

SLEEPING YOUR WAY TO THE TOP IN BUSINESS

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
ATTRACTING AND SEDUCING
MORE CUSTOMERS



"Defies comprehension and description... The guy has flair"
Australian Anthill Business Magazine

BEN ANGEL

Edited by Oonagh O'Reilly

Are people purchasing from your competitors instead of you?

Are they staring at your staff, website, brochures, email and social media campaigns wanting even needing what you have to offer, and yet, ultimately they fail to make a purchase and move on to buy elsewhere?

In this definitive, controversial and insightful marketing companion, popular 'In Bed with Ben' business and lifestyle columnist explores proven marketing strategies for getting to the top of your game by **Sleeping Your Way to the Top in Business**. Specifically designed for business guerrilla's unafraid to wage their own war on mediocrity, it will show you **step-by-step easy-to-apply formulas** for attracting and seducing more customers than ever before - transforming your company, your team and **YOU into WEAPONS OF MASS SEDUCTION!!!**

"An engaging, well written and very amusing book with practical guidance and ideas" BRW Magazine

"Unique approach to marketing and business communication"
Australian Business Solutions Magazine

"Continuing to grow my business off the back of it"
Andrew Morello -Winner of Channel 9's The Apprentice

"No-holds-barred rundown of customer engagement" Giftrap Magazine

"\$30,000 dollars and national media coverage"
Hunter Dean, Author 'Why Winners Win'

"It has become my Bible" Di Rolle Publicity



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'Sleeping Your Way to the Top;'

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2. Share it on Facebook or Twitter by posting the following link; **www.benangel.com.au/sharethelove**
3. Buy a physical copy of the book at **www.benangel.com.au**

Author Bio

Ben Angel, the 'Agent of Influence' will reveal to you step-by-step strategies for becoming more influential through his unique style of marketing, profile building, personal branding and self mastery based on scientifically proven techniques you can apply for rapid results in every area of your life, to transform your profits, yourself and your team into peak performers.

As a professional speaker he has delivered presentations for Toyota, Australia Post, Australian Institute of Company Directors, Rebel Sport, Origin Energy and Action International.

Innovative and provocative in his delivery, Ben's techniques are far from conventional and yet he manages to deliver the complete package: practical well-thought out business strategies coupled with irreverent and engaging humour.

Ben's unique mix of self-mastery and marketing adds a splash of colour to an otherwise conservative day. Media exposure includes but is not limited to: The Australian, Herald Sun, ABC Radio, Channel 9, The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and Australian Business Solutions Magazine.

To book Ben to speak at your next conference, visit:-

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Sleeping Your Way to The Top in Business – The Ultimate Guide to Attracting & Seducing More Customers.

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Author: Ben Angel

407/2 Rouse Street

Port Melbourne Vic 3207 Australia

ABN: 9321 3411 461

Website Links:

www.benangel.com.au

www.twitter.com/benangel

www.facebook.com/inbedwithben

www.youtube.com/inbedwithben

Email: ben@benangel.com.au

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my friend, role model and father Steele Angel who taught me to live life to the best of my ability and laugh and enjoy every single moment we are given on this amazing earth.

Steele Angel
13-8-1953 to 19-10-2005

To my mother Fay Angel, who has supported and loved me unconditionally through some of the toughest moments in my life. I can't express how grateful I am for all of your support and love.

None of this could have been achieved without either of you.

I thank you both from the bottom of my heart.

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INTRODUCTION

Before any SEDUCTION comes an INTRODUCTION!

“Get ready to be jettisoned out of your comfort zone: this book is designed to change the way you fantasise about yourself, your business AND your clients!”

-Ben Angel

I slept with my first manager at the tender age of 18. I must have done something right because I experienced a massive rise (all puns intended) but sadly not the promotion I was really after. You'll be glad to know I've perfected my technique since then.

Mixing Business with Pleasure

Nowadays when it comes to business my approach is slightly different (I did say slightly). I no longer attempt to generate business by sleeping with the wrong people, pulling my hair out, running myself ragged or stressing over how to make ends meet so badly I can't sleep (*exhausting*). Instead, I've adopted a few key business practices which are frankly magic. The process-driven learnings I've applied along the way mean I'm now in flow and everything good is being conjured up effortlessly - which feels *much better*, believe me! This 'How' is the GOLD I'm so excited to be sharing with you in this book because I'd love nothing more than to see YOU live and love the life you've always imagined, too. In fact, I've made it my mission in life to incite every career professional, business owner

and company out there to **sleep their way to the top**: and yes, that *does* include you!

This book will teach you how to hop into bed with the right contacts, solicit more effectively online and develop a personal brand so compelling that it screams in neon letters 100ft high, *“I’ve got what you want baby; no time to waste looking anywhere else!”*

In fact now is probably the perfect time for you to lie back and fantasise about every head turning, every heart clamouring and every cheque book falling open in response – how HOT is that? Welcome to your world.

“Personal branding is self expression amplified to influence and command attention.”

-Ben Angel

Unleash your hidden FLASHER

It’s audacious I agree, but I am actively encouraging you to get out there and expose yourself to the masses. Not only that, but I give you full permission to be as nakedly ambitious, big, bold and blunt as you dare. And when you do, be prepared to reap the rewards of polarising people into two very distinct groups: those who hate you, and the borderline stalkers who can’t get enough of your goods and services (hint: it’s the latter who will make you very successful).

This book is about positioning your “self” in the marketplace and developing the necessary skills to chat everybody up and develop full-blown relationships. That’s right. I don’t care what business you’re in; you’re in the business of selling relationships.

Because it’s the degree of mutual attraction between your business and your customers that will dictate how everything else plays out. If

you come across as fake and insincere or only after one thing (think every bad car sales, real estate or teenage romance cliché under the sun) then it's Party Over and you're going home alone.

They crave to be more than a NOTCH on your bedpost

When a customer buys something from you they are not merely exchanging their money for your goods or services. What they're really doing is flirting outrageously with your business and investing in the potential of a long-lasting relationship with you.

People will pay good money for a steamy relationship with a brand or individual they can brag about.

“What do I wear in bed? Why, Chanel No.5 of course.”

-Marilyn Monroe

Take Louis Vuitton. Women the world over pay thousands of dollars for an original handbag just so they can boast to all their friends about sleeping with this rich guy called Louis who's magnificent in bed.

They do all of this without uttering a single word. Instead they sling his calling card over their shoulder and shout it from the rooftops in the most nonchalant way. It's an expensive relationship but one that will produce an enduring legacy if Louis takes care of his women. And he does.

You'd better be good in BED or your clients will sleep around

In our highly networked modern world of online-savvy customers and homemade eBay millionaires, your consumers are also ruthless traders. They are dealing in the currency of 'relationship' every day and know how to take full advantage of the global market place.

Just like you and everyone else you know, your customers are in the business of trading affection with companies, partners, friends and family. You can do your best to treat them well and hope that they'll be faithful; they may even be loyal... but only to a point. Because if and when a relationship has run its course, your customers will either work it through by watching Dr Phil and Oprah...or else just simply jump online and upgrade to the hotter, younger new brand on the block.

Internet PORN

The Internet has connected us globally like nothing before and forever changed the way we all make friends, build relationships and do business. Even the way we have sex has been revolutionised by the likes of LIVE chat and webcams (if you don't believe me, do a quick survey of your closest friends and see how many of them had even *heard* of 'Skype sex' five years ago).

You might create a Facebook group today and have 1000 members signing up to exchange news and views about 'the next big thing' by tomorrow. For a global community of

credit-hungry consumers empowered to scream “Next!” at the top of their lungs with the slightest provocation, this is a powerful mode of communication indeed. And you *know* how people like to gossip about who’s sleeping with who...

“No Marriage Please, We’re Modern”

One of the most significant characteristics of modern society (especially in the west) is that it is geared to *encourage consumerism* and *discourage commitment* through a sometimes overwhelming confusion of possibility.

***Some of the DIRTY THOUGHTS
running through our modern minds:***

“If I commit to this now it’s going to stop me seeing what else is out there.”

“I’m not ready to be weighed down by a ball & chain!”

“Don’t lock me into a contract: I don’t want to end up trapped in this relationship!”

“There’s always something better waiting around the corner – let’s GO!”

Take dating or falling in love. The Internet has transformed this complex human dance of chemicals and mutual attraction into the equivalent of a trip to the supermarket to purchase a partner.

Adults can jump online, trawl the aisles of profiles, choose a few they like and take them home on a trial basis. And in the case of *unhappily* every after, they simply jump back online and exchange their choice for something else.

Let's be clear:

Q: Is this plethora of choice a bad thing?

A: No.

Q: Does it piss some people off?

A: Yes!

Q: Does everybody do it?

A: Definitely not!

However, what these social behaviours do illustrate to us is where some of the challenges, shortfalls and areas requiring attention in our society lie. At present, each leads us back to reviewing this one key underlying theme: the quality and strength of our relationships in every walk of life.

Not just a ONE NIGHT STAND though, either

Yes we all buy, sell and trade relationships to some extent. But this doesn't necessarily have to mean that we're shallow or emotionally deficient – it *could* mean that we're learning to become more discerning.

In fact, everything at the moment is indicating that people are seeking more emotionally rich (rather than devoid) connections than ever before. They are jumping online to find likeminded souls on Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and YouTube...plus whatever brand new trends have taken the world by storm since the creation of this book!

The LOVE being sought online...

- who can I connect with today?
- who may be my next best friend?
- where might I meet my soul mate?
- who will listen to me about my day?
- who will my next mobile phone provider be?
- which suburb offers the best amenities relevant to me?
- where shall I buy my new home / source or base my business services / invest my emotional energy this year?

The simplest way to interpret all this information is to realise that your customers are continuously communicating with you through their choices and behaviour. And what they are telling you is that they want to feel:

- safe
- connected
- happy being faithful
- in control of the relationship

This last element is crucial. If they see fit, these same consumers will happily block you from their 'friends' list, divorce their service providers and sever connections and other relationships in a heartbeat if they feel wrong done by.

Not only that, but they are even liable to bitch about their various personal and professional 'exes' online to 500 + virtual friends. There are even dedicated online forums for consumers hell-bent on getting their revenge by bringing a company down. This is a clear demonstration of consumers reclaiming their rights and taking control back from the companies that once had control of them. I call this revolution the '**Unsurprising Consumer Uprising**', and

be warned: because I believe that what we're experiencing is still only just the tip of the iceberg and you know what happened to the Titanic!

When NO means NO...and Yes and Both and Maybe...

Consumers are exhibiting more and more incongruent and contradictory behaviour. In one breath they are saying, *"Yes of course I want a long-term relationship"*, but also, *"No way – I'm not committing to that!"*

The good news is that tuning into exactly these inconsistencies is all the clue a savvy marketer needs in order to rise to the occasion (as it were). Our customers are educating us on the next communication phase of marketing. They are communicating their desire to have a relationship with us...but one that will look a whole lot different than it did for our parents.

Objects of DESIRE: what your clients really WANT

- a relationship with you and / or your business (on their terms!);
- to know they can call a **real person** who knows the answer when they have a query - *without* being put on hold for thirty minutes & transferred through to half a dozen people who they struggle to communicate with;
- to connect with personality types within your organization that make them feel **safe** by virtue of being **just like them**;
- to feel, "I'll do business with that guy because I trust him";
- to do business with people recommended to them through their trusted personal network;
- to avoid at all costs the cowboy service providers they read about on **Twitter** last week...

Q: So how can we ‘Professionals’ best attract and seduce customers and make sure that it’s the start of something beautiful; especially when they change their mind about how they even want us to chat them up every five seconds?

A: We create for them the only thing that has and will ever continue to get the perfect result: we market them a genuine, sincere and flexible relationship. And that’s where this **book** you’re holding in your hands right now comes in.

So join me now for a strategy meeting in the bedroom / boardroom and let’s get you started on **SLEEPING YOUR WAY TO THE TOP IN BUSINESS**. I can’t wait to show you all the enjoyable ways in which YOU can **attract and seduce more customers...**let’s go!

SLEEPING YOUR WAY TO THE TOP

MANAGING your INSATIABLE DESIRES

Imagine this: you're walking along, feeling great, strutting your stuff, turning heads...when **BANG!** – suddenly you realise you've lost your (sex) appeal.

Seemingly without warning, your lover's admiration of you has dissolved into indifference and your clients are deserting you for younger, sexier versions down the street. Middle-aged spread has struck without mercy and everything's heading south...which wouldn't be so bad if it wasn't drawing so much attention to your cankles!

In short, no one will sleep with you. This is what it feels like when it happens and it ain't pretty. Fortunately though, help *is* at hand...

cankles

noun

1 overly fat ankles; where calves & feet join in the aesthetic absence of an ankle "*Her cankles were self-evident; feet were stuck to the bottom of her calves without the least suggestion of an ankle*"

Because I get it: you have needs. I understand your insatiable desire to **sleep your way to the top in business** and I know you

want to have fun doing it. I wrote this book to reassure you that it's perfectly possible to get your mojo back and show you how.

So whether you're keen to achieve something simple like improving your strike rate, or undergo a full X-factor makeover to become irresistibly seductive to your target market, you've definitely come to the right place.

But before you crack open a box of condoms and lube up, let's clarify exactly what I mean by the title of this book. Because if there's one thing sure to ruin a promising relationship before it's even begun, it's miscommunication!

How Sleeping Your Way to the Top in Business will hit the spot for YOU

This book exists to help you become supremely seductive and therefore exert more influence on everyone around you. You will learn all about how to create and (crucially) sustain **mutually beneficial relationships**.

And no, it's not mandatory for you to actually have *sex* with anyone, although that certainly does add to the fun of it! You *will* be required to master how to deliver your target market a really great mind f@#k though – by which I mean learning how to mentally arouse them through authentic actions and behaviour. Sound good? Great.

Some of the useful things we're going to explore together in chapter one include:

- the current state of marketing
- future trends and how to spot them

- two distinctly different relationships that consumers now want with you and your business

Now, you may be one of those switched on people who recognises that what I'm about to share with you has been coming for some time. If not, get ready...coz this is likely to shock you more than Janet Jackson's 2004 nipple exposé at the Super Bowl. Enjoy (I mean the book, not Janet's nipple. Although...)

Human Connection

All human beings crave meaningful connections. The accelerated popularity of social media tools that help make these happen attests to this (think Facebook, MySpace and Twitter to name a few).

As Stephen Covey writes in his *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, building meaningful connections effectively “deposits cheques into our emotional bank accounts.” Relationships in any form are so powerful in fact, that Bosnian orphanages were crying out for enough volunteers during the war just to stroke, cradle and hug the infants in their care. The children weren't dying from a lack of food or shelter: they were fading away from the lack of human touch, of human connection.

People seek meaningful human connection in a variety of ways, for example by:

- going out of their way to accommodate or please others;
- manipulating themselves physically or mentally in an effort to fit in and be liked;
- engaging with peers and special interest communities via Facebook or Twitter;
- adopting a reciprocal ‘I'll scratch yours if you scratch mine’ approach to relationships.

The Internet has significantly increased the speed and diversity of ways in which we all connect, and this directly impacts on your results when it comes to attracting new clients. A different kind of foreplay is required these days in order to score with your customers. It all comes down to how well you can seduce and re-engage them... and it begins right here with a cautionary tale...

The Cautionary Tale of Regurgitated Business

“My product is BRAND NEW! No one has EVER done it quite like this before!”

Yeah riiiiiiight; that would be total bullshit. Excuse me for being so blunt but I for one am allergic to crap!

Just like a bird regurgitates food to nourish its younglings, so businesses often try to synthesise and regurgitate what's working about their competitors in order to replicate financial success. Instead all they often do is miss the mark. The question is, why?

Yes, yes I hear you...you're adamant that YOUR business model is different. But is it *really*? Take a moment now to jump online and Google the products and services you sell. Does your offering still feel so unique, or is it starting to look suspiciously alike to others in the marketplace? (Denial isn't a river in Egypt by the way).

The more crowded and accessible the global marketplace becomes, the more challenging it can be to uphold the unique selling points (USPs) responsible for your initial success. Once the USP of any business has been 'cloned' enough times, it becomes the norm. And once something is normal it fails to stand out, resulting in boundaries being pushed further and further just in order to create any significant impact.

Whether knowingly or not, most businesses out there are spruiking the same messages over and over again and it's because of this that consumers are disengaging and becoming harder to influence and connect with. In short, they've heard it all before. Hell, some of them feel like they've already been screwed over by someone just like you before. When this happens, no amount of well-intentioned lubrication on your part is going to slide that carefully worded marketing material into the front of their minds: you've got to unlock the chastity belt first before you can even begin the foreplay!

Fortunately there's a lot more about how you can do that to come.

The Consumer Uprising

Have you noticed all the power-shifting going on lately? Nowadays it's the consumers rather than the companies who are dictating the rules of engagement. Customer behaviour is now *leading* trends in business trends rather than following them. Not many of these changes feel comfortable or positive for traditional companies attempting to woo the market because they can end up feeling like they're on the back-foot.

The explosion of online consumer-generated content and reviews has seen customers reclaim their purchasing power by publicly expressing their dissatisfaction with organizations that rip them off. Website such as <http://www.acop.com> even pay consumers for their opinions and all of a sudden companies who provide bad service or leave customers on hold for thirty minutes only to be connected to a person they can't understand have nowhere to hide.

Customers are flocking to sites such as www.rippingmeoff.com and Facebook to vent their frustration and help others avoid making the same mistakes they have. The window for a second chance is

quickly closing for companies who ignore customer dissatisfaction at their peril. It is crucial for all businesses large and small to authentically manage their tangible deliverables and online reputations or else face potential consumer annihilation. The consumer uprising has begun!

Facebook is the new LBB (little black book)

The social networking site www.facebook.com has been at the centre of this consumer-led revolution. The site makes it easier than a randy teenager to set up a personal profile and start connecting with friends, family, colleagues, companies and causes the world over.

Of particular relevance to your business is the proliferation of special-interest groups being established online, some of which gain traction and popularity at an astonishing rate. Referred to intelligently, these provide a constantly renewable source of free market research for your business. They give you the heads up on emerging trends, consumer behaviour and market segmentation – how cool is that?!

Special-interest groups range from the outrageous:

- ***“I bet I can find 1,000,000 people who dislike George Bush!”*** (sitting at in excess of 1.3 million members at time of writing, I think of this as the online alternative for people who can’t get close enough to throw a shoe at him!)
- ***“I have more Foreign Policy Experience than Sarah Palin”*** (about quarter of a million members although that figure should be higher: I think even my tropical fish have more foreign policy experience than Sarah Palin)
- ***“The doona buttons must be at the bottom of the bed”*** (this was vitally important to about 280 freaks, er I mean *members*, at one stage)

- **“Hungry Jack’s”** (20,358 fans gaining searing insights from ex-employees who share secret mayonnaise ingredients among other things. Hmmmm, teenagers’ sperm...hold the mayo please, I’m on a diet!)

...to the sublime. These groups and thousands more like them exist to raise awareness, inspire action and generally make the world a better place. Some of the humanitarian and heartfelt causes you can find on Facebook include:

- **“Let’s start with just 1,000 people to support Gay Marriage in Australia.”** (increasing rapidly from 40,000 members (5 Feb 09) -> 42,000 members (27 Feb 09) -> 43,000 members (11 Mar 09) and over 50,000 members at time of writing in Jul 09)
- **“Join to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month.”** (currently 850,536 members: those who have experienced the loss of a loved one or other shared trauma generally rally together very easily out of mutual understanding to offer support and create change)
- **“Join The Fight To Stop Global Warming!”** (334,183 members: this group notably leapt from 1 member to 93,686 members in the space of two months alone!)

Facebook has essentially taught us more than any other platform in recent years that:

*‘an idea whose time has come’ +
‘a vehicle for spreading word of mouth’
= POWERFUL directional marketing!*

The POWER of mutual attraction

People power has ramped up and it's transforming the face of business as we know it. Heaps of individuals on Facebook are connected to more friends through their personal network than some businesses have on their entire database!

Suddenly, the major influencer in any marketplace is just as likely to be a lone individual sitting behind a dimly lit computer screen at home as it is to be a major corporation with pots of money to spend on extravagant campaigns. In fact even *more* so, because in the world of online consumer communities, the individual is king and the companies clamouring for their dollars become the servants!

Not only do consumers now have several platforms through which to express their admiration for or dissatisfaction with any company, they also have increased access to the information they need to inform and educate their many choices in the first place.

“Word of mouth has always been out there...but now with advances in technology AND the fact that customers TRUST companies LESS, the power of word of mouth online has risen. People’s TRUST in other people has just exploded, while the trust in companies has significantly declined.”

—Sam Decca of customer feedback service Bazaarvoice.com speaking on BBC Radio 4 about the power of consumer reviews

Through offering connections based on ‘mutual attraction’ (shared interests) with others far and wide, social networking sites are grounding people in their beliefs through validation. In the past, social segregation was far more common due to a lack of platforms to assist in these immediate conversations and connections.

Not any longer. There is no need for anyone to feel isolated or alone with their thoughts anymore: instant comfort in the shape of external validation can be found by jumping online and attracting hundreds or thousands of online cyber-buddies who feel the same way. In other words, **Facebook & co are helping your customers feel more confident in their pulling power through their mutual acceptance of one another...**and this information is GOLD for your business if you pay some savvy attention to where they are talking about spending their dollars!

A few of the ways in which the evolution of online consumer behaviour impacts YOUR bottom line:

1. Consumers no longer feel they have to tolerate bad service
2. Consumers generally tell MANY TIMES more people about a BAD customer experience than they do a GREAT one
3. Consumers turn to trusted peers in their network first (and companies second) for help before making purchasing decisions
4. **"Over 70% of SHOPPERS online seek out reviews from other customers"** (source: Sam Decca of www.bazaarvoice.com)
5. Consumers are now the ones dictating how THEY want to be communicated with, catered for and marketed to: this is demonstrated through their choice of online behaviour
6. More choice = more well defined needs = more important to observe & heed your customers than ever before in order to score!

Effective Marketing – best practice

With each new consumer niche that pops up, a communications strategy must be created around it. All **marketing** from here on in must be highly **directional** to compete effectively for consumer

attention: **the trick is to identify specific groups with well-defined needs and engage them on an emotional level.**

Let's be clear here: I'm not suggesting anything subversive about penetrating these new online consumer groups. Nobody's advocating the cyberspace equivalent of date rape: quite the opposite!

When you set out to capture the imagination and ignite the purchasing power of any special-interest group, I believe that authenticity is KEY. Be transparent. Execute clever, well-directed strategies with honesty, wit and intelligence if you want to get results. Because the merest hint of unethical manipulation from an organization means that the company may as well have tied a noose around its own neck.

Sometimes it's necessary to do some thorough research and nose around deep in the underground to find out who's connected to who and who is driving the emerging trends within the industry you're targeting. Oftentimes what comes to light is that one particular source (usually a highly influential individual or group) is the main driver in directing opinion in your sector. To find out who or what involves investing time in:

- **eavesdropping** in on forum chat room conversations online;
- observing the types of **groups** consumers are connecting with and why;
- discerning what **consumers** are getting out of these affiliations;
- working out what the **emotional pay-off** for purchase is and how your organization can become a **trend-setter**;
- learning how to turn a controversial online conversation into something that can spark **viral marketing** for your company;
- finding out **who, what and where** your target markets are in order to observe them closely for a period of time.

If you take the time to track your target market's ebbs and flows you will eventually get adept at predicting their next move. Although rewarding, this can also be time consuming and for this reason there are heaps of online tech companies such as www.bazaarvoice.com springing up to help. These online experts specialize in helping companies capture customer reviews and take them on board. The businesses in question then use this feedback to adapt and refine their offering to become more attractive to their target groups and exert more market influence.

"Let's be clear: I'm not suggesting anything subversive about penetrating these new online consumer groups. Nobody's advocating the cyberspace equivalent of date rape: quite the opposite!"

-Ben Angel

All this boils down to one thing: in order to become the major influencer you must **sleep with the right people** (i.e. associate with the right networks and engage the right help). Learning how to exert your influence through sparking infectious viral conversations (see chapter 6) and continually refining your offering to stay ahead of the game are two of the most useful things you can do. Connect with your market on an authentic emotional level; care about what they care about and over time you can indeed become the one that influences decisions and sparks new trends.

The importance of Marketing & quality Relationships

In all this rapid flux and market evolution you'll be glad to hear there's one thing you can be sure of that will never go out of fashion: the crucial role played by **'relationships'**.

It is the quality and nature of our relationships (with ourself and/or others) that binds us together or propels us apart. Regardless of what is done to limit or prohibit them, **relationships continue to transcend the supposed confines of sex, religion, culture, industry and so on.** It is only once we have established an emotional connection (relationship) with someone that we are in a position to influence them or their purchasing decisions.

In recent years I have observed that the missing link in business models has been the “true” management of client relationships - en masse and to a hugely profitable scale. This was more achievable in the past when customer complaints fell on deaf ears. Their voices were seldom widely heard and had little influence over the bottom line. Not any more.

It would appear that in life these days we're great at shooting through, getting divorced and ditching the old for the new...but when it comes to committing to long-term relationships (with people, products or institutions) the shit really hits the fan!

Which begs the question: if most people can't even manage their own love lives effectively, how on earth are they going to be effective at maintaining solid ongoing relationships with clients, consumers or providers?

“Promiscuous consumer behaviour with service providers is stimulated by sheer volume of choice. Customers have become outright tarts these days compared to the company-loyalty of days gone by.”

-Ben Angel

Anecdotal social evidence suggests that modern consumers seek out mutually beneficial relationships with just as much fervour as fulfilling any other basic need, like food or water. Some companies are fearful of the power of consumer connections and respond by

denying their customers a solid relationship. They keep them at arm's length and avoid engaging with their complaints or comments in the mistaken idea that they are somehow protecting themselves. I believe that companies who behave like this do so at their peril. To practically apply this learning to your own business, focus on cultivating these two distinct relationships with your client (and no - you don't get to sleep with anyone just yet):

1. a relationship with your Business
2. a relationship with YOU

1. A Relationship with Your Business

A client business relationship is defined as an exchange of money and/or time in return for a product or service. The crucial element that a lot of business owners miss however, is that every single potential customer is also purchasing *an experience of your organization*. This initial exchange may be highly connected (the beginning of a beautiful relationship) or thoroughly disjointed (in which case they've dumped you before you've even dated!)

I strongly advise that you *woo everyone...*'date' your clients and your staff: build strong relationships throughout your business on all available levels, no matter how big or small your organization may be.

One way to develop enduring rapport with your consumers en masse is through practising **key personal relationship building techniques** with and through your staff. I suggest you do this even (and also especially) if you are facing challenges such as high staff turnover: the practising of good solid relationships is something that will weed out the chaff and attract more of the right people to you.

When significant relationships are established throughout every level of your business, the integrity rings true and referrals are self-

generating. The profitability of each loyal and returning client you have also increases exponentially with every year they come back to you.

***How to ramp up your SEX appeal with some
Key Customer Relation Strategies:***

- Assign yourself and/or your staff a few key clients each to personally ‘fluff’;
- ‘Touch’ your customers on a regular basis (at least once every three months);
- Think of checking in with clients as a sure fire way of increasing your **sex appeal** and their monogamy;
- **Pop the question:** generate referrals and up-sell existing products and services by asking happy customers for a testimonial (not only will this help you promote your business in the marketplace but it also reminds the person you’re talking to how much in **LOVE** with you they are).

Remember: you’ve already paid for these clients and if they are enjoying your services and back up support then it will be no issue for them to refer a friend on via a special promotion. I recommend you spend the thirty cents it takes to make a three-minute phone call every three months and keep their dollars being spent with you. Because if the in-between contact is longer than three months then forget about it: it’s the relationship equivalent of neglecting your lover. It means that your client is no longer beholden to an exclusive relationship with you. They’re up for grabs from the competition – ‘out on the pull’, so to speak!

Don’t forget to invest some time and money in training your staff, by the way. Give them the best opportunity to be well versed in the art of building relationships so that they can make the best connections for your business. Truly engaged staff will develop

instant and effortless rapport with your target market through every email, telephone call or visual / in-person communication. The emotional power of this attentive behaviour should never be underestimated.

A client's relationship with your business can sour at any time in many ways, so be on guard. Some of the top pet hates from consumer forums include:

- long on-hold / waiting times;
- poorly educated or inattentive staff;
- slow or non-existent follow up;
- employees who are difficult to understand or communicate with;
- constant spamming (unsolicited mail);
- poor quality and bad service.

Imagine if only ONE person shares their bad experience with a few of their friends on Facebook. If those friends copy and paste it to a few more and so on, before you know it the damage is done. Even worse is when your ex- (client) advertises their disappointment in your business by plastering it all over their status bar for all of their friends to see!

Feeling pussy whipped yet?? Because by this stage in the proceedings most guys are asking me how they're meant to seduce customers who already have them by the balls...and most women are wondering how the hell to walk up and down on clients' backs in high heels when they dare not put a foot wrong! Relax: help is at hand. Let's have a look at your client's relationship with YOU...

2. A Relationship with YOU (but are you honestly available?)

The second level of relationship that any client has is with YOU directly (you as an individual). I call this relationship ‘**1 to many**’ as it is the way in which you provide your consumers with a slice of your own unique self (personality). Ideally this will be a quality both familiar (something that speaks to them on an emotional level) yet also aspirational (something they yearn to be associated with or emulate).

You may be wondering how you will have time to sleep with so many people all at once on top of everything else you’re doing (is anybody else thinking “orgy” right now?).

Well, one way you can achieve this en masse is by positioning yourself as the **marketplace expert** on a specific key area relevant to your industry. This helps to ensure that when consumers, institutions or the media are seeking product, advice or commentary connected with your chosen area of influence, YOU are the person who naturally comes instantly to mind. **How this works:**

1. it makes you less of a player = more exclusive = more **desirable**;
2. it **attracts** people to you who are already interested in what you’ve got going on because you’re so confident and up front about it;
3. it enables you to **charge more** for your specialised goods and services;
4. you’re able to leverage affiliate business relationships more effectively because **your reputation as a great lover** is such that simply by **being ‘in bed’** with you, other companies benefit (think celebrity product endorsements);

Don't be too concerned at this stage as to what your specialism is: you will get plenty of help developing your kudos in the following pages.

Establishing sound communication channels through which your target market feel they can get to know you is highly effective, even if from your point of view it isn't strictly speaking one on one. Ideally this will be developed through participating in or being featured by a whole range of mixed-media platforms, such as:

- blogs
- books
- e-books
- webinars
- television
- newspapers
- Twitter entries
- weekly columns
- YouTube videos
- online newsletters
- Facebook groups and profiles

Make sure you communicate via platforms that are also your target audience's **preferred mediums of choice**. You might think it's über-cool to lead the charge and express yourself via some obscure new technology, and if cutting edge communication is your business that might work for you. But if your target market is technologically vanilla in its tastes (i.e. not comprised of 'early adopters') then you're wasting your time being all exhibitionist about it.

Creating information they won't have ease of access to is like throwing the hottest fetish party in town but leaving your guests

queuing outside on the street: not a popular move when everyone's wearing chain-mail and starting to feel the cold.

The really great news about all of this advice is that it really is achievable on a miniscule budget when you apply a little bit of creative thought supported by consistency. Here's how...

Building your Personal Brand

In this section we are going to look at ramping up your charisma and sending your sexual magnetism through the roof! The aim is to help attract and retain more clients by building your personal business profile (otherwise known as your 'personal brand').

The first step is to make a strategic decision about how you want to work. There are three main roads you can take:

1. strategically building the profile belonging to your **Business** (not yourself);
2. strategically building your own personal profile (your **personal brand**) in conjunction with but also separate from your actual **Business**;
3. nominate a **Spokesperson** for your business and groom him/her to be the marketable 'face' of your business and brand.

Ben's TOP TIP 1: it can be dangerous to brand yourself too heavily to the degree that your business becomes reliant on your association with it for success. As you'll see later in this book, there are many techniques that can be used to brand yourself next to as well as separate from your business. This ensures that if you decide to sell out, walk away, take a break or hand over the reins, your business will not suffer unduly.

Ben's TOP TIP 2: despite the drawbacks, in my opinion it's always best to have yourself (**personal brand**) or else at least a **spokesperson** promoted in addition with the actual company. This provides your consumers with a tangible '**human connection**' with which to engage, instead of just a faceless business towering over them. For this reason, I am going to concentrate on helping you focus some attention on personal branding. You're about to get too sexy for words – are you ready? Great!

Personal Branding

Personal branding is not for the faint hearted. It forms a part of the most intimate relationship of your life...the one that you have with yourself. Personal branding is self expression amplified to influence and command attention. Get it right, and you will find yourself attracting new clients and sustaining their fidelity with ease. What I'm talking about here is **branding your 'self'** to boldly stand out within a specific industry niche. The idea is to **expose yourself in public** and get noticed...for all the right reasons.

Why? Because try as they might, YOU are the one and only element to your business that your competitors can't duplicate. That's why clear personal branding is so powerful in a cluttered marketplace: it achieves the kind of 'cut through' that other campaign approaches can't.

Personal branding is especially effective if your **insatiable desires** include:

- being a keynote **speaker**;
- being a company **spokesperson**;
- being a media commentator or **presenter**;
- benefiting from **free publicity** through attracting media attention;

- **flaunting** your availability to new clients or **thrilling** existing ones by giving them a kick out of their association with you;
- **daring** to assert yourself within an industry of look-alikes;
- being **THE CEO**, business development manager, sales agent or individual most effectively influencing the business decisions and purchasing power in your chosen field (pretty powerful stuff!)

Personal branding not only looks at the marketability of you as the individual, it encompasses all of the elements required to market yourself and your business successfully. These include (but are not limited to):

- image;
- stories;
- colours;
- biography;
- anecdotes;
- controversy;
- visual communication;
- engaging with your market in every other sensory and emotional way possible.

Online Branding

One of the most effective ways to promote your business is to invest in creating a website congruent to your personal brand. This means that if your branding stands for being young, fresh and engaging you obviously need to avoid dull static blocks of text written in old-fashioned font. I know how basic this sounds but you'd be amazed at how many websites I see with pictures or wording that completely contradict the supposed spirit of the brand.

Examples of consistently well-executed & congruent branding:

- VIRGIN (company)
- Richard Branson (personally)
- Apple Mac
- RED BULL

A well executed website allows you to instigate connections and conversations with customers on your own turf. It creates valuable consumer-generated content useful for positively impacting online search results. Think of it like building a special-interest community within the realm of your own personal influence. It is this influence that leads to greater sales within your networks. We'll come back to this in a moment...

A Cosy Night In

In order to 'take the temperature' of the nation (i.e. gauge where the population's headspace is at) all you have to do is cuddle up on the sofa and switch on your television. That faithful box in the corner will always befriend you by revealing current trends in consumer behaviour, especially if you pay attention regularly and observe patterns unfold and evolve year to year.

At time of writing, the common themes that rate well are those centred around controversy, true life experience, emotional roller coaster journeys and other tales of overcoming great adversity. Reality shows still reign supreme in the existing marketplace due to the minute detail in which the rawness of participant experience is documented. Audiences at home relate because these are individuals 'just like you and me' and this is predominantly what contributes to their success.

In other words, individuals are reconnecting with *themselves* by living vicariously through the experiences of others. Understanding the power of this phenomenon enables you to leverage your personal branding to bring “YOU” into the limelight. This in turn gives your business audience (i.e. target market) someone tangible to engage with, much like the characters and reality stars on TV.

What I’m *not* suggesting here is that you turn your business or yourself into a regular saga like *Days of Our Lives* - God knows we don’t need to know all about your actual sex life or lack thereof!

What I *am* saying is that people are looking for more from you than just a sordid quickie. They are looking for highlights; positive experiences to lift their entire day. They are seeking to be entertained as well as informed; introduced to new topics of conversation they may not have encountered before which can be taken away and shared with their networks (think how great they get to look in front of everyone by being the bearer of new information too.) It is these conversations that have the possibility to become viral in nature and spread all over the Internet in no time.

WARNING:

People don’t care you just opened a shop, got a new logo or have a new product range: BORING! They care about things close to THEIR hearts: things that emotionally impact on them either positively or negatively.

So whenever you’re creating Personal Branding material, remember to speak to your customers’ values rather than simply stroke your own ego. YOU wouldn’t sit through a TV ad that did the latter, so never expect your customers to either!

Exploding the Marketing Myth

There is a persistent myth in marketing which states that consumer attention spans are significantly dropping at an alarming rate. My response to this is: *“Bullshit!”* Why? Because people are still freely choosing to sit for hours playing their favourite video game, watch long movies (think *Titanic*, *Lord of the Rings* or *Harry Potter*) and delve head first into complex novels. This demonstrates to me that we’re not talking about an issue of attention deficit here; we’re dealing with an issue of audience *engagement*.

If your personal brand / business is engaging, it will engage people. If it’s boring or unimaginative, nobody will pay any attention to the conversations you attempt to generate through your website, marketing material or blogs. It’s that simple.

“When it comes to tackling marketing myths around consumer attention spans, the solution is simple:

It’s time for YOU to get interested in being interesting!”

–Ben Angel

Rather than pitching to your target market (something that customers never have and never will respond to positively, in my opinion), master the art of engaging them in dialogue that offers educational and / or emotionally rewarding benefits.

Delivered with consistency and care, your personal branding has the ability to leverage your own personality to provide a genuinely well-grounded and interesting experience to your clients. **It’s the difference between being ‘the talk of the town’ as opposed to being ‘all talk and no trousers’!**

Remember the golden rule: when it comes to marketing yourself and your business, **you need to get interested in *being* interesting** in order to turn your clients on enough to sleep with you. Once they do, it can be the start of a very beautiful (read ‘profitable’) relationship...providing you are good enough in bed, of course!

***“Be sure to understand the Power of Personality:
it is personality that drives customer interactions”***

—Ben Angel

Online Branding... part 2

Ok, so I promised we’d come back to this and because *my* personal branding includes embodying authentic consistency, you can be sure that I will always keep my promises to you. Sound good? I think so too!

Here’s the thing. People buy things to tell their own personal story to others and advertise *themselves* to the world: a Mercedes Benz to boast about status; designer labels to show allegiance; social and professional club memberships to promote a healthy outlook or intelligence, and so on. People also buy things for a temporary distraction from the mundane, to express all facets of their personality for acceptance and to attract others bearing the same ‘flags’ to connect with and create places of belonging.

Which is why it always amazes me that 99.9% of **websites** lack any trace of notable **personality** that truly connects. This is due in part to the way that search engines rank websites. And if customers are not currently flocking to your own homepage in their millions, this could well be the reason why.

Online SEX appeal: how to make the most of a Sexy Bot!

Search engines such as **Google** rank websites based on their relevancy to user searches. They achieve this by sending out ‘spiders’ and robots (known as ‘bots’) to trawl the Internet like friendly little cyber-spies. These **sexy bots** collect information on everything about your website, for example:

- how actively **users engage** with and generate content for any forums;
- how long the **on-screen webcopy** (text) tends to be (200 relevant words per page is ideal);
- how frequently your website is updated with **NEW content** (the more often the better);
- the quantity and quality of featured **keywords** (warning: the spies are clever, so if you needlessly overly-repeat any keyword this can actually result in your site being *downgraded* in terms of search ability);

The mistake a lot of inexperienced businesses make to this is to respond by posting copious amounts of new content online to achieve visibility. That the material is ‘new’ doesn’t necessarily mean it’s innovative, engaging or bursting with original personality though – and this is a big part of the problem.

Too many websites end up being nothing more than online brochures, failing to flirt effectively with anyone...and that is no way to get laid! You only have to look at the runaway success of personality-fuelled websites such as MySpace, YouTube and Facebook to get a handle on how important this central element is to successful online marketing.

Take a look at your own website and be objective. Ask yourself:

- Am I inspired?
- Does it make me think?
- Is it chockfull of personality reflective of my brand?
- Does it speak to the values of my specific target market?

If you answered 'No' to one or more of these questions then it is quite possible that your website is all about YOU and not about catering to the very people you are trying to seduce. People's responses are a combination of right- and left-brain thinking, and so their spending patterns are also based upon a combination of emotion (right) *and* logic (left). You need to understand and target *both* in order to increase sales, especially when you are operating online without the benefit of face-to-face interaction.

Having a No.1 HIT

Having YOUR website be one of the top three to appear whenever someone searches for the goods or service you provide via Google requires more than just relevant site content. You must also provide the controversial seeds for ongoing conversations that spiral off on their own, ideally sparking all sorts of **viral word of mouth** pointing people back to the source of the discussion (YOU).

