

Make your own rules

THE ANTI- FRAMEWORK FRAMEWORK

Straight from the Social Media Gremlin herself. There is no one right way to 'do' LinkedIn.

21k+ followers

2+ million impressions

Brand Partnerships

Creator of the Year Finalist

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BEFORE WE START

THERE IS NO SECRET INGREDIENT... IT'S JUST YOU



Going back to one of my favourite films, Kung Fu Panda (obviously). Everyone was expecting the Dragon Scroll to reveal some big secret, some magical answer that would make Po the Dragon Warrior. But when he opened it, there was nothing. Just his own reflection.

And it's the same with people selling you personal branding frameworks and playbooks. Everyone's looking for some big secret that'll make them blow up on LinkedIn, when half the time, the answer is just to stop trying to follow someone else's formula and figure out what works for YOU.

To make something special, you just have to believe it's special!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO POST

01

If I had a pound for every time I heard that, I'd be sitting on a yacht right now instead of trying to convince people that personal branding is worth doing.

01

The messy middle

Don't just post about your positives. People want the messy middle too. The things you're figuring out, the stuff that went tits up, and the moments where you're winging it and hoping for the best. That's the stuff people actually relate to.

02

Opinions

Say what you actually think about your industry. Agreeable is forgettable. You might annoy some people, but they were probably never your people to begin with.

03

Post what other people won't

Get real and grow some kahunas by talking about the things others are too scared to. Your values are probably one of the BIGGEST things that set you apart from everyone else in your industry. Whether you're passionate about mental health, women's rights, hiring processes or calling out the absolute state of your industry, don't be afraid to talk about it.

04

Other people

Shout out your team, clients and peers. Generosity travels further than self-promo. And don't be afraid to ask for things. The worst anyone can say is 'no'. Want more speaking opportunities? More podcast appearances? To collaborate with someone you admire? Ask the question.

The messy middle

You don't need to have everything figured out to talk about it. People want to hear about the things you're working through, the stuff that's gone pete tong, and the moments where you're winging it and hoping for the best.

Ideas to steal:

- A campaign that flopped, and what you did next.
- A project that's taking twice as long as you expected.
- Something you thought would be easy when you started your business.
- A decision you're currently going back and forth on.
- A goal you're chasing that you're nowhere near hitting yet.
- Something you had to learn the hard way.
- The bit of running a business nobody mentions until you're doing it yourself.
- A time you had to admit your original plan wasn't working.
- A win that came with a much less glamorous backstory.
- Something you're figuring out right now that you don't have a neat little lesson for yet.

You don't need to wrap every experience up in a motivational speech. Sometimes things just go wrong. That's the post.

Opinions

Agreeable is forgettable.

You don't need to manufacture a controversial hot take for the sake of engagement, but you probably have opinions about your industry that you're keeping to yourself.

Ideas to steal:

- An industry trend you think is massively overrated.
- Advice everyone gives that you think is rubbish.
- Something businesses waste far too much money on.
- A common business practice you think needs to die.
- Something your industry makes unnecessarily complicated.
- A hill you'll die on when it comes to your job.
- Something you think your competitors are getting completely wrong.
- A marketing tactic you refuse to use, and why.
- Something you wish clients would stop asking for.
- A business rule you think needs challenging.
- Something you'd do differently if you were starting again.
- A popular opinion you used to agree with, but don't anymore.

You don't have to be argumentative. Just have a point of view. Explain why you think what you think, back it up with your own experience, and let people make up their own minds.

Post what other people won't

This is where things get interesting. And where real 'thought leaders' will emerge.

What do you notice about your industry that everyone seems to accept as normal? What behaviours frustrate you? What conversations are people having privately but avoiding publicly?

Ideas to steal:

- Why being busy has become a badge of honour.
- The pressure to pretend you know what you're doing when you're actually figuring it out as you go.
- Why businesses say they want innovative marketing, then reject every idea that feels different.
- The expectation that employees should be grateful to have a job, regardless of how they're treated.
- Why the education system doesn't always prepare people for the realities of working life.
- Why some businesses want a senior-level strategy on a junior-level budget.
- The uncomfortable side of hiring, leadership or managing people.
- Why some clients aren't always right.
- The difference between looking successful and actually running a healthy business.
- Why businesses expect marketing to deliver results when they won't give it the time, budget or resources to do so.
- A time you got something wrong, even though you were the person everyone expected to know better.

