

Why fitting in was never the goal for me - The power of owning your entrepreneurial story

Your story is your most powerful tool as an entrepreneur when it comes to confidence, authenticity and winning your dream clients.

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In 2019, I decided to part ways with the marketing agency I co-owned. It was a bold move but there was no explosive breakup—no drama or scandal—just the slow realisation that we had outgrown each other. Like a relationship past its sell-by date, we were no longer aligned. It wasn't a case of "I don't fit here anymore." Rather, the business no longer fit who I had become or what I believed in.

Walking away was terrifying. Not because I didn't know how to run a business—I'd been doing that for years—but because I was stepping out alone for the first time, with nothing but my name and story to carry me forward. The weight of responsibility hit hard. All of the pressure to win clients, pay bills, and keep everything afloat rested on my shoulders alone.

But here's the truth: those fears lost their grip once I embraced the fact that I could rewrite my story—on my terms. I felt liberated. I took charge and worked diligently, accepting mistakes along the way. I envisioned the life I desired, gathered a supportive network around me and built the storytelling business I wanted. As I began working with other women in business who had also struggled to forge their own paths, it became clear that this wasn't just my story. It was our story, and that motivated me

even more.

Storytelling became a way for me to dismantle the narratives I'd been carrying—the ones about not fitting in or not being good enough—and construct a new one. A narrative for women in business who, like me, had felt the pressure to conform, to silence their inner voices, to make themselves small.

As I stand on this new ground, I can confidently say that I'm not just "fitting in." I'm finally taking up the space I deserve, and I couldn't have built my thriving business without figuring out my story first.

Maybe you've tried to fit somewhere that never quite felt right. Perhaps you've found yourself working for organisations whose values clashed with your own, or perhaps you've sacrificed your authenticity for the sake of stability or success. Worse yet, maybe you stayed quiet when you wanted to speak up, afraid your voice would fall short.

It's frustrating to feel like you have something important to say but still hold back, unsure if you even deserve that space. But here's the thing: your story and voice are exactly what you need to cut through the noise. Once you take control of it, you can step into any room knowing you belong.

Practical tips for owning your story as an entrepreneur

Define your values

The foundation of any story is belief. What do you stand for? What are the non-negotiables that shape how you live and work? When your values are clear, your story becomes easier to tell.

Identify your 'why'

Ask yourself: Why do you do what you do? Beyond making money, beyond professional success, what's the deeper purpose behind your work? Your "why" is the key that connects you to your audience.

Write your own narrative

Stop waiting for someone else to validate you. Be the author of your own story. What do you want people to say about you when you're not in the room? Shape your message so that it reflects the real you.

Let go of perfection

No one's story is flawless. In fact, it's often the mistakes and missteps that make our stories most compelling. So, let yourself be vulnerable. Share the challenges as well as the successes.

Take up space

If you've been playing small, it's time to step into your full potential. You don't need permission to be heard. Own your brilliance, speak confidently, and remember that your voice matters as much as anyone else's.

Build connection through authenticity

The most powerful stories are not the polished, sanitised versions we sometimes feel pressured to present. They're the ones that are real, messy, and human. When you show up as your authentic self, you give others permission to do the same—and that's where real connection happens.

Ultimately, your story is your most powerful tool as an entrepreneur. It will set you apart in a crowded market, forge deeper connections, and

give you the confidence to walk into any room knowing you belong. By owning your narrative, embracing your values, your "why," and even the messy parts, you're not just telling a story; you're shaping how the world sees you and, more importantly, how you see yourself. So, stop waiting for permission. Take up space. Speak your truth. The world is ready for your story—and it's time to start telling it your way. Let your story roar!

Hilary Salzman is a business storytelling expert, podcaster and speaker. She is the author of [The Roar of Her Story - How to Tell Everyday Stories to Attract Your Dream Client and Build a Business That's Unapologetically You.](#)



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