Sharing Your Expertise Online,
People Need What You Know

Overview

- Consider the following quote from the book 'Anne Frank and Me' by Cherie Bennett and Jeff Gottesfeld:

  "Amazing things happen to people. Then they die. If no one remembers their stories, the memory of who they were and what they did blurs, like watercolor paintings left in the rain. Until, finally, nothing is left on the canvas".

  I don't know about you, but this quote always has me close to tears (especially the older I get). And that's why we need to share our experiences and what life has taught us.

- Thanks so much for joining me with this ecourse to help you tell your story online. Each day go over a part of this mini course and in 7 days you will be ready to begin creating your own course. These are the sections: An Overview of the course (which you are reading right now), Deciding on the Main Points to Share, Gathering Your Content, Media to Use, Creating Your Course, Hosting or Delivery, and Instructor Best Practices. Inside this short course there will also be links to complimentary videos that I've created to make your learning easier and more enjoyable.

- Why tell your story? Click this link for a sweet picture of my granddaughter and the reasons why I think you need to share your story. – https://carolpicks.me/yourstory

- What story will you share?

Before you can begin creating your ecourse, you need to have an idea of the topic you are going to teach. Choose something that you not only know about, but are interested enough that you love to talk about it. I've found that it's so much easier to teach people something that is also a joy to me.

Think about what you like to do. How do you spend your weekends? Is it golfing, traveling, even doing crafts with the kids or grandkids? Your e-course topic could be as simple as how to golf like a pro on an amateur's time, or ways to travel with children without getting worn out in the process.

Have you dealt with a problem that other people also struggle with? Is it something you can easily show someone else how to do? For example, can you teach others how to transform their unhealthy eating habits into a healthy lifestyle?

Look at the books you read and the things you like to learn about your topic. There are probably a lot of other people with similar interests who would love to learn the tips that you've found. Magazine headlines will often give you ideas on a topic for your ecourse.

Choose an evergreen topic in health and fitness, weight loss, relationships, travel, self-development, finances, or hobbies like golf, fishing, knitting, cooking, etc. Evergreen means that whether someone reads your content this year or next year or even in ten years, the information will still be relevant.

There are a lot of ways to brainstorm you e-course topic. If you like, your topic could even be something that you want to learn more about yourself.

Your online course can be taught in different formats: video, audio, and written content. We'll talk more about that later on in this course.

- Resources to help in your online journey: https://carolpicks.me/Resources

Deciding On the Main Points to Share

* Short lessons are best and try to focus on one main point per lesson, which allows people to learn in short chunks and not get overwhelmed. For instance, my 31 Days of Online Marketing Ideas were all very short tips (most under ten minutes) done in video and attracted over 10,000 students to that one course. All I did was video one marketing task each day as I completed it. That helped me not only to create the course, but to get my daily tasks done!

* You don't need to tell people everything at once – decide if you are speaking to beginners or people who are more advanced in their topic knowledge. If you try to target everyone, you run the risk of overwhelming the beginner or boring the advanced.

* When you love teaching a topic and know a lot about it, the danger is in trying to tell people everything you know. It stems from a sincere desire to really help someone, but can often leaving your student lost and confused.

* My favorite way to organize and outline my content is by using a mindmap. Some people find them difficult but since I'm a visual person, I can easily see the whole picture of my project. Another advantage to mindmapping is how easily you can add extra ideas on a point as you think of them.

