you want them to feel like they're part of a community, you would probably want to share more personal stories that invite conversations and get that conversation going in that community.

Deciding how you want your audience to feel is key to creating a powerful brand voice. Here are a few starting points to help you think about how you want your ideal clients to feel. Maybe it's like we were just saying connected to community, energized, relaxed, inspired, excited, motivated, powerful, productive, confident, challenged, empowered, luxurious, whatever it is. The big secret here is that both your visual brand and your written/audible voice should tie in with these emotions.

Great copy should show the reader that you understand and empathize with what they're struggling with and that you have the know-how to help. It's really a delicate balance of empathy and authority. For example, if you want your audience to feel excited and hopeful, you might opt for bold, colorful, Instagram carousel posts that have valuable tips and are motivational. On the flip side, if you want them to feel very calm and connected, soothing colors and tone with a soft movement is where you'd want to head. Now again, this may seem obvious, but I can't tell you how often these two things do not align.

I'm going to share another quick story of my client Ena, who first showed up in her brand as a kind of baby brand. It was light pink and light blue and it was pretty. But when I met Ina, she is a strong, fairly loud, (and she would say herself), woman. She's amazing. It was really interesting that I immediately was like, "okay, something's not in alignment here." She did not notice it because as I say over and over, you cannot see the label from inside the bottle.

When we finally dug into it throughout the whole branding process and I suggested she use the color bright red or bright pink, she had an epiphany. She realized that growing up, her parents were always telling her, "Ina, Slow down, be quiet, you're too loud." She actually was showing up in these subdued colors because she was always told to be quiet her whole life.

When we shifted her brand and allowed her to step into who she truly is and be loud, be vibrant, be funny, be fun, everything shifted for her.

So again, it may seem obvious, but have you really looked at aligning your true nature with both your voice and your visuals?

Element Number 6: Tone.

Although your brand voice will always stay consistent once you have clarity and feel confident with it, tone is all about the way you express that message.

Your brand voice will always be consistent. Tone changes depending on the type of content you're sharing and where you're sharing it. For example, you might be confident and really bold in your ad copy, but really apologetic in a customer support email. On LinkedIn, you write more professionally than you would on an Instagram caption. Perhaps you have this limited offer that your dream client needs to hear about; your tone will probably be more direct and urgent.

Not only are we thinking about your brand voice overall and every time you show up, you have something your dream client needs to hear, we're also thinking about tone, which is how you're going to tell them. Whenever you communicate with your audience, considering your tone will guide you and help avoid mishaps.

Here are some tonal words to help you get started.

You might be data driven or scientific. I have a health coach that I worked with, and everything she did was very scientific. She really wanted that to be known because it's how she stood out from all the other health coaches that were just like, "lose some weight, have fun!" Not that that's not a bad thing either, but that data driven and scientific was specifically how she wanted to come across.

Are you more honest, humble, blunt, or tough love? I just had somebody come through my Legacy Brand Foundations program and she's a life coach. Of course, there are a lot of life coaches out there. First off, we had to call her something other than a life coach. She is quite blunt, so we actually went with that tough love phrase, and she feels a lot more confident because she can truly be who she is. She used to feel like she had to tone that down, and I helped encourage her to know that that is who she is and to show up in that way.

You might be serious, you might be playful, you might be concerned, you might be empowering, motivating, empathetic, authoritative, sarcastic, helpful, apologetic. (Although apologetic, I think we need to stop being people pleasers. So I'm not sure I would go with that one, but as I mentioned earlier, that could be good in a customer's support email, right?)

There are these times that you may kind of shift your tone, but your voice is overall one of these things. As I said before, pretending to be someone that you're not is not good business when it comes to your brand.

Choosing to adjust your voice to suit your current role will help you build credibility in tone. But please do not force it.

Element Number 7: Language.

Have you ever spent a lot of time with someone and then you start to catch yourself borrowing their phrases? For instance, I'm from the north, but I found myself sitting with my sister-in-law from the south and saying, "y'all" all of a sudden. That's totally not in my vernacular at all but I think it's cute. It just happens.

Language is all about the way your words flow together. It's about the way you tell stories, the way you convince your prospects that you're the one that they've been looking for. Deciding on the details of language in your brand, infuses your brand personality and makes it sound cohesive across all your platforms.

This is especially key when you start outsourcing or getting help with your content. You want to make sure that you have all the information I shared today in what I call your brand manual, which is like a brand bible for all of your marketing and brand communications. We outline everything in our clients' brand manuals, and language is a very big piece of this puzzle. AND while you might not need a style guide right at the very beginning of your business journey, you will need to create one once you're ready to truly become visible.

