

THE GUIDE TO DIY
BRANDING



SARAH DE VILLIERS

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2019

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South Africa

www.sldvportrait.com



About me

Following an A aggregate for matric in 1991, I originally qualified as a HPCSA registered psychologist, completing my Master's in Psychology at the University of Natal. Later I completed my MBA degree through De Montfort University.

I transitioned from counselling to industrial psychology when I joined MAC Consulting (one of the largest privately owned consulting firms in South Africa) in 2002, first as management consultant, and later as brand manager.

After many years of wanting to do so, I finally had the courage to go out on my own in 2015.

Creating a service, pricing and selling it, I found my passion and started my own business, which I now run successfully from home.

Under the combined brand The Atelier, my businesses are Typostudio (corporate publishing - typostudio.co) and SLDV (portraiture and illustrations - sldvportrait.com). I did all my branding myself, without any graphic design training.



SLDVPORTRAIT



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SARAHDEVILLIERS

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CHAPTER ONE

Starting Over

*L*eaving school in 1992 I thought I had it all figured out. I was going to be a psychologist and work with children, just like my aunt. Powering through my undergraduate degree and completing my Honours *Cum Laude*, I thought there was no way I wouldn't get into the highly prized Master's Programme in Psychology. The fact that I very almost didn't make it wasn't clue enough for me that it wasn't the path I was meant to take. Nope, I was going to see this thing through if it killed me. I was going to be a fancy psychologist and have my own practice and look all important and professional like in the movies. Not getting an internship at the local community clinic, again, didn't register for me. Instead I made a plan, created my own internship according to the HPCSA requirements, and got myself qualified. I suppose it was the start of my hustling though, which has turned out to be a fairly useful attribute. It took many more years before I finally admitted to myself that I was a creative creature at heart. Truthfully, I don't regret my journey and can now recognise that each aspect of it played an invaluable role in who I now am.

It took me a while to get to this point though. For some time I was just embarrassed about it. I felt as though there was something wrong with me to have been so uncertain about what I wanted from life. I now know, of course, how many women actually feel the same way that I did, and how many of them yearn to be doing something else with their lives.

*It takes courage to grow up
and become who you really are.*

EE CUMMINGS

I recall a day many years ago, when my children were small and I left them yet again to travel to work an hour's drive away. I felt particularly desperate that day, I can't recall why, but it was probably the yearning that I've always had to be in control of my own destiny and to be my own boss. Not to rely on - or work towards - someone else's projects and salary. As I arrived at the boom entrance to the parking, someone had left a sticker that said "Everything is going to be OK". I'm not normally drawn to cheesy, feel-good utterings, but that day it meant the world to me. Now, just a few years later, I marvel at the fact that I actually made it happen. I took the leap and went on my own. I created a service to sell, I priced it, and I now consistently sell it. Working from home and for myself, I accept only projects that I want, I work only for people that I like, and I earn more than I used to, in less time.

It feels like freedom to me, and I want the same for you.

Often the biggest obstacle to following your dreams is a fear of not being able to make enough money to sustain your lifestyle. Apart from the fact that - for a long time - I didn't know what I could offer the world that I would also enjoy, this was certainly the main obstacle for me. Once you have a home and children, it becomes a daily struggle to pay the bills and honour your commitments. I by no means would encourage anyone to put their family in jeopardy by upping and resigning without a plan, let's make that clear. I'm simply suggesting that a plan can be made. You are not too old, and it is not too late, as RM Rilke once said.

Write down your dreams. Break them down into actionable goals, with a timeline. Then work towards them every day. One day you'll wake up, just like I did, and realise that it actually worked - you are there. It may take years, but it's inevitable if you do the work.

The truth is your current job/marriage/whatever you're holding on to may not even be as secure as you think. What if it got taken away from you anyway, do you have a backup plan? Perhaps start by asking yourself whether you believe you deserve this? Do you believe you deserve to live your best life? If not, why not? Challenge your beliefs at their roots. You will create no more and no less than you believe you can.

“

No more and no less.