You might annoy a few people. That's fine. You're allowed to have an opinion, and people are allowed to disagree with you. Opinions are NOT facts. Just make sure you're saying something you actually believe, rather than trying to provoke people for the sake of it.

Other people

Personal branding isn't a one-person show. Some of the best opportunities I've had have come from connecting with other people, celebrating their work and actually putting myself out there.

Ideas to steal:

- Give a colleague credit for an idea that made your work better.
- Talk about something a customer taught you.
- Recommend someone whose work deserves more attention.
- Share advice from a mentor that changed how you approach your job.
- Tell the story of someone who gave you an opportunity before you felt ready.
- Celebrate a team win and explain what made it happen.
- Tell people who you'd love to collaborate with and why.
- Want to speak at an event? Say so. Want to appear on a podcast? Ask. Want to work with a brand you love? Tell them.
- Tag someone who's influenced how you think about your industry.

You don't have to spend your time sucking up to people with bigger followings. But it's always important to shout out the people that have helped you get to where you are, give credit where it's due and build relationships because you actually want to.

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO POST

02

If you have time to scroll or make a cuppa, you have time to post.

01

Consistency beats frequency

Two good posts a week will outperform seven forced ones. As long as you can keep it up, you're onto a winner. And not every post has to be a masterpiece!

02

Find your best time

Whether it's a specific day or a certain time that consistently gets the best results with your audience (and also fits in with your schedule), figure out what works and stick with it. There's no point posting at 7am because some LinkedIn guru said it's peak engagement time...they don't know you or your audience like you do.

03

The golden hour

Comment on 1st, 2nd and 3rd connection posts. Don't just put 'love this' and call it a day. If there's something that genuinely caught your attention, add your thoughts, share your experience or ask a question. And if you disagree, then SAY THAT.

04

Don't post for the sake of it

If you've got nothing to say today, say nothing. Nobody's keeping score. There's nothing wrong with taking a break if it's all getting a bit much. LinkedIn will still be there when you get back, promise.

I DON'T WANT TO SOUND SILLY

03

The more you sound like yourself, the less you sound like everyone else. A bit of personality goes a long way.

01

Define your voice

Are you witty? Or maybe you're quiet. Or even a little bit unhinged. Whatever your personality is, let it show in your content. Don't overuse AI here, otherwise you will sound like a soulless robot.

02

Ditch the hook formula

'I stubbed my toe. Here's what it taught me about B2B sales.' No one believes it anymore. You're better off starting with the actual point instead.

03

Think of yourself as a character

You don't have to overshare and tell us your entire life story. But have a proper think about what you want to be known for and which bits of your personality you want people to see. You're the main character here, so what are you actually trying to get across? What do you want people to remember you for?

04

Don't copy anyone else's style

You do you. If you don't want to use emojis, then don't. If you don't want to put a bunch of spaces between your sentences, then don't. Find a writing style that feels natural to you and stick with it. The whole point is to sound like yourself, and be recognised because of it.

Define your voice using the four dimensions

There isn't one right answer here. You're just working out where you naturally sit.

Formal

Casual



Do you say "I would recommend" or "I'd go with"?

Serious

Funny



Do you get straight to the point, or use humour to make it memorable?

Respectful

Irreverent



Do you challenge ideas carefully, or are you happy to poke fun at industry norms?

Matter-of-fact

Enthusiastic



Do you let the facts speak for themselves, or do you bring your excitement into the writing?

You can sit somewhere in the middle, and your voice might shift depending on what you're talking about. That's normal.

The aim is to understand your default setting, so you can write in a way that feels natural rather than putting on a professional persona every time you open LinkedIn.

Why this matters even more with AI

If you haven't worked out your own voice, you're going to struggle to tell AI what good actually sounds like for you.

You'll get the same predictable hooks, the same content, and you will sound like everybody else.

Hooks that work

It doesn't need to be dramatic, cryptic or engineered to death. It needs to get the point of your post across quickly and spark curiosity.

Here are some openings to steal and make your own.

The before and after

- "X years ago, I was [job/work you were doing]. Today, I'm [where you are now]."
- "I didn't get here by [common assumption]. I got here by [reality]."
- "I used to think [belief]. Now I think [new perspective]."
- "If you'd told me [time period] ago that I'd be [achievement], I'd have laughed."
- "A year ago, I couldn't [thing]. Last week, I [achievement]."