The most effective way to do this is by adding high doses of engaging personality through your personal and business branding and applying this consistently to every aspect of your business. The issue here is that most businesses are too afraid to display their 'personality' and stand out from the crowd for fear of rejection.

But as **Seth Godwin** explains in his brilliant little marketing book, ***Purple COW***, the key to success *is precisely to find* a way to be remarkable: to **be the purple cow in a field of monochrome**

Holsteins (that's boring black & white cows to anyone unfamiliar with cattle terminology!).

“Let me ask you a powerful question: If your marketing materials are designed to get you NOTICED, then why waste your time worrying about FITTING IN with accepted industry norms?”

– Ben Angel

You may not be self-sabotaging yourself consciously, but think about it: do you model how your business looks based on your competitors? Are you afraid to challenge the industry norms for fear of rejection? **Are you simply a regurgitation of someone else in your industry?** I hope not, because I'll tell you this: if you were to take a look at a lot of your competitors' financial statements you would probably pretty quickly rethink your strategy of trying to emulate their 'success'!

The new currency for marketing is attention to detail and the ability to engage and converse successfully. The more crowded a marketplace becomes, the more consumer choice is on offer – so much so that it can be overwhelming, which is why the user-generated content, views and reviews are becoming such a crucial tool for online buyers.

How to avoid Brand Suicide by learning to DANCE properly...

Simple inconsistencies between what your market material promises and how you and your staff present yourselves will become increasingly disastrous. Consistent authenticity across the board is key. Because when clients refuse to sleep with you because something

just doesn't add up, they probably won't tell you why...but they'll certainly tell their friends!

It used to be that you could set up a business, let it run and hardly make any changes to keep it going and growing. But with so many competitive suitors on the market courting your clients, this approach is as over as the dinosaurs. It's the **style and content chameleons** staying ahead of the pack that entertain as well as inform who are never going to be short of a date on a Saturday night.

So if you want your business to blossom like a prom-date's corsage rather than wake up one day only to find that you're the industry equivalent of a wallflower, you need to learn the dance steps, and quick (quick, slow)!

Trigger mechanisms in your business exist to help you respond by implementing fast, efficient change when a new trend hits a market. Not only do these triggers ensure your goods and services remain relevant, but they also help to position your business as the obvious source of topical stories for media streams seeking to expose the 'next big thing'.

"When it comes to effective business marketing, sell what people are buying and focus on the early adopters and sneezers."

– Seth Godin

The key to success here is to be discerning enough to balance change with consistency so that your organization remains on a secure footing for everyone vested in it and not known as the victim of every new trend instead! Even better is to succeed in positioning your organization as the key influencer in your chosen marketplace, leading the charge and dictating new trends, not merely responding to them. Now wouldn't THAT be exciting?!

TOP TIPS for wannabe TRENDSETTERS

1. identify an online community made up of your target market & start hanging out with them
2. follow one or two current trends emerging within this community
3. communicate regularly with your target audience about the trends and topics being discussed through:
 - i. sharing links to 'hot online sources' (not always your own site!)
 - ii. participating in online discussion forums
 - iii. offering to host complimentary value-add webinars
4. build up a solid reputation for being a reliable, trustworthy and well-informed contributor and source of information
5. simultaneously promote your brand **elsewhere** online (so that you can be easily found by the community you're engaging with but NOT seen to be abusing their presence by marketing directly to its members). This can be achieved through marketing tools such as:
 - i. blogging
 - ii. public speaking
 - iii. email campaigns
 - iv. published articles
 - v. media commentating

Once you've followed these **TRENDSETTING TIPS** and established a significant and trusted presence with your target community, it's time to recreate yourself and find a new position to take on the same hot topic. Next, set about driving your own new trend to attract attention, comment and (hopefully) obtain heaps of free media exposure.

As explored in Mark J. Penn's trendsetting book, *Micro Trends*, it only takes 1% of the population to create a movement that has the ability to change the rest of the world. Let's think about that again: **it only takes 1% of the population to create a movement that has**

the ability to change the rest of the world. If you're anything like me, it might take you a moment or two to really get how **powerful** this statement is. But once you do, it will **CHANGE** the way you think about business and marketing forever.

When you break this 1% down into smaller segments within your core target market, you can plainly see how you don't need to 'infect' many people to have your trendsetting 'sneezed' all over the damn place! Imagine giving birth to an idea whose time has come...a message so powerful it has the ability to infiltrate every tier of your chosen playground virally – with your name and business forever attached to it. Now that's what I call marketing!

What we are talking about here is **the power of reinvention** to stay ahead of the trends...to **CREATE** the trends! Later on we will be learning more about this from the one and only **Madonna**. Because if anyone knows what it means to successfully influence each new generation through trendsetting looks, styles, sounds and themes, it's got to be the *Queen of Reinvention* herself!

Get a GRIP; it's not that HARD...

...it's just that your clients aren't that EASY, either! Right now you might be wondering how on earth you're supposed to come up with a dynamite marketing and personal branding strategy that will cut through the clutter and target the minds of prospective consumers. Well, I'm not going to promise you it's easy but neither will I pander to any misconception you may have that it's all that hard, either.

What I *will* say is that it is an ongoing process of thrilling excitement and high rewards for the brave-branded individuals who dare to be different; compared with a seemingly unending and painful

succession of blocks and challenges to those too attached to industry norms and the desire to blend in to step up.

However, once you DO decide to fearlessly create your niche and find your footing, you will be set to benefit from previously unimagined profits as your influence increases. Your name will become all the calling card you need once credibility is established.

“You are and will always continue to be THE most marketable ASSET available to your business.”

– Ben Angel

You can't Unread what you've just READ

So, are you up for the challenge? Then read on! You will learn about how to bring all of this together and more. Be warned though, success is unavoidable when you implement these learnings. So if catapulting yourself to greater success than ever previously imagined is *not* for you and you'd rather aspire to mediocrity, STOP READING IMMEDIATELY and give this book to someone with the balls to follow through and make a difference instead. Aha...I thought that would stand out and get your attention!

The question is: are you willing to sleep with enough of the right people to get to the top? If so, read on because you're about to learn more about who you have to put your legs behind your head for!

“Let's remind ourselves of something here: YOU already have ALL the necessary tools and resources to communicate effectively with the masses...and all for next to nothing!”

– Ben Angel

SLEEPING YOUR WAY TO THE TOP

By learning how to master FREE social networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and MySpace as well as attract no-cost PR through media commentary and exposure, you too will become the **Don Juan** of decision-making and the **Cleopatra** of communication.

Soon enough, **seducing clients** on a massive scale with minimal effort will become something so easy for you that you can do it with your eyes closed. And then you really WILL be **sleeping your way to the top!**

FREE BONUS

To catapult your sales to previously unseen records, attract national media coverage, boost your profile and your profits, go to **www.benangel.com.au/blueprint** to download Ben's exclusive "Client Attraction & Profit Blueprint" today.

TWO

the ART of SEDUCING more CUSTOMERS

“Get ready to PULL... some emotional strings!”

– Ben Angel

Want to attract more buying clients to you like bees on honey? Then this chapter is written especially for you. Exerting just the right level of influence at the perfect moment is what I mean by learning how to pull **emotional triggers**. Once mastered, this technique will endow you with the charismatic ability to engage and seduce more customers.

While there are many ways to captivate your audience and compel them to purchase, none is more effective than successfully leveraging personal qualities (yours and theirs) to hit home powerfully on a deep emotional level. So if you’ve temporarily lost your power to seduce, it could be as simple as learning how to flirt more attentively with your prospects than your competitors are. Too easy, I can help you with that.

What we’re going to look at here is how to become a **master at engaging your audience**, because when true engagement is ignited you become untouchable. You will be respected by your peers, the media and your clients alike as a leading expert in your field. Pretty powerful stuff, eh? And we all know how **POWER** is a major **APHRODISIAC**...

So here is **your indispensable guide on how to seduce others** by:

- breaking free of your past thinking
- ditching all the storytelling that isn't serving you
- breaking through any emotional pain barriers preventing you from connecting with people easily on much deeper levels

Become Audacious

Want to hear some terrific news about any past trauma you've experienced to date? Well here it is: you have an incredible ability to **build instant rapport with anyone else on the planet** at your fingertips forever more. Let's really consider this for a moment. What an amazing gift that is to have come out of your time of adversity, don't you agree?

The reason this is such a powerful concept is because once you have vaporised any residual pain associated with the trauma, you are free to **empathise authentically** with anyone from anywhere at any time who has *ever* experienced any emotional pain themselves. Which is just about EVERYBODY in the whole world, *get it?* Like I said: Wow!

"That which does not kill us makes us stronger."

- Friedrich Nietzsche

As well as connecting with people on a level of shared experience (sorrow, trauma, loss, disappointment etc) the other heightened emotional state to connect on has to do with **triumph**, either over adversity or simply through hard work and consistent effort. People are inspired by stories of success and you're doing people a disservice not to share yours.

Well-known real life heroes, celebrities and other media personalities tap this way of operating to engage their audiences on an enormous scale every single day.

Oprah Winfrey, Ellen DeGeneres, Nelson Mandela, Donald Trump and Richard Branson are just a few of the most famous examples worldwide. These ordinary individuals have achieved extraordinary success on the world stage in large part through their willingness to be open and honest in sharing their own personal experiences. As a result they have touched, moved and inspired millions of people worldwide.

It is true, of course, that all of these remarkable and highly visible trendsetters have had to get used to coming under intense and constant lifelong scrutiny. So if you don't already have a thick skin, I suggest you cultivate one quickly if you really want to shake things up and draw a crowd.

Another word of caution: not everybody loves them! Quite the opposite in fact. Even global superstars as successful as **Madonna** who have contributed massively to the evolution of their chosen industry, must deal with attracting just as many ardent detractors as they do fans.

Individuals with the capacity (and balls) to achieve this kind of polarisation are the ones willing to break free from the pack and stand out from the crowd, for better or worse. Instead of playing by (or even breaking) the rules, they go one step further by doing their own thing and completely ignoring them! By so doing, they establish a whole new set of ground rules; becoming the thought leaders, trendsetters and style icons who set the benchmark higher for others to follow.

Later on we will discuss some strategies for how best to manage the process of polarising individuals into two distinct groups: those who LOVE you and can't wait to f@*k your brains out ...and those who wouldn't sleep with you if you paid them! The great news is that you can get BOTH groups working FOR you and your business. Pretty cool, huh?

How John Howard helped his opponent Kevin Rudd become Prime Minister

Don't be shocked...this is going to make a lot more sense in a minute, believe me (I haven't let you down yet, have I? Good). Here we go...

In 2007 it was national election time again for Australia. **John Howard** was the country's second longest running Prime Minister after Sir Robert Menzies, and he was probably pretty confident about going to the polls again.

Of course, that was before **Kevin Rudd** burst onto the scene with his '**Kevin 07**' campaign calling for change (don't they always?) and reaching out to a lot of ordinary folk on the street by participating in popular mainstream media, such as The Kyle & Jackie O Show.

The Howard camp retaliated by running story after story about Kevin being in bed with the Unions. They claimed these relationships would irreparably damage the Australian economy. In fact, rather than *promote* John Howard and his policies in the press, the months leading up to the election seemed to be exclusively full of pictures of and stories about Kevin.

Ever heard of that old adage, "*all publicity is good publicity*"? Well whether through his own campaigning (i.e. positive presence) or through the Howard camp trying to discredit him (pictures of Kevin

with a big fat cross across his face in black and white), one thing was clear: it was Kevin, Kevin and more Kevin.

The day I went to my local community centre to vote, I remember current incumbent being conspicuous by his absence. There was not a single poster of the Prime Minister's face anywhere; those famously bushy eyebrows were nowhere to be seen. I can't speak for other polling stations, but I do know that *my* fellow voters were treated to huge 'Kevin 07' posters plastered everywhere...and that the only Howard campaign posters there were, were of even *more* pictures of Kevin's face, albeit with that famous cross scored right through it.

The crazy thing is that associating a big fat 'X' with a person's face when using that precise mark is exactly how you vote FOR someone, has got to be one of the *dumbest* moves ever (and you don't have to be a master NLP practitioner to see where this is heading!).

The POWER of your SUBCONCIOUS

One thing we know about the **subconscious mind** after nearly a century of careful study, is that it simply doesn't make the same distinctions as the **conscious mind** does between right and wrong, good or bad, false or true. It is always up to our **conscious mind** to make the **logical decisions**.

And so when the entire 2007 election campaign featured nothing but images of Kevin Rudd (whether presented positively or negatively) it had the same effect as focusing on the colour red for three minutes and then walking around normally would have on the average person. If you try this you will see that everything red (cars, clothes, books, bags, bicycles) will leap out at you and seem more prevalent, while everything (or in the case of John Howard, *everyone*) else dissolves into virtual obscurity in the background.

This is essentially how **subliminal marketing** works in order to influence individuals yet to form an opinion or conscious purchasing decision. For the Howard camp to so massively misunderstand this basic principle and end up using it almost entirely to their own detriment and Rudd's advantage was an enormously embarrassing faux pas.

Those in opposition to **Kevin Rudd** actually ended up **assisting** his campaign by increasing **visibility** and **awareness** of who he was. They basically **educated the electorate** about this relatively unknown politician who must be a significant threat, or else why go after him to such an extent? This left Kevin free to **promote his policies** without having to contend with being the lesser-known candidate as well. Talk about an unintended side effect!

When you draw attention to anything, it expands. This is true whether the thing you are focusing on is a source of pain or pleasure; something positive or negative.

This is what is meant by the saying, "*where attention goes, energy grows*" and that, "*what we resist, persists*". The second concept is one of the central themes explored in Neale Donald Walsh's '*Conversations with God*' series. In other words, *whenever* you give attention to anything (whether it be an emotion, situation, person or idea) you are breathing life into it. This is true even if the way you are doing this is through actively disliking or even hating (i.e. "resisting") the person or problem in question.

John Howard's campaign *did* provide a platform for Kevin Rudd to be criticised, but far more significantly it made people feel compelled to find out more about him! While little Johnnie was messing about in the playground calling Kevin names, Rudd got on with the job at hand. Far from ruining his opponent's chances, all Howard succeeded in doing was alighting everybody's curiosity

and engaging the whole nation in debating Rudd's suitability – including of course, Rudd himself, who calmly rose above it all and concentrated on talking **positively about the policies he would implement once elected** rather than negatively banging on about anybody else's.

"Where attention goes, energy grows", remember? The people paid attention to Rudd (how could they not when his name was *everywhere*??) and he won the election hands down. Now whether you supported Kevin Rudd, John Howard, neither or both is totally and utterly beside the point.

What's relevant is that marketing is marketing. Whether thinking about politics, the Arts and entertainment industries, social sectors, Not For Profit or your own business dealings, exactly the same principles apply.

So is it really true that 'any PR is good PR'?

Anybody playing in the public arena is likely to attract both good and bad PR at some stage. So when running marketing and media campaigns for your business, recognise that although negative commentary may occur, you can still turn this around and use the power of attention to bring whatever YOU want to talk about into the spotlight too.

"The only thing worse than being talked about is *not* being talked about."

- Oscar Wilde, playwright, poet & author

Negative media can even be positively viewed as precisely the window of opportunity required to highlight points for discussion and access and influence a huge amount of people within a short

timeframe. Whatever you do, for heaven's sake learn from John Howard's experience and *never* draw attention to your competitors by mentioning their names. You might well be doing *them* the favour and yourself a huge disservice if you do!

As business leaders it is crucial that we focus on our **key objectives** and ensure that everyone on our team knows exactly what the communication strategy is for conveying a clear message to the right people. When we fail to educate those around us about our shared goals, we fail to align them with our objectives and ultimately end up losing out on their full support and influence.

I recommend being audacious. Brazenly announce business goals to all of your on-/offline communities and personal networks. By doing so, you back yourself into a corner where you can't do anything *except* deliver the goods, or else suffer the indignity of having so many people aware that you failed! You're also drawing powerful collective attention (a.k.a. '**collective consciousness**') from all these people to focus their awareness on *your* aims and objectives. Who knows, this might just be that extra little bit of moral support you need in order to be successful (*"where attention goes, energy grows"*).

I also encourage you to **become audacious in your communication style with audiences**. If you can be willing to ruffle a few feathers while at the same time always being mindful of the key decision makers you wish to influence, you will find it easier and easier to attract and seduce more of the people, more of the time.

Feel the FEAR and DO IT Anyway...

This is a biggy, but trust me: it's a concept worth persevering with in order to reap the rewards that seeing it through will bring.

I'm talking about the art of embracing uncertainty in business here, much in the same way as **Susan Jeffers** advises that we all learn how to '*Feel the FEAR and DO IT Anyway*' in her book of the same name. If you're willing to try this on, you will find that facing down your demons and past patterns of behaviour (which, let's face it, haven't served you perfectly or else you'd already be where you want to be) has the curious effect of **diffusing the fear** associated with any given worse case scenario.

Here's what I suggest you do:

1. Venture into that part of your mind where you most fear to tread; I'm talking about that dusty treasure chest of ideas in your subconscious attic. If you dare to unlock it and take a peek inside, it could just present you with a whole array of startling marketing strategies, each capable of making YOU the leader of the pack (if only you could grow balls enough to implement them);
2. Let out your inner 'crazy' for a while and see what you come up with (just remember to put it back once you're done!). Embrace every idea you have and just 'try it on', regardless of how powerfully it may challenge your feelings around being accepted or rejected by your peers;
3. Once you have confronted some of the possible scenarios in your mind, let everything go - because the truth is you can never predict the exact chain of events anyway;
4. Recognise that all you can really ask of yourself is to be bold; believe in your ability and good intentions and simply **START** to create some marketing campaigns with originality and impact. Your trust in yourself will radiate good energy that helps to instil the same sense of trust in you from others. You can always scale back where necessary later on; for now be all about pushing through the barriers first.

Break FREE from the constraints of your PAST thinking

If you've been in business for a few years now, you will no doubt have created certain beliefs around how business should and can be done. This will be based upon what you have observed others go through as well as be informed by your own personal experiences.

It's important to realise, however, that every single one of these (false) beliefs is a limiting decision. Think about it: each successive generation growing up *without* having been exposed to your successes, failures, beliefs and experiences (for example, the breed of young tech-savvy entrepreneurs reshaping our world with applications like Facebook, Twitter and SKYPE) are free to get stuck in and create *amazing* new ways of doing business, happily unfettered by inherited doubt or insecurity.

Their ability to think outside the box is so effective because they're not even aware there *is* one! It hasn't been constructed for them yet and if they're lucky they will be self-aware enough to avoid it. The good news is that if you are willing to let go of the past, become fully 'present' in this moment, stop yourself worrying about the future and remind yourself to recapture this beautiful 'blank slate' mindset by embracing the question "Why not?", then you too will find renewed freedom of thought and creativity.

The world of business is changing with increasing speed on every conceivable level. So even if your past experiences taught you valuable lessons at the time, what worked yesterday is almost certainly not going to be as effective today – and it *certainly* won't position you ahead of the curve tomorrow!

Creative thought is the currency of choice for all highly successful entrepreneurs. The only question is, how far are you willing to go and how many past beliefs and decisions are you prepared to let go of in order to make a splash?

Don't chase the butterfly...

...decide to be centred and allow it to come and sit on your shoulder instead. Let go of your attachment to the frustration you feel whenever you hunt for that elusive answer to your big-picture marketing challenges. Instead focus calmly on dealing with the first small thing on your plate right here and now.

By focusing your attention on these smaller, incremental steps you will achieve a state of peaceful effectiveness, often referred to as 'being in flow'. Practise this enough and before you know it you will have taken several creative steps outside your own box, breaking through a few past limiting decisions in the process.

Another way of approaching this is by asking yourself more valuable questions. Leading author, speaker and genuine all round polymath, **Dr John DeMartini** often talks about how "the quality of the questions we ask ourselves will directly impact on the usefulness of the answers we come up with."

Try this simple exercise to experience the power of high quality questions and their impact on the quality of answers you come up with.

Simply ask and answer each question in turn and then compare the quality of your answers...the differences might astound you!

POOR quality question	HIGH quality alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will I ever get to grips with all this complicated modern technology? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who can I talk to who will help me use the latest technology available to engage my market?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will I ever get anyone to listen to me? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can I best employ inspirational stories to benefit and engage my customer base?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm doing everything possible to satisfy my customers but they're still not happy – what do they want...<i>blood</i>??? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can I give my existing clients such powerful consumer orgasms that their cries of passion cause a tide of referrals to wash in?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What good is Facebook, Linked-In and Twitter to someone like me? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can I best leverage my existing relationships to improve my business profile & ensure I'm front of mind?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why doesn't anybody want to ring me up and place an order? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How am I holding back in my interactions and what can I do to significantly improve my connections with people on a deeper level?

The problem isn't that we don't already have access to top quality solutions to our marketing challenges; the problem is that we're

asking the same old poor quality questions. Ask a different question, one of a higher calibre and I guarantee that you will start to get more useful answers.

“We can never solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.”

- Albert Einstein

If you find yourself caught in the infinite loop of trying to solve the same problems by applying the same kind of thinking you always have, STOP YOURSELF and learn to recognise the pattern for what it is: a limiting and habitual response.

Instead, choose to break the cycle and set yourself free by intentionally improving the quality of QUESTION that you ask yourself.

SELL the kind of PORN that turns your clients ON

Let's leave the anal probing for E.T. to phone home about...I'm talking about uncovering the **secret desires** of your audience in order to really **tickle** their fancy and best **excite and seduce** them.

Take singer-songwriter **Lady GaGa** (I know some of you have thought about it!) who carved out a successful career writing hits for the likes of **Britney Spears** and the **Pussy Cat Dolls** before exploding onto the music scene with her own debut album, ***The Fame*** (2007).

Lady G's most impressive talent isn't actually in her acclaimed songwriting ability, her deep throat (I'm talking about the *singing*, people!) or even her alleged pole-dancing abilities...but rather in her acute understanding of the secret desires of her target market. ***The***

Fame tapped into this perfectly by being an album all about (in her own words), “how anyone can feel famous”.

The bold, uncompromising lyrics of tracks such as *Beautiful Dirty Rich* created an instant sensation and got the media all excited, touting her as the new “*material girl*” taking over the mantle from Madonna.

*Our hair is perfect
While were all getting shit wrecked
It's automatic, honey
But we got no money
Daddy I'm so sorry, I'm so s-s-sorry yeah
We just like to party, like to p-p-party yeah
Bang bang, we're beautiful and dirty rich
Bang bang, we're beautiful and dirty rich*

- Lady GaGa (lyrics) *Beautiful Dirty Rich*

Take a look at your existing client base. Can you imagine the myriad **insatiable secret desires** in their lives? You may say there's no way you can know, but let me ask your subconscious this question: If you did know what they were, what would they be?

Take yourself on a mental flight of fancy and see what you can discover... Are there any secret desires seething along under the surface that you could use as themes in your marketing and communications campaigns? What do you imagine your customers want to achieve? What do their patterns of behaviour and buying habits reveal to you about the things that turn them on?

Some of your clients' GUILTY PLEASURES!

There are more of us harbouring **secret desires** like these underneath conservative corporate suits than you may have ever realised before...aspirations such as:

- Being rich
- Being famous
- Being acknowledged
- Being thanked
- Being accepted
- Being happy
- Being sexy
- Being thin
- Being buff
- Being conversed

SEX SELLS!

Take some time out to really think up a whole host of creative ways to transform your business offerings into the **porn** of your key clients. What can you do to make your goods and services so addictive that they just can't get enough? Offer them rare **diamond** insights and **gold nuggets** of information that your competitors aren't communicating effectively enough. Zoom in on that quality content which can substantially impact their lives.

What you're selling doesn't have to be new (objects of desire have been around for as long as the people who create and covet them have) but it *does* need to take a fresh approach, be a new spin or a new angle...something shinier and more exciting than the way what you're selling has ever been presented before.

Create new and exciting ways to present fresh themes and perspectives your clients can't get from anybody else. Once you nail

this, it's like you're serving up a platter of their favourite porn on a regular basis and they will know exactly who to come to every time they feel the urge (YOU!).

Your objective is to uncover what really makes them hot under the collar and then go about providing sexy, insightful, attentive and memorable interactions with you, your staff and your business. Even if they do not need to be serviced by you now...they will definitely be fantasising about you and the very next time they're in the mood it's YOU who'll get the booty-call!

Even so-called "boring" industry sectors such as Finance can create clients who clamour to make booty-calls. Be creative, think outside the box. Maybe the Accountants you wish to service **secretly desire** for their extravagant spouse to stop buying shoes, their lazy kids to *earn* pocket money, or for their own level of social confidence at networking events to have a much needed boost?

Everyone has hidden secret desires. Everyone craves guilty pleasures. It's your job to uncover them and bring them out into the light to be indulged with your help.

The long-lost ritual of SEDUCTIVE Storytelling

Spend a day reading a variety of newspapers. Check out a few online social communities. Listen to the radio. Watch some Reality TV. What do you find? Probably that everything you're immersed in is geared around the idea that people are drawn to stories.

Billion dollar industries such as music, print and the web rely on storytelling to keep audiences engaged and the profits rolling in. Music is an especially powerful way of connecting people through the stories within the songs and the universal themes of love and loss explored. Even that crazy-ar-se frog song by Axel F breathed enough

personal branding into that damn frog to get it to number one in the music charts and on ringtones the world over! “R-Ding-Ding-Di-Ding-Di-Di-Di-Ding-Ding!” Even his little penis flapping in the breeze on his imaginary motorcycle didn’t stop him from breaking into the charts. See guy’s, size really doesn’t matter!

Popular **STORIES** in the world of **BUSINESS**

- **Human interest:** in which the founder of a business (potentially **YOU**) shares how they overcame seemingly impossible challenges and trauma in order to reach the very pinnacle of success
- **Innovation:** the tale of an exciting and original new product that addresses specific customer concerns and solves their problems to improve the quality of their lives like never before (e.g. the wider introduction of the **washing machine** in the 1900’s)
- **Love Affair:** a product, service or concept that delivers such emotional impact that the people who adopt it fall head over heels and shout how much they love it from the rooftops! Think about the common cry from ex-PC users the world over who have migrated to Apple: “**Once you go Mac you never go back!**”

“No SEX Please, we’re British” (and Australian...)

If you’re English or Australian, what I’m about to suggest here might feel particularly confronting to you. This is because the way you have been raised to do business may well place more value on cultivating a convincing ‘poker face’ rather than embracing a ‘warts and all’ approach. (Aha, and we’re back to **Lady GaGa** again...I mean the *Poker Face* by the way, not the *warts*!)

Rather than give in to the **fear** that most business people experience when it comes to sharing snippets of their personal life with an audience, I suggest you consider being far more **open** about your failures as well as your success. It might feel scary to be so honest about your fallibility but I believe it's far more likely to draw your audience in on a deep emotional level. By contrast, the 'poker face' business approach keeps your audience at arm's length, making it harder for them to see themselves in you, relate to you or engage with you and your business.

As we've already seen, modern generations are seeking the reassurance of connection. They want to know all about their social and professional role models (the good, the bad *and* the ugly) because by accepting the light and shade in others they are able to forgive and accept it in themselves. It normalises not only the emotions and secret desires that your clients are experiencing, but also demonstrates quite powerfully to them that anyone can be successful...not just the 'perfect' human beings who have never put a foot wrong or made a mistake.

If YOU (with all your talents, strengths, weaknesses, successes and failure) are willing to become the poster child for your chosen industry, you attract a huge influx of new and loyal customers who connect with you on a deeper emotional level. This is because YOU are the catalyst that helps them feel normal and acceptable, both to themselves and society at large. Be willing to integrate your personal story into the history of your business and you will have a very powerful formula for seducing and converting new target markets.

Some ways to share your story:

- TV
- radio
- email
- Twitter
- website
- blogging
- MySpace
- Facebook
- networking events
- viral marketing initiatives
- public speaking (my personal favourite)
- word of mouth (i.e. inspiring people so much you end up with ‘brand advocates’ who talk about how much they love you everywhere they go)

PLUS anywhere else you can think of that gives you a vehicle for communicating sincerely with your target audience 😊.

When you open up and share your experiences and those of your clients (with their permission of course) you open the floodgates for others to come forward and continue your conversation. You become the **catalyst** giving people **permission** to put their hands up and say, “I have that same issue! I thought I was alone but now I see I’m normal, dagnammit!”

I have seen time and again how the individual with the courage to do this can captivate an audience faster and more effectively than that of a combination of every other marketing effort put together. This powerful tool is how you can incite people to life-changing action where previously they felt stifled and dull.

The EXCEPTION to the RULE!

Before you rush out there and tell the whole world what a financial illiterate you are, PLEASE STOP: because **there are some things that are still taboo!** It is absolutely **out of the question** to discuss your financial matters in the public arena for example, especially if you're yet to turn a profit!

You should also put away ALL of the following topics. They are NOT open for discussion: lock them 'in the vault' so to speak:

- derogatory comments about your organization;
- stories that embarrass or degrade your staff in any way;
- any current challenges with existing clients, shareholders or franchise operators.

The list goes on but you get the idea (I hope!). In short, your story should be **safe and sound** for public consumption, so focus on **past** challenges you've already overcome, not current ones that are weighing you down. Your boardroom report is *not* newsworthy unless you are a top 100 company, and only then to a small segment with a vested interest in it.

“But I don’t even HAVE a Story worth telling: I used to work for a corporation, now I’m a small business owner...and there’s nothing EXCITING about that, is there?”

Blah, blah, blah...actually there IS. I've heard all these objections before and I'm not seduced by any of them ok? This boy's not buying! Why? Because look at me: I'm a dirty no good tramp but it's never stopped ME from making a living through sharing my story with others, now has it?

Everybody has a story:

- the CEO in her comfortable office who used to be a missionary in Uganda;
- that bus driver who made you laugh this morning who secretly dreams of wowing Melbourne Comedy Festival with his stand-up routine;
- the Librarian at your kid's school who once played bass guitar with Crowded House;
- the A-list celebrity you're jealous of who seems to have it all, yet goes home to a partner with early onset Alzheimer's disease.

The point is that you just never know what stories are lurking behind seemingly successful or conservative exteriors. In fact sometimes the *most* interesting tales of personal triumph come from small acts of kindness or courage carried through in everyday situations: and I'm **100% positive** that YOU will have been at the heart of some of those at one time or another.

In terms of business, it is incredibly rare to find a successful businessperson who has *not* encountered some kind of personal or professional challenge that threatened to bring everything crashing down around their ears at some point. It's these tests that give you insights into who you really are and help you draw on internal resources you never even realised were there before. The entrepreneur **Donald Trump** is a good example of this: he has earned and lost more millions than most of us can ever imagine and even went bankrupt before making it all back again and more.

“If s/he can do it, I can do it!”

The thing is, we human beings are intensely curious creatures. We're addicted to our emotions and anything that stirs these up, stimulates thought or invokes feelings of greatness will hook us in. We like to see ordinary people succeed as long as the story is accompanied with the message that if they can do it, **we** can do it too. **Give your customers a reason to adopt YOU as their everyday hero**, something to aspire to through your business offering. Become the catalyst for deep emotional connection and transformation in their lives.

Storytelling made SIMPLE

Still don't believe that your story's worth telling? Or that it will attract and seduce more customers? I disagree. Allow me to walk you through this simple 8-step process and I think you'll change your mind.

1. TOPIC (subject matter / content)

2. CRAFTING YOUR STORY:

- a. Context
- b. the Moral of the story
- c. the Journey
- d. the Destination
- e. the Style of delivery
- f. the Take Away (Brain-)Food

1. TOPIC

Your business stories can be about you, your staff, your customers, the personality of your business or even your corporate social responsibility program. Remember to show everyone in a positive light in the end. Also remember:

this is NOT a pitch! You are sharing examples of triumph over adversity in order to engage and inspire – not trying to get everyone in the audience to buy your products. If you do so much so as START some cheesy sales pitch you will lose your audience before you even begin. Trust that if you are entertaining and informative enough, people here will become ‘Brand Advocates’ and talk about you positively wherever they go.

2. CRAFTING YOUR STORY (the essential ingredients)

You’ll be glad to know that there’s an easy way bring together all the elements which create a successful story for sharing and marketing purposes. Ready? Ok, here we go:

a. Context:

Context is everything. Even a controversial title such as *Sleeping Your Way to the Top in Business* can only hold weight if it is immediately put into the context of building relationships. The title is there to hook people in and stimulate enough curiosity for readers to pick up the book. Once you’ve got their attention, you must deliver the goods. Never trick anybody. Customers who feel betrayed do NOT make good brand advocates for you out there in future!

b. the Moral of the story:

Ever watched that show, ‘*The Simpsons*’? Well I’m ADDICTED to it (yes I know, I’m being nerdy here, but go on admit it: haven’t you secretly warmed to me just a little bit more for giving you a sneak peak at my inner geek?!). What I LOVE about ‘*The Simpsons*’ is that even in its 20th season, every single episode still manages to reveal new insights into the beliefs and value systems of its characters or the moral code of Springfield as a community. I suggest you read through all of your marketing collateral with this in mind. Ask yourself:

- Q: Does my business literature offer valuable insight into what the core beliefs of my organization are?
- Q: Does it edify my staff and introduce them to my customers in the best light?
- Q: Do I come across as a trustworthy, well-informed expert in my field?
- Q: Have my prospects received an important message about myself, my organization and our morality; something of use and inspiration in their personal lives? Or is it just a bland piece of crap? (I didn't say the truth is always easy, but I promise it will set you free!)

c. the Journey:

This is the raw emotional guts of your story. Think back over your journey from A – Z in business. How has your business taken shape so far and what do the defining moments look like? Every business has a story to tell, it's simply a matter of highlighting the most impactful elements. Be sure to make it newsworthy and remember to include:

- * laugh out loud moments;
- * back against the wall moments;
- * OhMiGOD we're about to go out of business moments;
- * and especially some examples of the gentler, simpler everyday customer relationships that have touched your life and helped change theirs (how have you helped people?)

d. the Destination:

You're home baby! Wrap things up by leaving them wanting more of you (not less!). Gift your audiences a parting thought and give them an action to follow up with. Don't make the all too common mistake of just

trailing off without any direction on how to apply all the great learnings you've just shared. Always resolve your story by answering any questions you posed at the beginning or else people will feel confused and leave wondering whether you actually do know what you're talking about! A great tip to keep people talking about you is to leave them with a final question to ponder and discuss at their next meeting. Or else you could mention at the end which of your books / programs / products develops these ideas further for anyone hungry to learn more (remember though: this is NOT an excuse to go for the HARD SELL!).

e. the Style of delivery:

There is a mistaken belief in business that you can't be funny AND professional. It goes something like this: "Straight face, straight posture! Don't say anything inappropriate in case you offend someone!" Ahhhhhh...BULLSHIT. I'm here to tell you that it's your job to upset the apple cart! It's your JOB to ruffle the odd feather, stir up some reaction and stimulate debate. And engaging an audience through laughter is one of the best ways of achieving this in an effective and professional manner. I'm a strong believer in inserting humour into anything you do, say or write. When you educate your target market using humour you affect them on a deep neurological level. How cool to actually be able to influence chemical and physiological change in your customers' bodies? Why on earth wouldn't you use a tool this powerful to get your point across, even if the odd person gets a bit offended? Remember **Kevin 07**: even bad publicity can be good publicity as far as the subconscious mind's concerned! In every business interaction I have I actually make it my personal mission to get the client to laugh or crack a smile. By shifting emotional gears up and down like this, I create

memorable interactions with my prospects, and let me tell you I LOVE it when people describe me as, “once met, never forgotten!”

f. **the Take Away (Brain-)Food:**

You see it all the time: small organizations trying to fake size to appear ‘serious’ and attract new clients; large, cumbersome organizations trying to minimise their weight to appear personable. But **‘fake is fake’** as far as I’m concerned. So how about you make a promise to yourself right here and now that you will never manipulate yourself or your business in this way? I sincerely believe you will obtain a more competitive edge by cutting through all the bullshit, being honest and having nothing you feel you must hide. The moment you come into alignment with who you are and what your organization is about, you will start to attract and seduce more customers. Make sure the lasting impression you give them to **take away** from any interaction with you is always genuinely intended to nourish their **Hearts** and **Minds** and you won’t go far wrong.

How to READ your CUSTOMERS' stories too!

As well as writing your personal and business 'brand story' for customers to hear, it is also essential you learn how to read your clients' stories too.

By courting your prospects this way, you learn how to anticipate their future needs successfully and can therefore seduce them by attentively developing new products and services to turn them on.

Not only does this set you apart from your competitors, but it demonstrates to your target market that you care enough about what they care about to invest the time and effort it requires to surprise them by keeping ahead of the game.

So how on earth are you supposed to 'read' your customers' stories? By identifying their patterns of behaviour through engaging in online forums, conducting surveys and being open to communicating with your target market in all the other ways we've covered so far.

Examine the scenarios that your customers tell you they have lived through, past and present. This is the life cycle or 'story' of your customer and can be used to help you predict where their attention might be caught in future.

Here's a simple 5-step process to help you get started:

- **Step 1:** Identify which specific industry or challenge you would like to focus on - i.e. females; 50+yr old retirees who like to travel; weight loss; feeling attractive late in life etc
- **Step 2:** In relation to this specific industry or challenge, what were the newsworthy issues pertaining to it ten years ago? How were the needs met or the challenges resolved satisfactorily (if at all)?
- **Step 3:** In relation to this specific industry or challenge, what were the newsworthy issues pertaining to it five years ago? How were the needs met or the challenges resolved satisfactorily (if at all)?

- **Step 4:** In relation to this specific industry or challenge, what are the current issues pertaining to it today? Who is doing what to try and resolve these issues and how successful are they being?
- **Step 5:** Bearing in mind the advance of technology, longer working hours, highly competitive marketplaces, the rise in cost of basic goods and services, global warming and any other social factors you can think of, what might the needs and issues be for this specific industry or challenge in another five years? What about another ten?

By observing the changing landscape of your chosen industry and noting significant shifts past and present, you will be amazed at all the useful insights you will gain. Everything will make a lot more sense if you take this wider perspective and your ability to understand and leverage the **relationships between people, products and services** will vastly increase.

One more thing: **trust your intuition**. Get your subconscious working for you by meditating on the question: What will happen in my industry next year? Don't force, judge or dismiss the answers you come up with. One of them could well be 'the next big thing'!

A spoonful of CONTROVERSY helps the marketing GO DOWN...

I know I'm breaking with tradition here, but for once that's *not* a sexual innuendo (I could never abuse Mary Poppins that way... probably!).

What I'm talking about here is the **power of controversy** when it comes to marketing yourself and your business. One Australian business by the name of **Fernwood Fitness** isn't one to shy away from this. As a women-only gym franchise, its cheeky marketing

strategy did wonders to raise awareness of their brand and attract new clients. Their ad campaign, “**No Toms, No Harrys and No Dicks**” appeared on billboards all across the country.

Not only did this clever campaign engage the women it was targeting, it also irritated certain men’s groups who retaliated by accusing the company of sexual discrimination and demanding access to every gym based on equal rights.

The whole thing went to court, which meant **Fernwood Fitness** got thousands of dollars worth of free publicity in the press. The company not only succeeded in winning a legal exemption allowing them to host the women-only gyms, but they massively boosted their membership base in the process. Women everywhere suddenly perceived **Fernwood** as a brand who understood their needs and was willing to go into battle on their behalf. The gyms were perceived as a safe and supportive sanctuary, in part through the newsworthy exclusion of the opposite sex.

How to apply controversy to ATTRACT and SEDUCE more clients

Did you realise that a little controversy can go a long way? Yes, even for YOUR business, regardless of its size or scale.

There are definitely certain sectors where you might need to tread more carefully (Finance, Health Care, Bereavement Services!) but as long as you do your homework and trust your instincts I still believe there’s room to push the boundaries just a little in every industry to capture people’s imagination and hook them in.

As we’ve already discussed, you can develop substantial online networks through which to spark some controversial conversation for next to no financial outlay. All you need is a computer and an

Internet connection and a topic of conversation that presses people's buttons to get the market buzzing with your name.

As for the media, what they look for is an original and newsworthy angle (or 'hook') to your story and then you'll be getting all the free PR via the news that you could wish for! Here are a few suggestions of how to get those controversial **balls** rolling:

- **PowerPoint Presentations** that you can forward on to your networks featuring industry-related photographs, anecdotes or funny cartoons;
- **Short Film Clips** created with a home video camera and uploaded on to YouTube to promote something unusual you are doing in your business. You can market these easily to your existing database via hyperlinks in newsletters or embedded video screens on your website and other platforms (i.e. Facebook, MySpace, Twitter).

