

Strictly Business? How being more human can help grow your business on LinkedIn

There was once a man who worked in the corporate world. Although he was very successful, he was fed up with his job. He hated the company culture, the long hours and the long daily commute. So, one day he decided to become an entrepreneur and set up his own business. After a couple of years of consistent hard work, his business began to succeed. However, his personal life did not. His marriage began to fail, and he got divorce. This ruined him financially and so he had to start his business over again.

Then lockdown came along and wiped out his business for a second time. So, again he had to start from scratch.

After his divorce, he also started online dating. The months of loneliness and being ignored by women took their toll and he had to move back with his

parents to cope with mental health struggles.

So, he started over.

Unable to cope with the world, he decided to share his private life on LinkedIn, a social media platform which had a whopping 650,000,000 followers at the time. It now has 900,000,000 followers.

Within two years of sharing his private life, from mental health battles to being stood up on dates, to his journey of falling in love again, he's become a LinkedIn Top Voice, and Salesforce Top Influencer. This entrepreneur rebuilt his life and his business into a consistently profitable business that helps others succeed and also contributes towards living a life of purpose.

That entrepreneur was me. That is my origin story and the reason I'm here.

I share my story to startups, entrepreneurs and SMEs worldwide.

The questions I get asked most about LinkedIn are: "How do I go viral?" "How do I generate more sales?" and "How important it is to talk about my private life since LinkedIn is becoming more like Facebook?"

So how does being more human help you grow on LinkedIn and what things can we do? Here are some of my top tips:

1. Stories are how we connect

Storytelling is how we communicate and engage with others and it makes us more memorable. It's also the reason I started this article with "There was once a man." It gets people more deeply involved.

2. Trust and relatability

People buy from people they like and trust. Before lockdown, 1 in 5 people had mental health challenges. During lockdown it became 2 in 5 people and since lockdown, 3 in 5 people. Mental health has finally become a normal discussion and when you talk about challenges you've had to overcome, people relate to you and trust you.

3. Everybody hates sales

Everybody needs to buy yet nobody likes being sold to. Technology and the world have changed so much in the last few years, yet sales remain as painful and backward as ever. People don't realise it's a skill and don't treat it with enough respect. People running start-ups are smart, exceptionally hard working, yet where do they fail? Lack of sales. Being more human makes people want to buy from you.

4. What's the process?

Do people message you on LinkedIn when you talk about your private life and want to do business with you? If only it were that easy! People will follow you for days and weeks, quite often for many months before making contact. When they are ready, they ask for a chat. Then it's up to you to ask the right questions, listen and see if you're the right fit.

5. Work with the algorithm

The Algorithm changes but at the moment here are some things that work: selfies and personal stories. A personal story with a selfie will generate 2-3 times more engagement than a business post about your product or service.

6. You have unique content ideas

There's a lot of similar content on LinkedIn when it comes to certain topics like mindset, morning routines and business. The wonderful thing about your personal story is that there's only one you, so you can make it unique.

7. What if you're a private person?

This is a common question asked by introverts and a lot of women. They don't want their private life everywhere and that is understandable. You don't have to talk about every scar and share every nuance like I did. In fact, now I'm happily in love I don't do that. I do still talk however about struggles I have with imposter syndrome because people understand that. I also talk about the challenges I have with being a good person and setting boundaries with people who want me to work for free. I also talk about being kind and yet demanding with clients who don't pay me on time. Everyone understands this.

Be relatable. Be human and you will see growth.

Niraj Kapur is a LinkedIn trainer, TEDx speaker, and author of *Business Growth: Lessons Learned from Divorce, Dating and Falling In Love*, available on Amazon.

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