SUE BRYCE



WORKSHEET

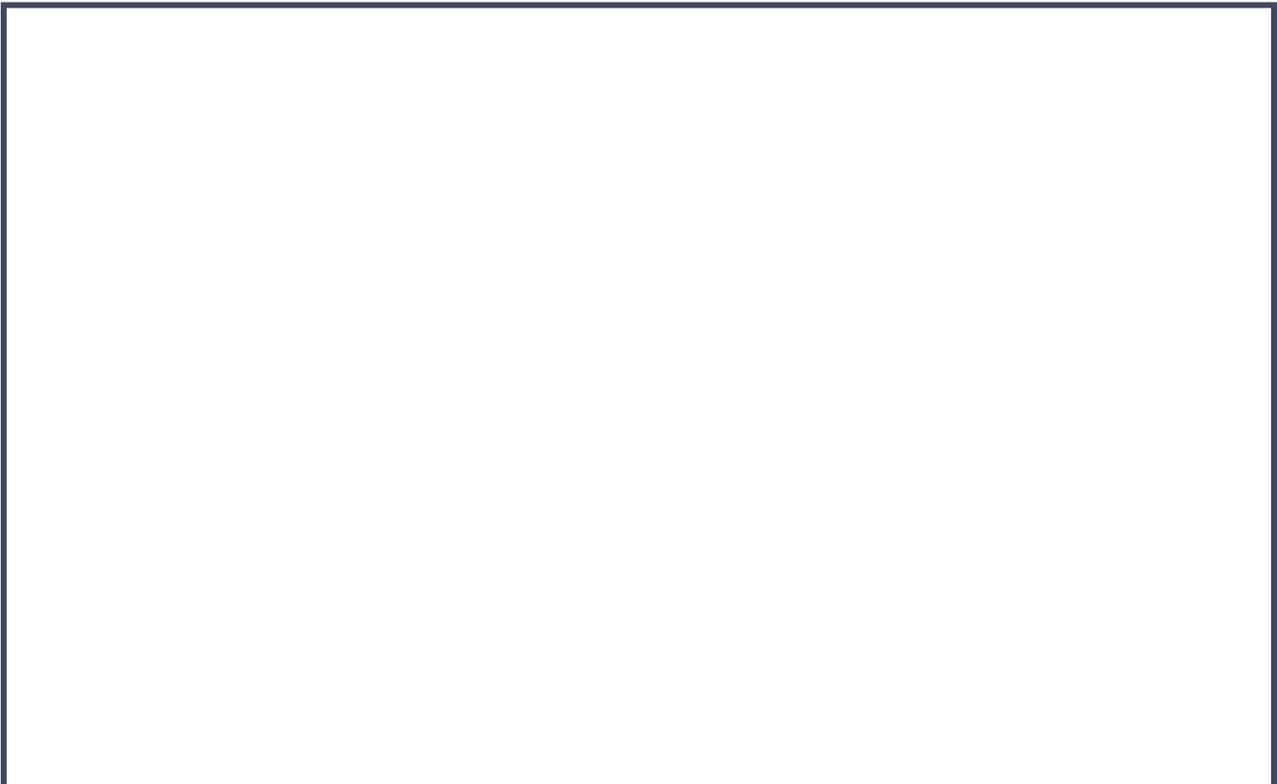
What is it that you long for?

At the Facebook offices they have a sign that says: "What would you do if you weren't afraid?" (Sheryl Sandberg)

*T*ake a moment and really think about it. What would you do if you felt able to? As Coco Chanel said, "My life didn't please me, so I created my life".

If you just feel generally lost, think about what gave you joy as a child. When do you feel as though you're 'lost' in what you're doing? What do you find time for on weekends?

WHAT DO I WANT TO DO?

A large, empty rectangular box with a dark blue border, intended for the user to write their response to the worksheet questions.

WORKSHEET

WHAT IS HOLDING ME BACK?

A large, empty rectangular box with a dark blue border, intended for the user to write their response to the question 'WHAT IS HOLDING ME BACK?'. The box is positioned centrally below the question and occupies a significant portion of the page's width and height.

WHAT WOULD IT TAKE?

A large, empty rectangular box with a dark blue border, intended for the user to write their response to the question 'WHAT WOULD IT TAKE?'. The box is positioned centrally below the question and occupies a significant portion of the page's width and height.

“

Pay attention to the things you're drawn to, the things you're good at, the things you lose yourself in, the things that make you stand up and say "My foot! I can't feel my foot!" because you've been sitting in the same position for hours, totally engrossed.