CASE STUDY: A branding video I created for **Nationwide Networking** gave the impression that it was footage obtained from a hidden security camera. It featured a woman stuffing her bra and ended with the tagline, *"Does your business need perking up?"* This video was viewed over 127,000 times on YouTube (30,000 times within the first month). It certainly brought the brand to life and got people talking about us!

- **Audio recordings** of controversial interviews discussing taboo topics with the informed consent of others in your industry. Once again, you can promote these via email campaigns and other online mediums. A good example of a topic to get people passionate on both sides of the argument might be, *"Why we website developers are knowingly ripping people off!"*

- **Articles** written for your industry's publications that boldly challenge the status quo. Try to pose the questions you've never heard anyone be brave enough to ask before. Make it your mission to rattle some cages and get people questioning their own life choices in ways they may not have dared to do before. These articles can be posted on your blog and forwarded on to your network of associated businesses to share with their databases too. The good thing about an article is that it is less likely to be blocked by company firewalls (anti-SPAM software) than moving images or sound.

Creating the Message Isn't Enough – To Seduce You Must Drive it Home

So you sent out one press release, wrote one article, appeared in one paper. Whoop-de-do! I don't mean to be dismissive but **ongoing results require ongoing aggregate action**, each building on the one before to achieve critical mass.

Be patient: every time you expose yourself in public you are having an aggregate impact. The benefits do not always appear immediately though so stay focused. Keep on track and stay on top of your game. Craft your story, become audacious, be controversial...and I promise that your consistency will pay off (hopefully with a nice sum of money when the time is right!).

Here's a challenging question for me to pose to you as we conclude this chapter: Are you ready to be wealthy? (bear in mind that if you really were, you already would be).

If you discover though answering this question honestly that you have an emotional block preventing you from attracting what you want, I encourage you to understand that **the process of becoming**

seductive is also the process of better understanding yourself and your own emotional triggers and patterns of behaviour.

Focus on becoming a master at managing your own thoughts and unblocking your own challenges and you will learn a lot about the ways in which you can empathise with and better serve your clients too.

In short, you will develop a fantastic reputation for being really great in bed and there will be clients queuing up around the block to sleep with you!

Want To Decode The X-Factor and Unlock Your Potential?

That's what Ben's second book in the 'Sleeping Your Way To The Top' book series is all about. Containing over 50+ scientific studies on human behaviour and a highly 'revealing,' entertaining and inspirational personal journey, **'Bigger, Better, Harder, FASTER!'** will show you how you can; **achieve more in 30 days than in 3 WHOLE months**, decode the **'x' factor**, discover secrets to instant influence and **find the moment when everything 'CLICKS'** and falls into place for you!

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THREE

**my BUSINESS is
too SEXY for its...**

*I'm too sexy for my love, too sexy for my love - Love's going to
leave me I'm too sexy for my shirt, too sexy for my shirt
So sexy it hurts*

-Right Said Fred (lyrics) *I'm Too Sexy*

Have you ever considered the fact that an overly polished business image may be putting your customers off? Maybe yours is so glossy that it comes across as sterile and actually *lacking* personality? Well beware: if your business is “too sexy” for the love, Love’s going to leave you....and then how on earth will you seduce anybody, hmmmm?

Today’s consumers are spoilt for choice. They churn through service providers like bargain hunters at the world famous Harrods SALE. Loyalty? What’s loyalty? If you don’t taste right they will eat you up and spit you out faster than you can say regurgitated business!

Standout success stories such as **Nike** and **Virgin** have created highly desirable brands that live, breathe, eat and speak to their customers. They are bursting with popular culture and display the traits and characteristics of real people. In fact, Australia’s leading brand consultant, Jess Logan (whose personal rebranding strategy *increased* BOOST JUICE’s turnover *by \$78m!*) even stakes her

own reputation, personal brand and company name on the fact that, 'BrandsRpeople2'.

So from now on I encourage you to imagine every brand you see as a living, breathing person alive with intentions and attributes, able to nod their heads in encouragement and shake your hand. You can see them now, can't you?:

- **Nike** would be a sporty athlete with *muscles* to die for in a hot outfit complete with awesome sneakers, sprinting around the park, carving up the netball court or scoring goals with the football team;
- **Virgin** would be a charismatic and successful individual with *attitude* to die for, giving the finger to establishments for ripping off the everyday consumer.

Both brands connect with us and make us feel like they're on our side. They give us something to idolise, and someone for us to 'wannabe' (the hot gym junkie, the homecoming sports hero, the successful entrepreneur, the anti-establishment activist).

I liken successful brand stories to being like **astrological star signs**: no matter which one you read you can always find a little bit of yourself in each one.

"Brands are people too. They pick you up when you're feeling down; they comfort and cajole and make life interesting."

- Jess Logan MD (www.brp2.com.au)

What STAR SIGN is your Business?

Your business was born on a certain day; this was the day you registered it with all the appropriate departments. And the day you gave birth to your business (thank God we're speaking metaphorically here!) was also the day you gave it a name. Maybe you chose something quirky, something young, fresh and new. Maybe you went for something more 'old school' with a conservative ring of established credibility to it.

In any case, during this process your business went from being first, an insatiable desire, then an orgasm, and from there it became a screaming infant before growing into a toddler. From this point on the work *really* starts...and maybe now you have a business that's reminiscent of a stropky teenager or, (if you're very lucky), a well-adjusted and successful adult.

For some of you, your child (oops, I mean your business) is still in the early stages of life. It's demanding and requires all of the attention in the world just in order to survive. It is probably screaming for love and attention while projectile vomiting everywhere and trying to take its first steps all at once. Nice. For others, your business has already grown up and taken on a personality of its own. Yet due to your influence as its 'parent' the personality of your business will still be in some respects a direct reflection of who YOU are, too.

The **personality of your business** is something that gets communicated by you, your staff, your website, your email campaigns and marketing collateral, your level of customer service and the quality of your products. Phew! This happens *whether you like it or not* so it pays to give all this some serious care and attention. Start by **asking yourself** a few key questions:

1. if my business was a person, would I want to spend time with it, take it out for coffee or supper?
2. would I feel proud to be seen out and about with it?
3. would my business be an entertaining and engaging conversationalist?
4. would it smile at me first meeting?
5. would it seduce me, make me want to rip its clothes off and f@*k its brains out and then tell all my friends what a great lay I just had...OR would it be a faceless, unattractive and dead boring starfish in bed?!

Hopefully your business doesn't have the kind of toxic personality that would require you to be rescued by an 'emergency' phone call from your best mate, or force you to escape through the bathroom window – Ouch!

Sometimes you can be too close to your own business to answer these questions objectively, which is where an independent business coach (or just a really authentic, business savvy friend) comes in. Get whatever help you need to address the questions above honestly and start to turn your business into a living, breathing person – the kind people can't wait to see and always feel happier for hanging out with. Done well, you will not only separate yourself from the competitors but you will also make it incredibly hard for anyone to mimic you or replicate your USPs.

Regardless of the actual size or 'foot print' of your business (whether you are yet to turn a profit, have 100 employees, 15 premises, a multi-million dollar turnover, 1 PA or none) you can still build a **heavyweight brand** that packs emotional punch without manipulating or misleading people about your business (remember what I said in chapter 2 about not being fake).

And as for requiring a bottomless pit of infinite funding at your disposal to create a **big brand** that will get you noticed, you'll be glad to hear that *that's* nothing more than a big fat myth!

"High impact marketing techniques don't have to be expensive, just creative."

- Carolyn Stafford (Small Business BIG Brand)

These days a tiny business with a **big personality** can easily command greater industry impact and deliver a significantly higher return on investment (ROI) on marketing dollars than a huge corporation with an enormous budget to blow but no personality to speak of. Why? Because people do business with people they like: they hang out with personalities who are enjoyable or life-enriching to be around and they give their loyalty to the people they love.

Big business can throw as much money at marketing as it likes, but today's consumers are too tech savvy and communicative to be easily fooled. They want to experience **real relationships with engaging brand personalities**, not find themselves embroiled in some kind of 'rent-a-crowd' scenario. So pay attention to them, woo them, love them and seduce them...but *never* make the mistake that you can buy them!

Once you have envisioned your business as a 'real' person with a personality to die for, the real work in creating some viral word of mouth can begin... Ready?

BORING the PANTS OFF your clients is no way to get them NAKED

We're only human and being human makes us vulnerable to what others think about us, right? Wrong. There is nothing to fear but

fear itself and this **fear of ridicule and rejection** is going to **cost you** new clients and **bore the pants off** your old ones if you insist on pandering to it. I don't know about you, but I can think of better ways to get people naked!

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself"

- President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933 inauguration speech)

Let's be clear: it is ***none of your business*** what others think about you...especially when it comes to people who aren't even part of your ideal target market anyway. Their only relevance is that they exist to be **polarised** into the group who hate you (remember them?) in order to talk and complain about you and your business for marketing purposes.

Now is probably a good time to **clarify polarisation**: I'm not suggesting that it's cool for the people who hate you to be slamming you on Facebook for being unreliable, dishonourable or tardy. These are unprofessional qualities in *anybody's* book and you should avoid them being true about you like the plague. Being criticised by your detractors for being outspoken, eccentric or controversial however, is music to your ears...because it will be precisely these qualities that your devotees LOVE about you most! Get it? Great. Back to the fear (that's if you ever really left it behind in the first place!)

Are YOU ready to JUMP?

The fear of rejection can paralyse us if we're not careful. It compels us to suppress individualism, originality and our own creative thought processes in favour of 'safety-in-numbers' thinking. This is often true despite the fact that the groups we sometimes seek

acceptance from can be at best dubious (peer pressure) or at worst lethal on a massive scale (The Holocaust).

Whenever I feel myself getting sucked into this useless fear-based vortex, I call on the only woman I know with bigger balls than AC/DC...**Madonna**: the Queen of fearless creative reinvention! These lyrics from *JUMP* say a lot about the **personal cost of safety retained** being completely outweighed by the **benefits of being brave**:

**“There’s only so much you can learn in one place;
The more that I wait, the more time that I waste.
I haven’t got much time to waste, it’s time to make my way;
I’m not afraid of what I’ll face, but I’m afraid to stay.”**

So are YOU ready to JUMP? (*Get ready to jump! Don’t ever look back now baby...*) Because forget about the cold hard cash: **creative energy** is where it’s at. It’s THE most valuable currency of our time and the terrific news is that YOU have unlimited access to this infinite resource...so long as you are brave enough to step up to the plate and refuse to die with your song unsung!

***“I have spent my days stringing and unstringing my instrument
while the song I came to sing remains unsung.”***

- Rabindranath Tagore

The biggest and most persistent obstacle you will *ever* encounter that seeks to prevent you from being your fully seductive creatively self-expressed best, is *you*! Some of the **dirty thoughts** running through your brain might include:

“This will never work”

“How ridiculous will I look?”

“What happens if this fails?”

“What will everybody think of me?”

Each of us interacts daily with our subconscious mind through internal dialogue. It's perfectly fine to acknowledge the presence of dissenting voices in your head, but it's quite another thing to let them run the show and heed their terrible advice! Try calmly thanking them for their concern and then just letting them go. Gradually over time you will learn to be a lot more comfortable with Susan Jeffers' advice to *"feel the fear and do it anyway"*. You will become a free thinker, someone that others look up to as a source of creative inspiration; someone who plays with different ideas and expresses themselves more freely through sparking innovative business trends.

The only people to worry about when developing your business and its personality are those you wish to seduce. And even then you're not always going to make all of them happy all of the time. So by all means do whatever you can to improve the quality of your service so that your admirers get every opportunity to become totally crazed devotees. But whatever you do, limit the amount of drastic changes you apply to your overall business personality: its development should be an **evolution** (just like growing up) and *not* the metaphoric equivalent of throwing a tantrum or stomping about like some skittish, noncommittal schizophrenic teenager!

Remember that your existing customers were attracted to your business in the first place for a reason. Probably because your brand promise included some key elements that spoke to their values. If you chop and change the message about who you are and what you stand for too haphazardly, you will get a reputation for being inconsistent and unreliable, and those aren't the kind of 'good bad reviews' you want, believe me.

Your business personality needs to come from YOU and not your clients. So while their suggestions about how to improve service deliverability and product satisfaction are to be welcomed, implementing every little thing they come up with will turn you into

their puppet - and there is *nothing attractive* about becoming just another uninspiring, gutless brand unable or unwilling to hold true to their brand promise.

Think about it: **Qantas** don't change their entire business offering overnight to try and copy **Virgin's** style because it is *precisely* **Qantas'** distinctive Australian flavour that sets them apart (as so do all of those near-misses in 2008, unfortunately!). So if your current branding is less than desirable, instigate slow changes which unfold gently over time. Remember that unless your target market is made up almost entirely of adrenalin junkies, then not many of them will appreciate being thrown so abruptly off-guard (*"Whoa! What position do you call THAT, love?!"*).

**Ben's TOP TIP for Dissolving FEAR of Rejection:
Become a social DEVIANT & CHANGE THE F@*KING SCRIPT!**

Here's the thing:

1. You've lived out your entire life to date like a character in a screenplay.
2. Adhering to this script has successfully gotten you to where you are today, but is that actually where you WANT to be?
3. If not, you need to start becoming deviant. Rewrite your lines to get to where you want to be tomorrow.
4. Unless you're performing a monologue, you'll be part of an ensemble cast so remember to call a script meeting and rewrite their lines together too.
5. Change the narrative; 'Direct' yourself in the starring role of who you are; help others get aligned with where the organization is going.
6. STOP looking over your shoulder seeking everybody else's opinion and second-guessing your choices. Tap into your intuition and learn to feel validated.
7. Remember: the only ratings that matter come from your target audience; the ones who can assist you by giving useful feedback.
8. Once you've mastered all this it's time to just sit back, watch your business take on a life of its own...and get ready to premiere in front of some really big audiences!

Learn to LOVE Criticism

The day that you are fiercely criticized is the day that you are effectively polarizing people by doing your job properly. Criticism that causes you great discomfort is the catalyst for your business improving, so learn to:

- a. **welcome it** (someone cares enough to engage with your brand)
- b. **use it** (apply what's valuable)
- c. **lose it** (dismiss anything irrelevant or unfounded)

Remember also to look at WHO is criticising you: are they someone whose opinion you even care about (i.e. part of your target market)? Copping criticism is all just part and parcel of being willing to stick your head above the parapet; it's how you choose to play the game that counts. So make a firm decision right now to be strategic and use whatever comes your way rather than let anything affect you negatively or block you from moving forward.

"I think saying, 'Go fuck yourself' is a very pleasant way of Saying 'Good morning' to someone you don't like."

-Joan Rivers, US comedienne

Take it like a MAN

When you do cop criticism, my advice is to take it like a man (not like *that*...stand up straight for heaven's sake, I meant for you to take it on the chin!).

Killing people with kindness is your best defence and in some cases you will even succeed in converting your biggest critics into being your biggest fans. This is because you are providing them with a platform on which to passionately engage with a subject close to

their hearts. So even if your opinion does make your critics hot under the collar, nine times out of ten they will still defend to the hilt your right to express it...which is quite an amazing thing to have in common, if you think about it.

Push the BOUNDARIES within the BOUNDARIES

Tangents are the spice of life. You will inevitably be choosing to follow some and ignoring others every day. Just make sure that any tangent you travel on is heading in a direction of real interest to you and your business, because whether it is or not, it IS (and can only be) leading you to your final destination!

With so many outside influences nudging you and everybody else in one direction or another, it's important to remain clear about *who* your business (personality) is and what it wants. This clarity of intent will help you to discern which influences to take on board and which to leave behind for your competitors.

<i>Which elements of your Business' Personality can be changed without negative impact?</i>	
FLEXIBLE elements OPEN for change in response to feedback include:	RIGID elements NOT for change (unless demonstrably costing you target clients):
Improving the quality of products	Changing your logo
Improving customer service experiences	Changing the name of your brand
Increasing the mode & frequency of interaction	Restricting the wide range of communication platforms employed

This discernment is all part of the process of learning how to **push boundaries within boundaries**. You need to be aware of which elements within your business are flexible and open to change, and which are required to stand firm because to change them would break the backbone of your business brand and cause apparent schizophrenia. And if you are still struggling to create an inspiring brand with personality to die for *Don't PANIC* – help is at hand!

How to SHIFT the Top 10 mental 'Brand Blocks' TODAY...

Do you recognise any of these common mental blocks? If so they may be limiting your thinking and preventing you from creating an inspiring brand. It's worth investing enough time to journey through these objections carefully and reframe your thinking as you go. Together we will blast through any creative mental brand blocks and advance into a brighter brand personality future – Yay!

<p>BRAND BLOCK #1: I'm judging my Business based upon what others in my industry are doing</p>	<p>REFRAME #1: In school this would have been called cheating. In business it means you're cheating yourself, your industry <i>and</i> your customers. People deserve innovation, not cowardice so do some legwork & use your brainpower to create a NEW angle</p>
<p>BRAND BLOCK #2: I'm holding myself back by being stubborn</p>	<p>REFRAME #2: Get out of your own way! You must be willing to let go of old ideas about how to do business as they become outdated so that your hands can be free to pick up the new ones and really run with them!</p>
<p>BRAND BLOCK #3: I censor new ideas and dismiss them too soon</p>	<p>REFRAME #3: Unfettered creative brainstorming with your team can produce GOLD and should be encouraged. Every great idea was once a seed in someone's mind; allow them to grow or miss the fruit!</p>
<p>BRAND BLOCK #4: I don't like attracting attention and am afraid to rock the boat</p>	<p>REFRAME #4: Quit your whining, bitch! Ruffling feathers is the ONLY way you're going to find new ways to fly! Imagine delivering OUTSTANDING goods & services that stir up your competitors as well as a media storm: that's liquid GOLD! Learn to love attracting that attention.</p>

<p>BRAND BLOCK #5: I'd rather get to be RIGHT than actually get the job done</p>	<p>REFRAME #5: Get off the ego train already. What's so great about being right anyway? It makes everybody else wrong & who is going to love YOU for that? It may feel hard to admit a mistake but the paradox is that you will win more trust for the times when you do stand by your word. Most successful business people you can think of have failed spectacularly 5 times (but tried 6!). Decide to view 'being wrong' as an initiation rite to 'being innovative'. All Geminis need to reread this insight a few times because you're the biggest culprits!</p>
<p>BRAND BLOCK #6: I'd rather be LIKED than be effective</p>	<p>REFRAME #6: YOU gave birth to your business, so the good news is that you can and do influence its personality and values. As it grows through puberty give your business every opportunity to make friends but understand that it can never please ALL of the people ALL of the time.</p>
<p>BRAND BLOCK #7: I KNOW I'm way more interesting than YOU or them or anybody else...</p>	<p>REFRAME #7: If you're having trouble attracting clients, you're just not that interesting and neither is your business. I suggest you watch, 'What Women Really Want' with Mel Gibson & apply the insights to your most challenging clients! I find the female of the species especially confusing. They're emotional creatures who require <i>heaps</i> of attentive pampering (<i>& my mother still wonders why I'm gay?!</i>)</p>

<p>BRAND BLOCK #8: I KNOW all about that stuff already, Thank you very much!</p>	<p>REFRAME #8: There's what you KNOW you KNOW (how to ride a bike), what you KNOW you DON'T know (how to split an atom in your kitchen) & everything unknown that you don't even <i>know</i> that you don't even know! (this last section is the BIGGEST by the way). So the moment you decide you 'know enough' is the moment you surrender control & find yourself in life's passenger seat instead of behind the wheel. Stay curious. Re-educate yourself & your staff in your chosen field... then forget it all & start again! Audiences will return to reframe their <i>own</i> thinking.</p>
<p>BRAND BLOCK #9: I have a sneaking suspicion I may be listening to all the wrong people</p>	<p>REFRAME #9: Everybody's got an opinion (just ask any 15yr old – apparently they 'know' <i>everything</i>) but they're not all worth listening to. There, I said it. Avoid bad advice by tuning in to your OWN intuition first & using <i>that</i> like a tuning fork to help you create a trusted inner circle of friends & advisors who have your best interests at heart (as you do theirs) and are all successful in their own right.</p>
<p>BRAND BLOCK #10: I prefer my comfort zone to a really good s-t-r-e-t-c-h</p>	<p>REFRAME #10: Comfort zones may be SAFE but do they help you get SUCCESSFUL? No! Learn how to love the momentary pain of a good mental & emotional S-T-R-E-T-C-H because you need to keep your business fighting FIT to fend off the competition! Shake up your organization on a regular basis by asking, "<i>How can we do things better?</i>" Never stop asking, improving or innovating (unless you want to stop attracting & seducing customers that is!).</p>

BEN's BONUS TIP: be FLEXIBLE enough to spread yourself WIDE open!

Not as naughty as it sounds (you'll have to read my BLOG for that!), this cheeky bonus tip is all about how to avoid limited thinking by keeping a supple and open mind. As a writer, I go out of my way to read as many different authors, thinkers and philosophers from every conceivable genre and discipline I can lay my grubby little hands on.

This ensures I'm not confined to my own thinking (or even that of my closest colleagues) and helps to expand my vocabulary as well as my mind. Sourcing the same information from the same people contributing to the same resources time and again can only ever result in accessing one perspective. It may constitute the 'leading industry thinking', it may even be spot on 99% of the time...but *what if* there's just one tiny little missing piece of information that nobody's found because everybody's looking in the same place? It could be an element with the potential to reap tens of thousands of extra industry dollars. Isn't that worth searching a bit further afield for? I think so too!

So for heaven's sake get out there and start hobnobbing (any excuse for a cock joke!) with as wide a variety of influential individuals *from every possible social and professional discipline as possible* and watch how this will enliven your business by adding splashes of intellectual colour you would never get from playing it safe in a million years.

Like a PUNCH in the GUT(-Instinct)

Some of these insights may have really hit home for you. If so, **I urge you** to act on your gut instinct and take the learnings you need on board to break through your limiting decisions and cast aside your false beliefs.

If you are suffering financially, for example, it's because you still have lessons to learn around money and how it works. For example, maybe you need to focus on how to **GIVE BETTER VALUE** to your customers first in order to **RECEIVE** a higher income in return. Turning a healthier profit from your business may also be about you getting real about how and where your money goes (*"where attention (money) goes, energy (deficit) grows"*!). Maybe you should be **INVESTING** it in training instead of **SPENDING** it on shoes, for example? Oh no! Wait, I didn't mean that! Buy shoes instead.

In the midst of any challenging life or business situation, I highly recommend being willing to get humble and ask yourself honestly: *"What is the lesson I've yet to learn that this situation is trying so hard to teach me?"* You'll only hear the answers that you're ready for...so if you want to get ahead, get ready!

"Insanity is defined as repeating the same behavior and expecting a different result."

-Anonymous

Above all, once you get the learning for heaven's sake **move on**. Don't get caught in the loop of playing out repetitive knee-jerk reactions, which no longer serve you. Patterns of behaviour can only get you so far before you need to be willing to break them before they break your spirit!

SEX (Ooops! I mean SIX) Sexy Toppings for Ultimate Death By Chocolate in Business... Yum!

Like baking a cake, get the mix wrong in your business and you end up with something that's stiff as a board(room) and impossible to lay(er). Sometimes we kid ourselves about that one elusive ingredient, which (if we could only find it) would make all the difference to how moist and irresistibly jammy our cream sponge would suddenly become.

Holographically speaking however, the whole is in the part and the part is in the whole. What this means is that the elusive ingredient you are looking for is actually hiding somewhere inside of your existing business model *right now*...you just haven't honed your taste buds enough to detect its flavour yet.

Try decorating your slice of the pie with my **SIX SEXY TOPPINGS for Ultimate Death By Chocolate in Business** and see if this helps awaken the domestic god/dess in you...!

(Some readers find it useful to say these short passages aloud and use them like positive affirmations; others like to record them onto a CD and use them for mediation in the same way you might choose to use a mantra; still others print them out and stick them on the wall of their office to be reminded of their power now and then - whatever works for you is fine):

1. **My Business *Breathes*** - It evolves & redefines itself on a regular basis. With each evolution I let go of past customers that no longer serve me and attract new and inspiring ones primed to tell their friends and colleagues about my goods and services...
2. **My Business *Entertains*** - It is a source of entertainment to clients by providing interactive and engaging experiences on and offline through education materials and/or staff

interactions. Each interaction stimulates a positive emotional response such as happiness, satisfaction, resolve and even peace. I educate my staff to engage these emotions in their interactions, which also create stronger bonds between individual customers and my organization.

3. **My Business *Feels*** – It has its challenges and is open and honest about these as they are being resolved. It recognises at the deepest level what customers are experiencing and offers sincere understanding and assistance to them.
4. **My Business is *Professional*** – No matter how open and honest and engaging it is, my business also always treats everyone with the same high level of respect no matter who they are. Fundamental deliverables such as being smartly dressed, well-spoken, pleasantly mannered and ensuring prompt service are never compromised.
5. **My Business *Awakens*** – Not only does it serve but my business also provokes: it instigates useful conversations by addressing matters at the core of customers' needs. It discusses taboos honestly in a non-threatening manner and provides customers with a safe, secure haven within the wider scope and occasionally rocky terrain of my chosen industry.
6. **My Business *Challenges*** – It not only cares for customers but it also challenges them and calls them to account. My business is 'cruel to be kind' and does not tolerate or pander to self-sabotaging behaviour. Instead it highlights the actions not serving its customers through frank conversations coming from a place of love. The sales process is consultative in manner. My business extends customers' comfort zones and commands respect by having their best long-term interests at heart.

How to Make Your Business Visually Compelling

Enough of the deep lovey-dovey stuff, let's get back to being glib and superficial (oh come on, what do you think this is? I *am* gay for god's sake!).

Approximately 55% of all communication is visually orientated. To put it in another way, if your business has taken a fall from the ugly tree, hit every branch on the way down and then got a beating from the ugliest man in Ugly Town brandishing a big fat ugly stick, it won't matter *what* you do to attract and seduce your clients, not one of them is going to sleep with you! It might sound harsh but I wouldn't be doing you any favours to sugarcoat this part, trust me.

I don't know about you, but I'm one of those people honest enough to admit that not *every* newborn baby is beautiful to look at. The truth is that some of them look like crinkly old men. Now imagine this: your best friend has just given birth to the ugliest baby known to man. Everyone's so polite, smiling those forced half smiles, but all the while it's obvious to everybody except the proud new parents that every visitor is thinking the same thing: "*Man, that baby has a face that only a mother could love!*"

Well I gotta tell you, your business is no different. If it's ugly, it's ugly. If you pin them down, most people will feign interest out of politeness but it's a rare individual indeed who will tell you the truth (unless of course the person you're asking an opinion of is me!). Even your closest friends may well be reluctant to tell you the truth for fear of hurting your feelings. Nobody wants to be the one to shatter the illusions of someone they care about but when it comes down to business, I really do believe that honesty is the best policy.

“Rita Hayworth gave good FACE” (-Madonna, VOGUE)

Ok, the time has come to get down on your knees (steady!) and learn at the feet of some of history’s hottest goddesses and most seductive screen sirens. We’re going to apply some of their tricks of the trade to create some eye-popping eye-candy quality to the visual presentation of your business and personal branding.

Aligning all of your associated images, graphics, colour-ways, fonts and layouts to suit the personality of your business may feel time-consuming but it is a necessary evil. Love it or hate it, this has to be done. For some people this is the most fun they get to have in a business context with their clothes on (I know, crazy, right?); it’s creative, self-expressive and helps them relate to their own business concepts, aims and objectives in a more tangible way.

For others, it’s a painful, long-drawn-out process. They worry about every little detail to the *n*th degree, find it hard to make a decision and end up outsourcing the whole thing to a designer they fail to brief properly and still don’t end up with something they love. This can be especially true if you already have marketing collateral being overhauled due to a lack of customer enquiries. Nightmare!

It doesn’t have to be this way, of course. If you’re not a naturally visual person (or even if you are but Graphic Design is not your profession) there is a great deal of incentive to outsource this to someone more qualified than you. Just make sure before you go abdicating all responsibility, that you have clearly communicated a full creative brief to the designer. This will probably be in template form (most designers have their own way of getting this down) and will cover crucial information such as your business’:

- Personality
- Purpose
- Values
- Goals
- Offering

Remember: there's no point you ending up with some flashy looking design concept that bears no relation to the core objectives (the 'heart and soul') of your business. It would be the business equivalent of a great big pair of fake tits that might look alright airbrushed in a magazine...but feel horribly fake and fraudulent in the flesh (as it were).

Your Story in Pictures

When it comes to choosing or approving visual images, be mindful and look for pictures that actively help to illustrate your business and its character. You can also try this simple exercise to drop into the mindset of your target market: close your eyes and imagine your ideal customer. Now answer the following questions from a place of intuition and imagination:

- What do they look like?
- How long is their hair?
- Are they young, old, single, married, divorced?
- What nationality are they?
- Which suburbs do they live and hang out in?
- Are they male, female or both? (not simultaneously of course – unless you're in the business of selling swimsuits to hermaphrodites, which is certainly a niche if ever I heard one!)
- What do they wear? How do they speak? How do they act? What do they love and hate about themselves?

This exercise will help you connect with the kind of visual imagery that has emotional resonance for your target market, but be wary of actually using pictures of *people* in your marketing material. These tend to date too easily and can trigger prejudices (maybe the client you're pitching to had a teacher, parent or boss who made their life a misery that looked like the figure in your brochure for example). Rotate your images regularly to prevent this.

Any images you choose should ideally be designed to press your targets' emotional buttons and keep your brand front of mind. This means that even if they don't have need of your services today, you will still have connected in a way that means that they remember you when they are ready to purchase.

Your chosen images should always:

- directly relate to your target audience and their values;
- be congruent with your business brand and personality;
- support the primary message of your marketing collateral;
- illustrate and encourage any calls to action;
- stir emotion (bland, unimaginative pictures of people smiling seem to be a popular choice, but are they actually *effective*?);
- emotionally match and mirror the emotional content of your tagline, headline or brand.

Say for argument's sake you're having a brochure designed to communicate with new mothers suffering from lack of sleep. You would need to make sure the images strike the right balance between reflecting the truth of this experience and offering a solution or end goal to aspire to. A whole heap of unrealistically refreshed looking mothers with glowing skin and not an ounce of fat on them isn't going to cut it and runs the risk of conveying nothing but your lack of empathy with and understanding of their situation.

Late night TV commercials for weight-loss products often show dramatic before and after pictures intended to inspire consumers to connect with what's possible for them: namely, to journey from where they are now to where they aspire to be (with the help of whatever goods or services are being sold, of course!). But unless these drastic images are accompanied by something more emotive and 'real' such as a personal testimony in the person's own words for example, they can end up seeming too extreme and unrealistic to engage with.

I flock, you flock, we all flock...to iStock!

www.iStockphoto.com is a phenomenal online resource which will give you enormous insight into the variety and power of a well-constructed image. There are thousands of 'royalty-free' images (known as 'stock') which can be used with relatively no restriction at minimal or no cost. From there you can get a bit more professional about it and purchase the publishing rights to literally hundreds of thousands of other images at reasonable rates to cater to your marketing needs.

Even if you have engaged a designer to find the perfect image for you, just having a nose around online yourself is a valuable way of gaining some understanding of the power of an image. You'll soon get a feel for the difference between a 'stock' image (which you may also suddenly start encountering being used more than once by different companies in their promotional material) and the more high-end, tailored shots.

I suggest you visit www.iStockphoto.com and conduct some searches based on the following emotional keywords. All it will cost you is a little time and you will probably be surprised how much you learn. Try searching for images under:

- Fear
- Hurt
- Happiness
- Excitement
- Curiosity
- Elation
- Depression

Have a good look through the images that get served for each word search. What do you notice? Probably that exposing your neurology to image after image of people looking depressed or scared will start to have a physical and emotional impact on you, right? In other words, the images begin to affect your **‘state of being’**. In the simplest of terms, the pictures are creating chemical chain-reactions that are disruptive to your physiology, such is the desire for we human beings to empathise, relate and connect to one another.

If you can learn to harness this visual potency to create powerful promotional material that tunes into your target market then you are giving them more and more reason to notice you: you are giving off a very sexy vibe, neurologically speaking, and it’s going to turn their heads!

Once you have their attention and they’re on your database, primed to receive your email communications, remember to handle your prospects with care. Mix and match your images on a regular basis to keep them fresh but always retain the core emotional message you are seeking to convey. However impactful an image was initially, its power to arouse anger, love, joy, shock or awe will always diminish over time as your audience get desensitised. Don’t let your visuals

become ‘the norm’ because **bland brands don’t get talked about**, now do they?

Be Consultative rather than Competitive

In conjunction with ensuring you have the right visual representation running through your marketing collateral, you also need to be consultative as opposed to competitive in your sales approach. This will serve to align you positively with your businesses persona (proactively ‘moving towards pleasure’) as opposed to place you in the negative position of being ‘in opposition’ to the competition (reactively ‘moving away from pain’).

An empathetic long-term approach to your clients’ needs is required here. They may be feeling quite overwhelmed by the amount of choice out there these days – both in terms of goods and services, and the multi-media means by which to research them.

The vast array of information on the Internet has placed a strange burden of responsibility on consumers’ shoulders because the current perception is that one should be able to find *anything* out at the merest click of a button. In reality, it can be very daunting for the average consumer to navigate their way around so many sources (of products, services and information): how are they supposed to know whose opinion to trust? Or which website’s payment process is actually more secure?

Business owners able to empathise with this sense of overwhelm will do *their* research and position useful brand-specific educational resources (articles, e-books, audio files, webinars, video clips) in the most fuss-free, easy to find places. Some of these include advertising on the side panels of sites such as Google and Facebook, for example. When consumers feel understood and helped already (before they’ve even made a purchase from you) then they are more likely to equate

this emotionally to higher quality service and more emotionally satisfying goods and services. Make sense? Good.

Educate the masses!

Not only are these warm fuzzy feelings created, but the fact that a considerate business has ‘offered something for nothing’ in an accessible manner also provides a catalyst for lead generation (their contact details in exchange for your information is deemed a fair exchange). This whole process is especially valuable to technology companies promoting systems or software, since they can actually be *teaching their target audience* how to engage with them using the applications in question at the very same time they are marketing to them. Pretty neat, huh?

The CASE of BOMBAY SAPPHIRE (or, ‘How to educate the masses’)

The producers of alcoholic beverage **Bombay Sapphire** advertise by educating readers on how to make a whole range of exciting, sexy cocktails such as:

- Bombay Mule
- Bombay Blush
- French Bombay 75 Classic

And guess what? Not only do all the cocktails require **Bombay Sapphire** to make them work, they also have the brand name in their titles – simple marketing genius!

The moral of this story is... That when your consumers understand *how* (& how easy it is) to use your product, the chances of them purchasing it simply skyrocket.

So while you get busy creating some fun ways to educate the rest of us on how to enjoy your product, I’m off to make myself a lovely **Bombay & Tonic**. *Yummmmmmm..... alcohol!* ☺

Be the CALM in the eye of the MAELSTROM

Because consumers need HELP assessing the quality of information more than they need to be bombarded with any MORE of it, what your business needs to do is twofold:

1. Excel at gathering relevant information and reliable resources on behalf of your client base;
2. Get really good at providing well-conceived access to this instant library in a way that inclines your target market towards making a purchase.

Be warned: it's simply not good enough to randomly collate and regurgitate unsubstantiated online information. Faceless resource provision will only fail to connect – and that's no way to attract a following or lead a community.

But get this right, and you will find yourself captaining a ship of obsessive cyber-clients waiting with baited breath for when the next piece of valuable information gets released. Key online community influencers wield a lot of power over their various industry community groups and it is worth your while to become one of the 'purchasing decision touchstones' as fast as is humanly possible!

Develop your business' ability to position as an online authority and 'information advocate' combined with a kick-arse influential brand personality and you are well placed to take over the world! Well, at least your industry niche anyway.

In the next chapter I will discuss how to build an individual's profile by creating articles and informational resources. However, let's not forget that the same strategy needs to be utilised for your organization as a whole. Create online resources that segment the various needs of your clients and prospective clients. Keep this

information fresh and interesting and communicate it via your online campaigns. Establish feedback mechanisms that allow them to make comment on your resources and provide their valuable opinions. Do all this and your business will do far more than survive...you and it will be ALIVE and THRIVE!

One last thing: avoid regurgitating the business opinions and concerns of your competitors: it just turns you into a clone. Find your own creative angle on a relevant industry theme and communicate it in various ways through the myriad resources at your fingertips, always staying mindful of congruence with your businesses personality. Build a solid reputation for being an online 'hub' of valuable information and you will provide prospective clients with more (and more compelling) reasons to come and visit your website. Once there, all you have to do is lead them gently through your online sales process – too easy!

Through enriching an individual's need for new external perspectives on their own environment, you provide talking points and create conversation. A true exchange of values and opinions results in loyalty, frequent purchases and viral communication. It is this two-way cyber-dialogue that will have 'brand advocates' out there building your business for you faster than you can say "*Ben, you're a bloody LEGEND – thanks for all the help!*" – he he 😊.

So what is it that makes YOUR Business so very different, huh? (I know you've been asked many times before but don't you think it's time you actually ANSWERED this Question?)

In your quest to attract and seduce more clients, any differentiating factors you can come up with to make your business stand out as SEXIER than the rest will be advantageous (as long as it's still relevant to your specific target market interests, aspirations and needs). Add to that a great big dollop of brand personality, visually compelling marketing collateral and a solid reputation for being the centre of the universe when it comes to being an expert in your field, and you can't go far wrong!

The secret to being SEXY in business is the same as being sexy in your personal life: it all comes down to looking and feeling your best (regardless of having picked up a few 'war-wounds' along the way) so that you radiate the kind of body confidence that's sexier than perfection because it's also *relatable*.

It's really not that hard to attract and seduce new clients. It's actually very easy. But we *do* need to be listening to what our customers *are actually really communicating* (through their **actions**, not just their words) and not make assumptions based on our own filters or interpretation of what they're saying to us, *capiche?*

"What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson (1802-1883)
American essayist, philosopher & poet

So now it's time for you to answer the burning question: **Is your business too sexy for its clients?** If it places its own ego above the needs of its customers, then the unfortunate (and less than profitable)

answer is a resounding “Yes”. In which case you’re probably a **Gemini** (sorry!) and you’d better go back to the beginning of this chapter, read it all again and apply the learnings properly!

As for the rest of us, it sounds like we’re all ready to move on to chapter four...so let’s go! It’s time to get SPICEY, GIRLS...

Can’t get enough?

Head over to **benangel.com.au** now and sign-up for Ben’s free ‘Industry Domination Insight’s’ blog. You’ll discover even more deliciously and seductive easy-to-apply well thought-out practical marketing strategies online.

Act now and join us in the conversation!

FOUR

PERSONAL BRANDING

(why the SPICE GIRLS are RICH but you're NOT)

Imagine if musicians never re-created themselves and released album after album of the same music with the same style (oh wait, that's Enya!). Imagine if they wore the same clothes, told the same stories and performed the same routine every single time. You'd be bored. You'd only ever need to buy one album, see one concert and look at one picture to decide that you'd had your quota of their type of entertainment.

"Personal Branding is self-expression amplified to influence and command attention. This has everything to do with your business success, especially in attracting media exposure and seducing new clients."

- Ben Angel

Your ability to re-engage individuals moment to moment through your personal brand is paramount in retaining their attention and making their emotional transactions with you profitable. **Your personal brand** is about how you position yourself within the market place. **It is made up of everything you are, do and have:**

- your clothes;
- your hairstyles;
- your intentions;
- your interactions;

- your emotional energy;
- your facial expressions;
- your tone and medium of communication.

When you create a compelling personal brand for your consumers to relate to, you invite them into your world and engage with them on a journey together. This helps make it very difficult for your competitors to copy the relationships you forge. Nobody can duplicate the **essence** of who you are as a person, so the more you put of this into your brand as possible, the more watertight it is.

The term “essence” refers to what is intangible, yet very real: you can’t physically pick it up and hold it in your hands in a ‘3D’ sense, but you (and everybody else around you) can definitely *feel* it. This is how one (business) person energetically engages with another (customer). When combined with clarity of business purpose and market niche, you can see how quickly this unique blend can become unstoppable through its immunity to replication (think invincible brands such as **Virgin** and **Red Bull**). What I’m talking about here is how to achieve the ultimate X-factor rapport; something that is fast becoming a necessary requirement for breaking away from the competition. You must be able to stand head and shoulders above the rest in a crowded marketplace to be successful in your chosen industry.