It's imperative once you have a team guide to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Here's a great list of things to consider with your language that you would want to have in your brand manual. The first thing is industry specific phrases and jargon. For instance, many of my clients don't actually resonate with the word coach, so we will help them determine what their title should be and then make sure it's always consistent. You always want to call yourself the same thing or a combination of the same things.

Is it individual or team? Whether you're a solopreneur, a one-woman show, or a team, one of the first language related decisions you need to make is between I and we. Both of these create different levels of authority, but also different expectations for your potential clients.

The way I see it, if you've done all the work, why let an imaginary team take credit? Right? You'd want to use "I". Yet in a Legacy Brand, we are always creating a brand that's focused on the future so you can grow and evolve into it, so I actually suggest to my clients that we use "we" in their manuals. Even if they're just one person and using "I" right now, as they grow and evolve, they're already set for that growth by having a manual they can share with a team.

The next language element is calls to action.

If you have some favorite CTAs on rotation, you're going to want to document those. How are you going to invite people in to work with you? Is it as simple as book a call? Is it hop right on over? Whatever your brand voice is, you want those CTAs to match.

Oftentimes will hear sales experts tell us you have to have this really catchy CTA. But then if the rest of your sales page is very informative and serious, a really weird catchy CTA is going to really throw people off. You want to make sure that you nail yours down. Then stamping your written content with a personal touch is going to make your content more memorable. So perhaps you have a signature sign off or a phrase you're always using. For instance, my emails are always signed "To Your Legacy."

At the end, think about what that could be for you, whether it's a sign off on your email or just certain phrases that you repeat. Recognizable catchphrases and taglines are key to help build brand awareness and create a feeling of connection among your community. For instance, "sustainability is sexy" is a tagline we developed for a health coach that we rebranded recently. I want you to think about what quippy tagline can you use to get people's attention?

Next up is humor. If you determine that you want to incorporate humor, that's awesome. But you want to think about how it is going to come through. If you love puns, you can put those into your brand voice strategy. If you love dropping pop culture references, you can do that through gifs and memes. The key is to stay consistent so your audience knows what they're in for and to make sure the reference serves a purpose. We already talked about purpose. You don't want to just put silly memes and gifs in if it's not serving a purpose. And while it might sometimes be less professional, many entrepreneurs and creatives use swear words within their content to stay true to the way they truly speak. These are all personal branding decisions.

All the time I get people asking, "Should I say the F word or not?" That is up to you. You really need to decide those boundaries. But once you decide, stick with it and be consistent.

If you want to show off your cultural roots, you might want to think about including dialects or words from a different language even if you're speaking or writing in English. For example, if you're proud Latina, own it. You might want to incorporate some Spanish phrases into your marketing to appeal to a Latinx audience or simply to differentiate your brand. I have a lot of clients from different parts of the world and putting some of their local flavor and their culture in to their voice really helps them stand out.

Another example is UK English versus US English. The differences are pretty subtle, but it can affect the clients you bring in. For example, I have a lot of clients in Canada, UK, and Australia and they all have slightly different spelling styles, so we really make sure that those are reflected in their manuals as well.

I hope that's been helpful. I know I gave you a ton to think through today, so I trust that it was valuable. If you have any questions at all, I truly do want to hear from you. I'd love to have a conversation. You can go ahead and hit me up on Instagram. I'm @tiffanyneumancreative. If you're not already following me, please connect.

And that's a wrap for today's episode. I trust you received some golden nuggets of wisdom that will help you create your own Legacy Brand Voice.

I want to do a quick recap. If you're going back through your notes, remember there are seven elements to that brand voice: your purpose, your character, differentiation, audience, emotion, tone, and language. At this point, you know how important brand voice is to the success in your brand and business.

If you're like, "this is amazing, Tiffany, but I still feel stuck."

I hear you and as I keep saying, you can't see the label from inside the bottle. Nailing your brand foundations, especially through the lens of Legacy, is not a simple feat. Yet, it's a feat that will set you apart from your competitors and elevate your brand to the next level.

If you're feeling that you'd like some support in creating your brand voice, I would love to be your guide. I'm taking some time off with my family this summer so we are currently booked other than a few 1:1 spots. If you're like me, you probably want to enjoy the summer as well. Which is why we decided to offer early bird spots for the next round of my signature Legacy Brand Foundations programming coming in September. This is my signature program where I help you nail your brand voice, your brand story and truly move the needle in your business. If you're ready to move into the legacy brand status, go to yourlegacybrand.com/earlybird and get on the waitlist.

Have a beautiful rest of your day and cheers to your legacy.

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?