Allow yourself to be pulled by your heart instead of pushing your way through a thick fog of shoulds. So often we discredit the things that come naturally because we've bought into the idea that success needs to be difficult, or that if something comes easily to us, it must come easily to everyone, and therefore isn't worth pursuing in any serious sort of way.

- JEN SINCERO

dream
FOCUS



2

CHAPTER TWO

Self-Confidence

*Y*ou may already have your own business, selling a product or service. You may already have figured out what you want to do with the rest of your life and you may have set a plan in motion. Well done, it only took me about 20 years to get there.

It's at about this point that Impostor Syndrome makes its appearance.

So you want to do WHAT? Who do you think you are, pretending to be someone that you're not. Who would pay for that? You must be a bad person to ask that much money. What will your friends say? Your family certainly don't think you can do it, why would anyone else? So-and-so down the road is much better than you and charges much less! Everyone else is already doing it, what would make you different?

Welcome to our old friends guilt and shame. For me, dealing with this inevitable part of the journey starts with examining my attitude towards money. Do I believe that money is abundant? That it's out there, it surrounds me and I attract it? Or do I push it away with my beliefs (conscious and unconscious), my words and my actions?



Act as if you live in an abundant universe (which you do) and have the ability to create whatever financial reality you desire (which you can), and that by doing this you'll be sharing the most magnificent version of yourself with the world (which you will).

- JEN SINCERO

No-one will ever value you or think of you, or pay you, more than you value yourself or that you believe you are worth, or that you ask them to pay you. So the work starts here - with you.

Yes of course - especially when starting something new - there is a learning curve and a period during which your work is still improving. But be self-aware and know when it's time to start charging, and then do so confidently. Neediness, insecurity and anxiety puts people off and devalues you in their eyes - don't do it.

It is true that not everyone will value what you do, or 'get' what you are offering. Not everyone will want to pay for it. That's ok. So what? There are many others who

will. Accept that you will get many "no's" and that it doesn't matter. Carry on regardless.

Choose to honour your work with equal exchange. "Giving and receiving money is an energetic exchange between people, and your job is to consciously get your frequency in alignment with the money you desire to manifest and open yourself up to receiving it. This means getting clear on the value of the product or service you're offering, being excited and grateful instead of weird and apologetic about receiving money for it, and having total faith that this money is on its way to you instead of worrying about the possibility of its not showing up" (Jen Sincero).

WORKSHEET

How do I feel about myself?

Enthusiasm and confidence is persuasive. Make people WANT what you are selling. Be authentic by knowing yourself, your strengths and weaknesses, and work hard to offer something you are proud of.

Focus on service. Value your customer and give them the best that you have. Work on your fear of rejection and shame when doing your pricing. ACT VALUABLE.

If you are focused on price, you are not focused enough on service and value. Remember that what people say about and to you will only resonate with you if you believe it yourself.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO OFFER?