Why the Spice Girls are Rich and You’re Not

The Spice Girls (or rather the creative team behind the manufacture and maintenance of their public image) have delivered to us one of the most significant lessons in personal branding on the world stage so far.

Both their combined (group) and individual branding served them well in becoming a worldwide phenomenon seemingly

overnight after hitting the British music scene in 1996. Audiences were presented with **SIX powerful brands** to choose from:

1. **The Spice Girls** – i.e. as a musical group, collectively standing for ‘girl power’ (friendship, love, solidarity, action, sex appeal, bravado etc)
2. **Posh Spice** (Victoria Beckham) – aloof fashionista; all catwalks & A-list image
3. **Baby Spice** (Emma Bunton) – cute, smiley, down to earth
4. **Scary Spice** (Mel C) – “*I am Spice Girl hear me ROAR!*”
5. **Sporty Spice** (Mel B) – lean, muscular, no-frills tomboy
6. **Ginger Spice** (Geri Halliwell) – flawed but well-intentioned; relatable; upbeat; ginger hair

Each personal brand was packed full of self-expression. This (combined with the overarching sense of loyalty, belonging and friendship that the collective group name conveyed) gave their target audience instant permission to be as individualistic as they liked while still feeling like they ‘fitted in’ and had a place.

Soon enough girls (and boys) were idolising their favourite **Spice Girl**: in essence, this was whoever best reflected back to them who they were and or most aspired to be. Even the debut single (*‘Wannabe’*) played perfectly into the marketing phenomena that the girls became.

Don’t be a ONE HIT WONDER

If you’d rather be a headline grabbing Robbie Williams than a “*what’s his name again?*” Jason Orange, you need to TAKE THIS (sorry, I couldn’t resist) and address a few important questions:

- Do you have the personality it takes to take your industry by storm?

- Does your personal brand distinguish you from your competitors?
- Have you positioned yourself as *the* 'go-to' expert in your industry?
- Have you carved out a clear niche for yourself in the market place?
- Are you newsworthy?
- Are you the first person the media call when they need expert commentary?
- Do you embody the values that your target market aspires to?

While most business professionals are cognisant of building the brand personality and profile of their business, too many forget to brand themselves. It's important to remember that **YOU + YOUR BUSINESS = THE COMPLETE PACKAGE** that prospects are either drawn to or repelled by.

You must get crystal clear on exactly what you want to be known for in your industry. If your answer is "Sales" for example, be specific: do you want to be the go-to expert for how to achieve high retail sales in a recession, or will you be specialising in generating business-to-business sales? These are obviously two completely different niches even though they come under the same broad umbrella. If you managed a retail outlet and wanted to train your staff then it would need to be clear to you which one of those experts you would turn to.

Make sure your personal branding offers a specific match to a niche industry need and then communicate that loud and clear through everything you say and everything you do. It doesn't mean that you won't ever do any work with other industry sectors, it just means that you will become more effective in seducing more of the

customers who do come your way because you will be attracting them based on a clear understanding of what you offer.

To avoid any confusion and stand out even more, take a leaf out of **The Spice Girls'** book and give yourself a memorable media-friendly title to help get you noticed (although you may want to pick something a little more professional than 'Scary Spice' coz that would just be *gay!*).

Here are four examples of standout personal branding success stories. Each of these **homegrown Aussie Brand Heroes** has succeeded in positioning themselves as THE expert in their chosen field. Nobody else comes close to what they do or (crucially) *how* they do it. In consequence, they are rarely out of the media spotlight as guest commentators. Their business brands are intrinsically infused with their unique personalities and (unlike The Spice Girls who were maybe 60% 'real' personality and 40% manufactured image) there is ***nothing fake*** about the unequivocal stamp of personality on *these* business brands.

**Personal Branding at its BEST:
FOUR home-grown Australian SUCCESS Stories**

Yvonne Adele, a.k.a. 'Ms Megabyte'

Otherwise known as **Yvonne Adele**, this technologically savvy speaker is known for taking the hard work out of hardware. Her uniquely zany branding and friendly, no-nonsense style has seen her grace the guest spot on top rating Australian television shows such as: '9am with David and Kim'; 'The TODAY Show'; 'Sunrise' and 'The Panel'. Her distinctive personal branding includes striking red hair, something which helps her stand out against a backdrop of grey-looking nerds. Her personal branding and high quality content is consistently delivered from head to toe, commanding respect and attention wherever she goes (www.ideasculture.com).

Peter Sheahan – Gen Y Guru

Peter has positioned himself as THE leading Australian expert on the concept of 'Generation Y'. His multi-million dollar consulting practice has attracted clients such as **Google, Coca-Cola and Ernst & Young**. Peter was one of the first Gen Y experts to emerge after he began spotting and sparking conversation about generational trends occurring in the workplace. He carved out a well-defined niche for himself and his business offering through writing books, conducting courses and providing independent consultation (www.petersheahan.com.au).

International Employee Engagement Expert, James Adonis

One of Peter Sheahan's notable Gen-Y colleagues is fellow **Fairfax** Blogger, author & international speaker, **James Adonis**. James is the National Speakers Association of Australia's **youngest ever** chapter President and forms part of the new breed of über-successful 'Generation Y-ers' that Peter saw coming. Thanks to a phenomenally media-friendly look & feel (his controversial yet well researched opinion is rarely out of the national press, with regular articles & radio interviews attracting 'highest ever' audience feedback), James made his mark by reducing employee turnover from **70% to zero** as a manager of 100 staff when he was still in his early 20s (www.jamesadonis.com).

Justin Herald - The Thinking Entrepreneur's Entrepreneur!

After turning an initial \$50 investment into multi-million dollar empire **Attitude Inc** earned him the prestigious accolade of **Entrepreneur of the Year 2005**, Justin Herald's star has continued to rise. Now a bestselling international business author, Justin shares his groundbreaking motivational advice with individuals & companies alike as a popular speaker on the niche theme of 'Attitude'. Popular titles such as, *"It's All a Matter of Attitude"* and, *"Would you like Attitude with that?"* have seen him become a media favourite. Jason has cornered several markets through various projects, each of which has been a true self-expression of his incredible business journey & unbeatable personal brand (www.justinherald.com).

What I love about these **brand heroes** is that if you were to bump into any one of them at either a party or business function, you'd encounter the same genuine humour, intelligence, engagement and charisma that lifts their business persona to be head and shoulders above the rest. The **authenticity** of their personal branding has earned them the ability to profit handsomely from public speaking engagements, consultation work, judicious business affiliations and associated mixed-media projects.

It's important to note that whether YOU choose to be the face of your own business or appoint a **spokesperson** for your organization is irrelevant. The trick is not to get drawn into being bigheaded and appoint yourself if someone else within your business model can do a better job (arrogance isn't very attractive and it's not likely to seduce anybody!).

Select and develop a standout brand spokesperson by:

- Imagining yourself in your prospects' shoes;
- Identifying what sort of spokesperson *they* would best relate and respond to;
- Grooming the best person for the job (including important areas such as Media Training) with a specific market niche and title in mind;
- Instilling the value of a consultative sales approach (your spokesperson as educator, not 'pitcher').

Follow these simple steps by putting your own USPs to good use and drawing inspiration from the success stories of others you admire (*without trying to clone what is unique to them*) and you'll be well on your way to being the personal brand hero that your peers look up to in future.

There's BEAUTY in the BREAKDOWN **(uncovering the Key Elements to a Personal Brand that POPS)**

If you're familiar with **Sam Horn's** bestselling book, *'POP! Stand Out in any Crowd'*, then you will have a head start on appreciating the kind of '**POP** culture' we're about to explore together.

An influential **personal brand** is a heady and unpredictable mix. If it were a recipe I'm convinced it would be one of those fiercely guarded family secrets dating back hundreds of years! For this reason, while many have tried, few succeed in capturing the essential **X-Factor** elements for success in writing. It's a BIG ask but I hope to change all of that for YOU, right here, right now. Ready? Then brace yourself (and if you like, you can even 'assume the position'...)

Through closely monitoring a wide range of successful individuals over the years ranging from musicians and entrepreneurs to social change activists and politicians, I have observed that what each of them possess is a rich personal blend of the following magical ingredients.

The exact measurements are down to their own unique style of course, but here is **BEN's BREAKDOWN** - a guide for your delight and delectation designed to stir (sorry, steer) you in the right direction for creating an intoxicating personal brand for yourself or your spokesperson to serve up to clients.

BEN'S BREAKDOWN:

The Personal Branding Guide to X-Factor Ingredients!

1. **Define your Personal Niche & consider marketing yourself with a TITLE.** While a 'SPICEY' title isn't essential to make you POP, a well-defined niche definitely is. What a great title ('**Ms Megabyte**') does do is suggest that a niche exists to be catered for in the first place (tech knowledge delivered with a woman's personal touch). Although **Peter Sheahan** does not use a stage name per se, he did carefully define his niche by self-branding as the leading thinker on an emerging trend, namely Gen-Y. The more specific you can be = the more inclined people are to view you as 'The Expert in...'
2. **"You bloody LEGEND!"**
Every industry has its **idols** (you may even be surprised to know this is not merely confined to Simon Fuller's singing comp format for Channel TEN!): the only question is, do you want to be one, or follow one? Societies the world over revere their leading thinkers (Einstein), activists (Mandela) and troublemakers (Darwin, Ghandi) in religion, politics, business, music and so on. It takes guts to pave the way and be ahead of your time, though! Most of these figures' true worth is celebrated in retrospect when the enormity and value of their contribution is born out in the decades that follow. But if you have the potential to become a leading light within your industry, my advice is go for it! All you need is a willingness to change what's not working and the wherewithal to stand by your message regardless of the temporary backlash.
3. **Same Niche, NEW Angle.**
What you first set out to be known for ('Sleeping your way to the Top in Business', for example) will inevitably evolve over time as your customers do. This is a journey you embark on together with you acting as the Tour Guide. Get known for your expertise by approaching your niche from one angle, and then expand over time to reinforce your message in fresh and engaging ways. The idea is to keep people guessing as

to what **brilliant new angle** you'll come up with to help them understand more about the niche next (e.g. my next book might be called, 'Dumping the Clients You're Just Not That Into' . Hey - that's pretty good, I like that!)

4. ***"Is it in yet?" (Amplifying your Personal Expression).***

Personal branding is self-expression amplified to influence and command attention, remember? So walk into a room with your head held high and invite others to connect with the 'real you'. Turn it up or tone it down to reflect the environment you're in, but for heaven's sake make sure you get noticed! Express your sense of humour, incite emotions, create a stir. You'll soon learn to gauge when you've gone too far...or not far enough.

5. **Ability to Reflect.**

Pre-empt any potential objections your audience will have on your angle or theme, especially if you're going for controversy. This doesn't mean avoid them, it just means make like a Boy Scout and **'come prepared'** (good advice for Sleeping your way to the TOP if ever I heard it!). Write a list of potentially negative reactions and then head objections off at the pass by addressing these concerns throughout the course of your presentation or writing. Place controversial subject matter into context to explain why you think the way you do about it. Not everybody will agree with your opinion, but you should be able to explain it well enough that they do defend your right to express it and appreciate its intellectual finesse. You can help support your argument by citing personal experiences. A bit of conflict can be a good thing anyway: you're seeking to incite conversation, not shut it down.

6. **Self-Aware Humility.**

Great personal brands are not only self-aware but also humble. Learn to read how your interactions with others make them feel. Ask for honest feedback if this is not immediately apparent. Every encounter should be designed to press your target market's emotional buttons in one way or another.

Take a leaf out of **Oprah's** book and 'respect and acknowledge everyone'. Your prospects are precisely the people who will help you achieve your goals at the end of the day.

7. **Sex Appeal...**

...or as I like to call it, '**F@*k Factor**'! Nothing is sexier or more attractive than someone who knows who they are and is comfortable in their own skin. Sexual confidence (yes, even in the business environment) is a must. Later on we will discuss **flirting without intent**, but for now let's put the focus on YOU:

- Do you feel sexy?
- Are you 100% comfortable with how you present yourself?
- If you walk into a room and everybody turns to stare, how sure are you that they are noticing you for all the RIGHT reasons?

You may be surprised to know that when I work with male personal branding clients one of their top priorities is to **feel sexy** and seductive again. This is all the extra fizz required to make most of my clients memorable in bed and help them **penetrate** their clients meaningfully again (cue the deep contented sigh). Joking aside, you can feel sexy without actually having sex! Distinguish between the two and never cross the line.

8. **Unperturbed and Undisturbed**

A lot of otherwise confident business professionals won't put themselves in front of a live audience for fear of criticism. They worry about needing to have the answer to every single question – *especially* the impossible unforeseen ones, but frankly my dear, that's just never going to happen! You can't ever predict or know *everything*; you just need to know enough and be clear about directing people to where and how to find out more. Remaining 'unperturbed and undisturbed' means you're in that serene state of mind where you're comfortable in your ability to handle whatever comes up. It ROCKS, so give it a shot.

Structure & Stability of your Personal Brand

It can be daunting to have others judge you in business but you can help improve your chance of success by ensuring you have the right structures in place to support your central theme. Be aware of the beliefs you carry about yourself and what you will and won't do in certain situations.

The face of modern business is changing fast: we've inherited a whole range of traditional approaches but these guidelines are being pulverised by newer, faster, younger generations out to push communication boundaries and break their forefathers' rules. In refining and defining your personal brand and the image you want to project, you must be clear about what type of behaviour is associated with it. Consciously consider the options and then choose appropriate behavioural strategies for different scenarios, such as:

- Business meetings
- Keynote speeches
- Networking events with Colleagues
- Networking with Media
- Interacting with Clients

Each scenario calls for an adaptation of what your overall brand signifies. For example, this might be:

- Power
- Sex appeal
- Credibility
- Influence

Remember, YOU create your brand and YOU decide which elements best represent your business personality in an authentic and effective manner. Amplify them when required to bring your influence to

bear on others. Be genuine and honest. Don't try to be someone you're not: everything to do with your brand personality needs to be the essence of you. Through carefully deciding which business behaviours to adopt you will create a reliable framework to support your best efforts – even if part of your objective is to be controversial.

How I caused THREE church groups to UNSUBSCRIBE from an Australian Business Magazine (much to my delight!)

In 2003 I got thrown to the lions by three church groups. What did I do that was so unforgivable that even the Christians couldn't turn the other cheek? Well, I wrote an article called, '*Sleeping Your Way to The Top*' (sound familiar?) which was published in Australian Anthill Business Magazine - which the church groups in question promptly unsubscribed from. I had rather cheekily likened business networking to dating and relationships. Hardly pornographic, but then I guess it's all in the mind of the receiver...

The article was a fun, light-hearted appraisal of how to get the most out of business relationships and the only mention of sex that was actually made was in the title of the article. Ok...there *were* a few pictures of condoms strategically placed by the designer, but in fact the magazine had already toned down my original version so as not to upset anyone! Which just goes to show there's not much point in dumbing things down: you may as well be bold and go out with a bang (as it were) if at all.

Now, while I don't advocate you actually have sex with key decision makers to further your career (I'll leave that up to you...I mean, what if they're *hot* for God's sake?) I am a very vocal advocate of business professionals expressing their personal opinions in such a way as to challenge the status quo and provoke impassioned debate.

In this case, religious groups expressed their opinion by boycotting the magazine. What's odd about this is that the article itself promoted building stronger relationships within the community through socially conscious business practice. Not so devilish, you might say.

I must admit to being secretly quite chuffed to have ruffled some feathers; I'd rather get a polarised reaction than no reaction at all. It is precisely these intellectual scuffles and ideological skirmishes that stimulate reassessment, engage creative thought and give (immaculate) birth to innovation.

One thing's for sure: when it comes to speaking your mind you're often damned if you do but even more damned if you don't. In this case I literally *was* damned – by the church itself. But goddamnit, it *felt good!*

I still write for AAB Magazine by the way. I guess in the end all the controversy sparked enough raised awareness and discussion of the serious business issues at hand that what I did turned out to be so wrong it was right.

May I take you from BEHIND? (Oops, I mean 'SURPRISE')

It's time to sit back and relax. You've mastered nearly everything you need to know to create an awesome personal brand. There's just one more element you need to get a handle on, but it's not a biggy, don't worry. In fact, it's just this teeny tiny, nice a quiet little thing. Ready? Ok, cool, here we g-

BOO!

Oooooops, did I make you jump? Sorry!

The element of surprise is (a) serious business though, so I hope I succeeded in attracting your attention just now. What we're going to talk about here is how you can achieve the same result with your target market...

Do you remember the last time you were really surprised by something? Maybe you dropped what you were doing the moment your adrenalin got pumping; maybe you rushed to the television set, radio or computer screen; maybe you screamed at the top of your lungs and then panted heavily, your hands on your chest to calm you down. However it played out, chances are it caused you to tell other people about what just happened.

The art of surprise is like that. It's a highly specialised way of spreading word of mouth, especially when it comes to drawing attention to your personal brand. Whatever comes out of your mouth (within reason, steady on) has the ability to put people to sleep or to surprise and engage them within your thoughts, words and shared experiences.

**So what does it MEAN to be taken by SURPRISE
(as opposed to *behind*)?**

1. Surprise occurs when a situation disrupts the norm;
2. Surprise challenges habitual thinking;
3. Surprise happens in an unpredictable instant, 'right out of the blue';
4. Surprise indicates to individuals that the information they are about to receive will be new and useful;
5. By surprising your consumers you ignite an instant curiosity they will need to satisfy by finding out more about you;
6. Surprise is a key ingredient of every brilliant movie preview you have ever seen; they drip-feed tidbits of information in the months running up to a big release to get everybody talking & waiting with baited breath through unbearable levels of curiosity;
7. Surprise can be achieved in a business context in similar fashion:
 - i. By drip-feeding your prospects short sharp pieces of information
 - ii. leading up to a new product or service launch;
 - iii. By shocking them in an instant and driving them to make a
 - iv. purchase...or at the very least, notice you in a really big way!

Surprise is a useful tool for stirring myriad emotions (whether positive or negative) in order to serve your marketing needs:

- **arousing negative emotions** will arrest people and grab their attention in an instant, but they must quickly be contextualised to reflect your brand positively to avoid enduring negative associations;
- **arousing positive emotions** will surprise people by offering something special they can't find anywhere else.

Whichever way you choose to do it, you must ensure you follow through on any surprise by delivering the goods. Tricking people into paying attention and then not providing them with depth or context will always do **more brand harm than good** and should be avoided at all costs. Don't panic though - there are plenty of ways to surprise your prospects (and the media) for **all the right reasons**, for example by:

- **Speaking your mind authentically** in any given situation regardless of the temporary costs in order to reap longer term rewards;
- **Saying what you mean and meaning what you say** (a rarer business brand quality than you may think, unfortunately);
- **Voicing what others are already thinking but are too afraid to express**;
- **Producing controversial articles that generate debate** by rattling cages, ruffling feathers and derailing traditional trains of thought.

My advice here is to **be bold**. Don't be afraid to think and execute creatively. Marry the element of surprise with a consistent personal brand to shock audiences from time to time and re-engage their attention. For great ideas on inciting surprise and controversy, go to **www.YouTube.com** and search for "banned commercials". That ought to get your creative (love) juices flowing!

Later on we'll have a look at some tools for **measuring the emotional impact of your marketing campaigns**, but for now let's look at how you can reinvent **yourself** and your personal brand:

What MADONNA has that YOU DON'T

(CONE BRAS for one thing...I hope!)

What the original **material girl** has perfected more consistently than any other performer is **the art of reinvention**. Even in her fifties, good ole Madge still looks the (sex) bomb and manages to pull surprise after surprise out of her well-toned wazoo. Her enduring ability to tap into the zeitgeist and make every different kind of musical style in fashion work for her is pretty damn impressive. In her youth Madonna was a dancer, sussing out the latest underground trends in sweaty nightclubs all over New York and bringing them before a wider audience. Not only does constantly reinventing her personal brand keep things interesting for her loyal fan base, but her determination and ability to fuse **religion & sex, music & politics**, and the **achingly modern** with **timeless spirit** in surprising new ways introduces her work to successive generations seeking inspiration.

Through instigating innovative musical collaborations with rising young stars (Britney Spears, Justin Timberlake) busy generating their own mass market appeal, Madonna gains access to target markets never before influenced by the flash of Jean Paul Gaultier ice cream cone bra.

Take a tip from Madge when building **your own personal profile** and develop your talent for industry innovation and personal reinvention. Simply ask yourself: what ISN'T being done and who's NOT being daring – and then go up against them as hard as a pointy metal over-the-shoulder-boulder-holder! Every time you successfully surprise your target audience you should follow this up with delivering the goods...and then creating yet another new and exciting angle to WOW people with.

The LAZY BRAND's Guide to EASY REINVENTION

SWITCH Direction: Learn to be lightening fast on your feet. Forget leading the existing trends within your industry; be on the hunt for the as-yet undiscovered ones to bring to light instead. Once more than a handful of competitors are joining the debate, switch agendas on them and start a new thread. Inauthentically manufactured business personalities are easy to spot because they follow like sheep and end up saying and doing the same thing as everybody else. Be **BOLD**: buck the trend and benefit.

APPEAL to Insatiable Desires: Make sure that **you're the one** your target market feel most wanted and accepted by. Help them feel connected; listen to them. Praise them in front of their friends, family and colleagues every chance you get, but don't pander to anyone whose custom you're not courting (you still need some people to piss off and polarise, remember). Make people feel great about themselves and even if they wander off every now and again, they will always come back for more.

LIVE Your Brand: Anyone can talk the talk, but it takes a truly authentic business professional to actually walk it too. Practice being the most exemplary living breathing example of your brand in everything you do, say, wear and are. LIVE the advice you are offering – be an embodiment of every reason why people should listen to you. This is the reality of being a genuine expert: congruency which goes beyond merely the obvious business contexts to positively permeate every area of your life. After all, you never know what chance conversation will elicit **your next best conquest!**

HARNESS (not that kind!) and Help: Everyone has personal insecurities. Find out (but don't create) whatever your customers' concerns may be and then be proactive with genuine solutions. Come from a place of service to provide information and resources in alignment with your product range. Share with unflinching courage the peaks and troughs of your own business journey and harness life-changing testimonials from people you have helped in the past. Encourage community discussion forums between different customers who you think might be able to use your goods and services to help each other too. This gets you talked about positively on so many different levels. Executed with finesse you can manage to do the hard work once, but reap ongoing benefits forever.

TREND Set: Credibility pays great dividends. Establish yours by predicting future trends within your industry and get them published – first! Just like most politicians, you may not get everything right all of the time, but you will command respect through your sheer audacity and willingness to take the fall for anything you're not quite 100% about. After all, if YOU can't demonstrate confidence in your ability to get it **more right than wrong** in the end, how can you expect anyone else to? In predicting these trends you also redirect and reinvent your own personal brand in alignment with them. This may well require a personal makeover of your hair, clothes and communication methods on a regular basis to reflect being up to date.

Some people are just born interesting. But even if you're only usually as exciting as watching paint peel (even worse than watching it dry) then you should still find enough gold here to get you jazzed up – at least a little.

Cultivate a curious approach to life. Take yourself, your staff, your business and your prospects on emotional adventures both within and independent of the traditional scope of your industry.

Try visualising your customers' attention in new and unusual ways in your mind's eye. For example, 'see' it as a flight of beautiful but flippant butterflies. Respond by presenting the most attractive blooming business brand imaginable to attract them to alight on your petals. Ahhhhhh...lovely! Your daily life can also be a great source of relatable experiences you can turn into randomly intriguing business metaphors to learn, grow, teach and inspire.

Effective Emotional Management (or How NOT to throw TANTRUMS & TIARAS à la Reginald Kenneth Dwight aka Elton John!)

POP QUIZ! The sky is crashing in on you, your clients have deserted ship, your staff have all gone home early for the long weekend and your back is slammed against the wall (and not in a good way, either).

QUESTION: How do you cope with business demands to put on that happy personal branding face regardless when venturing out and about in public is the last thing you want to be doing? Do you...

- a. suck it up, step up to the plate and storm on through a stellar world tour like the ultimate Madonna-esque trooper and consummate professional you are? Or,
- b. suck your thumb, kick your feet and throw all of your (gay)boy-toys and glittery hairpieces out of the pram in true Elton John meltdown mode?

ANSWER: You suck it (up), swallow your pride...and see how far that gets you. It will probably be a lot further than you can possibly imagine at the time.

Trust me on this if nothing else, because I speak from personal experience. And in the spirit of authentic brand personality, I am going to take my own advice and share a personal story with you now to illustrate this concept:

“The SHOW must go ON”

Earlier in this chapter I spoke about developing internal congruency to be more attractive and influential. The importance of this holds true despite (or even especially during) times of extreme personal challenge. You may feel as if a certain situation is leaching every ounce of energy you have left but I promise you that these are the best times to learn how to draw on inner reserves you never dreamed existed. Through so doing, you have the opportunity to become a source of inspiration to thousands.

In 2005 I lost my dad to a brain tumour. I was not only confused, I was devastated. My dad was my role model, the guiding star that always demonstrated to me that anything was possible. We were close and I was only 23yrs old when he died.

There are always going to be instances in your life when you simply don't want to interact with anyone and this was one of mine. Even though the last thing you may feel like doing is talking to or accommodating anyone else, I urge you to power through regardless.

By all means do whatever you need to do outside of the business space to look after yourself personally, but when it comes to the main event I strongly recommend you keep up with as many business commitments as possible. It can take a lot of dedicated time and effort to build momentum and recognition for your personal brand. Whatever you happen to be going through 'off the field' as it were, please bear in mind that it is still much easier to keep your brand momentum going than it is to stop and try to reignite it later on.

Even if you don't care about your business much TODAY, you will care again tomorrow, or next week, or next year. Live for that time if not for now and you'll pull through stronger than ever.

I found it helpful to dissect my emotions on a daily basis and understand what was “really” going on compared to what I was “perceiving” or assuming might be. So if you find yourself having a bad day (and losing your dad is right up there with the worst of them, believe me), ask yourself the following questions to bring perspective back into your world. At first glance they may seem basic, even flippant. But trust me: if they helped me come to terms with losing one of the most cherished and dearly loved people in my life, I’m betting they can help you regain some balance too:

- Am I tired?
- Am I dehydrated?
- Have I suffered a loss from which I need more time to heal?
- Have I had too much coffee and have crashed as a result of it?
- Have I engaged in negative dialogue with myself or with my colleagues?
- Have I eaten foods that make me feel lethargic such as breads and sugar?
- Am I premenstrual? (if the answer to this one is yes then check out this awesome site which is great if you or your partner suffer from bad period pain: www.pmsbuddy.com)

In times of extreme stress, pressure or sorrow it pays to remind yourself that nobody is immune to life-shaking events. Even A-list movie stars, recording artists or world leaders are forced to manage their personal brand regardless of the way they may be feeling off-stage. We all saw Britney Spears’ highly publicised struggle with depression and prescription drugs. Those of us who have been through times of great personal challenge will have empathised more than we condemned because we could see her courage in the struggle.

This is what you should coach yourself to expect (and therefore deserve) from your customers and staff. As long as you are doing your best to meet as many of your professional commitments as possible, nobody is going to let YOU down by deserting your brand in times of trouble, either. Managing tough times as gracefully as possible is a necessary evil to keep everything on ice for when you're back in the swing 100%.

When in doubt...WRITE your future

There is a lot to be learnt from the technique of mastering one's own mind. Learn to manage this and you'll be unstoppable in building your profile and dealing with any criticism that may come your way.

Through your various life experiences you will discover stories that will be relevant to your audiences. In sharing these stories and background, sing them within your industry to make them relevant and helpful, you'll not only succeed in healing yourself in the process, you'll also find some cause for celebration of the lesson within yourself.

I encourage you to write regular articles to build your personal brand because come hell or high water, turbulence, trouble or plain sailing; there is always relief and clarity to be gained from this important discipline. This is when the real magic is free to occur. You'll uncover a personal brand that is grounded and has the ability to connect with thousands when you let it.

Your personal brand is your calling card, your credit card and your business card: invest time, money and energy into developing it and it will pay you well for years to come.

So, just how rich *are* **The Spice Girls** and how well did consistent **personal branding** 'come hell or high water' work for them? Well

according to www.Forbes.com, their reunion tour took in more than \$60 million US, making it the number one income earner for concerts in 2007/2008...and that didn't even include endorsement deals or the 20 million or so album they've sold worldwide since their careers began. Not bad going!

So now that we've covered **how to develop your brand** and come into alignment with **your true nature**, it's time to take a look at how well you're gift-wrapped. YOU are the product, remember - so this makes your clothes the gift-wrap, ok? Ok. Then let's get you beautifully packaged and presented like the fine Tiffany trinket you are – Hooray! Follow me...

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you ARE your PRODUCT (so why the HELL are you WRAPPED so BADLY?!)

If I were to hold up two pictures of people dressed according to their beliefs, one of the **Klu Klux Klan** and another of a **Nun**, how would you respond to each? Quite differently and maybe quite extremely I expect. Even if you didn't learn too much about the Klan in school, their choice of costume and the stance they adopt is pretty disturbing (although if you went to Catholic School you may find the nun just as scary!).

Clothes, costumes and uniforms are designed to portray the characteristics, beliefs or personality of the person wearing them and can produce emotions ranging from sheer terror, sexual intrigue, calmness or trust in others. You don't have to be **Kylie** or **Madonna** in some full on **Dolce & Gabbana** stage creation for what you wear to make a statement about you.

What you wear to client meetings, around your colleagues or in front of industry audiences has as much impact as either of the pictures stated above. Just because it's happening on a more subtle level, don't make the mistake of believing it isn't happening at all. Every individual you encounter is experiencing an emotional response to how you present yourself, so you may as well understand this well enough to use it to your advantage.

Among other things, your choice of attire indicates:

- your status;
- how seriously you take yourself;
- how seriously you take your business;
- how seriously you take the other people you are meeting with;
- whether or not you are the sort of person others want to be associated with as a customer or colleague.

“YOU are the product and your clothes are the wrapping that represent your personal brand.”

- Ben Angel

You can use your clothes to either seduce or repel other people. Once you really ‘get’ this concept, why on earth would you choose to incite negative or neutral responses when you could be influencing others positively on all sorts of extra levels?

DRESS for SUCCESS

Your internal and external representations of yourself need to be aligned for you to have maximum impact. How you feel about what you see in the mirror every day affects the way you project yourself to others, whether that be with confidence, temerity, timidity or sexual prowess. What *you think of yourself* will influence the clothes you choose to wear: never mind your heart, you are wearing your personality on your sleeve every day. Even if you’re in a position at work where rules and regulations dictate your wardrobe, your degree of attention to detail will speak volumes.

DRESS to IMPRESS

In some ways, dressing to seduce your customers, peers and the media in business is no different from getting all spruced up to go on a really hot date (although maybe it's best to actually *wear* underwear for the business lunch).

Noted social psychologist **Albert Mehrabian's** conducted various studies in the 1970s, which investigated the significance of verbal and non-verbal elements of communication. One of his best-known experiments demonstrated something which came to be known as “**The 7%-38%-55% Rule**”:

In his 1971 studies, Albert Mehrabian came to two basic conclusions.

Firstly, there are three elements in any face-to-face communication which impact upon our 'liking' for the person conveying any message:

1. *words* (7%)
2. *tone of voice* (38%)
3. *body language* (55%)

Secondly, the non-verbal elements are particularly important for communicating feelings and attitude, especially when they are incongruent (i.e., if words and body language disagree, one tends to believe the body language (non-verbal) over the verbal).

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Mehrabian#Three_elements_of_communication_-_and_the_.227.25-38.25-55.25_Rule.22

Put simply, you may be saying the right words and using the right inflection in your tone of voice, but if you're dressing like you don't know what year it is and your body language is stiff or self-conscious, these non-verbal clues will reveal the *true attitude* you have towards your content (notably your *belief* and *conviction*) and communicate

this directly from your subconscious mind to that of your audience. In short, if these elements are out of alignment, you reduce your powers of influence by up to 55%!

LOOKING the PICTURE of INNOCENCE

Your visual presentation provides back up support to everything you say and do. Looking the part will strengthen your personal brand and help people trust in you and what you have to teach them. You will become what is commonly referred to as being ‘media-friendly’ through *looking as if you know what you are talking about* – and this is crucial in you want to position yourself as an expert to be called on for comment.

Think about it: why else would so many image consultants work with defendants? To help make them appear more respectable and (therefore) more innocent in court, of course!

Being judged by ‘a jury of your peers’ is essentially what’s happening to you out there in the real world every single day. Putting your best foot forward in terms of your personal grooming and attire can make all the difference between whether or not you win their confidence, gain respect or close the sale with a client. Get it right, and you can really help yourself out by instantaneously removing several subconscious barriers and objections before you even open your mouth (and by the way – don’t forget to *smile* before you start to talk!).

10 Powerful ways to LOOK the PART

1. Give yourself a LIFT, short arse!

If you're vertically challenged (like I am) then you need to wear clothes that give the illusion of more **height** as this has been shown to equate to possessing **power and influence**. Even animals use techniques to appear tall in order to ward off attack. Several studies conducted in the US even suggest that the taller we feel and appear the more likely we are to be successful.

- a. **Pants:** find yourself a good tailor and avoid having too much excess fabric draping around your ankles; your trousers should fall at the heel of your shoe to elongate your legs.
- b. **Jewellery & Neck-ties:** statement pieces of jewellery worn around the neck and ears will draw attention upwards and help women appear taller. For men, wear ties that reflect your attitude: do you want to appear drab, dull and faded out or strong, confident and appropriate? Regularly update these elements on a yearly basis. If you own any ties more than 5yrs old, I have two solutions for you: **1)** take them to your local **Salvation Army** store, or **2)** take to them with the scissors, some matches and a bottle of kerosene!
- c. **Pinstripes vs. horizontal lines:** wearing pinstriped suits or clothing with vertical lines will help elongate your body, as long as they are a good fit and do not bulge sideways due to you carrying any 'excess baggage'! This is because horizontal lines have a tendency to make you **appear wider** than you actually are instead, which is the opposite of what we're trying to achieve here people. **NB:** Not all horizontal lines are bad: as long as they are extremely thin and close together rather than thick and wide-set, you can still get away with them and they can even have the effect of helping the eye to travel upwards like the pinstripes do. **STRIPES or PATTERNS of any kind should always be avoided for television**

appearances, however since the camera can distort these in quite bizarre ways and make you memorable for all the wrong reasons – Ooops!

- d. **Shoes:** avoid wearing round-toed shoes unless you want to appear stumpy (think Danny DeVito). Stick to squared or pointed toed shoes with designs that appear to run up your leg. Keep the colour of your shoes similar to the colour of your trousers or skirt to minimise any breaks in colour. Ensure that the width of your shoe is in proportion to the rest of your body (the same goes for ties and jewellery). **NB: If you are too tall** you can reverse these tips to help reduce your stature a little – although I would say that is a GREAT ‘problem’ to have and not something to be self conscious about at all!

2. Connect using COLOUR

Colour is powerful. Traditional Indian medicine proposes we have **7 chakras** or ‘energy centres’ in the body, each with a corresponding colour:

- **violet/white/gold** (crown/top of head: ‘higher consciousness’)
- **indigo** (third eye: ‘intuition’)
- **light blue/cyan** (throat: ‘communication’)
- **green** (heart: ‘sincerity’)
- **yellow** (solar plexus: ‘feelings’)
- **orange** (lower abdomen: ‘relationships’)
- **bright red** (root/groin: ‘self expression / ambition’)

You can tap into this wisdom by subconsciously accentuating different elements - although I don’t suggest wearing all of these simultaneously unless you want to end up looking like a clown!:

- **a blue shirt** to enhance clear communication;
- **a green tie** to convey heartfelt sincerity;
- **red shoes** to express ambition;

The popularity of different colours in business and in the media changes over time, of course. As I write, the current trend in worldwide politics is to wear a light blue tie to instil trust in voters (although this could change if too many corrupt officials adopt this attire!). Bright red ties are definitely passé and conjure up frightening images of sleazy, hard-nosed car salesmen from the 1980s!

Colours & their meanings for use in a Business context: If you're not into the charkas as a concept, here's a less esoteric approach for you. Use with caution. Take note of which colours are being worn by your peers and why, especially in the media. If everyone in your industry is wearing navy blue, then I suggest you go for something else. Also, wear colours that suit you as not all of these will. More information on that to come shortly. In the meantime remember, your **prime objective** as a **personal brand** is to **stand out**. Use this table to help you widen your options:

Navy blue	Authoritative; Trustworthy; Responsible; Organised.
Light blue	Trustworthy; Energetic. NB: never wear light blue shirts that are faded or of poor quality material as they will dull your complexion and make you appear tired.
Charcoal grey	Successful; Serious; Well-informed.
Black	Power, Power & more Power! Team black with a light blue shirt and a tie with dark blue & white stripes (preferably with a sheen to it) and you've come up with a powerful mix for when you're in front of the CEO. NB: never wear a black shirt during the day (unless of course it is a polo top or a t-shirt).

Yellow	Focusing attention; Engaging audiences. Not many people can wear yellow but if you can get away with it go for clothing that has elements of yellow in it.
Red	Commands attention; encourages brain wave activity; makes a bold statement.
Orange	Stimulates Emotions & Conversation. This is a good colour to be worn as jewellery, on watch faces, in ties & on cufflinks.
Green	Soothing; Calming; Builds Rapport; Assists in the Sales Process. Light green shirts & green jewellery will calm an individual down long enough for you to connect with them. NB: never use fluoro green in the corporate environment unless you want to look like a prostitute!
Purple	Historically Associated with Royalty; Magical; Mysterious; indicative of Sexual Prowess or (conversely) Sexual Frustration! NB: I DO NOT recommend wearing excessive amounts of this as I've seen some women do. It is for individuals extremely confident of their ability to stand out <i>positively</i>.

COLOUR & its Effect on your FACE: colours from your waist up reflect onto your face and have the greatest impact. When trying clothes on, ask yourself:

- Does this colour help me look energised or does it wash me out?
- Does it help my eyes stand out or does it clash with my hair colour?

- Does it make my skin glow with health or emphasize my wrinkles?
- Do I look jaundiced (yellow), grey or ill? (only useful for pulling a sickie!)
- Does it gracefully minimise or draw attention to the bags under my eyes?
- Does it make me appear younger or does this colour age me?
- Do I look slimmer / taller / fatter / shorter when I wear this colour?

Use the answers to these questions to better choose colours that suit your skin tone. If you're unsure, hold the item of clothing directly under your face and look closely at the details. If it doesn't work, it doesn't work. Recognise this and don't insist on being a slave to fashion! Find something else that suits you better.

3. Say it with STRUCTURE

Baggy clothing projects an image of someone who is sloppy, lazy, immature and probably lets their mother buy all their clothes for them (all the mama's boys out there take note!).

Well-tailored/structured clothes that fit well project an image of someone who takes care of themselves, knows their own body (a very seductive quality!) and is comfortable in their own skin.

Structured clothes suggest positive personality traits such as: professional, organised, credible, likeable and able to deliver on time.

Be willing to have alterations made to business garments in order to maximise the influence you can have by dressing well. Avoid the classic mistake of 'flabby fabric' around the waist by having excess fabric hanging out from where your shirt's tucked in.

4. LOVE the SKIN you're IN

For years I struggled with pimples and rashes on my face, which

feels like quite a big admission to make in a business book! This was until I discovered that (along with many others out there... possibly even you) that I am allergic to gluten, which is found in wheat. I had to bid a fond farewell to all my favourite “I-feel-like-having-a-fat-day” food overnight: no more pasta, sugary cereal or pizza! I was devastated at first but my skin cleared up completely and the confidence I gained in front of live audiences through having beautiful skin was well worth the sacrifice.

If you are prone to bad skin, conduct your research and find a solution that works for you. Getting to the root cause is important; don't just treat the symptoms or you'll never be free. Maybe you have an allergy to certain foods or the chemicals found in detergent or washing powder for example? Your doctor should be able to refer you to a good dermatologist for allergy tests if need be.

Ensure that you cleanse and moisturise your skin daily because everyday hazards like pollution and air conditioning can dry your skin out and encourage premature aging. Also, **please be very VERY wary of using fake tan!** If you find yourself wondering whether you look a little orange, chances are you DO! Go to a professional or use lightly tinted creams that build up a gradual tan and don't streak, clump or peel. It's better to be pale and interesting than have skin that screams, *“Christina Aguilera!”*

5. “Oh My God, not the FACE!”