The opinion

- "Can we stop pretending that [common belief]?"
- "One thing about [industry] that genuinely frustrates me..."
- "I'm going to say something that probably won't be popular with [audience]."
- "I don't think [common tactic] is the problem. I think it's [actual problem]."
- "Here's the hill I'll die on as a [job title]."
- "I'd rather see a business do [specific action] than spend another penny on [alternative]."
- "Unpopular opinion: [your actual opinion]."

Hooks that work

The messy middle

- "We lost [opportunity/result] because of one thing we didn't plan for."
- "The part of [project/role/business] I'm finding hardest right now is..."
- "Our campaign failed. It was the best thing that could have happened..."
- "I thought [approach] would work. It didn't."
- "Here's what nobody saw behind [achievement]."
- "I nearly [mistake/setback]. Here's what happened."
- "A small business reality check: [honest observation]."

The story

- "Someone said something to me recently that I can't stop thinking about."
- "The first time I [experience], I had absolutely no idea what I was doing."
- "I didn't expect [event] to teach me anything about [topic], but here we are."
- "I made a decision that seemed sensible at the time. It wasn't."
- "A customer asked me [question]. It's a good question, actually."
- "Here's something I haven't really talked about before..."
- "I didn't plan for things to work out this way."

The lesson

- "Here's what I'd tell someone about to [experience] that nobody told me."
- "If I had to start [business/strategy] again tomorrow, I'd do these five things differently."
- "Three things I noticed after [experience]."
- "One thing I'd never do as a [role] is..."
- "I learned this the expensive way."
- "I wish someone had told me this before I [experience]."

Hooks that work

The very simple hook

Sometimes, you don't need a hook formula at all. Just start with the point.

- "I'm going to say something that probably won't be popular with [audience]."
- "Can we stop pretending that [common belief]?"
- "One thing about [industry] that genuinely frustrates me..."
- "We lost [opportunity/result] because of one thing we didn't plan for."
- "The part of [project/role/business] I'm finding hardest right now is..."
- "The first time I [experience], I had absolutely no idea what I was doing."
- "I didn't expect [event] to teach me anything about [topic], but here we are."
- "I'd rather see a business do [specific action] than spend another penny on [alternative]."
- "If I had to start [business/strategy] again tomorrow, I'd do these five things differently."
- "One thing I'd never do as a [role] is..."
- "Three things I noticed after [experience]."
- "Here's what I'd tell someone about to [experience] that nobody told me."
- "Our campaign failed. It was the best thing that could have happened..."

It doesn't need to trick people into clicking, and it definitely shouldn't promise a story your post doesn't deliver. These are just examples to get you going, eventually you will find your own style!!

Think of yourself as a character

Bear with me.

This isn't about inventing a personality or pretending to be someone you're not. It's about figuring out how you naturally communicate, then leaning into it.

Think about characters from TV and films. They can communicate the exact same message, but you'd never mistake one for the other.

Gina Linetti, Brooklyn Nine-Nine

Confident. Funny. Irreverent. Unfiltered.

Gina has an opinion about everything and isn't particularly interested in toning it down to make everyone else comfortable.

How she might sound:

"People always ask me, 'Gina, how do we engage the community?'
It's real easy to create a G-Hive.
Through the freedom of... DANCE."

Captain Holt, Brooklyn Nine-Nine

Formal. Dry. Serious. Matter-of-fact.

Captain Holt is precise, measured and very structured in the way he thinks. He's not about to start throwing emojis into a LinkedIn post.

How he might sound:

"My 10 Steps to Community Engagement.
By Captain Raymond Holt.
Step 1: Establish structure.
Step 2: Communicate clearly."

Think of yourself as a character

Captain America

Principled. Earnest. Direct. Values-led.

He leads with conviction and isn't about to compromise on what he believes is right.

How he might sound:

"Humanity has lost its humanity.
We have somehow decided that treating people well is optional, as long as the numbers look good.
I don't think it is."

Iron Man

Witty. Bold. Sarcastic. Self-assured.

He knows what he's good at, isn't afraid to say it and will probably make a joke while doing so.

How he might sound:

"Too many marketers roll over and show their belly when someone questions their strategy.
You can explain your thinking without apologising for having a brain. If the strategy is sound, stand by it."