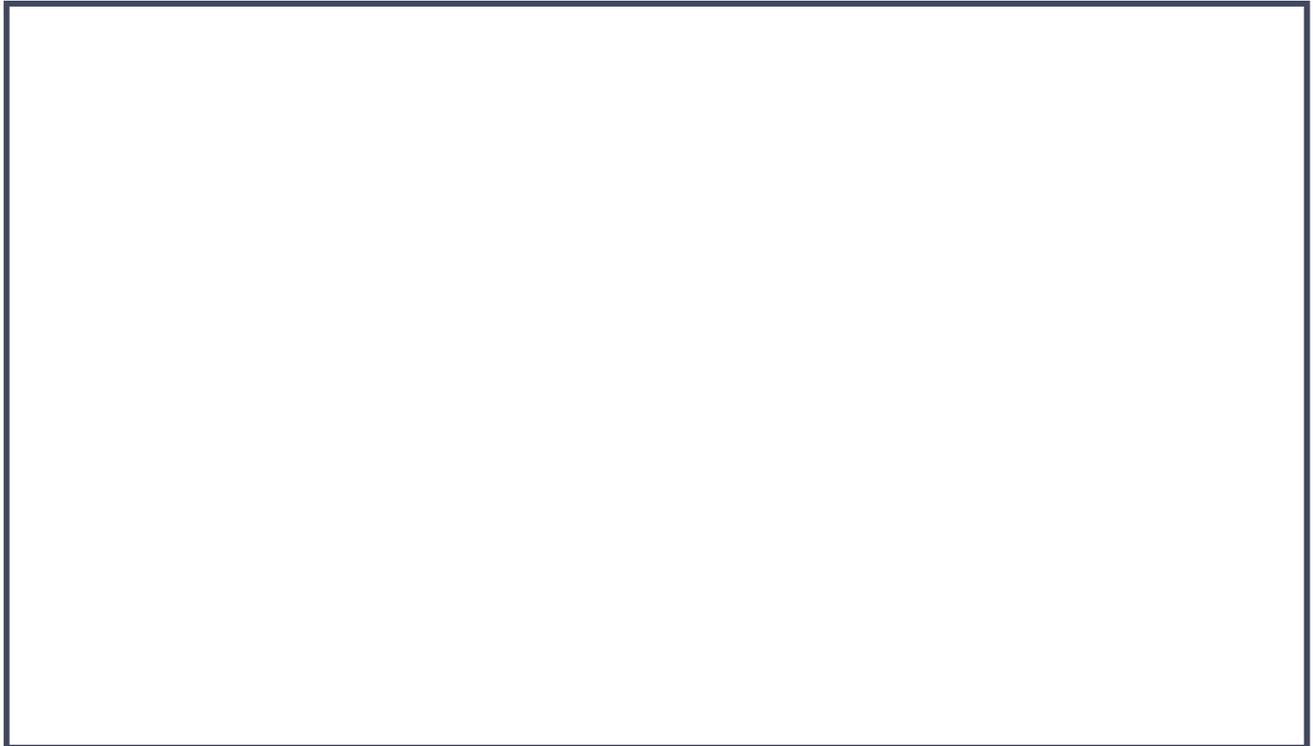
A large, empty rectangular box with a dark blue border, intended for the user to write their response to the question 'WHAT DO I HAVE TO OFFER?'. The box is currently blank.

WORKSHEET

HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT MONEY?



**WHEN I VISUALISE MYSELF LIVING AN
ABUNDANT LIFE, WHAT BLOCKS COME UP?**



“

A desire for money is a desire for life.

- JEN SINCERO



CHAPTER THREE

3 *About Branding*

*L*et this sink in. Kevin Abosch, an Irish artist, sold a photo of a potato for over \$1m recently. Do you think he feels ashamed about it? Does he ask himself who he thinks he is asking someone that much money for a photo of a potato? A photo that - technically anyway - many others can create? I would hope not. Clearly he has spent his life building a brand, a brand that says "this photo of a potato is worth about a million dollars more than your photo of a potato".

What is that? What is the thing that we call a brand? It's a promise. A guarantee of something. It's how something makes you feel.

Your brand is what you are known for, it's what will make someone choose you over another service provider. It's whether they like you or not, whether they feel heard by you, whether they remember you. It's not just that one thing, or that photo of a potato that you give them; it's everything that they associate with your photo of a potato.

It's the lemongrass scent as they walk into your store, the welcoming smile of the shop assistant, and the French music in the background. But it's also about, and perhaps most commonly associated with, your Corporate Identity (CI).



CORPORATE IDENTITY

Usually built around a logo, your CI is your business's visual identity. It should include a colour palette, fonts, and a general 'look and feel' that is consistent across all your business materials, e.g. social media, business card, brochure, and website.

DIY VS GRAPHIC DESIGNER

It is always going to be a good idea to get a qualified graphic designer to create the initial CI for your business. Pros include that you'll get a complete kit from the get-go, and you are assured of a professional and quality product.

Cons, however, include cost, having to have a clear concept and brief for the designer, and not being able to make edits easily once it's done.

Plus, if you're anything like me, I absolutely love being involved in creating my own business materials, and tweaking them whenever I wish. The thought of having to send every little thing through to a designer is exhausting.

So - use a designer when you have the inclination and funds - and then use what they give you to build on. Or just start from scratch yourself. There are such amazing tools available nowadays, there really is no excuse for anyone to neglect their branding anymore.