Your face is your fortune so please look after it and maybe think twice before you start tattooing or piercing it in a million different places! Celebrities, musicians, business professionals, news-readers, actors, entrepreneurs, politicians...we all rely upon our faces to a greater or lesser degree to get ahead (excuse the pun!).

Regardless of which industry you're in, **your target market is your audience** so how you present the face of your business to the world (i.e. how well-groomed you are; how much you align yourself visually with your brand personality) is a critical element to your overall success.

Take a look in the mirror and ask yourself if there is anything

that may need improving, for example: do your teeth need whitening? Does your mono-brow require attention? (and YES to all the straight men out there – this does include you!). **The right eyebrow shape will frame your eyes and draw important attention to these ‘windows to your soul’.** Observe politicians and you will see that most of them have their eyebrows attended to because they are aware of this powerful fact.

Women, please check your face weekly for unsightly hair growth! You may think that the hair on your face is all downy blonde, cute and largely invisible but wait until you get out into the sunlight and then it’s all we can see when we look at you – whoops! **Laser hair treatments** are very effective in treating this problem, which can often worsen with age if you’re not careful.

It also pays to get some professional advice if you are going to wear make up (essential for press photography, public speaking or television appearances): “Mimi” styled makeup only works on **The Drew Carey Show**, not in real life! Update your techniques and colour palette regularly and expect this to change as you get older.

Above all, this section is about removing all the obvious distractions so that you can relax and enjoy using your face to engage your peers, the media and prospects through animated **facial expressions** and a big, broad smile! **Smiling** more often is one of the most effective things you can do (which is why it helps to have clean, white teeth!).

6. Don’t pull your HAIR out

Your hair is a picture frame for your face. It can make you look old, young, hip, harsh, tattered, conservative, professional...or as if you’ve just been shagged senseless (only fine if you work in that industry!).

To appear youthful, keep the hair away from your temples (more important the older you get) otherwise you run the risk of it creating ‘drag’ on your face (and as any Drag Queen will tell you, that ain’t pretty!).

Avoid 'teenage' hairstyles such as spiky hair or styles that need a lot of hairspray to hold them in place: a good cut won't require either to look good. Invest the time and money in finding a really great hairdresser you can trust to always make the most out of your particular hair type and face shape (including matching the colour of your hair to the tone of your skin – again, expect this to alter with age).

This goes out to ALL the MEN out there: Please Please PLEASE avoid the dreaded comb-over at all costs! It SCREAMS lack of self-confidence and is the quickest imaginable way to destroy trust and rapport. At the age of twenty-seven my hair started thinning so believe me, I do understand how distressing this can be. If this is happening to you, you have two options:

a. **invest in hair regrowth technology** (I did and can happily report that mine is growing back),

or

b. **be bald and proud!** Ok, you don't have to completely shave everything off, but go for a really short, well-maintained style that doesn't try to hide anything. You'd be AMAZED at how many women find this sexy – and when I say that, I'm referring more to the PERSONAL CONFIDENCE you will exude in carrying it off more than anything else, make sense?

Oh, and a quick message on this subject for all the LADIES reading too: please be sensitive about this issue! Male pattern baldness is the equivalent of cellulite for chicks. We may pretend we don't care (and you may genuinely not get what all the fuss is all about) but the truth is that it cuts most of us to the quick when it first starts happening and can have a real impact on our confidence.

7. "I said, STAND up STRAIGHT!"

Hello Igor, how's that hunched back posture working out for you, dude? If you're in the habit of slouching your shoulders forward and dragging your knuckles on the floor, then you're

also in the habit of projecting visually to others that you're uncomfortable being you and severely lacking in confidence. The way that you feel about yourself will always directly impact on the way that you look, and vice versa.

Unless you have a medical condition that prevents you from standing up straight, **address bad posture immediately** because the GOOD NEWS is that correcting it is the **fastest, easiest way to look slimmer and command more respect** – pretty cool, huh?

If the truth is that you privately do lack in personal confidence, simply start by standing up straight because correcting your posture will help correct your attitude. A few other things you can do to help yourself (as long as you are physically capable) include:

- **BodyPump classes at the gym** (great for becoming conscious of what great posture is and training your muscles to support you the right way 24/7);
- **Visiting a Chiropractor** (these practitioners focus on the diagnosis, treatment & prevention of mechanical disorders of the musculoskeletal system, especially the spine);
- **Take an ACTING, DANCING, SINGING or TV Presenting course** (this is the most FUN way to receive constructive criticism about your 'carriage' and how it affects an audience; if you're lucky you will get to view the 'before & after' differences on screen which is always incredibly enlightening!).

8. A WEIGHTY Issue (how to be FAT but look THIN)

I'm not suggesting that you obsess over your weight or get sucked into fad diets - unless of course you haven't seen your cock for a good twenty years or you've got more rolls under your shirt than the local bakery! I don't believe in diets: I believe in loving life and being healthy...healthy eating combined with regular mental and physical exercise to keep fit.

There is no doubt that getting to a place where you are entirely comfortable with yourself, your body and your shape (whatever that looks and feels like to you) will guarantee that you portray a far more positive presence than if you are hauling old body issue concerns around with you. If you do find yourself carrying a bit of extra weight, don't panic: you've come to the right place for some workable solutions. Here are a few tried and tested techniques to help you find clothes that are flattering to your body shape to help you feel sexy and more confident.

TOP TIPS to minimize extra Weight & Increase your Personal Presence

- a. **Wear semi-fitted clothes:** 'fitted' doesn't mean 'tight', it means tailored (just to get over that objection straight away!). This is especially important to realise since the truth is that overly baggy clothes add far more bulk than you actually have as well as lay out all your insecurities for the world to see which is, of course, the most unattractive consequence!
- b. **Avoid 'round' designs & cuts:** round patterns and designs will make you seem larger than you are. Be smart: stick to vertical lines and v-neck designs if you want to appear slimmer.
- c. **Avoid colour blocking:** wearing a white top with black pants has the unfortunate result of creating two very large horizontal blocks, which is an even more exaggerated version of the fattening horizontal lines discussed earlier. Toning colours, less extreme in contrast, will make your body appear longer and leaner, balancing out your body shape.
- d. **Slim down the widest part of your body:** whether you're a girl with thunder thighs or a guy with an overly thick waist, for heaven's sake don't draw attention to these least attractive attributes by wearing shorts, skirts or shirts that struggle to conceal your thickest areas! Accentuate the positive instead. Whatever people compliment you about most often is probably what you should start dressing to celebrate.

- e. **Utilise patterns:** clothes with patterns don't let the eye settle in any one particular area (such as your gorgeous eyes or your beautiful smile) and this has the effect of deceiving the viewer into perceiving you as smaller than you really are.
 - f. **Shoes:** avoid wearing round shoes, as they will make you appear short and stumpy. The opposite applies if you want to add height, i.e., shoes that have squared or pointed toes will add length to your legs and help you seem taller and more slender. As it happens, the second option is also more professional, which helps.
 - g. **Bad Hair Days:** as discussed earlier, your hair impacts your whole look; it frames your features and can easily either lift or age them. By adding large round curls to your hair, you can create the unwanted effect of making your face appear thicker than what it actually is. Find yourself a talented artiste (brilliant hairdressing really is an art form!) and ask them to create a clever cut that fits, frames and flatters your features.
- 9. Be the Best CLOTHES-Horse on the Racecourse, "Neigh?"**
- Be warned: If you're an award-winning shopoholic, you might find what I'm about to say particularly shocking, but for some people going shopping is like walking the plank. Some of them even look like **Sean Penn** dragging his feet on the way to the gallows in **DEAD MAN WALKING!** For them it's a painful, often embarrassing and incredibly frustrating experience. If you sincerely struggle or require a makeover, a talented **image consultant** will set you on the thin and narrow.

The great thing about stand-out consultants is that once you've got a good handle on the most flattering basic pieces for each season, you're more or less set up for life. Let yourself be taken shopping once or twice, experience the joy of stylist industry discounts and being greeted by name in all the swankiest stores, be open to discovering how to best dress for your shape (sometimes in the most surprising of ways), and the knowledge and experience will stay with you for the rest of your life.

From then on, whatever you choose to do with fashion or personal image consulting just gets to be pure FUN. In fact, regardless of how competent you are at aligning your personal image with your personal brand, you're not an experienced image consultant so it makes sense there would be more to learn from an expert in their field, (because what goes around comes around, brand-wise), get it?

So whether you are seeking to create an increased media buzz around your brand, throw a glamorous book or product launch, or dazzle at a special annual event, it pays to engage a true master of colour and shape to work their magic on beautifying your bootylicious bod – at least once.

10. ZAG while others ZIG

Make it your mission in life to be the best-dressed person wherever you go so that even if you miss the mark by an inch you'll probably still be the second best-dressed. It is your job to be a positive walking advertisement for your brand. Through so doing, you will also attract new clients and find yourself being treated with greater respect.

Being well-dressed is a question of discovering your own personal (brand) style and then being brave enough to use it to **avoid fitting in**. Fitting in is for those that don't want to further their careers in leaps and bounds. When you know others are going to be wearing the same kind of clothes, such as black corporate power suits, then wear a grey one instead (as long as it hasn't been specifically requested by the event organiser).

Ben's Bonus Tip: Balance, Balance and Balance!

A great outfit look likes *it was made for YOU* (not your grandma or your nephew!). To decide whether or not a colour or style suits you, ask yourself this question: "Am I wearing the clothes or are the clothes wearing me?" The clothes are there to compliment you, your personality, hairstyle, skin tone, face and body shape. If your clothes

are louder than you are, they're not doing a very good job of this so for heaven's sake change them!

Everything you wear should also be in balanced proportion to your size. Have you ever noticed that when short people wear huge belt buckles it can make them appear even shorter and way out of balance? Well, the same goes if you are large and wear jewellery and clothes that appear too small for you: you will appear much bigger than you are. Balance is the key to every successful outfit.

Personal Branding IMAGES for different INDUSTRIES

As a source of inspiration I've included a few industries here, along with a suggested image strategy for each. This is just a guide so you will still need to ensure your body shape and personality is reflected. Although there isn't room here for us to explore every little subdivision, you can look at the **objective** of each industry to find one that best reflects yours. From there you can take relevant elements and apply them to your sector:

SLEEPING YOUR WAY TO THE TOP

POSITION	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY
CEO / Managers	To appear credible in front of stakeholders; to project authority, status & credibility.	Well-structured suits for men and women. Clothes tailored to create an image of someone in control who has the capacity to deliver. BLUE will project trustworthiness. BLACK will project power and influence. Place a high priority on the quality of the fabric and jewellery worn. Do not skimp. Purchase high quality watches, earrings, suits, shoes, pens, ties, scarves, handbags and cufflinks.
CEO in the Making	Being groomed to move up through the ranks; earning trust, credibility & respect from peers & seniors.	Influence decision-makers by matching and mirroring their own personal style. Dress as if you already are the CEO. Beautiful shoes and attention to detail count. Be consistent in your personal appearance to project someone who will make a sound choice when the time comes to appoint a new leader.
Life Coach	To be the embodiment of an amazing and successful life.	Relaxed, semi-casual but good quality clothes. For men: well-fitted jeans with black/brown shoes; a smart blazer; shoes that match your belt. Women: casual bottoms mixed with beautiful jackets and statement pieces of jewellery. Update your wardrobe every season to project an ever-evolving, positive and successful attitude. Utilise vibrant colours. If your target market is corporate, reflect this by wearing a full suit but allowing colours to come through via shirts and ties. Avoid wearing too much black.

<p>Musician</p>	<p>Regular brand reinvention for maximum personality & sales impact.</p>	<p>Each album requires a different look to maximise personal expression. Clothes and costumes will directly reflect your personality and may occasionally be controversial to stimulate debate and create media interest. Stay abreast of current trends and begin to dictate them over time. Never wear the same outfit more than once if you can help it. Stay fresh and original. Research cutting edge trends and introduce key elements into your wardrobe ahead of time. Include simple signature touches which fans can easily duplicate (think Michael Jackson's wide-brimmed black hat and white sequinned glove).</p>
<p>Business Consultant</p>	<p>To be up to date, current, innovative, credible and trustworthy.</p>	<p>Well-fitted suits projecting someone who is up to date with current business trends and modes of thinking. A wide selection of ties with striking colours to stand out from the crowd. If you're a public speaker, choose clothes that differentiate you from the audience by taking their style and giving it a really unique twist. I.e. tailored jackets in daring colours; designer label ties; unusual one-off accessories. Well-balanced, structured outfits that project credibility and trust. When dealing with the corporate sector ties will be necessary for men unless you have a strong enough media presence to get away with being appealingly louche. Women please cover your cleavage by at least 5cms, especially when dealing with larger, more formal organizations (unless you are deliberately representing a really provocative brand).</p>

Marketing Consultant	To be a trendsetter; to combine industry knowledge with ballsy credibility.	For men a mix of suits and well-fitted jeans with blazers; for women the focus is on integrating creative elements by way of jackets and jewellery. Cutting-edge hairstyles (excuse the pun) are required to show clients you know where the marketplace trends are heading. Update your wardrobe constantly to reflect new and evolving trends. Find balance in looking up to date but remember that the key to success is relaxed chic: don't obsess about what you wear.
Health Practitioner	To appear healthy, vibrant & professional.	Be the epitome of health and vitality. Give clients every reason to place their health and well-being in your hands. If you are a personal trainer, your own health and fitness is of high priority. Practice what you preach. Bright, vibrant colours will project vitality and health. Other health practitioners will need to focus on structured clothing that projects someone in control who knows what they're doing. Semi-casual, well-fitted, tailored shirts are ideal for both men and women.

NOW that I've got your ATTENTION...

As a general rule of thumb, expect to spend about one month's salary a year updating your wardrobe. You can stretch things out by learning how to be artful about mixing expensive pieces with inexpensive elements (unless of course you're the **CEO** in which case it should be top quality all the way). In addition, always be open to

the idea of a personal image makeover to support and promote the launch of a new product or service.

One powerful parting shot: Nobody *ever* wears ‘Bitch’ or ‘Bastard’ well (unless you’re someone who makes a career out of it, like Germaine Greer maybe!). I don’t care *how* hot you look, if you’ve got the attitude of an arrogant Tasmanian devil people will run a mile from you – and just you try and seduce them then! What ever it is that’s got you all hot under the collar, I’m here to tell you to drop the act, deal with your anger and *move on*.

Your clothes are an extension and a reflection of you and your brand. When you get up tomorrow ask yourself what you would like to communicate through your choice of ‘look’ today. Remember that YOU are your product and your clothes are the wrapping.

Your business success greatly depends on how well you grasp this concept and run with it (wearing the hottest, most up to date gym gear, of course – he he).

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CONTAGIOUS CONVERSATIONS

(ENERGETIC & EMOTIONAL Engagement in VIRAL MARKETING)

Human interactions can be rich on many levels, yet surprisingly few businesses effectively apply their knowledge of this on a daily basis to generate discussion or word-of-mouth benefits. The ones out there who *do* realise that modern business is about going above and beyond the call of duty are the ones who prosper. And so the question is: do YOU really know how to find your prospects' sweet spot? Wait, don't answer yet – you're about to find out!

Because even though the concept of 'emotionally engaging' customers may not be a new one, '*energetic engagement*' hasn't been much touched upon at all. This chapter explores both **emotional and energetic engagement** and how it can assist you in growing your client base by sparking viral conversations.

viral | 'vīrəl|

adjective

1 of or involving the rapid spread of information about a product or service by viral marketing techniques : a viral video ad.

SHIFT them EMOTIONALLY

The ability to powerfully shift an individual from one emotional state to another is an influential business tool well worth developing. Imagine being able to shift your customers from a neutral or flat-lined state into one of optimism or energy: wouldn't *that* be a great association for them to have with your brand? It's positive experiences like this which are the catalyst for customer conversations 'going viral' and taking on a (cyber-) life of their own.

We exhibit this behaviour every day in our personal lives. Take dating for example. After you have a first date with someone, they may or may not call you back based on the quality of emotional exchange that occurred. For example:

- **positive exchange** = call back
- **neutral exchange** = unlikely to call back (unless they're desperate)
- **negative exchange** = restraining order!

The same principles apply when dealing with your customers: they too are all about the emotional quality and content of their interactions with you and your business. So if people aren't responding to your emails, there's no need to waste time wondering why. As **Behrendt & Tuccillo's** book of (almost) the same name clearly states: they're just not that into you!

The reason most businesses fail to incite viral conversations is because they are providing them with yet another 'ordinary' and unimaginative customer experience, not an 'amazing' or particularly memorable one. It's not enough in today's crowded marketplace to simply provide the basics for your customer base. In order to be talking about you to all their friends they will want to have their minds blown.

You know when you've been the catalyst for a positive emotional shift in your customers when you see their eyes light up, their posture correct itself and their mouth crack open into a big wide smile. It's the best feeling in business to be the cause of such customer satisfaction – who wouldn't strive for that? Most importantly this kind of high quality exchange engenders **gratitude and generosity of spirit** and these are benefits of immeasurable worth out there in the big wide world. Wow. Pretty heady stuff, eh?

ENGAGE them ONLINE

Online interactions are different to the ones that happen face-to-face, or even over the phone. They begin with a one-sided communication that will only develop into a full-blown conversation that goes viral if you provide something of real wit, value or originality.

Twitter, Facebook and YouTube all thrive and survive in a business context through providing the platform for compelling content. You need to make sure that whatever YOU post up online is something that **ideally both stirs up *and* resolves your customers' curiosity**. If conversations about your goods and services are failing to 'go viral' and take on a life of their own, chances are you're just being way too predictable and unimaginative. Instead of getting disheartened by this, see it for the exciting creative challenge it really is and start to express yourself and your brand more powerfully.

Twitter TIPS for going VIRAL

1. Jump on www.twitter.com;
2. Create an account for your business (there are tips on how to do this on the site);
3. Start posting daily tips and pose controversial industry questions based on your target market's needs and interests;
4. Download a tool called '**Tweet Deck**' and learn to conduct searches on yourself or the name of the business;
5. Keep tabs on what topics you post cause people to 're-tweet' (respond) about what you have been saying;
6. Adjust your Twitter strategy according to what you learn about the interests and concerns of your target market;
7. Ask questions, find out what people really want to know about you and your industry; discover their biggest challenges and respond to them;
8. Stay flexible and continually strive to integrate your learnings into how you use Twitter;
9. Remember: as with anything in marketing ('viral' or otherwise) testing and measuring is of utmost importance;
10. Also remember to keep advertising on social sites to a bare minimum by sticking to the 80 / 20 rule (i.e. you freely offer 80% tips & advice but only use 20% of your engagement on the site for promoting your website or wares.

"Have you EMOTIONALLY SATISFIED me lately?"

To provide you with a clearer understanding of **how emotional engagement works** I've created some basic scale tools you can use to test how influential your emotional interactions are. Each scale

represents a different **core emotion** and the extent to which the emotion is being experienced:

- **Zero** represents an interaction that hasn't resulted in any emotional enhancement whatsoever (pass the Viagra, someone!);
- **1 – 4** represents that the interaction has provided a relatively neutral response; nothing terrible, but certainly nothing that would get tongues wagging (it's like being the ex that nobody remembers they ever went out with);
- **6 – 8** represents an interaction that will leave your customers in an enlightened state and keen to share their experience with a few friends should the subject come up in conversation;
- **9 – 10** represents the place you want to be! This is the level at which real magic occurs: there is a discernable emotional shift which your customers feel compelled to proactively tweet home about and may even get you mentioned in the media (just this morning a major radio station in Perth quoted my fashion tips on Twitter).

To gauge the level and type of emotional experience your business is offering, interact with your competitors (inconspicuously of course) to find out just how much they are engaging with *their* customers...and then create ways to leave them standing! Rate their interactions and compare them with your own using the scales below. **This will only be useful to you if you are prepared to be brutally honest with yourself** so don't kid a kidder, kid! There's no room for self-deception bullshit here: we need to work together to hone the quality of your customer interactions to ensure you go viral, ok? Ok. *Let's Do It!*

SCALE #1 : Conveying ACCEPTANCE

One of the first emotions that your business should communicate is an empathetic **acceptance and understanding of your target market's concerns**. Take all the great BIG billboard signs popping UP all over the place concerning erection problems (kind of ironic, when you think about it). This business model is all about reassuring men that *they are not alone* and that it is perfectly 'normal' to suffer from this problem at sometime in their life. Otherwise the fear of rejection, ridicule or judgement will prevent their customers from ever picking the phone up to ask for the help they need (not very good for business!).

You need to create a safe brand experience so that your customers feel able to ask every question, however serious or dumb they feel it to be. It should go without saying that you must ***never laugh at a customer's question!*** Nobody ever refers a business on to others that made them feel stupid. So whenever you are tempted to throw your intellectual weight around, remember that you're potentially trading thousands of dollars in lost revenue for a split second's selfish little ego boost. Hardly a very business savvy emotional exchange!

***"Wisdom is knowing when to speak your mind
and when to mind your speech."***

- Anonymous

Create an online presence through which you openly discuss your target market's embarrassing challenges no matter how taboo they may seem because they *will* thank you for it! Have the guts to go where your competitors fear to tread. Now here comes the FUN part:

On a scale of 0 – 10 rate how effectively your brand conveys acceptance of your clients' concerns in your marketing material and online conversations (and remember, God kills a kitten every time you lie, so don't lie!):

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)

- 0-5** barely or not at all conveyed
6-8 conveyed in printed marketing material (brochures, leaflets and posters etc)
9-10 conveyed both on- and offline; including through firsthand customer testimonials

Next rate from 0 – 10 what level of intensity you estimate the feeling of acceptance being experienced by your customers is:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)

- 0-5** neutrally or not at all
6-8 acceptance experienced at an emotionally satisfying level
9-10 acceptance felt to a high degree with great likelihood they will tell others about your offering (i.e. they feel comfortable enough to 'vomit' out all their issues into your lap to deal with, and then 'sneeze' about how well you handled them to all their online networks (more delightful than it sounds, trust me!).

SCALE #2 : Provoking THOUGHT

It's time to (mentally) arouse your customers in order to seduce them. I recently challenged audiences to rethink, defend or completely alter their position on the validity of multi-level marketers (**MLMs**) by emailing my entire database to announce that all MLMs were

banned from attending any future NWN (Nationwide Networking) events.

Our reason for doing this was due to the harassment our members and guests reported receiving from this particular sector. Their tendency was to waste people's time by refusing to disclose the nature of their business on first meeting. Banning MLM companies from our events caused a mixed reaction of more than 30 impassioned online comments (both positive and negative) *in less than 5 minutes!*

What we succeeded in doing was **polarising our database into two distinct groups for marketing purposes:**

Group 1: multi-level marketers who got royally pissed off and raged about our **company to all of their networks (thus getting our brand out there for us),**

and;

Group 2: other business professionals grateful to us for 'protecting' their interests and acting as Gatekeeper in keeping the MLMs away from them.

Identify a particularly 'touchy' topic within your own industry yet to be addressed because people are too afraid to discuss it. Contextualise it for your target market and open up the platform for discussion. **Provoking thought and discussion drives market attention in your direction.** Is your business provoking positive change through debate and discussion of major industry taboos? If not, get onto it TODAY!

Score yourself from 0 – 10 for how much your organization provokes thought to create positive change on a yearly basis:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)

- 0-5 barely or not at all
6-8 moderately so (“We have sparked some questions for debate”)
9-10 very much! (“We pissed off plenty of people who were never our ideal clients anyway and reinvigorated our target market to seduce more customers – Hooray!”).

Now rate yourself from 0 – 10 for how intensely this is felt by your customers:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)

- 0-5 neutrally or not at all
6-8 emotionally satisfying
9-10 rewarding and exciting enough to proactively share with others

In order to score highly above you may well have created as much intentionally negative word-of-mouth viral marketing as you have positive, which is totally fine, trust me!

SCALE #3 : Instilling TRUST

Essentially, this is all about how adept you are at providing **social evidence** to potential new customers that shows how many **other consumers** *already trust you*.

People work with and trust the people they like, and those who they feel an affinity with. Get good at generating credibility by association for your brand. This can be achieved through: **brand storytelling**, **affiliation** with credible sources, amassing **quality business contacts** and all the other tools we’ve spoken about in previous chapters.

Social evidence comes in many forms, but one of the most effective is to present photographic evidence, for example of your brand business spokesperson hobnobbing with influential industry leaders. These images can be scattered on websites, used in email campaigns or included to illustrate printed material. **Associating your business with others already possessing a positive reputation within your industry is a fast, effective way to establishing brand credibility if your business is new.** This will be covered in more detail in the next chapter, but for now just ask yourself this: How trustworthy and credible is my business and how well do we convey this?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)

- 0-5 barely or not at all conveyed
- 6-8 conveyed in printed marketing material (brochures, leaflets, posters etc)
- 9-10 conveyed both on- and offline; including photos, personal recommendations from public figures, links to industry bodies and access to respected informational resources

Now rate your business for the level of intensity your customers feel about how credible and trustworthy you are:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)

- 0-5 neutrally or not at all
- 6-8 emotionally satisfying
- 9-10 rewarding and exciting enough to proactively share with others

SCALE #4 : Creating CONFLICT

Sparkling inner conflict within your target audience (i.e. the ultimate ‘mind-F@*k’) helps raise your profile through creating yet more controversy. Challenge your audience and their habitual ways of thinking. Pose questions about why they do the things they do.

TWO Brand Case Studies in ‘Creating CONFLICT’

Case Study 1 >> Sorbent toilet paper achieved this by posing the following question to its target market: ***“Are you a scruncher or a folder when you use our toilet paper?”*** This created great debate among families and friends. It’s a question that most of us had never even considered before, yet Sorbent suddenly had us all passionately debating it and defending our relative positions. I honestly didn’t realise scruncher’s even existed!

Case Study 2 >> Vegemite conducted a similar campaign. They asked consumers how they ate their Vegemite: “Are you a Streaker, Edger or Wormer (just to name a few)?” Each of these styles was then associated with various personality types, much like star signs. By merely asking the question, ***“How do you like your vegemite?”***, the company compelled people to engage positively with their brand and bring the topic up for discussion when out and about with their friends. Too easy!

Is there something that your audience does automatically that you can challenge them to think about or reconsider? Is there a certain behaviour that you can link to both your product and their personality type? On the scale below, rate how well your organization manages to instigate inner conflict and self-reflection within your target audience:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)

SLEEPING YOUR WAY TO THE TOP

- 0-5 barely or not at all
- 6-8 moderately instigated
- 9-10 overwhelmingly instigated with great response

Now rate the level of intensity to which this is felt by your customers:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)

- 0-5 neutrally or not at all
- 6-8 emotionally satisfying
- 9-10 rewarding and exciting enough to proactively share with others

That's IT! So...how well DID YOU SCORE?

So now it's time to add up your points and see how well you scored out of a **possible maximum score of 80 points**. If you answered honestly, you may well find that you didn't rank too highly. Well in the words of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, "**Don't PANIC!**"

Plainly speaking, even though some of the information above may seem obvious now that we've explored it together, chances are you've *never actually been taught these **best-kept secret business basics** before!* I know, it's crazy right?

Improve the areas you didn't score too well on through brainstorming ideas with your staff, family and friends. Incentivise individuals outside of your business target market to rate your ideas honestly and give you their feedback. Anything less than **consistently scoring 9 – 10 in each case** doesn't have the potential for getting the masses talking but the GOOD NEWS is that now you know you have the challenge, you can easily set about solving the problem!

“Returning to the SOURCE” – Learning from your Customer MATRIX

Another great technique for creating **effective emotional engagement** is the ability to make your consumers look and feel great. When you are responsible for making an individual feel good about themselves, they get ‘addicted’ to you and will feel compelled to *return to the source* (is it me, or did you just hear **Morpheus** say something to **Neo**?).

‘Returning to the source’ in this context basically means your customer base are making repeat purchases. This happens when you have successfully managed to fire off chemical explosions in their physiology eliciting feelings of great elation. Who wouldn’t want more of that? It’s as addictive a natural high as **real raw chocolate**!

Let me illustrate this another way by asking you to respond instinctively to each of these two statements:

- Your partner is cheating on you
- You look amazing

SERIOUSLY...your partner is cheating on you! Ha ha, just joking. If I were a betting man I’d say you probably responded better to the second statement! Apply this learning to each of your customer interactions. This goes for influencing *everyone* in fact: clients, colleagues, politicians...and especially that annoying whiny retail assistant who always gives you crap service. The art of making someone feel good is the art of attracting positive experiences into your world and your business, regardless of the circumstances. How many people have YOU made feel great already today? Terrific. Now...double it!

Measuring CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

Sorry to get all analytical on you, but from time to time it's important to watch your figure(s)! Here are some **specific areas** I urge that you measure every time you roll out any kind of customer relations or marketing campaign:

1. Subscriptions to your website database
2. Sale conversions
3. Referrals
4. Repeat purchases
5. Blog comments
6. Forum interactions
7. Unsolicited linking from other websites
8. Sharing information about YOUR business within THEIR networks (online or via general feedback)
9. Re-tweets on Twitter

If you find you're not hitting the mark, adjust your approach to ensure tangible and positive results are occurring from all of your **consumer engagement strategies**.

Remember: a customer doesn't actually have to buy directly from you to become engaged. They may be just as useful to you as a 'foot soldier' or 'brand champion' – someone who is a natural and proactive advocate for you and your business, who goes around telling everybody else about you because they like the conversations and content you've been sharing.

Understand that **emotional engagement** is only part of the formula: the rest can be found within the **energetic** ties that you create. Watch out now...you're about to fall a whole lot further down the rabbit hole, Alice...!

Intangible Connections: how to **ENERGETICALLY** engage your Customers

So far we've discussed how to engage consumers visually and emotionally. **Energetic engagement** underpins both of these elements while taking things to a whole new level. Energetic engagement provides a contextual current to sweep your prospects up in and carry them along to the final destination: 'Purchase Town'!

Each member of staff in your business (or it could be just you) brings various elements to the table, i.e.:

- Skills
- Insight
- Attitude
- Integrity
- Personality
- Experience
- Care & Attention to Detail

The missing ingredient that is also brought but not always discussed due to its somewhat more esoteric nature, is the intangible yet highly influential underlying bedrock of positive and negative **energy**.

This energy is produced by the emotional currents ebbing and flowing in each individual's life. Currents of negative energy or thought in the personal lives of your staff or customers will naturally affect how they interact with one another: how they do their work or make their purchasing decisions.

Each interaction you engage in is like a chemical experiment: energy is getting swapped constantly – for good or bad, better or worse, like it or not. If you are feeling anxious, stressed, depressed or even hurt, the person you are interacting with may experience those same feelings without consciously realising or understanding why.

They may even go to great lengths to withdraw themselves from the conversation or relationship to get away from you without being able to put their finger on the reason. What they *will* remember is that for some reason they don't feel good around you – and that's the absolute antithesis of an effective marketing strategy if ever I heard one!

“The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed.”

- Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961)

ENERGETIC Vampires

Have you ever met someone who you later described as having ‘drained’ your energy? You will know what I mean if you have ever walked away from a person or conversation feeling less energised than you did when you arrived. It's not a good feeling and I can bet you didn't hurry back for more! The reason behind it is the quality of the **energetic exchange** that has occurred. In short, an energetic vampire just attacked you and they sucked the life right out of you (not in a good way, either!).

On the other hand, there are probably friends, acquaintances and colleagues whose company you actively seek (or who seek you out) because interacting with them is energising, inspirational and ‘real’.

Whenever customers walk away from an interaction with you, your brand or your business feeling this way, you can bet your bottom dollar (sometimes *thousands* of bottom dollars in repeat business!) that they will be back for more. Such is **the potency and power of harnessing the positive energy in your business**. So make like **BUFFY** and guard it with your life!

Clashes can occur when positive and negative energies collide, usually resulting in one of three scenarios playing out:

1. a negatively geared person encounters a positively geared person and one energy attempts to match and mirror the other in order to remain in the space and build rapport;
2. a negatively geared person encounters a positively geared person on energetically **neutral** ground (a place that neither of them has any personal or professional association with; a topic of conversation that neither has any prior knowledge or experience of for example), and this enables them to build some rapport;
3. a negatively geared person encounters a positively geared person under circumstances they both feel a vested interest in and one tries to energetically overpower or dominate the other which results in a fight, clash, heated debate and/or a distinctive ‘parting of the ways’ (this is what is meant when you overhear people saying, “I don’t like the vibe in here” or, “You could cut the air in here with a knife”).

Whether you can physically see it or not, energy is impacting your life positively and negatively all the time. And if that is true for you, it’s also true for your customers, clients and (visible) bottom (panty) line!

The trouble is, relatively few people are self-aware enough to distinguish the separate energies being thrown at them

all day long. This begs the question, What can YOU do to ensure that the energetic message being communicated by YOUR brand is: a) **positive** and b) **undeniably yours?**

Energetic Industry Incongruencies to be Avoided at all costs!

- The **Life Coach** whose own life is a mess
- The **Financial Advisor** who goes bankrupt
- The **Business Consultant** who's never even run their own successful business
- The **Sales Consultant** with a pathological fear of people
- The **Personal Trainer** who smokes, drinks and is morbidly obese
- The **Accountant** who gives business advice even though he's no entrepreneur
- The **Telemarketer** whose 'stage fright' prevents them picking up the phone
- The **CEO** or **Spokesperson** who is terrified of public speaking

Once you get the value of understanding **energetic engagement** you will find yourself paying more attention to what is *not* said than ever before! You will start tuning in more easily to the **energetic** information being given off, which tends to be far more authentic even if it is light years away from what is being suggested verbally (remember **Albert Mehrabian** and his **7%-38%-55% Rule** from chapter 5? Perfect!)

The ENERGETIC Holy Grail

Here's the **REAL secret**...the good goss, the inside track...the **HOLY GRAIL** of energetic info for you...ready? Ok, here we go: the *real*

reason things don't work whenever they don't work out for you is **because of the energy** you are giving off. That's it. I'm serious! If *anything* you do comes from a place of desperation or malice this will permeate every aspect of your business and turn people off faster than a knotty forest of unkempt pubes in public!

Take the classic example of the **accredited life coach** (I'm allowed to pick on them because just between us, I am one too!). For a Life Coach to be able to successfully attract, retain and develop clients, they *must* possess the essence of enjoying a great life themselves, or at an absolute minimum be *well on their way* to achieving this. It is the **authentic essence** of the good life well lived that is attractive to the Coach's prospects.

Clients want to **upscale** (energetically speaking) to resonate (live) at the same high level as the Life Coach – that's why they're the clients for heaven's sake! It would be **energetically bankrupt** to be a practising Life Coach without living, breathing, being and exuding a genuinely successful, well-rounded and grounded energetic life force.

I'll teach you how to make this **energetic upscale shift** shortly, but for now let's understand the **energetic scale** and where you sit on it, ok? Cool.

Where do YOU sit on the ENERGETIC SCALE?

How does the energy of a depressed person 'feel' to you? Are you able to sense someone who either currently is or has at some time felt this way based upon their **energetic composition** when you met them? Practice resonating with this and you will get more intuitively gifted, I guarantee it.

SLEEPING YOUR WAY TO THE TOP

The energy of a person suffering from depression is usually heavy, lethargic and uneasy. (**Note:** If you are suffering from depression, as I have in the past, seek out help. There is no shame in it and it is more common than what some may have you believe.) An energetically uplifting person by comparison will ‘feel’ light, grounded and fun to be around. On the **scale** below you can see where these emotions sit and slot yourself in:

0 - 4	5	6 - 8	10
Depressed	Neutral	Happy	Energised
Helpless	Neither happy nor sad	Satisfied	Vibrant
Apathetic	Indifferent	Content	Charismatic
Angry	‘could go either way’ (up- or down-scale depending on external influences)	Enthused	Attractive
Guilty		Relaxed	Highly influential
Selfish		Peaceful	Jubilant
Lethargic		Elated	Ecstatic

Human beings are unpredictable creatures who can easily shift capriciously from a **1** to **10** and back again on any given day depending on how susceptible they are to external (as opposed to internal) influences.

Generally speaking, people who meditate on a regular basis have access to a resilient internal world (‘inner peace’) which makes them less likely to fluctuate. They are more able to stay Happy, Peaceful and Relaxed at the very least (if not ecstatic) regardless of what the outside world may throw at them.

This is because they ‘get’ on a much deeper level that *we always have free **choice***; not necessarily about *what* life delivers to us, but definitely about how we **choose to respond**. This is one way in which inspirational leaders like the Dalai Lama and peace activist Yoko Ono (John Lennon’s famous widow) still manage to smile, live, love and laugh in the face of persecution or adversity.

Conversely, people suffering from depression (whether mentally, physically, circumstantially or chemically) are unlikely to be able to see the sense or goodness in the most beautiful, carefree summer’s day because of the **low-scale filter** they are taking in the external world through.

If you find yourself resonating at **5 or below** on the **energetic scale**, then authentically communicating enthusiasm for your business and its products is going to be like shoving shit uphill: *not* my idea of fun - and yet incredibly plenty of people do operate this way believe it or not. I bet you know some of them. Maybe you have even *been* one!

The trouble with pushing poo uphill of course is that you end up reeking of (bull)shit. You will *stink* of being out of alignment, and anybody with an ounce of **energetic intuition** will know to steer well clear of you, your business, your brand, your goods, your services *and* your advice. Good luck with getting anyone to sleep with you under those circumstances! You become a sexual pariah: quite literally the opposite of that famous *When Harry Met Sally* orgasm scene. Because when you’re being this inauthentic, baby, **ain’t nobody gonna want what you’re having!**

To come into alignment is a matter of recognising where you are on the scale and then actively doing things that helps you **come up** (sorry guys, Viagra only works in the bedroom - and anything else that just came to mind for you is probably illegal!). Don’t expect to

sit at level **10** all the time by the way (regardless of how you get there) because what goes up must **come down** sooner or later!

It has been conjectured that people who suffer from **bi-polar disorders** can often experience seismic shifts from **0** to **10** and back again in an instant. Most people are able to effectively manage their energy with a little practice, however. You can do this through becoming more aware of:

- the nutritional quality in the type of food you eat;
- your habitual energetic choices (how you tend to react to specific scenarios);
- how to anticipate likely fluctuations in your external environment;
- your ability to project and influence positive emotions, people and energy;

Negative attitudes within your environment need to be minimised or avoided as much as possible. Not because you can't be resilient in the face of them with practice, but because it takes energy you could be better using on more positive things. Always remember that you DO have a choice about what you will and won't tolerate; what and who you will or won't engage with. If you doubt it, look again. There is always more freedom than at first appears.

When it comes to **organisational culture**, there is an old proverb I love that says, *"The fish rots from the head down"*. This means that if you're a CEO or business manager, the power to positively or negatively influence the entire company energetically rests upon your shoulders. Don't waste such a terrific opportunity to be the kind of leader people love, go out of their way to work for and aspire to be.

If you are an **energetically grounded** person then few people will try and test you as long as you stay in alignment. If you're someone who often finds others trying to walk all over you however, then realise to what extent you need to take responsibility because it is indeed largely your doing (for allowing it) rather than theirs. Why? Because what you're projecting energetically is communicating non-verbally to their subconscious, signalling that you're unsure of yourself and fair game when it comes to negotiations and getting screwed over (not in the good way either).

If you're experiencing a lack of sales, it may be that a member of your team is causing energetically weak communications to occur in their customer interactions. You need to ferret this out and get it sorted pronto – especially if the culprit is YOU! Consider these **three key points** to help you identify and correct any problems with the congruency of energy within your business:

1. The **QUALITY** of the Energy

There are **two important elements** to consider in your **energetic communications**:

- 1 > the **quality** of the energy you / your business is delivering;
- 2 > the **essence** of where the energy is coming from.

The quality of the energy is determined by how **pure** it is. If you walk into a sales process feeling 30% doubtful that your product will be of any use to anyone or you're experiencing oscillating emotional shifts up- and downscale outside of the office, then the **quality** of your energy will be significantly compromised. In other words, expect your sales to be 30% under par as well!

However, step into any business meeting feeling 100% congruent and you cannot fail. This isn't some kind of cheap trick of the mind: it is a fundamental energetic 'truth' about

being in alignment with your energy, your purpose and your belief system (values). Work at living this way; be willing to improve the areas which hold you back by refusing to fit in with putting your best energetic foot forward.

2. The ESSENCE of where the Energy is ‘coming from’

It’s a common problem that sales people can bring external energy into a deal and jeopardise closing the sale if they’re not careful about guarding their attitude against it. Prior to engaging in any professional interaction it is important to ‘clear your energy’ and get into a ‘clear energetic space’.