These characters sit at very different ends of the spectrum. You might relate to one more than another, or find yourself somewhere in the middle.

The point is to help you recognise the kind of communicator you naturally are. Are you the person who makes everyone laugh? The one who cuts straight to the point? The one who gets people fired up about an idea?

Don't copy anyone else's style

- If you don't use emojis, don't suddenly start sprinkling them everywhere.
- If you're naturally direct, don't pad everything out with motivational waffle.
- If you have a dry sense of humour, use it where it fits.
- If you're more thoughtful and measured, you don't need to force controversial hot takes.
- If you hate dramatic one-line hooks, stop using them just because someone told you they perform well.
- If you swear in real life, you don't necessarily need to pretend you don't online. Just know your audience.
- If you prefer writing longer stories, you don't have to turn everything into a five-slide carousel.
- If you hate dancing in front of a camera, please don't start doing it because someone said video is the future.

The goal is to become recognisable, not to become a copy of someone who's already recognisable.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

No 90-day plan. Just a few habits that stick.

04

01

Find your content rhythm

Find whatever content format gets your personality across best, and what you can realistically keep up with. Image posts, carousels, videos, text-only, a mix of everything. There's room for all of it. Some people even post memes, so the bar for creativity is pretty wide.

02

Batch the thinking, not the posting

Draft ideas when you're inspired, post them when it makes sense to. That way you're never stuck for what to post.

03

Content for AI

So, LinkedIn appeared in 11% of AI responses across LLMs. Which means if AI visibility matters to you, LinkedIn probably deserves a bit more attention. LinkedIn themselves have suggested publishing one article a month and 3-5 posts a week. Now, that's a lot, so don't panic and start posting your breakfast, lunch and tea. Start with what you can manage consistently.

04

Religiously save time

Whether it's first thing in the morning, or something you do in a lunch break. Set aside a clear, uninterrupted time when you can post content and engage. Even if it's just 20 minutes, that is better than nothing!

EXTRA TIPS

The bits nobody puts in their framework.

05

01

Fix your profile first

Your headline doesn't have to be your job title. It's what you want people to know you for. Your profile picture from your wedding in 2017 probably isn't doing you any favours either. Update your About section, and maybe even chat to a designer about your banner, because your profile should be your landing page.

02

Use real photos

Your phone camera beats stock imagery every single time. People will tell you not to post selfies, but from my own experience, people recognise me at events because they know what I look like. Funny how that works. But if you're not comfortable posting selfies, try some candids of you at your desk, a photo of your view that day, or even a snap of your coffee.

03

Don't outsource human interaction

Please, please, PLEASE don't use an AI agent to do your LinkedIn engagement and sales outreach. It's so obvious and leaves a bad taste in your mouth. Some of my favourite connection request messages have been things like, "Hey, just wanted to connect with a fellow diva."

04

Ignore the numbers

People can get so wrapped up in the metrics that they lose sight of what actually matters. Even if your post gets 2 likes, think of it like this. Imagine 2 people walking up to you in real life to tell you they liked what you had to say. That's pretty bloody cool if you ask me. I've had posts flop and still had people message me about them weeks later. The numbers don't always tell the full story, focus on why you started posting in the first place.

ONE LAST THING

ROME WASN'T BUILT IN A DAY, **AND NEITHER IS YOUR PERSONAL BRAND**

You wouldn't quit the gym after 2 weeks because you haven't got a six-pack yet. So why are you giving up on LinkedIn because a few posts haven't performed?

Good things take time. Apply the same mindset to your personal brand as you do to your business. You're a brand too, and you can't expect results if you give up before people have had a chance to get to know you.

Instead of throwing in the towel, look at what you've learned, what's resonating and what you could do differently.

Building a personal brand takes consistency, trust and time. Give it a chance to work.

And if you think you've been doing it long enough, give it another month.

NO SHORTCUTS. JUST YOU, SHOWING UP.

NEED A HAND?

KEEP THESE FOLKS IN MIND

If yourself or your brand ever need support in branding, web, design or performance, keep these folks in mind.



Jon

Founder & Brand Performance Director



Rich

Director of Strategy & Brand Performance



Fraser

Head of Performance | SEO Lead



Vinod

Performance Specialist | Paid Media



Holly

Performance Specialist | Social Lead



Fiona

Studio Manager & Content Lead

TALK TO THE FOLKS

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