*Determine who you are
and what your brand
is, and what you're
not. The rest of it is
just a lot of noise.*

- GEOFFREY ZAKARIAN



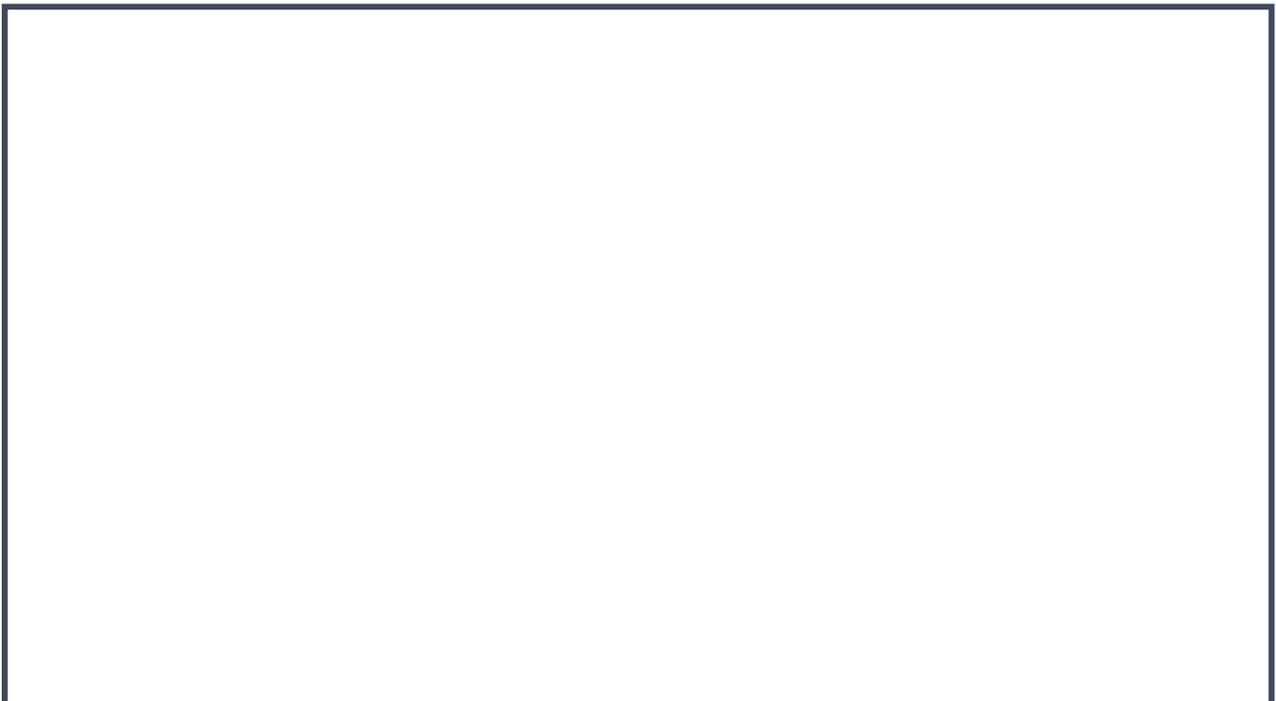
What is my business brand?

It could be argued that the single most important factor in branding is consistency. People need to be able to instantly recognise you or your work, not feel confused by diverse messaging in images, tone, colours or fonts.

Creating a consistent and authentic brand takes some work. Start by analysing what you are selling, and how you want it to be perceived. Taking the time to define your strategy upfront, and how you

will be applying it, will save much time and effort later. It means you will know what you want by the time you get to choosing nitty gritty elements of your brand, like colours and fonts.