This means letting go of anything negative that has happened that day. I don’t care if the boss has just been a prick (you may be in trouble here if you’re self-employed!) or you’ve had a vicious fight with your ex lover who gets custody of the dog. None of this energy has anything to do with the job at hand and you have simply got to get better at compartmentalising your energy to leave it at the door and go in fresh.

Imagine the scale in your head and take yourself energetically ‘up-town’. Otherwise you’ll be bringing energy from a fight or argument into the sales meeting and the customer might assume your energy is speaking for the quality of the brand promise...and nobody wants to buy bad temper!

3. The Bringing of Energy back into ALIGNMENT

If what you’re offering is not a product or service you have actually had the need to use yourself before (maybe you’ve never failed to get it up for example), then you can still be in alignment by leaving your judgement and any emotional baggage at home. This will enable you to be fully ‘present’

with your customers and really listen to their questions and concerns.

Create a space in which your clients feel comfortable enough to share personal information with you and really listen to what they are communicating (both verbally and non-verbally). The clearer you are energetically, the less likely you are to misinterpret or confuse the signs. File the thoughts, feelings and emotions of your customer base away in your mental filing cabinet to draw on next time you need to be able to empathise with a client's experience.

Remember to meet people *where they're at right now* before you try and take them where you want them to go. If you are dealing with a client who is feeling tired, stressed, frustrated or angry, touch on these emotions briefly (without indulging them for too long) by sharing a similar experience with them before slowly but firmly (ohhh yeah baby!) bringing them up the scale of positive emotions.

Engage clients by focusing more energy on their goals and aspirations rather than their negative emotions. Talk about how they're going to feel once they achieve them. Bringing people up the energetic scale leaves them with a positive experience of having been in your company and something great to remember you by. Conversely, allowing them to loiter around the low energetic frequencies throughout your interaction will only serve to anchor an association of you + bad energy in their mind, however unconsciously. Think of your customers as emotional creatures who have a challenge to which YOU are the uplifting solution. Sounds good, doesn't it?

By approaching situations and clients this way you engage with them on so many different levels and positively position yourself successfully as *'the'* (not merely *'a'*) catalyst for emotional and energetic transformation (and consistent, energetically congruent sales – the very best kind).

BRING it!

As we round this chapter off, it's time to ask yourself a bold question: **What energetic quality and emotional essence am I bringing to all of my business dealing, interactions and communications?**

If you can't honestly answer that every single one is of the highest possible calibre then you still have work to do. I know you can do it, though. Not to sound cheesy, but I do believe in you. It's really just as simple as being willing to **wake up** and become aware of where you're at, where you want to be, and the fact that there might be a little bit of work worth doing to bridge the gap. See you on the sunny side of the street!

Can't get enough?

Head over to **benangel.com.au** now and sign-up for Ben's free 'Industry Domination Insight's' blog. You'll discover even more deliciously and seductive easy-to-apply well thought-out practical marketing strategies online.

Act now and join us in the conversation!

SLEEPING with all the RIGHT People **(your Little Black Book of BIG contacts)**

Hooray! The time has come to leap into bed (“*Finally*” you scream!). You’re about to discover how to sleep with all the right people to influence key decision makers and improve that sexy bottom line of yours!

Networking is MY Business: now let’s make it YOURS

I bet you’ve been told time and time again how important networking is, but I *guarantee* you’ve never heard it said like this before. The information others have shared with you simply doesn’t cut it. How do I know? Because as the **founding director** of www.nationwidenetworking.com **networking IS my business**. What I aim to do for you here is to also make it YOURS.

Let’s clear a few things up right off the bat: Does networking take time? Yes. Does it require energy? Yes. However when you play your cards right, invest your time wisely and connect with key individuals of influence you’ll not only generate new clients and greater business opportunities, but also extensive media exposure (if that is your objective). So **put your best flirt forward** and let’s go!

“It’s Networking Jim, but not as we know it!”

There is a new breed of networking in the world today. The stuffy, elitist and heavyweight Old Boys Network is a largely extinct

beast, having given way to some powerful new nationwide and international networks with more of a modern twist. These include **networking organizations such as my own** which encourage fair and equal access for men and women (we'll come back to www.nationwidenetworking.com later) as well as those that aim to redress the historically male-centric focus.

Female entrepreneurs catering to redress historical imbalance often spearhead these large niche networks. They are run (business-) women, *for* (business-) women and their female-friendly male friends, as opposed to being geared towards the masculine business mindset. Emma Isaacs' highly successful www.businesschicks.com.au is one good example of this.

Another Aussie Brand Hero (networking space)

Entrepreneurs Organisation President, Emma Isaacs is also the female force of nature behind personality-rich brand www.businesschicks.com.au. A particularly notable example of female networking power, **The Business Chicks** has had a significant impact on the Australian networking scene with their own unique brand of **'Sex And The City-meets-Philanthropy'** styled events, now offered in every capital city. The proliferation of sharp witted, big-hearted, career-savvy chicks on a mission combined with world famous stand-out guest speakers caused membership to swell **from just a few hundred to about 20,000 in less than three years** - and as I write, this unstoppable brand is being carried overseas to Europe, the middle east and beyond due to their combination of Business Connections & Mentorship, Philanthropic work and emphasis on Community & Learning.

Now, if you're not in the habit of wearing a Bra Boys (although if you like to surf in one of a weekend who am I to judge?) don't worry: there's still plenty of room for us boys in business too.

Thanks to the global reach of social networking sites and the ability to connect with people virally over the Internet, virtually

nobody is out of reach these days. **Yet the *truly awesome potential* for you to promote yourself, your brand, your goods, services and organization via networking still isn't fully recognised in the business community at large.**

Believe it or not, there are still some people out there who project their own misunderstanding onto a word like 'networking' and perceive it as somehow 'inauthentic'. They do not celebrate and embrace it as a legitimate vehicle for making meaningful business connections and generating quality customer leads. This becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

In other words, the people who believe networking is valuable, rewarding, easy and fun approach it with integrity and reap enormous benefits from quality business connections. Conversely, those who disregard its importance and fail to take networking seriously tend to approach it in a haphazard, unprofessional manner (if at all) and rarely generate any kind of authentic relationships as a result.

"Whether you believe that you CAN network sincerely with integrity to generate extensive and positive results, or you believe that you CAN'T...you are RIGHT!"

- Ben Angel on the self-fulfilling prophecy of networking

Networking can be an intangible activity in the sense that the interactions themselves are often transient, events-based experiences (at least to start off with) so in some ways I can see where some of the naysayers are coming from. It is true that you can never really know when a business relationship is going to pay off until or unless you are willing to give it some room to blossom.

Companies have always traditionally demanded quantifiable bottom line business measurements (i.e. a specific and monetary return on investment or 'ROI') in exchange for attending or

hosting a networking event. When the event does not yield this instantaneously, they throw their hands up in the air and shout: “*Well wasn’t that a bloody waste of time!*” and move right along without ever properly following anything up or through (drama queens!).

(Net-)WORK it, Baby!

When it’s worked properly, *networking really works* because of all the **real life connection** that is going on under the surface. This is the GOLD that print and online mediums do not possess and traditional bottom line business measurements fail to appreciate. Face-to-face encounters provide deep emotional and energetic exchanges between human beings that no other medium, however influential, can hope to fully emulate.

As we have already seen, YOU are the vital ingredient that will dictate to what degree your networking activities are conducted **with integrity** in order to create **truly authentic** and long-lasting relationships. This doesn’t stop some people from finding it all a bit awkward of course; especially as for some it can rekindle childhood fears of rejection from the schoolyard playground. But **love it or loathe it, networking is here to stay** so you may as well learn to play nicely!

EXTROVERTS may *Improvise...* but INTROVERTS are IN!

I get it: the thought of striking up conversation with a complete stranger can be nerve-racking, even if you’re not normally shy. It’s never come easily for me, and I own a networking business!

The reason I'm so well positioned to help you get over any residual social phobias or **fear of networking** you and your staff may have, is precisely because *I am an introvert* by nature. Yes, seriously! Despite (or even *because of*) the title of this book, frequent media appearances and my being a public speaker, I'm actually no extrovert.

I grew up on a farm and enjoy my own company (so that I can practice line dancing and sing country ballads by Slim Dusty). So when I moved to the BrightLightsBigCity I had to invest some very conscious effort into developing my interpersonal skills. I went from being terrified of conversations with strangers at business events to learning how to enjoy the practice of networking and I know that if I can do it, anybody can. And that includes YOU.

Results you can SEE, SMELL, TASTE...and SPEND!

To generate **tangible outcomes** from your business relationships you'll need to set yourself some goals. Start by brainstorming about your industry. Who are its rising star and leading lights? Who are the current trendsetters and thought leaders? Create a list of all the prominent business people making waves and hogging the headlines. Don't worry about how you'll get them into bed just yet: this is just a list, ok?

The next step is to get comfortable with the idea (just the *idea*) that these are the important contacts you need to be associated with in order to put yourself front of mind with your customers and increase your own brand visibility and circle of influence.

Once you have identified the industry bigwigs, it's time to **take action** (yes, you still have to follow through with some 'doing' in the 'real' world, sorry guys!). There are heaps of easy ways to get started, for example:

- Join the most reputable **industry body**
- Then join another one...and another one...and the rest!
- Subscribe to **trade journals** (the trick here is to actually READ them);
- Scan the news and general media (blogs, Twitter feeds, Facebook groups etc) that relate to your business but also those that cater to *the interests of your target market*;
- Attend **networking events** (if this is daunting, make it your goal to meet just three new people to exchange details with at first and build up);
- Go to hear relevant speakers;
- Be aware of **current opinion** (i.e. politicians, peers, colleagues, customers etc);
- Join any kind of groups that cater to your target market and care enough to *really get to know them from the inside out*. This might include support groups, social clubs, gyms and so on.

Any group, event, practice, sport or committee you can think of which offers indirect or direct access to your consumer base and is non-competing is an excellent place to start (you should be starting to see that you are actually spoilt for choice!).

“Remember the Golden Rule: the power of quality networking relies on Professional Street Cred. So don’t be surprised if your annual membership to ‘ShowGirls Strip Joint’ doesn’t exactly go down a treat with your female clientele (as it were)!”

- Ben Angel

Above all else, you must get the balance right: **be proactive enough** to get out there and start meeting people, yet also **patient enough** to allow new contacts to cement at their own pace and

blossom naturally into meaningful business relationships. I mean, you wouldn't take your toothbrush with you on the first date and expect to move in that night, would you? (*You would?* Wow – maybe you ought to be the one writing this book!).

Take a **genuine interest** in the people you meet. Find out who they are, who they *think* they are (not always the same thing), what they do and how they do it. Court them as you would a **new lover**: match and mirror their body language and shower them with love and attention. Oh yes - and if you're currently single, a lack of attention to this kind of detail could be the reason why. Step out of the Brady Bunch household and come and join the real world...*it's not all about YOU, Marcia, Marcia, Marcia!* The more you put in, the more you'll get out.

“Get by with a little HELP from your FRIENDS...”

The Beatles always knew how to **spread a little love around** in the '60s. Decades later, you too could be forgiven for assuming that saying ‘**Thank You**’ to a customer or client after they buy something from you or help you out would be as natural as breathing. *Wrong!* As difficult as it may be to believe, this simple little courtesy rarely occurs in the business world. It's as if **business etiquette** has had its **epitaph** signed, sealed and delivered as securely as one of **Stevie Wonder's** #1 hits.

Let's make this very clear: ***nobody owes you anything***. So if you want people to refer business your way, then you need to make sure that you're a likeable, trustworthy person with something of value to offer. Treat others fairly and with respect. Recognise that it is rarely appropriate to ask for business advice or assistance in the first three meetings with a new contact.

By all means *offer* help (if you can do so genuinely and without suggesting that there is anything wrong with the other person to begin with) but for heaven's sake **don't try to sleep with them on the first date**. What are you, CHEAP? (You *are*? What a relief - I thought I was the only one). Think of it this way though: sure you may get lucky, but they'll never call you back. Hardly the start of a beautiful business relationship, is it?

When it comes to **spreading the love**, thank colleagues who have gone out of their way to assist you by taking them out to lunch, inviting them sailing (if that's your thing) or spoiling them with a bottle of their favourite wine, posh truffle dressing or preferred scent (here's hoping they're not all one and the same thing!).

If you ever ask for assistance via email and find your request is declined, always, *always*, ALWAYS still respond with a heartfelt, "Thank you for taking the time to consider my request" message. The key here is not to fixate on the other person's behaviour, but rather be *an exemplary example of the integrity and high standard of your own self and business brand*.

In failing to thank people (regardless of the outcome; everything's a lesson to you, right?) you run the risk of looking shallow. This may earn you the unfortunate reputation of being 'a user'. This is *never* the kind of bad publicity that's good publicity...*ever*!

Do you SUCK at Relationships?

This is not to be confused with **sucking in bed**, which done well is usually a GREAT thing!

Networking is based on relationships and like any relationship it has its phases: dating, relationship-building, marriage, divorce (Ooops!) and the on-again-off-again phase to name a few. Ooooo,

and let's not forget my personal favourite: the **fuck buddy** phase! This is the metaphorical equivalent of calling up a business owner you got along well with but haven't seen for months to ask them right out of the blue to endorse your new product. It shows complete disregard for the person concerned and *only* works if there is a clear understanding that this is the way you guys play due to mutually agreed benefits. Hardly anybody ever gets this balance right however, at least in the long term (people change, things change... blah blah blah).

The relationship-building process generally goes like this:

1. You meet someone through mutual acquaintances or at a networking event;
2. You agree to hook up again and have your '**first date**';
3. You take a great deal of interest in who they are, what they do and what they're looking for;
4. You discuss **the rules of engagement** (i.e. what it is that you each bring to the relationship);
5. If there's a spark your relationship blossoms;
6. If the firework's a dud that never gets off the ground, this is also great. In going your separate ways you become free and single and able to invest your time in attracting your ideal match instead. Easy!

So You Think YOU can NETWORK?

Can you **BRING** it? In this section we're going to look at how to reinstate some of that good old-fashioned dancehall poise and romance to your networking repertoire. So limber up and prepare to be lifted from **weak wallflower** to **connections champion** extraordinaire!

***“Ginger Rogers did everything Fred Astaire did,
only backwards, in high heels!”***

– Faith Whittlesey

Question: why is top-rating reality TV talent show ***So You Think You Can Dance*** so damn popular wherever in the world it shakes its booty on the dance floor? I believe it’s because you don’t have to *be* a dancer to get absolutely blown away by the staggering beauty of a couple who really click. The sexual tension is palpable, the lifts appear effortless and the romance of it all makes your heart ache with admiration as you say to yourself, *“How do they DO that?!”*

Well the great news is that **romance never goes out of style**. Learn to bring a little fancy footwork into your networking and your fine lines and finesse will be as memorable as the best **Ginger Rogers / Fred Astaire** dance routine.

DANCING doesn’t have to be DIRTY

These tips will help you trounce the competition and score that elusive ‘perfect 10’...let the games begin!:

- **Don’t Step on their Toes:** It is never cool to play on someone else’s turf without permission so expect to be thrown out on your ear if you ask for the contact details of your competitor’s clients! Be mindful of the work that everyone is doing to get ahead and don’t expect anyone to fast track you at the expense of their own business goals;
- **Keep a rigid Frame:** Respect the personal space of everyone you network with. Don’t bombard them with promotional material or spam their inbox (because SPAM tastes like crap!) or they’ll never want to dance with you again;
- **Develop Great Posture:** concentrate on being interested in what others have to say as well as interesting enough for

them to want to be around. Great posture (carrying yourself with ease and confidence) will help you attract all the right attention as you move gracefully around in these circles of influence;

- **Go for the Show-stopping Lift:** Keep a keen eye out for golden opportunities to keep running into the people you know will help you fly. Follow them on Twitter, join their business brainstorming group on Facebook and learn to love golf if that's what it takes! Ultimately you're looking for any (good!) reason to make contact and stay in touch;
- **"Nobody puts Baby in a Corner!":** Whenever possible, be the first to offer assistance in any given business situation. Extend a helping hand with a view to helping the other person shine... without selling anything directly! You'll be amazed at how effective this can be. The trick is never to let yourself be taken advantage of in the process.
- **Save the Last Dance for YOU:** Whenever you're doing things for free to build relationships (writing an article for someone's newsletter; referring some business their way; sharing your insights; introducing people you think will dance well together etc) there is a fine line between letting go of expectation (a good thing) and being too lazy to follow up (not so good!). Make sure you check in with the people you have helped from time to time. This serves two purposes:
 - firstly, it gives you a great excuse to get back in touch and strengthen the relationship, and
 - secondly, it is a tactful way of reminding someone that you were the one who helped them out. This will keep you front of mind enough for them to return the favour when the time is right – hopefully without you even having to ask. Too easy!

How to ROMANCE your NETWORKS (even when their ways are set in STONE)

Once you've got your dance moves down pat, there are the four main crowd pleasers guaranteed to bring the romance back into your business relationships: Trust, Respect, Kinship and Reciprocity. If it worked for **Michael Douglas** and **Kathleen Turner** in the Columbian jungle then it can work for you...

1. **Trust** – I must be able to trust that if I refer my clients or colleagues to you, you will do the right thing by them and by me. It can take years to build trust but the financial dividends can be well worth the effort. A colleague of mine networked with one company for three years. Every month he'd touch base with the owner and ask if he could be of any assistance. Finally one day he received a phone call. It was a contract worth over three million dollars! One million for each year he respectfully persevered – not bad! **Consistency builds trust and trust pays well.**
2. **Respect** – As soon as someone senses selfish energy from you (i.e. that you are only in it for yourself) then you can kiss goodbye to any hope of referrals or business leads. As with the energetic connection with your consumers, be aware of where your contact is 'at' on the energetic scale and resonate accordingly. Don't railroad others. Give value. **Respect is earned, not taken for granted.**
3. **Kinship** – People work (and sleep with) people they like. If you're not clicking with someone that you wanted to do business with, let it go. You can't force anyone to love you. In fact I'm pretty sure that's illegal!

4. **Reciprocity** – As the ‘good book’ says, “*give and ye shall receive*”. This is as true when *Sleeping Your Way to the TOP in Business* as it is in the bible (I should get a few more complaints from church groups for putting those two works in the same sentence, goddamnit!). The trick is to **give freely without attachment or expectation as to where the reciprocity will flow back from** (the spirit of generosity moves in weird and wonderful ways!).

#4 above is basically another Golden Rule: “treat others as you wish to be treated” – some very wise words that lead to everybody playing together nicely (*Abbbbbb...*). Behave as if this is true, and it will become so. Even if you do encounter a few rogue traders along the way don’t allow yourself to get jaded: they are the exception not the rule, and because like attracts like (by resonating on the same energetic level on the scale) you will naturally draw like-minded people into your personal and professional life and before you know it your networks will be of absolute top quality.

‘Give Generously’ to others by:

- sharing ideas;
- sharing resources;
- referring business back and forth;
- forming affiliations (for example, your accounting clients get a 10% discount when you refer them to Angela’s flower shop and Angela’s customers get a 10% discount if they do their Year End TAX Return through you);
- walking your talk and being a source of business inspiration to everyone you come into contact with;
- helping them out of kindness and respect, not obligation.

Credibility by Association

We see it every week in the gossip mags: “Up-and-coming wannabe movie star ‘caught’ schmoozing at the hottest party with established (and too often married) star.” None of this is accidental. Scratch the surface and sometimes it’s as blatant as two celebrities supposedly in love sharing the same PR agent, especially in Tinseltown!

Publicists send their clients to these events with a **clear purpose** in mind. They know that being seen in the right place with the right person can help you skip a few rungs when climbing the professional ladder. The people you choose to surround yourself with are a direct reflection of *who you are too*. Forging less than reputable connections (i.e. drug lords and politicians...although these days they’re one and the same aren’t they?) will **damage your credibility** (sometimes irreparably) and **jeopardise sales**.

I’m being dramatic: keeping your nose clean (as opposed to powdery white) is as simple as being more discerning about whom you hang out with. **Dress well**, attend high calibre industry events and behave with dignity and panache while you’re there (that means no getting pissed and flashing your boobs while you fall off the piano, ok? Save that one for your mum-in-law’s at Christmas).

Introduce yourself to as many speakers and guests as possible (opening with a sincere compliment about their talk or a positive experience you have had of their brand) without outstaying your welcome. **Compliment the event organiser** on a job well done. Don’t waste time ‘practicing’ on people you care less about meeting in order to build up your nerve – especially if you’re drinking as you go because we all know about your penchant for pianos! Instead, head straight for the top. **Hobnob with the bigwigs first** and work your way down to the plebeians (but don’t tell the plebs that I said that, ok?).

Look for good quality photo opportunities and jump on in there, as these will be worth their weight in GOLD for use in your marketing materials. Never let your fear get in the way of asking for a photo. Done respectfully, it is a sincere form of flattery. Besides, what's the worst that can happen? Someone declines, right? OhMiGod that would be devastating wouldn't it? I mean, all of your clothes would fall off right there and you'd be **naked in public!** Get the point? Good. Make like **Nike** and *Just do it!*

When you do get photographed with your business idols, pose yourself as close to the main drawcard as possible to avoid ending up on the cutting room floor when the images go to print. With any luck you'll end up with your lunatic grin plastered all over the industry magazines, local paper, online social sites and even in the national press.

In fact, **photographers exert a lot of influence at posh events** for this very reason, so it never hurts to hold their drink for them while they nail a particularly tricky shot, or help them out by asking if there's anyone YOU can introduce THEM to (be sure you can follow through on that though, eh?!). Remember to ask for the photographer's business card to get a copy of all the photos and post them up on your personal or professional blog. People must actually get to *see* them for the images to have any power.

SCHMOOZE without BOOZE (drunk confidence is false confidence)

Remember that wish-list of influential industry leaders you created earlier? Well I want you to pull it out right now (I'm talking about the list!) and make sure you refresh your knowledge by doing a little

online research about any of them who are likely to be at the event you're attending.

This will give you something intelligent and topical to talk to them about. ***Let your conversation do the talking!*** – by which I mean your confidence should be 'real' and come from your ability to emotionally and energetically engage someone - not because you just knocked back five G&Ts under the misconception that alcohol's a social lubricant that helps you relax and become more interesting. That might be true for your stag night but not a business function! **Remember: the goal is to flirt with, court and date the object of your affection, not to try and get them drunk and trick them into bed.**

**7 SEXY contacts YOU must SLEEP WITH
in order to get to the TOP**

Your **little black book of BIG business buddies** should never be without current contact details for the heavy hitters who can lend you credibility and the key players willing to be on your team and help you win. Choose well because cultivating these relationships will effectively make up for any shortfalls in your own business skill-set. Don't discount contacts external to your industry since they are the ones who often provide the freshest perspective.

If you bond authentically, your key business connections will blossom into deep sincere and genuine friendships. These are the people who understand your challenges, have enjoyed watching you grow, and will bend over backwards to help you succeed (as you will them).

I believe in building genuine rapport with people, so for me it's always **'make friends first, do business second'**. This is contrary to the common belief that discussions should be kept to business topics only. In my experience, friends who happen to be in

business are always more helpful than business contacts who happen to be friends.

You will find these friends when the time is right and I will help you recognise this later on, don't worry. For now, please allow me to introduce you to the **7 types of people you are going to be getting into bed with:**

1. **The MEDIA** – You can't buy the kind of quality credibility the media can give you. Befriend the editors and journalists in your sector (beauty, business, retail, manufacturing). Make contact with them via their articles, columns, through personal introduction or by attending events. Never pitch to a media contact the first time you meet them. Get to know them over a period of months and discuss interesting angles about what's going on within industry. As confidence in your expertise grows, your media contacts will start to come looking for YOU to add your comment to a story. If they don't bite, then you my dear are still as boring as bat shit!

The media are reactive. When a story breaks it breaks so sign up for **Google Alerts** to keep abreast of relevant events, topics, people, commentary, editors and columnists in order to be prepared with an informed industry opinion (www.google.com for details). When a story breaks, offer a comment and do it FAST or you will miss **out**.

2. **The WEBSITE developer** – This is a no-brainer. The Internet has helped small business compete on a large footing without the need for excessive marketing budgets. Friends in website development, whether or not they have actually built your site, are essential for ensuring that you're kept up to date with any significant changes in online trends. They will turn you onto the most effective new ways to drive traffic to your website. By all means follow web-warriors on Twitter but be sure to establish 'real life' friends offline as well.
3. **The COPYWRITER** – Put simply, a first-class copywriter is a master wordsmith, just like my editor (thank you, Oons!). A talented copywriter makes your words sing and dance. The content is yours but the cadence is something they can improve for you no end. Copywriters refine the aspects of your brand

personality or business offering that features words. Examples include:

- Bio, pamphlets, webcopy, speeches, articles, taglines, mission statement, books, presentations, pitches, proposals, business cards, business name and so on.

A truly talented wordsmith understands that headlines make or break campaigns. You yourself don't need to understand everything about this, just enough to ask the right questions and be able to judge the quality of a copywriter's work to ensure it's up to scratch (we will explore more about headlines and formatting ideas later on).

4. **The BUSINESS CONSULTANT** – Make friends with a business consultant you respect and touch base with them regularly to refer business back and forth, discuss trends and brainstorm about general business strategies. Nine times out of ten their thinking will be fresh and positively influence your bottom line.
5. **The SALES COACH** – This person may or may not be one and the same as your Business Consultant. A Sales Coach understands business structure and human behaviour. He or she can help you refine your sales offering and processes to get your customers 'over the line' to purchase. They will be your best pick-me-up when you're failing to make sales and feel unsure about how to get back on track. In short, they will provide you with a structure to **generate cash**.
6. **The INDUSTRY EXPERT** – If you're following all the advice in this book, it will be YOUR name that grace's somebody else's little black book under this heading! In terms of your own 'go-to' expert, you need to find an outstanding mentor in your industry who you respect and admire, not merely for their business prowess but also for their carriage, their deportment...their way of being in the world. This person may be the director of an industry association you are a member of or volunteer for. Offer to help out at their next function by completing events registrations at the door. This is an awesome way for you to introduce yourself to all of the attendees and meet them more than once. As you know, nothing is more memorable than consistent exposure. Plus, exposing yourself is fun – so go nuts!

7. **The ENTREPRENEUR** – Every successful business professional needs to find an equally or more successful entrepreneur to sleep with. They will challenge your thought process and be productively intolerant of you ever thinking small. They understand the emotional roller coaster ride that business can be and will provide you with insights, perspective and reassurance to keep you on track.

Just in case you're asking yourself, *"Ok Ben, but am I supposed to pay these contacts money for their time or should I lavish sexual favours on them?"*, my answer is: No to the first, and maybe yes to the second (but only if they're hot!). The reason you don't pay them is that these people are friends first, and business people second. The relationship should be an equal two-way process, with any sharing of information based purely on a friend-helping-friend basis.

If you require any of their services on a professional, structured basis then by all means become a client of theirs and expect to pay the going rate. The benefits of this are that you get to work with a friend you trust who will give you great advice with your best interest at heart every time, minus any industry bullshit!

When the NETWORKER's ready the CONTACTS appear

Here's the BAD news: you can't force this process, sorry! The most influential contacts on your wish-list, the thought leaders you aspire to hang out and have in your life will never show up until you're ready to receive them. But the GOOD news is: we can *totally* get you to that point though, no sweat. Just read on...

“When the student is ready, the teacher will appear”

- Buddhist proverb

If you are in any way incongruent, inconsistent or inauthentic in your personal or professional dealings, you cannot hope to be worthy of attracting the best quality contacts. You will instead attract the same slightly damaged ones who are resonating at the same mid-low emotional frequency that you are. You must be in 100% alignment with your goals, personality, actions, emotions and objectives in order to be in a ‘place’ good enough to receive top calibre houseguests!

You must demonstrate some serious commitment and patience enough to see your business journey through from beginning to end in order for others to know that you are worth them investing their time and energy in you. So when you’re ready to have what you want, take the plunge and burn your canoes! In other words, sail off into the future you want and don’t give yourself any opportunity to back out and return to the less remarkable life you previously settled for. Others resonating at the same higher pitch will pick up on your conviction and be attracted into your world just as you will be drawn into theirs.

”Whether YOU think you CAN or you CAN’T, you’re RIGHT”

American entrepreneur **Henry Ford** is credited with having made this observation (above), which I believe it’s just as applicable in ANY professional networking situation. Speaking from the personal experience of having transformed myself from introverted farm-boy to public speaker and columnist, here’s what I know: **Whether you**

believe yourself to be an AWESOMELY first-class networker or a totally helpless social wart, you're right!

Why? Because it is your thoughts and belief system that create your reality every single second, moment to moment, every single day. Look around you and you will see what I mean. You are entirely surrounded by what you expect to see, and indeed have been expecting (and therefore creating) for yourself on a very deep level your entire life. Whoa...got a bit deep there for a moment – time to pull back!

Put simply, if you're telling yourself 'woe is me' stories of despair and how you're not great socially then guess what? You're going to behave like a dumb arse and be socially inept! You've already set yourself up for failure before you even set foot in the room. Replace these limiting decisions with ones that are beneficial to achieving your objective, such as:

- "I enjoy networking events";
- "I love learning about others";
- "People love me and I love people";
- "I find it easy to meet new people and love engaging with individuals for mutually beneficial relationships".

The really GREAT thing is that whether you BELIEVE in the power of positive mantras like this or not, what have you got to lose? At least commit to it for a week and see what happens...at the very least you'll become aware of just how many times and in how many ways you self-sabotage your best efforts. Even if you decide to tackle this unhelpful behaviour another way, it will still be progress. As good ole **Dr Phil** says, "You cannot change what you do not acknowledge."

What's YOUR PERSONAL Networking STYLE?

Right then **Ginger**, in order for you to network at your electrifying best, it will be helpful to recognise some of the most common networking animals twirling about out there in the business jungle (Gotta love a good mixed metaphor).

Half the FUN of this is finding out who YOU are most like, of course...although if that was the *first* thing you thought about you're probably 'The Politician'! Here we go:

The 4 most common NETWORKING PERSONALITY Types & how to handle them (which one are YOU?)

The Labrador is your best friend. They will be caring, generous, affectionate & loyal in their mannerisms and the way they engage you. You will feel grounded and comfortable when you're with them. They are comfortable looking you in the eye and will respect your space, your business and your beliefs without forcing theirs on to you. **The Labrador** is the ideal business contact. They will give you every opportunity to demonstrate that you are made of similar stuff and once you have proved yourself to be equally trustworthy they will remain as loyal to your business interests as they are to their own. Treat them well and in return they will send you referrals and support you emotionally in all your endeavours.

The Politician is all about campaigning...for their own self-interests! They want to be put on a pedestal by you, their customers, colleagues and the media; idolised for the rare pearls of wisdom they believe they so generously impart. My advice for when you encounter one is to RUN! Politicians want to be at the top without having to do very much work at all to get there. They feel a great sense of entitlement to everyone and everything they want. **Politicians** rarely make any significant changes and are not

prepared to be in it for the long haul: they will interact with you for as long as it takes to win your vote, then swiftly move on and attempt to sway the next candidate. You're just a number to them, not a real person in your own right; someone to squeeze dry for contacts or insider tips and then discarded. **The Politician** is dead weight: let them sink to the bottom of the ocean with all the other rusty old shipwrecks where they belong! Always make a **Politician** work doubly hard to prove themselves before you invest too much of your own time or energy in them.

The Tart has a very short attention span and offers their business on a plate to everyone immediately. AVOID at all costs!!!! You will recognise the **Tart** because when you meet one for the first time at an event, within fifteen seconds flat they will be trying to sell you something - before they even know what you do or if it would be a relevant product or service for you. Before even asking your name or offer theirs, the dreaded networking **Tart** will pounce on you with the equally-dreaded opening line: "I have a business opportunity for you!" (OhMiGOD, Nooooooooooooo! Just shoot us all now and have it over and done with!). This opening gambit is YOUR flashing neon warning that the Tart is most probably a multi-level marketer (or else just a bad a door-to-door sales agent willing to sell their own grandma and yours to turn a profit). Either way, a firm "Thanks but no thanks" is all that is required from you. The good news is that once you've brushed them off you're unlikely to encounter them again because the Tart is playing a numbers game and has already said, "Next!" inside their own tiny little head. Good riddance to bad Tarts, I say.

The Town Bike has been around the block a few too many times. Everybody's had a ride and no one's better off for it. **Town Bikes** will attend the opening of an envelope without any reason for actually being there apart from the fact that it helps them feel important. Because the **Town Bikes** have no definable business outcome to aim for, they have plenty of time to just hang out and chat. They are chock-full of ideas about how you can work together but fail to follow through on any of them because instead of committing to

any one project they are already off attending some other event, talking up a storm to some other person, sharing a whole heap of other 'brilliant ideas that will never come to fruition. Don't get me wrong, Town Bikes are lovely people and can be a lot of fun to be around. Their endless supply of fresh new ideas definitely has its place (for example, they are great for getting projects up and running). It's just that once the initial start-up phase has passed you won't see them for dust! Like a lady of the night they will know exactly how to schmooze you, yet when it comes time to putting out, you'll simply stare and wonder, "Is that it??" A more self-aware **Town Bike** who is willing to change their ways CAN become a fully-fledged Labrador though if only they can learn to be true to their word. For this reason it's worth investing a little bit of time with them every now and again to see if anything has changed...yet. When they DO get it together, Town Bikes are a real force of nature and can be unstoppable! Until then, however, the **Town Bike** will talk the best talk you ever heard...they just won't often walk it. Which is why they have a bike...to ride off into the sunset on!

Attend enough networking events, or even regular industry functions, and you will soon learn to recognise these personality traits and broad categorisations reflected in the behaviour of the individuals you are dealing with.

I advise you to concentrate your energy on networking with the people you feel most affinity with and don't get too worried about the rest. Especially avoid the **Tart** who will do your frigging head in if they manage to back you into a corner by the vol-au-vents! Death by puff-pastry and hot air – what a nightmare!

Getting DOWN and FLIRTY

Let's get one thing straight between us (no not *that* for heaven's sake – get your mind out of the gutter for a minute!). Here's the thing: we all flirt. You, me, them, us, we...all of us, ok? Even kids and animals do it when they want to influence the Giant Human looking after them by tugging on the heartstrings. So leave your preconceptions at the door and wash your hands (and your mind) when you come in please, thank you!

In actual fact, **flirting's just another form of energy** and as a nifty networking skill it can work some pretty instant magic for you (and no, I'm not even talking about sex for a change!). Flirting is NOT just about sex and it doesn't have to even be a sexual energy that's played with. Don't believe me? Read on...

flirt |flɜrt|

verb

1 [intrans.] behave as though attracted to or trying to attract someone, but for amusement rather than with serious intentions

It is true that some people are better at flirting with people than others and appear to be able to charm anyone into giving them what they want (I even know someone who 'flirts' outrageously with inanimate objects!).

Maybe it's this perceived 'unfair advantage' which is at the real root cause of others' disapproval? It doesn't actually make much sense though, since **becoming a successful flirt is something anyone can learn** (yes, even YOU) and it actually has absolutely

nothing to do with the looks you're born with and everything to do with how you channel your energy.

Even though most people are quick to link the concept of flirting to sexual motivation (dirty buggers) the act of flirting can actually be genuinely motivated by the ebb and flow of any one, two or even all three of these objectives in mind:

1. **sexual gratification** (the guy winking at you from across the dance floor);
2. **one-way emotional gratification** (the baby gurgling for attention; the cat winding its way around your legs and purring to be fed);
3. **two-way mutually beneficial (non-sexual) relationship-building** (in order for both parties to achieve something specific, such as the instigation and completion of a business project).

Flirting is a delicate social skill which (when used tactfully) can really assist us in building instant rapport with another person, whether male or female. Once rapport is established, your ability to influence another's decision-making process dramatically improves. The benefits are numerous and far-reaching and can include more harmonious relationships and outcomes for you when dealing with: suppliers; affiliates; partners; colleagues; clients; and the media.

Effective flirting can effectively shortcut an otherwise lengthy relationship-building process by 'cutting to the chase' and getting the person concerned to instantly warm to you. And if they like you, they'll do any business they have to be done with you. Flirting is the cheeky, fun, harmless conduit for instant connection. The idea is that both parties feel safe enough to express their personality and opinions without fear of judgement or rejection.

This is a key component in clearly identifying and responding to another's needs minus all the time-intense 'surface conversation' generally endured in more traditional, less relaxed and more prolonged business settings...*Yawwwwww!*

FLIRTING is GOOD for your HEALTH and your WEALTH!

A study done by the University of Alabama (2003) found that individuals with low flirtatious activity tended to correlate with low energy levels. Wow - lethargic *and* frigid, what an attractive combination...*NOT!* The university study also demonstrated that these great lethargic lumps of frigid grey pudding (maybe they used more scientific language, I can't remember now...) thought of themselves as less attractive than their flirtatious counterparts. No shit Sherlock! Our thoughts create our reality, and then our reality shows up just exactly the way we asked it to.

Joking aside, this study has massive implications for addressing self-esteem issues. Hands down THE most attractive quality (whether sexual or otherwise) is a person comfortable in their own skin; someone who is confident without being arrogant. When you are confident in yourself you are also less likely to be adversely affected by what others think of you, thereby free to live a life more of your own choosing. You are more willing to confidently express yourself in your business and personal lives and also more supportive of other people self-expressing too, because their point of view is unlikely to feel threatening to you. Wow. That's a pretty powerful list in favour of the positive qualities of flirting yourself to health and well-being right there!

Add to all these health and self-esteem benefits the fact that the more happy, relaxed, confident and influential you are in your own

skin (and therefore in the business world) the more likely you are to make you bum (bottom line) look fantastic (profitable).

“All you need is LOVE”

Everyone yearns to feel loved, appreciated and accepted. Our entire society is based on the premise of fitting in and finding our place. When we feel liked and loved we respond positively to those around us.

But when others hold back from us we have a tendency to mirror their behaviour and become distant too in order to protect ourselves from future rejection. In creating this distance we disallow true communication to occur: a kind of **self-imposed social censorship**, if you will. Many of us will even avoid complimenting others because we make the assumption that they will perceive it as a come-on. This stilted, politically correct society we have created is responsible for more harm than good.

It is easy to understand how FEAR instead of LOVE abounds in modern society: a lot of people are too scared of saying anything even vaguely flirtatious for fear of being labelled sexist or – worse – being accused of sexual harassment and taken to court. While I support cracking down on genuinely inappropriate behaviour in the workplace 100%, I also think it's a great shame that our overly-litigious, fearful society is leaving us void of genuine experiential interactions that have the power to influence for mutual benefit. I guess this is one of the reasons I'm writing this book – and why I gave it such a deliberately provocative title! I can't deny that it feels good to rock the boat.

FLIRTING makes you MEMORABLE

Leaving a lasting impression (for all the *right* reasons) is what you should always be aiming for when you network. Use this influential checklist to make sure you're ticking all the boxes:

- Making eye contact
- Smiling frequently
- Complimenting their personal style- only if you mean it (clothes, attitude, brand)
- Complimenting their professional achievements
- Being playful in your interactions
- Joking (but without ever resorting to being overtly sexual)
- Making them laugh at least once every time they see you
- Seeing the conversation as your chance to play / enjoy / experience one another positively for mutual benefit

Is flirting risky? Sometimes! Your playful nature may be misinterpreted as a sexual advance. However, this only ever happens when there is sexual energy present in the first place (was it lurking in the background when the engagement, lunch or dinner was set up, for example?). **Trust your intuition:** you will always know ahead of time if the interaction is about to go too far and stray into unwanted territory. Just make a conscious decision to pull it back and remain professional.

TEACH to LEARN and LEARN to TEACH

Through the way that we behave (how we present ourselves, what we will and won't tolerate) we teach others how to treat us too. We also learn a great deal about others and ourselves in the process. This is

especially true in a networking scenario when you've got hundreds of others objectives flying around the room.

Understand and take responsibility for your own self and how you are being perceived through the interactions you are having. Others will reflect back to you the behaviours you exhibit, one way or another (these may not be immediately apparent but may manifest over time as your relationships proceed).

If someone is standoffish, aggressive or aloof around you, try remembering when you last behaved that way (we're all capable of everything) and look and see if you are still projecting any energy from this past incident out at other people for them to 'pick up on' and play with? It is quite possible that this is happening to you because you are doing or have done the same thing.

FLIRT in the SAFETY ZONE

Which basically means...

- **No touching** (other than a firm handshake, an affectionate tap on the shoulder, an invited peck on the cheek);
- **No inappropriate gazing** (i.e. you simply cannot stare at your colleagues' tits / crotch / arse...which I've always thought a tad unfair considering the foot fetishists get away with murder, especially in summer when everybody's wearing thongs!);
- **No leading the conversation off** down overtly sexual paths;
- **No playing (sexual) favourites** in front of other staff / colleagues / clients.

“Thank You...and Goodnight!”

Your ability to generate exceptional **ROI** from your networking activities is entirely dependent on your ability to influence others. You must **be seen** in the right circles, **talk to** the right people and

consistently expose yourself to the most powerful decision-makers, all on a regular basis. Attend all sorts of different events and cause a stir wherever you go. Getting people talking about you left right and centre is the name of the game.

Oh yes, and for god's sake *leave the **bike** at home and **walk** your talk instead!*

Can't get enough?

Head over to **benangel.com.au** now and sign-up for Ben's free 'Industry Domination Insight's' blog. You'll discover even more deliciously and seductive easy-to-apply well thought-out practical marketing strategies online.

Act now and join us in the conversation!

EXPOSE yourself FREELY in PUBLIC **(how to be ARRESTING without getting** **ARRESTED)**

Ok, so now that you have developed your brand, refined your offering, groomed yourself for success *and* learned how to stop yourself from energetically ejaculating all over the place...it sounds to me like it's time for you to become a true '**A-lister**'!

An A-lister in business is someone that everybody else wants a piece of. They are the ones who have fully developed their business networks and can slot into every environment with ease. The media clamours to quote and feature them, which in turn wins the A-lister a whole heap of free exposure (magazines, newspapers, blogs). Consumers are attracted to A-listers because they are seen as the industry expert; the one and only person to go to for worthwhile advice.

Other businesses are drawn to partner with A-listers in order to increase their own exposure and ride off the back of that **credibility by association** we spoke about in chapter 7. **The Business A-list** is made up of successful CEOs, consultants, spokespersons, entrepreneurs and small business owners (like you), all seeking to increase their exposure and client base by being recognised as a specialist.

In this chapter I am going to share two distinct strategies to help you to **become an A-lister in your field**. I specifically look at public

speaking and host beneficiaries for reasons we'll get to later. Let's just see if you're up for the challenge first!

Are YOU UP For It?

Becoming an A-lister isn't for everyone. It takes a well-groomed individual to attract and maintain such acute levels of attention. This doesn't come easy or happen overnight. It may take several years to build up enough momentum for real results to occur, all of which are dependent on how aggressive and strategic your game plan is and how much stamina you have to follow it through.

The 'face' of your brand (whether it belongs to you or your spokesperson) needs to be well-trained in **crucial A-list behaviour basics**, such as:

- Managing conversations (how to steer them to best serve your agenda);
- Handling the media (what to say, what *not* to say & when to say it; what *not* to wear - shapes and colours to avoid etc)
- Signature visual style (commanding presence; looking like you *own* your title)

If one or two of these elements are in place but the other areas are weak, you can forget all about achieving A-list status. This is true however 'big' the game you're playing happens to be. Take **Sarah Palin** for example, **John McCain's** running mate for the 2008 presidential elections against **Barack Obama**. Despite *looking* the part, Palin failed so spectacularly to verbally impress, that voters simply could not conceive of her as a potential president elect if anything happened to John McCain - and this cost them both the election.

Palin wasn't the only candidate parodied by the wickedly satirical *Saturday Night Live* team but her ongoing public gaffs made her the easiest target and a standing joke in worldwide media. Will we see her again? I believe so, but when we do we will be seeing a far more highly-polished professional able to field any question the media throw at her with ease. Which begs the question:

How well refined are YOU?

If the media came knocking today asking for your expert commentary, or you were invited to speak at a top class industry function tomorrow, would you have the communication skills to accept immediately and manage or deflect the hard questions thrown (and sometimes pelted) your way? How effective are you in successfully negotiating with potential affiliate partners in order to promote yourself to their database of thousands for free? Do you have the skills to manage the conversation to a substantial outcome and influence those around you with your opinions?

As you know I grew up on a farm, so I can assure you that it took many years of learning from my mistakes in order to groom myself effectively (after all, cattle aren't the best role models and their advice sucks because they don't talk back!).

How to get an A+ for 'A-lister-ing'

We each play many roles throughout our lives, so why hold back in giving yourself the best chance to shine in each? Take the time to develop your outward persona so that you have every chance of becoming an **A+ A-lister** within your sector. Go through the previous exercises presented to you in this book and unleash an individual with the power and influence to attract consumers to your business like bees on honey. Once you've refined your own

personal message and marketing, it's time to find the right platforms to convey your newly found self-expression.

The Power of Public Speaking

Becoming a public speaker or finding a nominated person within your organization to become the spokesperson is a fantastic way to generate exposure. It allows your organization to position itself as the credible 'go-to' authority for expert advice.

Shining on stage is the business equivalent of earning an academic degree. Audiences revere great public speakers because they have the personal confidence and courage to get up and share their opinions with others. They believe in their message enough to be willing to poke their heads up above the parapet regardless of the consequences. An accomplished, memorable spokesperson within any organization is a fantastic asset (just make sure the lapel mic's switched off when in the bathroom - yikes!).

More Benefits of Public Speaking

- **Promotion** – Speaking **one to many** instead of merely **one to one**; extended reach of your message; greater influence; group consciousness (there is power in the collective energy of a group reaching consensus on a topic);
- **Opportunities** – No need to sell directly from stage, just be yourself; new business opportunities will naturally flow from each new speaking engagement (depending on how good you are of course so practice, practice, practice!);
- **Profile** – Speaking at industry events is one of the fastest ways to build your personal and business brand.

Don't be too concerned about how to get speaking engagements or even worry about what you're going to speak about just yet, we'll cover that shortly. For the time being, let's address your nerves...!

Firstly, let me empathise if this is worrying you. The first time I spoke professionally it was to host a speed-dating event. There were over forty participants in the room and I felt like projectile vomiting everywhere. Picture the puking scene in *The Exorcist* – that was almost me (although I did look much prettier than her, even if I do say so myself!).

“According to most studies, people’s number one fear is public speaking. Number two is death. Death is number two. Does that sound right? This means to the average person, if you go to a funeral, you’re better off in the casket than doing the eulogy.”

- Jerry Seinfeld

If you're a nervous public speaker and the thought of getting up on stage sends you running to the bathroom, then you can either:

- nominate someone else within your business to do it, or;
- *Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway*, à la Susan Jeffers

You can probably guess which one of these will be more personally empowering for you! And be warned: whoever does take on this role is likely to become the face associated with your business so you need to ensure there is longevity in their role within your organization.

Separate the Energy

When you speak from stage, you project your energy to the audience and you also pick up on theirs. Hosting speed-dating events for

nervous daters meant that I was not only dealing with my anxiety, I was also dealing with theirs. You can imagine how jumpy and unsettling this energy could become if it wasn't managed properly, what with so many people feeling concerned about what everybody else in the place thought of them!

As a result I learned pretty fast that as a speaker, one of the first things to master is how to successfully separate the audience's energy from your own. Try this simple visualisation technique next time you're up on stage:

1. Visualise your energy enveloping the entire audience (this could be in the form of white light, sounds airy fairy I know but you'll get over it);
2. Feel how this brings them into your sphere of influence;
3. Create a space in which you are joined together with your audience so that you become a part of the whole;
4. Allow your standing as part of the whole to mean that you can exert greater influence since YOU are the one on stage commanding the attention;
5. Establish rapport through being relatable (avoid being perceived as an outside entity that is capable of being rejected);
6. Next take your audience by the hand and lead them wherever you wish to go.

"Whenever or wherever you find yourself presenting (to the board of directors, during a sales pitch or in a room full of attentive listeners) notice how the person with the highest amount of energy gains control and majority of the influence."

- Ben Angel

Manage your emotional frequency levels effectively to bring about a new perspective and fresh energy to influence your audience. The

only public speakers that excel are the ones who can **energetically shift the entire audience up the scale by several notches**, thereby leaving them feeling elated, being better informed and wanting more. This doesn't mean you have to capitulate to an audience's presuppositions however, which is the subject of the next section about **growing some BALLS** (yes ladies, you too!).

Grow some BALLS & Avoid the TRAP of being a PUBIC Speaker!

There are many '**pubic**' speakers out there on the circuit. By '**pubic**' I mean the speakers who still don't have the balls to say what they really think for fear of pissing people off and ruffling the feathers of their target audience. Well here's what I suggest you keep in mind to avoid falling into this trap. Put simply, ***Don't Sell Yourself Out!***

Being meek is no way to get noticed. You may manage to be good but you're never going to be great if you simply regurgitate the same stuff as everyone else has for years. Of course you need to get paid... but not at the expense of selling out your own values and brand beliefs.

Growing up as a young gay man, I spent years 'editing' myself in order to fit into a society that devalued me just to avoid being bashed or ridiculed. Trying to live in someone else's skin this way caused me enormous grief. As a teenager I got so depressed I even went to the top of the Adelaide Hills one night believing I would end it all with a knife I'd swiped from the kitchen drawer. Thank heavens sense prevailed, but that moment was a crucial turning point for me. I don't regret having had to face down my demons that night, because the freedom of letting all that expectation about 'who I should be' go was the most liberating decision imaginable. **The positive impact a similar decision can make on YOUR bottom line** is what we're going to analyse next...

Never, ever 'edit' who you really are, especially if you are the face of your business brand. It is YOUR authenticity and uniqueness that will generate client leads and attract raving fans - not some puppet parody of yourself you accidentally became in pursuit of worshipping the holy dollar.

Pepper speaking engagements with your personal stories and brand anecdotes to make yourself more relatable and connect with individuals in your audience. Your ability to move an audience is directly related to how much of 'you' you bring to the presentation. Whichever industry sector you are in, there are always appropriate ways to draw on your own personal experience in order to illustrate a point. As discussed previously, just remember to always **Contextualise** your content.

Help yourself out by keeping a simple notebook in which you jot down all the interesting, unusual, mysterious or inspiring things that happen in your life. Look for ways you can weave these personal touchstones into your presentations. Literally **become the instigator of thought by means of your talks**. Wow, that was deep - even for me! Don't tell anyone I'm not as superficial as I seem, ok?

What do you TALK about?

Regardless of which industry you're in there is always opportunity for you to generate new clients by speaking on topics and matters that are of interest to them. Presenting informative seminars and keynote speeches will help you attract clients both directly and indirectly by giving them a taste of yourself, your brand and your goods and services.

By presenting your target market with a few gems (tidbits of knowledge attributable to you and your brand) you show them a way to put two and two together themselves by testing your theory

in the marketplace. If they can experience some benefit from what you've offered, they will return to engage your professional services. This **informative sales approach** has been working effectively for years.

Nowadays companies and business experts also create and distribute **FREE e-books** and downloads galore to market themselves informatively to prospective clients. In return for receiving useful information, recipients will often opt in to your mailing list. This adds to your database for promotional follow up later on. If these free downloads provide enough value and the backup marketing hits its mark, the whole campaign will automatically promote credibility and everything that is associated with it, thereby reducing the chances of objections to purchase occurring.

Here are some examples of keynote titles you can work up to present to your own target audience, or else deliver to another. Through doing so, you showcase the versatility of this approach and your material, got it? Great! To stimulate your beautiful brain and get you thinking, here's how the same essential message might be marketed to different industry audiences:

<i>Beauty Industry</i>	10 yrs in 10 days: 7 Magic Tricks guaranteed to have You Looking MORE than 10 years YOUNGER in LESS than 10 days!
<i>Marketing</i>	Marketing Machine: Ultimate Online Marketing SECRETS Revealed!
<i>Business Services</i>	Go for Growth: 5 Easy Steps to Reach Your Business Goals...TODAY!
<i>Life Coach</i>	Back on Track: The Secret to Getting Your Life Back on Track for OUTSTANDING results!

TURN your customers ON before your SEDUCE them

It's important to provide some solid information and practical tips that your audience can leave the function with and put to use immediately. If not, you are wasting their time and yours. Don't give away all your ideas, but make sure you hand out enough IP ('intellectual property') to at least stimulate debate and **start turning people on to who you are and what you offer them of value.**

Executed with intention and finesse, public speaking can be a highly effective lead generating activity. But be warned: *whenever* you are invited to address an audience, whether paid or unpaid, **self-promotion must be kept to a minimum** out of respect for the organisers and the audience (some of whom will have forgone an episode of *Desperate Housewives* to hear what you have to say). If you blatantly promote yourself (instead of *demonstrating your brand through the way you ARE*) you run a very real risk of alienating both the event organizers and your audience. In case you're wondering at this point how you are supposed to generate sales from speaking engagements if not through self-promotion, don't panic, we're getting to that. But before we do, let's cover how you go about obtaining speaking engagements in the first place.

How to get F@*ked (er...I mean *BOOKED*) as a SPEAKER

The speakers with a full schedule of engagements are those who are well-connected in their chosen industry *and* beyond. They will have honed in on key influencers and decision makers within their sector, such as industry body committee members and those thought leaders whose organizations have access to their target market and can benefit from an affiliation marketing strategy.

Successful keynote speakers have built up a reputation for providing engaging, fun, informative and thought-provoking speeches that mean they get invited back...again and again and again. Of course this kind of popularity also requires a successful speaker to keep on their toes and be constantly evolving their material to avoid sounding stale. **This is a very good problem to have** so when you get there, be grateful!

If you feel yourself to be lacking the necessary industry connections, don't despair because there's plenty you can do to turn this around:

1. Jump on **Google** and search your little heart out - I certainly did;
2. Make a list of all of the industry bodies, networking groups and chambers of commerce in your area that host regular events of any kind that may engage guest speakers;
3. Conclude your research by creating a proposal that sets forth your credentials and availability in a professional looking manner;
4. Send this to the organizations concerned, **ensuring you address it personally** to the correct recipient;
5. Include: sample promotional material that the organization could use to market an event; your speaker's bio; any media you've had; and of course, plenty of testimonials from happy clients!;
6. Also include a relevant event title and a minimum of four dot points highlighting key elements to be covered in your keynote (don't send out your whole presentation willy-nilly though as you will look desperate). In my experience, the more specific you

can be with your ‘dot points’ the more attendees you’ll attract.

There’s a **simple formula** I’ve successfully used for years that you can follow if you like. Would you like me to share it with you? Oh all right then, here we go...

1st element > the Keynote title :

(e.g. ‘Facing up to Facebook - The Secrets for getting Social Media working for Your Business.’ ← this title is one of the keynote presentations I deliver regularly. **Make your title compelling;** rhyming words help you be memorable. Look at magazine covers for inspiration or engage a copywriter to help you put a powerful headline together.)

2nd element > the Introduction :

(e.g. At this event your dynamic presenter (*insert your name here*) will uncover for you:

- 7 Ways to (*insert your desired audience learning outcome & its benefit here*) for example, *7 Ways to Network More Effectively and Increase Profits TODAY!*
- 5 Tips to (*as above, insert what they will learn and tag a benefit onto the end of it*)
- 3 Secrets to (*insert what they will learn and tag a benefit onto the end of it*)
- Unlock the key to (*insert what they will learn and tag a benefit onto the end of it*)

3rd element > the Invitation :

Date:

Time:

Place:

Investment:

Call to Action / How to Book / Special Offer : (i.e. - include a FREE e-book or audio download to drive people back to your website for lead generation)

NB: when creating your proposal, be sure to include as many credibility factors as possible. If you've worked with large or local brands that have a good reputation, list them and highlight them within your one to one conversations along with any media exposure you've had. Don't be afraid to name drop. I'm a serial namedropper and over the years have experienced it working to prevent a lot of sales objections from occurring.

If possible, **have each keynote you present filmed and streamed on YouTube.** This is a handy resource for event organisers seeking that little bit of extra reassurance before they book you. Email them a link to your best video so they can preview your skills and see you in action.

An ENTREPRENEURIAL Alternative if you find yourself getting F@*ked more often than BOOKED : Host the event YOURSELF

The more entrepreneurial alternative to pitching for speaking engagements through other organizations is simply to host the event yourself. You will need a thick skin and a strong will (just because you set a time and date doesn't mean people will actually show up!) but this can ultimately be a far more satisfying experience if planned and executed well.

It requires a lot of work to get bums on seats at events. Influencing factors include everything from what else is happening on that day

(is there an annual conference of your target audience happening already?), what time of year it is (are people away on holiday around this time?), whether your topic is noteworthy enough (have they heard it all before?) and so on. Here are a few top calibre insider tips to help you get started (don't say I never give you anything...!):

- Expect about a **1% conversion rate** from promoting the event to your database and through other potential prospecting resources. This means that **marketing your event to 2000 people = 20 attendees**. It doesn't sound much but this is the average, which just goes to show why a huge current database is one of your biggest business assets! Also, note that it doesn't take just one promotion to get the 20 people. You may have to market to them several times to even come close to achieving this result;
- Make sure you can **cover your bottom line costs** in the unfortunate event that nobody shows up. Be clear in advance (at the online booking or registration stage) about what you do or do not offer in terms of refunds or credit notes for people who commit in advance but fail to attend;
- You will need to **promote to the same database consistently for a minimum of four weeks prior to your event** in order to obtain strong numbers. As each week passes by and you leave it too close to the actual date to promote, your numbers will drop significantly;
- There is an enormous gulf in the results you can expect from giving prospects two week's notice instead of four. Giving them half as much notice can result as much as a 75% drop in registrations. This turns the whole thing into a farce and wastes everybody's time;
- There is nothing worse (or more damaging to a brand) than having to cancel an event. Whatever excuse you give, it will just look like there weren't enough people interested in what

you have to say. As a speaker or spokesperson, this negatively affects your credibility more than anything else. Avoid cancellation at all costs by being fully prepared in the first place and you won't go far wrong.

If you do decide to host your own event, **hire a professional copywriter** to ensure the promotional material is compelling enough to invoke prospects to commit (financially or otherwise) to being there. **Establish affiliate relationships** with other organizations that will agree to promote your event in return for something you can do for them. For example, you may allocate some FREE sponsorship for their brand through visible signage at the event or allow them to set up a table for displaying their products. If you are planning on handing out event treats or 'goodie-bags,' include some of their marketing material in these as well.

Running your own events is a great way to connect with new clients so long as it doesn't take you too far away from your core business. Organising a successful event can be more time consuming than it looks, so if you find it all becoming too much of a drain on your time appoint your PA to take over or else engage an independent events specialist to handle it for you.

Allow a solid twelve months of running your own events before you gain real insight into what makes them rock and begin to see real results. Hiring an experienced **events coordinator** will short-cut the wait on ROI, as will engaging a commission-only or commission-based sales professional to help you write an underlying sales process into your presentation. The trick is to make sure this is subtle. Anything too obvious will disengage your audience and ruin your chances of successful conversions to purchase.

Lighting a FIRE to generate LEADS and SALES

There is a delicate balance between what you give and what you get which must be achieved with every talk you give. Ensure that you always ‘gift’ enough genuinely practical information for your audience to take away and apply *that day* in order to *experience your wisdom and expertise* at work in their own lives. THIS is what will impress them more than anything else and bring them back for more.

I always make it a habit to save a **few glittering gems of information** to scatter throughout each presentation that I do. For example:

- information on the latest trends;
- the industry ‘goings-on’ (who’s doing what and where, with whom and why);
- what’s happening in the overseas market and what the implications are here at home.

If you tell an audience just enough to rouse their curiosity right at the end, you can then finish off with a subtle sales invitation. Try this one, it works wonders!: *“I’m sorry to have run out of time to talk about this today. However it would be my pleasure to share more information, so if this appeals to you please pass me your business card and I’ll send you some details.”* Magic!

If you have the event organiser’s permission (and it feels appropriate to the setting and won’t make you come across as too pushy) you can sometimes sell an actual product or service from stage. This is obviously easier to arrange at your own event, although I would still encourage you to **remember that you are being paid to speak not to sell – that is if you are being paid to speak**. You may have to speak at a lot of events for free to build up your reputation to get hired initially. This applies to BOTH the event manager (if there

is one) or your own event audience (who have either paid to be there or are at the very least giving you their time and attention).

If you are going to sell something at a presentation create a really tempting offer for a limited time only (and be strict about the parameters of this or else people will feel cheated). For example, offer a 30% discount for thirty minutes or the first 30 people to make a purchase. Think of something catchy and try to tie it in to the theme of the event to help it seem more special and unique. If your presentation has been inspiring enough you will have individuals flock to the front of the room to take advantage of your offer. Without any clear boundaries about what and how to buy however, you lose out on this chance and cannot easily recreate the opportunity with the same group later on.

SING for your SUPPER: how to generate LEADS from your SPEAKING

Just like **Madonna** or **J.K. Rowling**, you too can get paid forever for work you do once – IF you follow these simple steps for generating business leads from your speaking engagements:

1. Record a simple audio program or create an e-book you can give away to the attendees for FREE in return for them putting business cards into the ‘Business Card Draw’;
2. Draw a winner from this bowl of business cards and have a prize on hand from one of your sponsors (or even something of real value you can donate yourself);
3. Heed this **CASE STUDY** of my **SUCCESS**: The most successful campaign I have ever done using this strategy was when I recorded an audio program on my laptop, printed off DVD covers to give out at the event

and placed a card inside the cover instead of the actual CD recording. Attendees were required to write down their business details and give me back the card in order to receive a link to the actual audio download (which I had placed a value of \$79.95 on).

Out of 150 attendees at one particular event, 123 filled out their card and gave it to me at the end of the night. In an instant I had an additional 123 *target market specific* names on my database – I told you this was magic!

DEATH by SPEAKING :

Or how *not* to BORE your Audience to DEATH!

Ann Reinten of The Australian Image Company is recognised as one of the best image-consulting trainers in the world. But even she had her work cut out for her keeping up appearances when an elderly woman in her audience **died** midway through Ann's presentation!

Being an ex nurse, Ann hopped off stage to resuscitate the woman and organised for the local priest (also in attendance) to call an ambulance. The priest urged Ann to finish her presentation, as there were plenty of attendees still desperate to hear the rest of what she had to say. The lady in question was taken by ambulance to hospital but shortly after, the priest appeared in Ann's eye-line at the back of the room and dragged his finger across his throat to indicate that the woman was dead!

Now, Ann is one of the most engaging, informative and entertaining presenters I've ever seen - but this story just goes to show that even if you're doing everything you can to engage, inform and entertain, you can never be 100% sure you're not boring one of them to death (sorry Ann, only joking!).

To avoid any unnecessary casualties, always remember to 'check in' with your audience regularly (encourage questions and partner

activities or else just be the BEST damn speaker they have ever encountered); deliver to them precisely what they need and have come to learn (not what YOU think they need or you think YOU NEED for them to hear); leave your ego at the door and think of yourself as *being of service* to your audience.

Footnote: just to clarify, I don't believe for one minute that Ann is capable of boring *anyone* to death. If anything, her audiences have to be careful not to get too over excited because her content's so damn hot! If only we all had her skill!

Your 2nd Lesson in Exposing Your Self to 1000's for FREE begins right HERE, *right NOW!*

Now that we've covered **public speaking**, we're going to turn our attention to the valuable skill of how to maximise **free exposure** through your networks (no need to purchase a dark grey raincoat and hang out in the park unless you really want to though!).

If public speaking really isn't your thing, scares you too witless for words, or simply doesn't 'fit' with you or your brand, then this next technique is right up your alley. I can vouch for it, because this is the technique I used most extensively to get my own business, www.nationwidenetworking.com off the ground. This advice is very practical and the reason I used it so extensively in the early days was specifically to test how well it actually could work through practical application. Much to my delight it worked like a charm and also enabled me to get my business up and running without any start-up capital to speak of. What's the technique? Well, it's a strategy called '**Host Beneficiary**' and this is how it works:

1. you create a range of quality (complimentary) educational resources;

2. these are then forwarded on to your colleagues' databases as if the communication has come from them;
3. **CASE STUDY example:**
 - a. I write a FREE article showcasing key hints and tips about a specific topic that is purely educational and practical in nature;
 - b. At the bottom of this article I create a by-line with a brief promotion explaining who I am, and a hyperlink to my website;
 - c. Included in the by-line is the offer of a FREE download (audio of a seminar, complimentary e-book, special report etc);
 - d. The company in question then forward my article on to their database as a way of educating their customer base about challenges close to their hearts;
 - e. The result is a win-win situation for all concerned (I get to expose myself in front of thousands; the company gets to shine in their customers' eyes; the customers receive free education and the contact details of the source for this in case they want to find out more).
- **The largest host beneficiary of this kind that I've ever conducted went out to a database of over 110,000 national businesses.** Marketing like this anywhere else would cost you thousands. It also wouldn't be as targeted or effective, nor would it generate such an immediate response.

TOP TIP:

Always remember to implement Host Beneficiaries strategies with synergistic organizations whose values are in alignment with your own and whose goods and services compliment yours without competing.

Some examples of synergistic relationships for the purposes of 'Host Beneficiary' strategies include:

- Business Consultant/Graphic Designer/Marketing Consultant/Website Developer/Accountant;
- Personal Trainer/Life Coach/Masseur/Image Consultant/Hair Dresser/Nail Technician

All of these businesses share something crucial in common: they appeal to the SAME TARGET MARKET but for DIFFERENT REASONS. This means that they can HELP one another without HARMING one another.

Here are a few of the ways you can get your message out there using Host Beneficiaries:

- **Audio Download** – Create a free audio download. Send your colleagues a short promotional copy offering the free audio download exclusively to their database for a limited time only to generate an immediate response. To retrieve the audio download each recipient must click on the hyperlink and go to your website. Before they download, each visitor must fill out a minimum of their name and email address.

(I recently used an audio download to generate over **600 fresh business leads in one week**. This has resulted in ongoing sales for work done just once. All it cost was the time it took to record the audio, which was enjoyable to do anyway - even for this introverted farm boy!)

- **Hot TOPIC e-Book** – A *well-written* (note the emphasis on **well-written!**) e-book is a fantastic promotional tool. Your e-book will discuss issues close to your target markets' hearts and be about 15 'pages' in length. Try to include original images that appeal to visual learners and don't be too text heavy (a lot of people will be reading the book from their computer screen). Make a list of the top concerns your clients have and begin to write about them. Send promotional copy of the e-book to your colleagues asking if they will give it to their database. Place a dollar value on it and limit it to the first 50 that download it from your site to generate an immediate response.

(**TOP TIP for e-Books:** when it comes to creating a really great e-Book (and there is no point in creating a BAD one because it's your BRAND that's going **viral** here!), remember the old journalistic adage of **less is more**. In other words, imagine an old hack handing over his copy to the Editor saying, *"Here it is chief. If I had more time it would be half the length!"*)

- **A Special Report** – Special reports feature topical, newsworthy items. Look for the hot topics being discussed in the media relating to your client base. Write a two to four page document that highlights what changes are occurring and offering your considered expert opinion. This positions you as a credible authority on the matter and as such also separates you from your competitors. Email your **special report** out to your clients, the media and all of your colleagues but make sure it is of REAL VALUE to everyone concerned. The LAST thing you want to do is get a reputation for being mashed up meat in a can (SPAM).

In SHORT...

A **host beneficiary** is a business referral conducted en masse – pretty powerful stuff, eh?! Just like the media, most businesses are constantly on the hunt for quality content to add value to their audience/readership/database/clients. It can be expensive hiring external experts to produce relevant copy for email campaigns or even their regular weekly newsletters, so if you **can position yourself as the solution to their problem**, imagine how much they are going to love you. You'll not only be doing them a huge favour, you will generate leads for yourself as well!

Identify the relevant colleagues and businesses that run regular email campaigns and write them some content for free. They will tell you if you've hit the mark with their client base or not, and the great thing is that because to some extent you share the same target audience, you will usually have a pretty good understanding of what they need anyway.

The real secret to reaping maximum benefit from a host beneficiary strategy lies in creating content that is relevant, topical and (above all) EASY to forward on virally. Keep your content short and to the point and your links prominent so that copying the whole lot into their newsletter is as easy as pie. If a host beneficiary has to spend time fiddling about creating links then you've lost the game before it's begun.

**“FLIRTING...DRESSING UP...PUBLIC SPEAKING...
whatever NEXT, Ben?”**

I know, I know, I'm being very demanding on you but I never said that being the BEST was easy – but it is FUN though...*and* very lucrative, so please bear with me! I just have a few more suggestions

coming up that are SO simple yet so often overlooked. Take a deep breath...we're about to GO LIVE...*by going online.*

Can't get enough?

Head over to **benangel.com.au** now and sign-up for Ben's free 'Industry Domination Insight's' blog. You'll discover even more deliciously and seductive easy-to-apply well thought-out practical marketing strategies online.

Act now and join us in the conversation!

Internet DATING (how to get it ON with your CLIENTS online)

So are you ready to become a **first class hooker**? Don't panic, we're only talking about how to get your customers hooked on a great idea and then reel them in to land the sale here - nothing *too* scary, I promise.

I have dedicated this whole chapter to **the business of 'online dating'** though, because there's more to **the successful solicitation and seduction of your customers** than meets the (wink of an) eye. Chapter 9 explores all the key elements, which include:

- first-class **blogging**;
- **co-registration** success principles;
- how to apply **social proof** to spark word of mouth;
- instilling a **sense of urgency** to buy online from your **website...right NOW!**

Hold on, tight baby...because I'm about to go DEEP. Are you coming with me? Let's kick off with some (social) proof that's in the pudding (or do I mean 'bun in the oven?').

Social Proof

Picture this: You're overseas in the heart of a busy shopping district. All of a sudden you see a crowd of people gathering around a store. You can't see into the store or even its name, but you *can* see that something interesting enough to draw a crowd is happening in and around it. Your curiosity gets the best of you and you soon find yourself heading over, drawn deeper and deeper into the excitement and intense atmosphere of urgency. What is driving you to this place? What is piquing your curiosity? The same thing that drives you to do many other things: **'social proof'**.

BIG BEN's Dictionary of Definitions: 'S'

Social | 'sō sh əl| **proof** |proōf|

noun

1. also known as **'pack mentality'**;
2. evidence to individuals as to whether or not to make a purchase, attend an event or visit a website;
3. the reason why most of us will only ever eat at a busy restaurant (except for McDonalds maybe: I only eat there when drunk enough to believe it's actually *food* they serve in there!); if it's busy and popular chances are it tastes good;
4. the reason why waiters/waitresses aim to place early arrivals for dinner in and around the front windows to make it look busy and attract more customers on an otherwise quiet night;
5. lots of other examples I'm sure you can think of

Is Your Website an Empty Restaurant?

In the quest to get top billing on **Google** and generate sales from your website, you may be overlooking **social proof** as the crucial component for building critical mass.

Application of social proof in the online environment can be hugely influential. It offers a means of making purchasing decisions easy for people whom, for whatever reason, don't feel personally qualified to do so. For these buyers, social proof provides a frame of reference through which to assess the quality of the opportunity being afforded them.

"In short, a lot of online customers will look at what others are doing, saying and buying and let this be the deciding factor."

- Ben Angel

Social proof, also known as '**pack mentality**', provides evidence that others have tried and tested the scenario, goods or service beforehand and given it the 'thumbs up' of approval (although seriously, who really ever thought Mc Donald's was fit for general consumption in the first place?). Social proof is often precisely the catalyst required to increase traffic to your website and convert leads. When this social proof does not exist it fails to coerce enough individuals to make a purchase or engage.

Examples of how today's **SOCIAL MEDIA** platforms rely on the **SOCIAL PROOF** of crowds in order to work effectively:

- **Online forums** with low user interaction usually die a quick death; the only hope of resuscitation is when a key influencer

(typically the owner) instigates a controversial conversation or reignites an existing thread;

- **Blog posts** with lots of comments attract even more comments because readers also want to BE read (at least when they are sharing their precious opinions too!);
- If a subscriber count is visible, **Blogs** attracting few subscribers attract even fewer new ones; whereas the popular ones (which can afford to boast about their numbers) can enjoy runaway success;
- **Websites** that prevent consumers from posting their comments to blog entries offer little by way of engagement, therefore arousing suspicion rather than creating community; the site may become branded as a dictatorship – something to be avoided at all costs when it comes to dating your customers online!;
- **Twitter accounts** that only have a few followers generally only ever attract a few more...whereas the popular ones go from strength to strength. **Demi Moore's** actor-producer husband **Ashton Kutcher** is sitting at a figure of fast-approaching **3 million followers** and Twitter itself has gone from zero-2 billion 'Tweets' in less than three years...*wow!*);
- **Websites** that only have a few testimonials, testimonials displaying first names only, or out of date testimonials do little to sway opinion or convert sales leads;
- **Websites** featuring a naff celebrity endorsement *don't* excel; as for any that carry a personal message from Mr T...well, "*I pity the fool!*"

Whisk the WORRY out of your WEBSITE

Your website must provide evidence that it is worth investing time to engage with. Apply the **interactive tools** discussed in a moment and you'll engage visitors enough to keep them coming back for more.

These tools are designed to reassure consumers who may have some or all of the following questions in mind on their first visit:

- Is this a credible source of information?
- If I purchase from this website will I actually receive the goods promised?
- Is this a trustworthy site or could it possibly be fraudulent?
- Can the company behind this website back up their claims of customer service?
- Is there anything of real substance and value behind all of the hype?

While we're talking (A)-lists, let's review your online website objectives, which should include:

- **Generating, measuring and converting traffic** (especially first-time visitors): this is where businesses with an online presence spend the majority of their time and money;
- **Seducing new visitors** to enter their details and **subscribe** to your database / newsletter; by them opting into your database, they are funnelling into your **sales pipeline**;
- Once a visitor has become a customer, the objective shifts to focus on ways to get them to **come back and purchase again in the future**; these repeat purchases can be generated via email campaigns of FREE offers or compelling content.

The more often you 'touch' - as opposed to 'touch up!' - your consumers *in new and interesting ways* (key for avoiding the reputation of being an irritating 'SPAMmer'), the more likely they are to buy from you.

Regular **blogging** and **Tweeting** helps keep you front of mind so that when your customers have a need, it is YOUR solution they think of first. This only works if you keep me reminded of your existence in an unobtrusive way, however, so spread your time evenly on both generating new leads and converting existing ones so as not to pester either group to the extent that you end up pissing them off!

Do put the effort in to follow through (effectively) though. You have already invested time and money in getting people to visit your website in the first place so why not spend the extra time to make them happy and convert them into repeat business during and after, too?

"It takes more effort and money to attract new visitors than it does to convert existing prospects."

- Ben Angel

STATIC SITES are only for those who believe in LEPRECHAUNS!

If your website *isn't* interactive with heaps of brand personality, *doesn't* encourage customer feedback *or* incite consumer opinion and you really believe that's ok, then you probably also believe that leprechauns still exist - when in reality, they died off years ago.

A **static website** merely informs visitors who the company is and what it does (in this case, who = 'old-fashioned' and what = 'something old-fashioned'!). Static websites are all about the *company* and not the consumer, so you can see how the latter might be forgiven for feeling insulted.

Imagine walking into a retail store that never changes its stock: the window display stays the same year in, year out and the staff stare

at you with unblinking, bland expressions devoid of any personality. Would you feel compelled to make a purchase, let alone hurry back? Not on your life! Well, running a successful online presence is just the same as running a successful physical retail store in this sense. It requires continual updating and merchandising to attract new consumers and engage existing users on an ongoing basis to drive them to purchase and re-purchase.

A site that lacks a thriving social media element is like the uncool kid in school nobody wants to hang out with. Conversely, the popular kid in school whose house parties are always booming would be the offline equivalent of a YouTube, a Facebook or a Twitter – i.e. *much more attractive to play with* and way more profitable!

Some EASY-to-add Internet Applications to Transform your WEBSITE

- **Product Ranking** – empower consumers and make them know you DO care about their opinion by incorporating a way for them to rate your goods and services (think about how www.ebay.com operates and you'll get how powerful this consumer-generated content can be);
- **Forums** – create and sustain a lively forum in which you (yes, YOU) can converse with consumers as they discuss topical matters with yourself and one another; this is great for **SEO** (Sexy European Optometrists...or **Search Engine Optimisation** as I've also heard it called); i.e. lots of regular fresh consumer-generated content scores your website 'points' when it comes to your Google (and other) search engine ranking;
- **Blogging** – create a blog and post entries full of new and useful information for your audience to access; they will respond by commenting on your posts to (self-) express their opinions;
- **Video** – add video streaming to your site using tools such as YouTube which 'host' the bulk of the data for you to keep

your own hosting costs to a minimum; this also gives your customers the ability to share the video of you with their network at a click of a mouse through social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace and of course Twitter;

- **Audio** – stream a welcome message as well as other auditory elements through your site to engage visitors using sound; but make the content and delivery about satisfying the user, not you;
- **Games** – if you've got the budget, develop games around a theme within your business (I'm sure you've seen the shoe throwing game with George Bush that was doing the rounds last year. I still can't believe that guy missed his head!).

Each of the interactive tools above can be easily implemented with the assistance of your **website developer**. However, if you're yet to build your site, or are in the process of an overhaul, make sure you check up front that your designer / developer is capable of delivering on these applications. Discuss the cost implications at length up front, including any possible blowout costs and the fee for ongoing maintenance.

Compared to other industries, 'Online' is still in its infancy. While it's catching up fast there are still a lot of sharks in the water that will bite off an arm and a leg given half the chance! Find a reliable, talented web designer (look & feel) and web developer ('back-end' technical elements) by finding sites YOU like online and contacting the team behind them, or through referral from other business owners.

Just in case you need any further incentive to do your homework on this, I personally know of a case where a pair of business partners paid upwards of AU\$20k, only to be forced to dismantle their shiny new website again twelve months later because it didn't do what the developer had promised it would. Conduct your due diligence

because you'll be the only one your customers blame at the end of the day if you stuff up.

Get the Conversation Started

The purpose of all of this interaction is **to stimulate debate and get people talking about you and your brand**. By combining as many of the applications discussed here as possible on your website, you will succeed in tripping all of their senses. You should also attempt to:

- Begin every online conversation based upon your prospects' most urgent needs;
- Provide useful tips about how your customers can enhance their own lives or solve a persistent problem by using your goods or service in a way they may not have considered before;
- Add value to your customers' experience online (don't allow pop up boxes or intrusive advertising to pester them for example);
- Remember who is courting whom; once you've started the conversation it is up to you to keep it going.

A lot of businesses falsify comments on blogs and in forums to start things off and provide that initial set of **social proof** to get things rolling. Unethical? Yes. Necessary? Even more so! This kind of 'seeding' is a necessary evil. Just don't carry on any longer than you have to.

"Never get caught out writing glowing comments about your own business – especially when 'seeding' your own forum! This kind of fake self-promotion is as obvious and unsavoury as a botched boob job!"

– Ben Angel

Blogging for Business

Establishing a blog is a great way to complement your online strategy. A blog is an online journal in which the writer shares his or her thoughts with a readership of hundreds, thousands or (if they're lucky) *millions* of avid readers and/or prospects. You can write a blog that is housed externally (i.e. separate from your website on a site specifically catering for business bloggers with a link back to your site) or have your blog imbedded as a part of your own website. I believe the latter is best as having the blog installed in your site will boost its overall **SEO** (back to those naughty Europeans).

A *well*-written blog adds instant credibility to your brand, catapults your profile into the 'blogosphere' and generates valuable business leads. A badly written one, however, is just one big fat ego trip and a total waste of time for all concerned – so take your pick. Which is yours to be?

ARTFUL BLOGGING IS AN ARTFORM!

Only a genuinely engaging blog will attract subscribers and incite comments, regardless of how well known the blog's platform is. Remember International Employee Engagement Expert, **James Adonis** from chapter 4? Well his small business blog for **Fairfax** launched in July 2009, replacing that of a predecessor with all the same advantages in terms of a well-established platform (the Fairfax website) attracting millions of hits ...and yet **James' blog became the most highly commented-on small business blog for Fairfax ever within just two weeks (2 blog posts) of launching!** Why? Because it's controversial, well written and engaging – which just goes to show that **artful blogging is an art form** in itself. Just because you *can* do it doesn't mean you should! You could end up doing more harm than good if your spelling, grammar and content isn't up to scratch. Consider hiring a **ghostwriter** or **copywriter** instead if your penmanship's not up to scratch.

An effective blog will engage your audience and stimulate conversation of its own accord. To begin with though, encourage your database to jump online and remind them to post their opinions and questions there. Do this until your blog reaches critical mass and you can retreat into the background a little again and just respond when appropriate.