**WHAT AM I SELLING? WHAT IS MY VALUE PROPOSITION?
(ELEVATOR PITCH)**

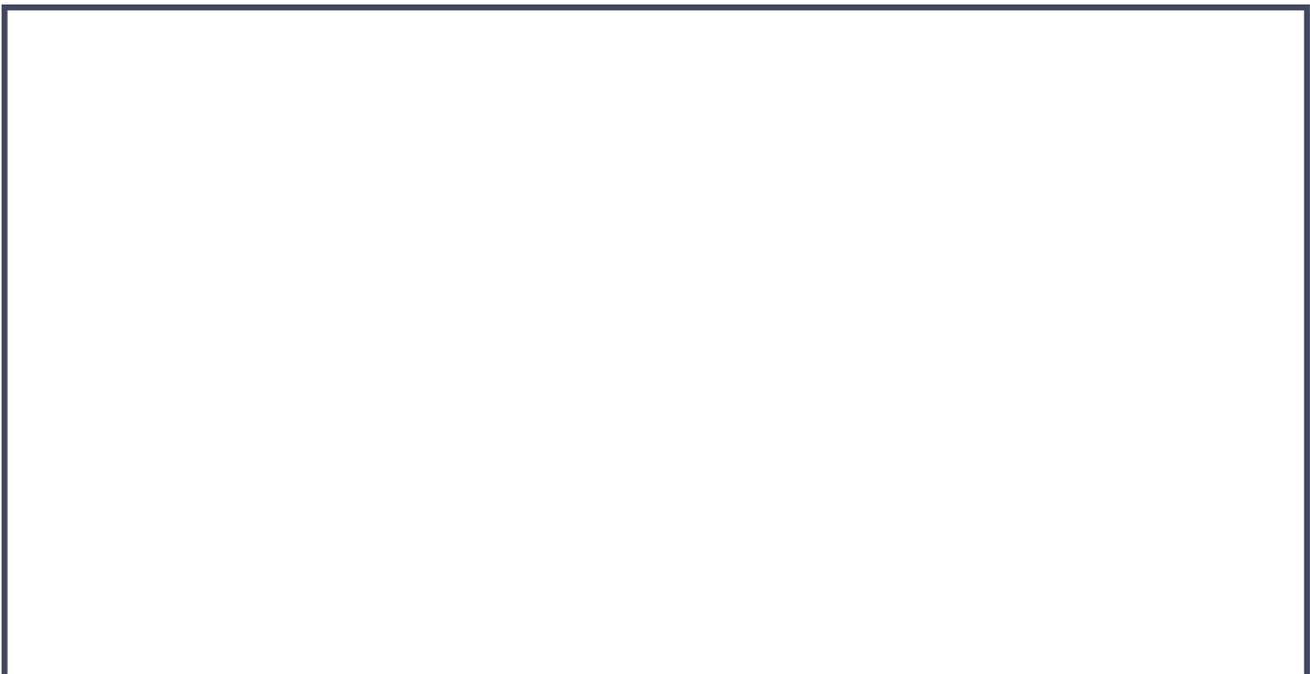


WORKSHEET

**WHAT IS MY COMPETITIVE STRATEGY?
(COST / DIFFERENTIATION / FOCUS - PORTER)**



**WHO IS MY IDEAL CUSTOMER?
WHO DO I WANT TO APPEAL TO?**



NOTES

WORKSHEET

**WHAT IS MY BUSINESS
NAME AND TAGLINE?**



**HOW WILL I BE MARKETING MY BUSINESS?
(Print / Networking / Online / Social Media)**



NOTES

WORKSHEET

**WHAT ARE THE TOP THINGS THAT I WANT
PEOPLE TO PERCEIVE IN MY BRAND?**



**WHAT AM I INSPIRED BY IN CREATING THIS BRAND?
(People / Places / Values / Images / Concepts)**



NOTES

WORKSHEET

**IF MY BRAND WAS A PERSON, HOW
WOULD I DESCRIBE ITS PERSONALITY?**



**IF MY BRAND COULD TALK, WHAT SORTS OF THINGS WOULD IT BE
SAYING? HOW WOULD IT SPEAK AND WHAT TONE WOULD IT HAVE?**



WORKSHEET

WHAT COLLATERAL WILL I NEED TO CREATE?

- Logo (dark/light/transparent)
- Website
- Email signature
- Business card
- Presentation template
- Proposal template
- Brochure/flyer
- Signage
- Price list
- Social media (page/cover/posts)
- Letterhead
- Labels/stickers/tags
- Invoice template
- Desktop/phone backgrounds
- Other:

*If you can't explain it simply, you
don't understand it well enough.*

-ALBERT EINSTEIN



CHAPTER FOUR

4 *Create your Brand*

*N*ow that you've done your brand strategy, it's time to put together your brand kit. It can be tricky to commit to one 'look' when there are so many stunning options out there. So just do it!

One negative of doing your own branding and learning how easy it is, is that you will probably end up wanting to tweak your CI constantly. That's ok and it's also one of the benefits of doing your own branding - remaining flexible - however, try to stick with what you've done and move on to other, arguably more important, aspects of your business like marketing. While branding is important, it's also important not to get stuck - ultimately you can totally make money with or without a perfect 'look'.

If you already have a business brand (e.g. a logo or website), start there. How can you build on or refresh what you have? Or do you want to start over? When starting from scratch I take inspiration from pretty much anywhere. I can start from a PowerPoint template, from an image, or from a website template. I then lift the colours, fonts, themes, etc. from there and apply them across the collateral that I create. It helps to scroll through stock libraries (like Creative Market) and website builders (like Wix) and look at the different templates. Choose one thing and stick to it! You may also find a designer that you love and create a brand around their products (e.g. I've used Lisa Glanz and Kate Max).



There are a few principles to remember when designing anything. Apart from the general rule of remaining consistent, design is often more about what NOT to include than it is about what to include. Don't be scared of white space. Also remember the rule of thirds in composition, an easy trick to apply in your layouts and when cropping your images. When using stock images, avoid the cheesy "we are all smiling at the camera in this fake office" 90's photos, and make sure you have permission to use the photos that you do. Remember that you can crop, change colour, and use transparency to make your stock images look interesting and different. Then, stick to a grid, ensuring that your elements are aligned from page to page.

While professional designers create "style guides" for clients, all we really need for a small business is a Brand Board.

LOGO

LOGO
HERE

LOGO VARIATION

VARIATION
HERE

SUBMARK

SUBMARK
HERE

COLOURS



#AAAAAA

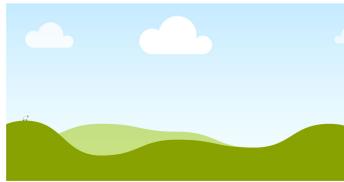
#AAAAAA

#AAAAAA

#AAAAAA

#AAAAAA

PATTERN



ICONS



TYPEFACES

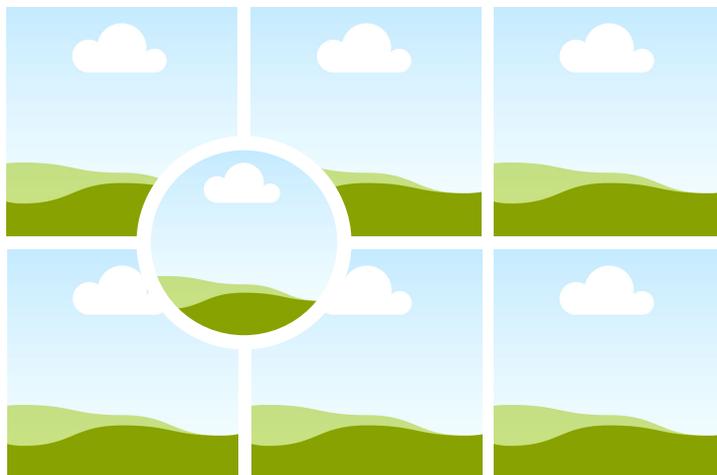
Typeface Name

abcdefghijklmnop
qrstuvwxyz

Typeface Name

abcdefghijklmnop
qrstuvwxyz

IMAGES



YOURURL.COM

Create your brand

Create a Brand Board for your business on Canva, using the template I have supplied (feel free to tweak the elements), then print it out and refer to it every time you create collateral for your business.

Refer to the resource lists in chapter five. Spend some time just searching through images, templates and ideas. Collect your favourite ideas and then refine.

Remember to have FUN creating! Don't let anxiety or a need for perfection ruin this process for you. Commit to something. You can always change it up later.

**WHICH VARIATIONS DO I NEED FOR MY LOGO?
(Dark, Light, Transparent, with or without tagline)**



WORKSHEET

WHAT IS MY COLOUR PALETTE?

(Choose five colours and generate a palette on Colors)



**DO I WANT ANY SPECIFIC PATTERNS OR
ICONS ASSOCIATED WITH MY BRAND?**



WORKSHEET

WHICH FONTS / TYPEFACES DEFINE MY BRAND BEST? (Choose three from Canva or Font Squirrel)



WHAT TYPES OF IMAGES WILL I BE USING TO DEFINE MY BRAND? (Search on free or paid stock libraries - not Google)



Meraki

(V.) TO DO SOMETHING WITH SOUL, CREATIVITY OR LOVE;
TO PUT SOMETHING OF YOURSELF INTO YOUR WORK.