Once this happens, **write regular Q&As** and be the ‘go-to’ place for your readers and target market whenever they are looking to receive or share insights. Go through the comments that appear and follow your consumers’ tangents of thought, however off-the-wall. They will provide you with a lot of ideas for future articles! Is that worth the time and effort? Absolutely, but you must make regular contributions to receive the benefits.

Twitter is what is known as a ‘**mini-blog**’. On Twitter, you can actively follow other people, brands and companies and they can follow you. In the short time I myself have been using Twitter I have generated new clients and media exposure from it very quickly. Use Twitter in conjunction with the blog on your site to drive traffic to it from one to the other and back again.

For you to attract a substantial following on Twitter, post insightful comments of interest to your audience (not something banal like the fact you’re running out for groceries!). Send links to relevant articles and ‘tweet’ on a daily basis to generate real word of mouth. The principles for producing quality business content on Twitter and your own site blog are the same and we will cover them in detail in a moment.

The blog on your website needs to be regularly updated for the activity to be highly ranked by Google. Changes to search engine optimisation (SEO) methods occur more often than I change my underwear though, so to make keeping abreast of all the current

trends easy, I recommend signing up for the **Site Pro Newsletter** at www.sitepronews.com.

**A few TRICKS for making your BLOG or
Twitter feed a *huge SUCCESS***

1. Follow a THEME and give it a TITLE
 - ensure the personality of your business is represented consistently;
 - if your business is marketing, then naturally your blogs will focus on providing genuine and practical marketing tips to your readers;
 - regularly read from other sources to gain wider inspiration and create new angles to breathe life into ongoing topics;
 - give your blog an umbrella title relating to your topic which ties into your personal brand (e.g. the columns, blog and Twitter content I produce come under the umbrella title ***'In Bed with Ben'*** which gives context to my readership and gives them the heads up that what they are about to read is a little 'out there');
2. Proactively PROMOTE your blogs
 - your blogs will need plenty of promoting in order to get established;
 - include regular links to your blog and Twitter feed in all your marketing campaigns;
 - insert hyperlinks to your Twitter account and blog to form part of your email signature;
 - think of individuals within your various personal and professional networks who might like to contribute something to your blog, thereby giving them a reason to share the link with their whole database too;
 - help them in return by adding comments to *their* blogs in an exchange of goodwill. – it's that old win-win again 😊
3. Make sure your BLOG is EASY to SUBSCRIBE / Unsubscribe to

- your (web)site blog needs to offer an easy, fuss-free interface via which users can subscribe and comment;
- make sure there is an opt-in panel on the same page as each blog post and don't hide the opt-out either! (If people are leaving anyway the LAST thing you want to do is piss them off even more by making it difficult!);
- make sure that the benefits of subscribing to your blog are clear;
- offer an extra incentive such as a complimentary e-book / audio download when users subscribe;
- for **Twitter** offer your followers the same FREE material by directing them to your website to download them (in exchange for their contact details to build your database of course!).

4. Don't OVERSTEP the LINE

- balance quality content with promotional campaigning;
- each blog / Twitter post should support the theme of your sales process yet remain somewhat understated;
- use the space surrounding your blog posts to drive enquiries, rather than promoting endlessly within the posts themselves;
- on Twitter you can change the background page to educate people on who you are and why they should be following you, for example.

5. Write for the Worldwide Web!

- in order to be ranked favourably online, you must write for it (think of the Internet like a lover you want to woo... there's **foreplay** involved, right? Right!);
- keep your content fresh and industry-relevant; include keywords and phrases you know are likely to be spotted by the **cyber-spies** ('robots', 'bots' or 'spiders' we spoke about earlier in this book);
- ensure that the popular keywords and phrases that your target market are typing into the search engines appear throughout the content consistently (you can get a handle on this by participating in consumer forums yourself and

getting to know what the hot topic is that's on everybody's lips);

6. You can also improve your SITE's ranking by:

- posting your keyword in the blog post heading (this may be the actual article title for example);
- using your keyword in the first paragraph of the blog and then at least three more times throughout the copy (beware: any more than this and you will start to LOSE points...those **cyber-spider-spies are clever bots, remember!**);
- using keywords to describe any images posted within the blog or attached to your Twitter feed;
- linking your keywords to other relevant pages on your website that are populated with similar content.

Co-Registration

(how to DOUBLE DATE in cyber-space)

Since this chapter is dedicated to the **online dating** of your customers (as I like to call it), the courtship of clients in the online environment wouldn't be complete without a strategy with the potential to put thousands of names in your little black book (or leads in your database). **This strategy is known as co-registration.** It's legal, it's highly effective and (as yet) still rarely used or understood by business owners – so get in quick!

Co-registration is the practice of referring leads to another business through the online registration process, i.e. opting in for a newsletter or registering for a FREE download. Once an individual has opted into one businesses website, the 'Thank You' page will offer them a second opportunity to opt-in to another complimentary offer supplied by an affiliate or business sponsor. To

carry our **online dating** metaphor through to its logical conclusion, **co-registration is the business equivalent of a double date!**

Co-Registration CASE STUDY #1

A while ago I aligned with a national business magazine. We came up with the strategy that every person opting into my website www.nationwidenetworking.com would receive a free copy of the magazine. All postage costs were covered by the publisher who was also responsible for distribution. It worked like this:

1. Visitors to my website would land on my opt-in page and see the message, "Register for your free business listing now and receive a FREE Business Magazine valued at xxx." In order to receive the magazine, they had to first opt-in to my database.
2. On the 'Thank You' page, subscribers were then directed to a separate form, which they completed to receive the free magazine.
3. Once they had submitted this second form, my website automatically sent the magazine publisher an email advising them to add the individual to their database and send them a magazine.
4. The publisher covered all distribution and magazine costs as this was a source of valuable lead generation for them (they increased their database of potential magazine subscribers by over 1000 in a very short period of time).

I benefited from this arrangement through having something tangible of value to offer my subscribers. I also ensure that the co-registration was exclusive to my database in the first instance. **Privacy issues** were addressed on the pages stating that to get the magazine they would need to register for my affiliate's newsletter too. Based on our measurements and results, this did not seem to present an obstacle for subscribers (who always have the choice to 'opt-out' again later on anyway).

It's TIME for Your First DOUBLE-DATE

To establish your own **successful co-registration strategy**, take that list you made earlier of all the businesses offering complimentary (but not competing) products and services to your target market (e.g. free downloads, e-books, complimentary workshops, magazines, webinars, podcasts etc). Now simply follow the steps from my case study above, or else reverse the process and enter through the back (as it were!). Here's what I mean by that:

Co-Registration CASE STUDY #2

I recently established a reverse-flow co-registration strategy with a networking organization that meant every time someone opted-in to *their* database, they would be offered a copy of *my* free e-Book on networking.

Subscribers had to opt-in to my site as well to make them eligible. My e-Book went out to thousands of extra people as a result and cost me nothing in real time because there were no postage costs and I had *already done the work to previously create it*.

The networking organization benefited because they had something of value to incentivize new customers with. Another great win-win!

Another similar campaign I established with a large corporate business here in Australia resulted in my website producing over 10,000 requests for a book they'd created to establish credibility within the SME market. Wow. This phenomenal partnership generated so much goodwill in the way of new leads for both parties that we are always on the lookout for other ways to **double date**.

I hope you're getting the distinct impression that co-registration is not only simple, but it can also be exciting and FUN. Get creative

with it. Speak to your website developer about making this happen for you...*today!* It's too good an opportunity to let pass you by. Create free educational content that can be utilised and leveraged like crazy. It's a very worthwhile investment.

ATTENTION: it's ALL in the HEADLINES

Your marketing campaign is just like a featherweight boxer: light on its feet, maybe even strong for its size...but never able to punch above its title weight. This kind of fighter is no contest for a heavyweight campaign of a marketing campaign, packing enormous punch in the form of **impactful headlines**. Think about it: which one would YOU place your bets on to win or prefer to have against you down a back alley (as it were)? Yeah, me too! But maybe for different reasons...he he.

Headlines are probably the most important element of all of your marketing campaigns and great care and attention should be taken when constructing them. Don't make the mistake of thinking that just because they're short, that makes them easy to write. It's often precisely the *brevity of a heavyweight headline* that packs so much punch! Remember the story of the journalist who needs more time from his Editor so that he can trim his story down? Exactly. Now you've got it.

A **headline** either grabs your target audience's attention or it doesn't. There is no in between. Given this fact,

Question: How closely should you be monitoring the results from each campaign with different headlines?

Answer: With a fine-toothed comb in my opinion! Especially when you understand that **the right headline can produce thousands of dollars**

in sales results alone compared to others that generate diddly-squat.

Headlines are required to be presented in many shapes and forms, especially when you take into account distinctly different styles of writing such as:

- Webcopy
- Journalistic long-form
- Online articles
- Print media
- e-Books
- Leaflets
- Brochures
- Twitter entries
- Blog posts
- Sales pages
- Email campaigns
- SMS marketing
- Discussion forums

...and any other modes of marketing communication you can think of! Don't worry if you're feeling overwhelmed. I've put together a list of **template headline formula** for you to call on for inspiration. Simply customise each one by tagging it with YOUR unique offering – too easy! **Effective headlines are a call to action** one way or another. Examine your customers. Look at what pains them. Then pick the best type of headline to address their needs. Think of it like picking a really great restaurant for your **first date** together...get this right and everything else is a (romantic) walk in the park – all together now, *Abbbbbb!*

NB: You can obviously substitute or change the numbers and words in these **headline templates** in order to align them with YOUR business offering. However, do remember that it has been proven that **odd numbers generate a greater response** – don't ask me why. Hey...maybe someone should write an e-Book about that...

I digress, here's your **HEADLINE TOOLKIT LIST** – enjoy!

- **7 Ways to...**
 - 7 Ways to Reduce Your Mortgage Fees
 - 7 Ways to Increase Your Business Profits
- **The 9 Most Powerful Secrets for...**
 - The 3 Most Powerful Secrets for Overcoming Your Fears
 - The 5 Most Powerful Secrets for Getting a Promotion
- **7 Early Warning Signs that...**
 - 7 Early Warning Signs that Your Husband is About to Leave You
 - 7 Early Warning Signs that Your Best Staff are About to Leave You
- **See How Easily You Can...**
 - See How Easily You Can Get Cost Effective Health Insurance
 - See How Easily You Can Increase Your Client Base by 5000 in the Next 90 Days
- **Why You Won't Sleep Tonight Until You...**
 - Why You Won't Sleep Tonight Until You Discover

the 7 Ways to a Peaceful Rest
Why You Won't Sleep Tonight Until You know the 7
steps for Getting Out of Your Financial Crisis

- **You Don't Have to Be... to ...**
You Don't Have to Be in Business for Years to
Become Successful
You Don't Have to Be 18 Years Old to Build a
Website
- **The Secret of...**
The Secrets of how to Meet the Man of Your Dreams
- Uncensored!
The Secrets of how to Become Happy Unveiled
- **Uncover Hidden Techniques....**
Uncover Hidden Techniques that Will Make You
Look More Youthful
Uncover Hidden Techniques to Becoming Fulfilled
- **One Quick Trick to / for...**
One Quick Trick for how to Build a Better Business
One Quick Trick to Become More Desired by the
Opposite / Same / Both Sex(es)!

As you can see it doesn't take too much effort to come up with impactful headlines once you have some basic formulas. Words that rhyme also assist in giving headlines impact and making them memorable. **So now you can see how a headline beginning 'One Quick Trick...' would obviously stick!**

***Even MORE ways to create super-fit HEADLINES
that PUNCH above their TITLE WEIGHT:***

- Warning:...
- ATTENTION:...
- Are You...
- If You're a...
- How to...
- 7 ... That The Pro's Don't Want You to Know!
- How I Was Able to...

(once again, just add the extra words necessary to align these to fit your USPs)

Each headline provides you with an opportunity to demonstrate that you empathise with your target market and understand their core issues. These headlines can be used to promote products and services or create the range of educational resources we touched on earlier. Test and measure each headline carefully and adjust as required.

“The more closely you track the HEADLINES you are using, the closer you’ll get to uncovering which ones pack a KNOCKOUT punch...as opposed to the clammy ‘limp fish’ handshakes to be avoided at all costs!”

– Ben Angel

Act NOW before it's TOO LATE

We'll come back to this bit later.

Ho-hum...

Just hanging out...

Biding my time...

Oh – you're still there? I'd better get on with it then...

Seriously though, if you don't give people good reason to keep the momentum going and act (= buy / subscribe / opt-in / complete the survey etc) immediately, then you've lost them. You simply must learn to provide extra incentives for customers who act quickly to reward and retain them. **Make them an offer they can't refuse... and when they jump at it, remember to THANK THEM to ensure they feel appreciated for hopping into bed with you so soon – not cheap!** You can base your 'action in the moment' marketing on one or more of:

- Price
- Exclusivity
- Time
- Limited quantities
- Special payment options

HOT ways to inject a sense of URGENCY into the proceedings!

- **Offer a Discount** - But be sure to accurately calculate in advance how many units you will need to sell to make up for the discounted price (it may be greater than you realise at first);
- **Discount one thing...to entice them to BUY another!** - Retail outlets do this all the time: they will dramatically reduce the prices on some items just to get people into the store to 'up-sell' them more expensive items. Think of ways you can up-sell on your website through your shopping cart;
- **Cash Back Offers** – Cash back offers are (paradoxically) a terrific way of generating instant cash flow. In what creative way could you apply this to your business model?;
- **Introductory Pricing** – Discount new goods and services, but only for a limited time;
- **Paying in instalments** – This is the online equivalent of putting items on 'lay-by' in a physical retail store...or maybe **going 50/50 on your date!** Offering flexible payment options increases your conversion rate and the regular cash flow for you coming in from Direct Debit is also handy for budgeting with...especially if you charge an admin fee for the privilege;
- **Extra Bonuses** - Throw in a few complimentary extras with any purchase over a certain amount. These **surprise FREE gifts** are like an extra little kiss on the cheek (or all four of them, he he) before parting...an **added bonus** in the form of books, massage vouchers, movie tickets, CDs, DVDs...anything that doesn't cost the earth but has a worthy perceived value.

I personally prefer this last option to any form of discounting. This is because with discounting you run the risk of losing credibility by devaluing your product or service, whereas with the 'added bonus' approach you come off looking **generous, abundant and thoughtful** – **a much nicer way to end a first date**, wouldn't you agree?

Whatever you do, remember to set specific times, dates and quantities to any special offers and *stick to them come hell or high water*. Otherwise nobody is going to take you seriously next time. Creating a palpable sense of urgency is a required and necessary aspect of **online dating**. Don't risk ruining your first impression by being careless here, okay? Okay!

RESIST your compulsion to CLUTTER : some TIPS on website layout

Now that you're armed with powerful **headline** formulas, understand **social proof** and have learned how to **incite your target market** to act, it's time to put all of this into practice and strut your stuff outrageously online to attract even more potential suitors.

Think of designing your website like you do your outfit for the day: an overly-cluttered site with a hundred different communication devices, dozens of links, clashing colours and an inconsistent tone of voice (copywriting style) is confusing and frankly *very unattractive* (and I sincerely hope you never 'dress' this way yourself – especially for a **first date!**).

Your website should be clear, simple and effective. If people land on your web page and don't know where to go or what to do, they'll simply jump back onto Google and go to your competitors instead. To avoid this cyber-faux pas, ensure your site is well presented with plenty of space around the content allowing each **call to action** to 'breathe' easily. Here's a simple checklist to get you started:

1. **Situational headlines & hyperlinks**

Situational headlines or hyperlinks identify with a visitor's challenge / goal instantaneously and encourages them to ' **click here**' for immediate assistance. E.g. "***Click here to reduce your mortgage repayments overnight...***" and/or, "***Click here to discover how much you can borrow for your brand new home...***" Situational headlines / hyperlinks directly relate to what your target market 'seeker' is searching for and may well include one or more of your regular keywords. Once the user has clicked through, the next page is highly focused on delivering on the promise in terms of information, resources, goods and services etc. Stick to a maximum of four 'situations' to create a fluid website that is navigationally smart and simple. You can always update them over time – **remembering to monitor which headlines work best**, of course!

2. **Goods & Services**

Create clear navigational links on your site, specifically relating to the needs of your customers to the goods and services you offer. Ensure the descriptions are accurate and up to date. Present information in bite-sized chunks as it can be tiring and tiresome to read from the screen. As a rule of thumb, online copywriting should always be more succinct than any print alternative. This goes for everything from Bios to e-Books, from Press Kits to instructions.

3. **Opt-in**

Every website needs a strong **call to action**, a call to 'opt-in'. Ensure visitors can easily see how and where

to sign your cyber guest book or enter their email address to receive a special offer or simply just to stay in touch. There is no point spending thousands of dollars to create a marketing tool that lets you down at the final hurdle by failing to generate new business. In my opinion, **every page should have some form of opt-in panel or call to action**, however discreet in some cases, in order to assist you in building your database. Use the offer of FREE e-Books and audio downloads to incentivize this, as previously discussed.

It's OK to outrageously OBJECTIFY your WEBSITE!

As you go through this process you will most likely find that you also need to **streamline your website's core objectives**. Be crystal clear about these, as they will affect all future results and how profitable your site will become. **Outrageously objectify your website** by:

1. Building your **(opt-in) database** to minimize future marketing costs;
2. Providing FREE ongoing educational resources to re-engage your database and encourage them to visit your home(page) regularly in order to be **seduced**;
3. Establishing credible trust through the use of **social proof**.

When does it get to be ALL ABOUT ME for a change???

If you're wondering when you get to talk about YOUR business instead of always pandering to the whims of your customers, the answer is that you **show, not tell**. It's the difference between *saying*

you're a caring person (for example, by **SHOUTING** this message at the top of your lungs to random strangers, as some websites do) or **showing** you are, for example by gently stooping to help an injured bird on the road or carrying an elderly lady's shopping up the stairs for her - get it? Good.

Social proof works wonders in this regard. Scatter your site with glowing testimonials beside relevant products, highlight complimentary blog comments, or post links to all your best media appearances and let your interview on *Today Tonight* speak for itself, capiche? Highly tuned headline statements designed to resonate with your target market (e.g. "10 Top Tips for Busy Mums whose Children need to improve on Literacy") will also help drive the flow of traffic around your site. The more specific you are the greater your results will be.

Consistency is KING

As with any other component of your business, **consistency is king**. Strike up a regular cycle of interaction with your database and be reliable. Don't self-sabotage by getting sporadic or 'flaky' with your communication strategy. Try to automate as much as you can without sounding formulaic, or write up a whole heap of blog posts and special offer 'Tweets' in advance so that if you're ever sick or overworked you can fall back on your **communications pantry** – Excellent!

Remember that **wooing customers online** is very similar to advertising your personal wares through an **online dating** forum: if you try to **attract and seduce** the perfect match using a butt-ugly profile picture (website), provide little social evidence that you're credible (no photos of you at any of the cool parties) and are inconsistent with your follow up (never call when you say you will) then your chances of scoring are darn near shot to pieces.

Luckily, the next and last chapter deals with how to get into bed with **the only person you ever really need to sleep with...**and if you're lucky, they might just forgive you *everything*!

Would you like to discover secrets to INSTANT INFLUENCE?

That's what Ben's second book in the 'Sleeping Your Way To The Top' book series is all about. Containing over 50+ scientific studies on human behaviour and a highly 'revealing,' entertaining and inspirational personal journey, **'Bigger, Better, Harder, FASTER!'** will show you how you can; **achieve more in 30 days than in 3 WHOLE months**, decode the 'x' factor, discover secrets to instant influence and **find the moment when everything 'CLICKS' and falls into place for you!**

Visit www.benangel.com.au today to order your copy.

TEN

‘the ONE’!

(a.k.a. the ONLY person you EVER REALLY need to SLEEP with)

“Welcome home! You have finally arrived!...1, 2, 3 and time to ORGASM...Ahhhhh, that’s it - you’ve hit the spot! It’s time to introduce you to THE ONE and ONLY person you ever really need to sleep with to get to the top in business (the rest are just sport)...”

- Ben Angel

The process of *Sleeping Your Way to the Top in Business* is a journey in and of itself for each individual and organization concerned. It can be fraught at times. You are likely to encounter potholes, uncertainty, crisis management, freak occurrences and much, much more. These experiences will give you pause for thought and cause you to reflect deeply on who you are and whether or not you have the wherewithal to stand up and be counted against seemingly impossible odds. Take heart: you are not alone!

Almost every business model in the marketplace today still fails to address the core components necessary for creating a truly successful business. Yes, you need to be market-savvy; yes, you need to be one step ahead of current and emerging trends; yes, you need to be clear on about your unique selling proposition (USP) is...but you also need something more. Something much more powerful than all

these other essential ingredients put together. Curious? Then read on and all will be revealed (*oooo-er, you cheeky monkey!*)...

The MAGIC ingredient

The single most important thing you can hope to achieve to guarantee yourself outrageous business success is in this next sentence, namely that:

YOU, your ORGANIZATION, your BRAND PERSONALITY, your PURPOSE and your OBJECTIVES are all 100% ALIGNED with finding TRUE AUTHENTIC and unfettered SELF-EXPRESSION in the way you PROJECT YOURSELF and create your own REALITY in the external, physical world.

Phew!!! It may sound full on but believe me it's totally achievable... and if that is what it takes to cause your customers to enjoy a few multiple screaming orgasms, why wouldn't you put the effort in? Your rewards will be tenfold...coming back to you (as it were) in the form of more high calibre business leads; greater FREE media exposure; an insane amount of positive viral marketing; and super-charged through-the-roof profits.

Becoming adept at *Sleeping Your Way to the Top* requires practice. You will need to review and re-emphasise all the elements discussed in this book until your ability to **build relationships**, ignite **provocative conversation**, **seduce customers** and build a prominent **personal brand** is second to none; until you are, in short, an **A-lister**

of the very highest calibre. I for one KNOW beyond a shadow of doubt that you can do it – *but do you?*

From time to time you may find that self-doubt creeps into the picture. Remember that this is a GOOD thing though, honest! It means you must be pushing boundaries and getting out of your comfort zone – perfect. As my ole mum always used to say, “*The strongest steel is forged in the fiercest kiln.*”

Understand that for any business to have longevity and leave a tangible legacy in today’s high pressure, fast paced environment, it needs to be able to stand securely on its own two feet, independent from all else that exists. This will require a significant amount of courage, energy and (at times) a large splash of stupidity from you.

Are You Willing to Stand in the Eye of the Storm?

Sleeping Your Way to the Top in Business isn’t for the weak or the fickle. It is for those willing to stand in the eye of the storm (or indeed create it) and bare the brunt of everything that comes their way: the good, the bad and the downright hideous!

“Live the life you have always imagined.”

- Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

It is this ability to be both flexible and sure-footed in a constantly fluctuating marketplace that will give you the courage to stand up and speak for what you believe in. You need to be able to give and take constructive criticism; always with a view to stimulating innovation and challenging society’s habitual modes of thinking. This process is

for those who don't seek solace in sameness and security but rather choose to create the life they have always imagined.

The ONE & only person you must actually SLEEP with...is YOU!

It's easy to get caught up in the notion of labelling things (so-and-so made this, so-and-so does that), yet despite the need for you to be marketable as the face and personality of your business, you must never let these things define who you are:

YOU are *not* your clothes, YOU are *not* your career title of position, and YOU are *not* your business. YOU are none of it. At the end of the day you climb into your bed and lay to rest within **your 'self'**. That's right: **YOU are the only one you actually *have* to sleep with** - every single night of your life. Likewise, YOU are the one you must learn to influence the most. You have to believe that you've got what it takes to make your business work. This is an ever-evolving task, day in and day out – but that's what makes it so damn exciting!

Your thoughts are the last thoughts you hear when you go to bed at night and the conversation you have with yourself on waking is the first conversation of the day. This means you are setting the tone and temperature of your own day *all the time*. You can never get away from yourself; you take yourself with you wherever you go. Unfortunately this includes any personal baggage you insist on hauling around as well!

"Wherever YOU go, there YOU are!"

- Anonymous

So if you're experiencing hardship, failing to get your business off the ground or struggling to sustain a meaningful relationship you have *got* to face up to the one common denominator in all the scenarios: namely, YOU. This being the case, YOU are the only one who can do anything about any of your issues.

Do whatever you need to do (practice meditation, learn yoga, read books, go on Vipassana, experiment with therapy, get your palm read, whatever) in order to *really get to know yourself* inside and out. The idea of this is to fully reconcile with yourself any contradictory beliefs you may be harbouring about yourself and your business so that you can deal with them and bring yourself back into alignment. Otherwise, your energy is scattered (shooting off in different directions) instead of powerfully honed in on being in flow and achieving specific objectives.

It is your job to *sleep with yourself* authentically and without any self-consciousness or pretence. We humans are creatures who rebuild and recreate, so much so that the day we stop doing this is the day that we die. So decide right now how you would like your life to be and then manipulate your business to fit into this 'life purpose vision', not the other way around.

Your life is YOUR creation and yours alone, so it is up to you to decide what it is that you'd like to create for yourself today. You don't *have* to do anything - only that which you tell yourself. So ask yourself:

- what is it that I'd actually like to do today?
- What in this moment is actually lacking?
- do I love myself today or am I running the same old stories of fear and self-loathing?
- am I exhausting myself by worrying needlessly about trying to fit in?

- am I brave enough to shake everything up and be the lone voice advocating change in my industry?
- am I overly-attached to the same old story of business having to be done in a certain way so as not to upset anyone?
- what will it take to set myself free and be truly self-expressed in my personal and professional life?

TRUST in your ability to MAKE LIFE UP as YOU GO along

Once you have done enough soul-searching you will eventually arrive at yourself. This is a place where you **trust yourself enough** to make life up as you go along...to weave a different tale and tell a different story: YOUR story (not your parents' or your schools' or your job's or your partners').

Maybe you will choose to tell the story of being an expert in your field, provoking thought within your industry and even the world? Maybe you will choose to tell the story of bringing about a better way of doing things within a world of overly manufactured businesses, as if they were all carbon-copy pop stars churned out by a music factory?

After watching my father slowly die in hospital my life was upheaved. At the age of 23 my whole identity was thrown into chaos, as up until that point my 'self' had relied heavily on pleasing my father and trying to fit in. Being the black sheep of the family I always felt I had to prove myself more than anyone else just to validate having been born.

When dad died, the identity that I'd held for years died with him. I had to start all over again by redefining myself from scratch. Who was I? Years later, I still find that the more I learn about my true self

today, the more I shed my old self of the past. The Ben I was three months ago is barely recognisable to the Ben I am in this moment, sitting on my balcony writing to you by candlelight.

Your most challenging experiences will always test your metal, but trust that every little ounce of it is for your greater good. You may not see the lesson while you're in the midst of heartache, but if you can find it in yourself to trust in the process then these intense moments of challenge will prove to be your greatest gifts.

Be PROFESSIONAL - by taking everything PERSONALLY

Your personal life has a direct impact on your business life and vice versa. This is because you can never entirely shut off your personality or self-expression, wherever you find yourself - whether at work or play. *How much* of yourself you choose to bring to each personal or professional interaction is up to you, however. Think of it as turning up or down the dimmer switch controlling the bright shine of your unique blend of personality traits.

Your gift to everyone else on this planet throughout your lifetime is the experience you bring to others in that moment of interaction. The moment you are able to be truly happy in your own skin and no longer feel the need to project anything you're not is the moment when you can truly start to impact others beneficially.

It is also the time that **sales, personal branding and business development will become so much easier for you** and you will begin to generate outstanding results. This is because people are attracted to individuals with the courage and integrity to be who they truly are in each moment without any deception of self or other.

It's important to grasp that things external to YOU will never actually "get better" just because you make more money, have a big enough business or seduce enough customers. This is because it's not what happens but how you choose to respond to it that counts. And so, things *always* improve the moment **you decide that they will**, but not a moment before.

When you come to realise that things are **perfect as they are right now**, you will find anxiety and stress leave your body instantaneously. The absence of these emotions allows you to fill the void with more positive things that generate happiness - such as everything around you right now! Stop reading for a moment and just look up. Mentally list all the things you have to appreciate and be grateful for right now, in this very moment.

The space in which you live, the people in your life, the opportunity you have to continue your lifelong education...everything is as it should be and in a year's time it will still be perfect. It was perfect yesterday, as it is today and will be tomorrow.

When you live in this moment it is impossible to feel tense or anxious. *'The Power of (this moment right) NOW'* (made so famous by modern spiritual author **Eckhart Tolle**) is that you can live forever feeling nothing but pure excitement in relation to what's around the next corner because you're appreciating everything from a place in which great gratitude resides.

In **chapter 3** I briefly discussed why you are where you are today. To recap, you are here today experiencing the challenges you are experiencing because you are still yet to learn the lessons you need to learn to get to where you need to go tomorrow. A bit of a tongue-twister I know, but read that again and I promise it will make more sense the more you do!

Whenever you are repeatedly faced with the same challenge, it is because you are failing to learn the lesson it contains which the universe is communicating to you. Whatever challenges arise in your business are simply an indication that more education is required on your part to make things work. Are you failing in sales? Then educate yourself more extensively on the practice of selling - but don't keep doing the same things over and over again expecting different results!

Decide to feel HAPPY about where you are right NOW (not tomorrow!)

If you can't choose to feel happy and grateful in this moment regardless of whatever life is throwing at you, then how are you going to feel happy later on? As popular 20th century thinker, Wayne Dyer famously observed: *"There is no way to happiness; happiness IS the way."* Guard mindfully against projecting your belief in happiness into some far off distant future as this puts it ever beyond reach. As Wayne Dyer wrote, happiness is a choice right now, a way of reacting to everything – not an aspiration never to be realised. Ask yourself:

- Have I forgotten to live in the now?
- Have I forgotten that this is where life exists?
- Have I forgotten that all of my business plans and thoughts of the future are simply illusionary, as are all my worries and fears?
- Have I forgotten that these imaginary concerns do not exist externally; they only exist within that grey matter that I call my brain?

It really is this SIMPLE...

If your worrying thoughts are not serving you, then choose other thoughts that serve you better; thoughts that fill you up to the

brim with positivity and give you that extra lift to enjoy every day. Business is to be enjoyed as a journey and a process of experience (not merely an end destination). By all means plan for the future, but never forget to live in the now. Otherwise you'll always be stuck, never fully anywhere, in limbo between the place where you are and the place you want to be.

I suggest you learn to mentally reframe challenges within your business as moments of happiness. Do this by being grateful for an opportunity to prove yourself. Without these key lessons to break you down and re-emerge from like a phoenix from the flames you would never really get to know the extent of who you are and what you are truly capable of.

Today was tomorrow only yesterday. Next year is this year only that you said it last year (you might want to read that again to make sense of it!). You already decided that you were going to be happier this year years ago. If you are going to decide that you will be happy in the future then you can also decide that you can be happy in this moment no matter what kind of personal or professional challenges you are experiencing. When you can be happy within this moment you suddenly come to an understanding that you are already successful. And it is this understanding that will allow you to attract even more success – of every kind, on every level.

Your business endeavours will serve you well in your quest for a greater understanding of yourself but never ever let a business define who you are. Strip yourself of whatever identity you have been holding onto. Pick this identity up in your hands and look it from every angle. Do you like what you see? Does it impress you? Does it look like it would bring great joy to wear this identity?

“To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

If not, you can choose to set it aside rather than put it back on. You really do have that power! And if you choose to set it aside and recreate yourself, sit down now and enjoy the process of doing just that; redefine yourself - who you'd like to be and become. Your identity is simply a choice as if you were going through your wardrobe and choosing what to wear. You can wear that same old outfit out of habit or you can have a complete clear out and opt for something fresh, innovative and self-inspiring. All of our closets (minds) need a thorough clean out from time to time. When was the last time you cleaned yours out and uncovered the shining essence of who you really are safely tucked away in that tiny little box in the corner? It could be time to peak inside again!

The Art of ATTRACTING and INTENDING

The Law of Attraction (made so famous by the book and film, *The SECRET*) has instilled in a whole new generation growing up the ability to proactively manifest experiences tangibly into their own lives. However, only one element of the Law of Attraction has been revealed to the masses. The other remains steeped in confusion, namely: what are you to do with the negative thoughts you may be having right now? How can you disperse the anxiety you may feel in trying so hard *not* to think negatively? You cannot even begin to come close to thinking positively if you are constantly stressed out about trying not to think negatively.

In order to move reside in a more secure, sure-footed personal and professional space, you need to become aware of the emotions you're experiencing (and in business terms, that your team is experiencing).

You need to learn to evolve these anxious thoughts into positively powerful, well-intentioned and influential thoughts.

Begin by acknowledging whatever you are experiencing in this moment. You may be hurt, upset, angry or frustrated at not being where you thought you'd be. Don't resist these emotions. Fully experience them as they are meant to be experienced. They are here to tell you that you're currently a bit off course and need to come back into alignment with who you really are – so they are useful, see? They have their purpose too.

Never label your feelings as good or bad or beat yourself up for thinking them in the first place. By labelling them this way you bring about a chain of events to support them like a self-fulfilling prophecy (that phrase exists for a reason!). Your subconscious mind hears the concept 'bad' and triggers patterns of negative habitual thinking in your conscious mind also. All of a sudden you've created for yourself a series of unwanted negative thoughts encroaching painfully on your experience of the present moment – Ouch!

I encourage you to experience so-called 'negative' emotions just *as is*: nothing more and nothing less. Don't label them and certainly don't entertain them. Find yourself in the moment and redirect your thinking to a more productive frequency (by watching a funny film, listening to an inspirational teacher or simply practising gratitude) – one that will serve you better and assist you in obtaining your outcomes.

Just by learning to *observe your thoughts* you begin to change them. This is what it means to 'be conscious'. In other words, **'being conscious' is that feeling of being aware that you are aware.** Kind of trippy in the best possible way, huh? 'The observer' (the real YOU that witnesses all the tricky twists and turns your ego's up to) has more influence over outcomes than you can possibly ever imagine.

So hone this skill and it will help you not to buy into the ego's mischief or the apparent chaos out there in the world at large.

BACK to BUSINESS...

Becoming successful in business is as much a process of taming your thoughts to provoke better outcomes as it is learning the tools required to make the business run. It is the taming of thoughts and the re-direction in which you choose to think that will assist you in obtaining your outcomes whether you work by yourself or as part of a team.

"You can have all the business tools and the skills under the sun, but if what's going on in your head is out of alignment, you will never realise your goals however how hard you try, however many hours you work and no matter what you sacrifice. Trust me I know because I've had to learn the hard way!"

- Ben Angel

One day many years ago I found myself in an emotional mess on the floor (and yes, I'm an ugly crier, isn't everyone?). I'd done everything I thought I was meant to do to make my business work. I put in long hours, I quit my social life to dedicate all my time to my business and I pushed through every mental boundary I thought I had, including a fear of sales and public speaking - and yet I still had nothing to show for it. There was next to no income, I was physically and emotionally drained and doubting whether or not I actually had what it took to make things work. It wasn't until years later that I realised I had always had the skills and tools required to make it work - I just didn't recognise that the 'missing piece' was me: my core self. In short, I was out of alignment.

What I learned was that you can work your bootylicious arse off, but if you are inwardly undermining yourself in every word and deed then you are going to get nowhere fast. I found I was spinning stories of self doubt, anger, resentment and fear inside my own head and so it never mattered what external actions I took to improve my business, I was never going to reach my goals. It wasn't until I started telling myself my own stories of great success and gratefulness *within this very moment now* things magically began to improve.

They don't teach you this in business school. In fact 'they' don't teach this stuff to you and me full stop. More often than not it takes a death in the family (as it did for me), book like this, or some other fortunate accident to set you on the right path of self-discovery. Finding oneself can be really hard for some people but I'm here to tell you that if I can do it after losing a father to cancer and watching my mother and my family grieve, I guarantee that YOU can do it too – and once you do, you can apply these 'happiness principles' whenever and wherever you need to forever more. That's got to be worth putting some effort into, surely? Yeah, I think so too!

Establish, Let Go and Let In

The second part to **actualising your unlimited success** is in learning to let go of your outcomes once you have established your intentions. It sounds paradoxical, I know, but letting go of the intention / business goal / aspiration once you have set it is one of the most challenging yet most crucial parts of the process.

We tend to go into micro managing ourselves and all the people around us in a bid to control the outcome, when in actual fact *The Universe* is far more adept at this than we are, so why not let *The Universe* do it for you? The only way you can control the outcome is by intending for it to be so and then letting go of all the 'how' and the 'why' and the 'when'. Trying desperately to control everything

keeps you furthest away from the thing you want the most – and that really is a shame! You can't tame a wild beast and neither can you tame your outcomes by controlling and micromanaging them. You need to set your intent, then let go and TRUST instead. Learn to recognise the little synchronicities that start to present themselves and follow them, learn from them, take action based upon them. It's far more effective to be a little Pheobe than living hell-bent as a Monica, the control freak out of *Friends*!

Q: how exactly do you let go when you're holding on for dear life just to keep your business afloat during times of economic turmoil?

A: You learn to observe and control your thoughts! Listen: *your mind is incapable of holding two thoughts at the same time*, so when you notice you have a 'negative one' (i.e. a thought that is not serving what you say you want to achieve), simply swap it for a positive one. **Listen to your instinct:** things meant to be will come your way naturally in the form of unplanned opportunity, small synchronicities with people and places, or through chance meetings that develop into personal or professional relationships. Whenever you feel like you are 'pushing shit uphill' and you feel that sense of overwhelm and struggle, learn to recognise this as **your intuition warning you** that you're veering off course. Life was never meant to be so hard!

Maybe you are still finding it hard to 'let go' because you're worried about handing over the steering wheel of your life to some faceless chauffeur while you're travelling at 100kph? I hear you. The thing is I'm also here to reassure you that it's all okay, you won't crash. Think of it as programming the car on cruise control with a set intention fixed like a destination in the GPS. Then, all the mysterious chauffeur of the universe is really doing is just minding the wheel while you get to relax and just enjoy the ride. You can be safe in the knowledge

that whichever route you take there, you will still end up at your final destination safe and sound. Sound good? I think so too.

So be warned: whenever you fail to trust your intuitive GPS you will begin to feel tossed and turned and churned about by life again. That's ok, just recognise it for what it is (you veering slightly off course because you interfered somehow) reconnect with the happiness, the gratitude and the ability to let go once again.

And remember, nothing is all bad – and I say that as someone who lost a beloved father at a very young age. After all, it is this battering around that life sometimes gives us, which prompts us to discover who we really are, and what we're actually capable of. Without it entirely we'd simply be lost. Obstacles in your environment are simply there to test your resolve and give you a little jolt to remind you to steer your thoughts back to a place that serves you better. Allow them to guide you to your outcomes and be grateful for their presence.

If it's meant to BE, then it's just NOT meant to BE

Have you ever wondered if that traffic jam you got stuck in the other day that felt like an inconvenience at the time may actually have saved your life? Maybe it kept you out of harm's way with its divine timing? Suddenly your whole ability to feel happy and grateful to the traffic jam shifts, doesn't it? And yet the only REAL change is the one that has occurred in your mind. Wow – that's pretty powerful stuff!

I have learned that everything in life is meant to be exactly how it is meant to be. There is no other way it could be! Don't fight your outcomes, allow them to guide you to what you need to learn, which place you're meant to be in, when and why.

How GOOD are YOU in bed at PLEASURING YOUR- 'SELF'?

Sleeping Your Way to the Top in Business is not only a book about the art of attracting and seducing more customers. It is also the art of coming back to basic business fundamentals. It is about learning to **reignite what it means to be human**, thus connecting with your target market on more and deeper levels than you ever thought possible. It is **the art of self-expression** in its truest form and it is **the art of seduction** through mastering the single most important relationship you will ever have: the one that you have with your- 'self'.

Learn to pleasure yourself first and foremost and you will always be in the right place at the right time. You will be a constantly overflowing cup of energy that others may draw on rather than a half empty jar desperately trying not to evaporate.

Learn to love and trust in yourself and reinforce this belief in your mind's eye in bed before you fall asleep; reaffirm it in the morning before you get up. Because that, dear friends, is how you're actually meant to *Sleep Your Way to the Top in Business*. I wish you a very happily, life-affirming entanglement in the process!

Thank you for buying, reading and (I hope) enjoying this book. If you would like to contact me or find out more about how we can maybe work collaboratively, visit my website: benangel.com.au.

From the Bed of Ben

Ben Angel

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Acknowledgements

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Contact Info:

Email Ben at: info@benangel.com.au

Book Ben to speak at your next event through:

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Ben's website links:

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Australian Anthill Business Magazine

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