CHAPTER FIVE

5 *Resource Lists*

I remember the event that first set my transition to business owner in motion. It was when I found a blog regarding free online resources that entrepreneurs could use. It was around the same time that we got fibre wifi installed at home, with unlimited data. All of a sudden a whole new world of streaming education, using online apps, and downloading creative assets, opened up to me.

The truth is there are so many now, that it's easy to get overwhelmed. I'd like to share with you just those apps and sites that I personally find useful and use all the time. They are by no means the only options and you may find better options, that suit your needs better. Leveraging my experience, though, is as good a place to start as any, so I hope that you will find this list as invaluable as I do every day.



DESIGN

Graphic Design

www.canva.com

Canva is the key tool that we will be using in this workshop. Create your account, subscribe to Canva Pro (currently \$13 a month, with the first month a free trial), and create your own brand kit. You can use the in-app templates, or you can purchase Canva templates from Creative Market. Magic Resizing and Download into PPT are particularly useful tools. Canva also has its own image, font and graphics library.

NOTES



FONTS

Colour Palette Generator

www.colors.co

*T*his free tool is super easy and fun to use. I use it all the time to generate colour palettes for my clients. First I lift the colours I want in PowerPoint, using the Eyedropper tool, I then insert their RGB colours in Colors and download as a pdf - that way I have the Hex values to insert into Canva and other design tools.

NOTES



FONTS

Free Fonts

www.fontsquirrel.com

www.dafont.com

Fonts are super fun to play with and can make all the difference in how your message is perceived. There are so many amazing ones available for free download. So, whatever you do, do *not* use comic sans, it's an inside joke for designers! Once downloaded, unzip the file and open it, then simply click install. It is important to remember that you should always pdf your files when using custom fonts, as the reader won't have the same files installed and the document will look distorted on their end. Also upload your fonts to Canva, or you could choose to use their in-app fonts.

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IMAGES

Free Images

www.pexels.com

www.unsplash.com

www.pngtree.com

Gone are the days when you had to pay for every image you used, or had to rely on dodgy Google Images that were actually a copyright infringement. Pexels and Unsplash are just two of the many libraries that offer the most amazing stock images for free. Pngtree offers two free downloads per day (useful for cut out graphics).

NOTES



IMAGES

Paid Images

www.shutterstock.com

www.istock.com

www.pichastock.com (for SA)

www.hautestock.co

www.katemaxstock.com

When choosing images, first consider your application. If it's a formal printed brochure or a billboard, for example, that many people will see, you may want to consider purchasing your images rather than using free ones. Purchased images are less likely to have been used by others, and will come across as more professional.

NOTES



LIBRARIES

Paid Stock Libraries

www.envato.com

www.creativemarket.com

Creative Market offers six free downloads every Monday. Envato Elements offers a reasonably priced subscription for unlimited downloads. Or you can pay per asset purchased. I regularly use these two libraries for images, PowerPoint templates, 3D graphics, and much more.

NOTES



WEBSITE

Website Builder

www.wix.com

*Domains and email:
www.godaddy.com*

Build a free website - just play around and have fun. Stunning templates to choose from and intuitive to use. Once you're happy, buy a domain from Godaddy to connect it to.

NOTES

Final Words

Building your own business is never going to be easy. You will work harder than you've ever worked before, and you'll feel every victory and defeat more deeply. You may need to start slowly - on weekends or in your spare time - but I genuinely believe that, if you put your mind to it and never give up despite setbacks, with time any business can be successful. The key for me was having a plan, breaking away slowly, and working from home, which kept my overheads down. Find your own way and **JUST DO IT!** Perhaps the best advice anyone ever gave me was

Done is better than perfect.





'Don't compare your behind-the-scenes to someone else's highlights reel.'

- ANON

RECOMMENDED

CONFIDENCE

You are a Badass at Making Money
Jen Sincero

SOCIAL MEDIA

Jasmine Star
www.jasminestar.com

MOTIVATION

Gary Vaynerchuk Quotes
www.facebook.com/garyveequotes/

COURSES

Transformation
www.suebryce.tv

Confidence and Inspiration
www.suebryceeducation.com

Canva Design School
www.canva.com

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