I like to mindmap on paper, but there are a number of mindmapping programs online that you can try out. Many have a free version as well as paid. If you'd like to know more about creating a mindmap, click here for a short video I've created to show you how.
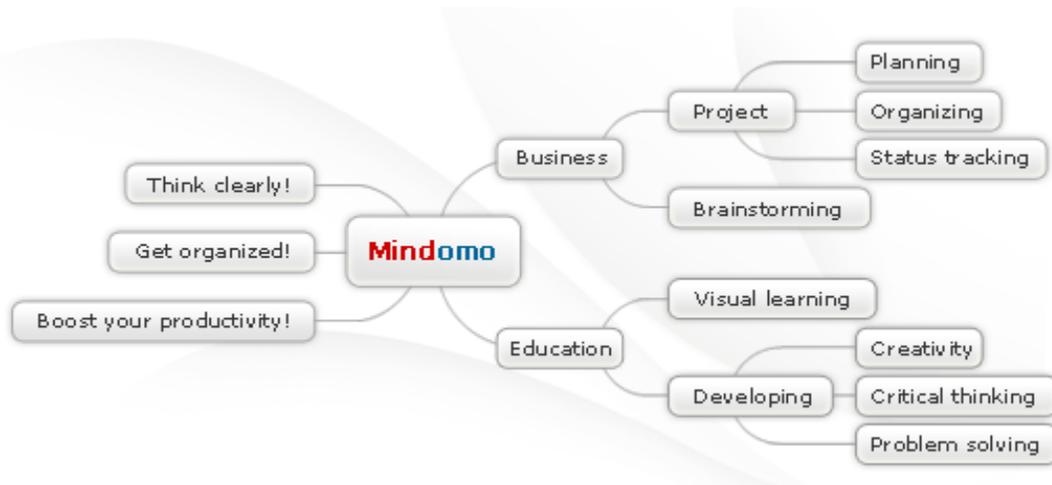
* Many people use the bullet point method to outline their content. The only reason I'm not as fond of doing that is because when I decide to add a point to another area or think of more things I want to say, my paper can get pretty messy looking. Using the computer for bullet points is much easier.

* A third way to plan your course is by using the sticky notes method. Similar to writing chapters in a book, you would use one color of notes for the chapter or section, another color for the headers, and a third color for the points you will include under each heading.

The sticky notes allow you to move your points around to put them under the area that would make the most sense. And having one point per note allows you to add or subtract as needed. I liked this method since it is also so visual, but you need to use good quality sticky notes or they don't stick well. The notes can be posted up on a wall so you can easily see and work with the entire project.

- Don't have more than about half a dozen points (or lectures) per section so your content stays in bite-size chunks. That way you'll end up getting reviews such as this one below from your students.

Reviews

Average Rating: ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

by Leanne Crisp, 7 days ago ·

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

Another AWESOME course by Carol Bremner

Thank you so much for breaking down what can be confusing topics into such manageable chunks Carol. I have completed your Paper.li course too and your way of explaining is easy to follow and very thorough. Thanks for all your hard work on this. Much appreciated.

Gathering Your Content

* What do you already have from your blog, a book or articles you've written, presentations you've done, any offline training, even content that you've curated from experts in your field? Often someone will come to me with no idea what they could possibly put into a course. Yet when I look at the About page of their blog I find many potential ideas based on the experiences and expertise they mention.

Look at your existing content carefully and you'll notice how much more you have to offer people than you even realize.

* What FAQ's are you often asked? No matter what your topic, there are probably a lot of frequently asked questions. For example, if you suffer from fibromyalgia and have learned some strategies for coping, you have probably often been asked what fibromyalgia even is.

* What SAQ's should people be asking? SAQ's are questions people should be asking. Often the right questions aren't asked because we don't know what we don't know. There are probably a lot of things you learned about your topic because of trial and error and your experience can be a big help to someone.

* Gather a small group, mention your topic and find out the gaps in what they know – when I do this in a training session I usually start by asking the expert to introduce their subject and then ask the group to ask questions about it. The presenter is often amazed that people ask about things that to them are very basic. Don't take it for granted people know anything about your topic.

* Try teaching your topic to a young person and see if you're missing a step.

Hopefully these tips will get you going with deciding on the content to include in your course. And remember less is more. If your topic is very complex, you may need to create more than one course, rather than overwhelming people with your content.

Media to Use

Now that you have a topic, you need to choose the type of learning model you want to use. There are many types, but the easiest to use are video, audio, written lessons, or a combination. At the end of this lesson, I'll mention the tools I use. They are all fairly simple, even if you're a non-techie.

Keep in mind people learn in different ways. For example, I prefer learning by video, partly because I'm a visual learner and partly because often I can speed up the video as I watch. I find that forces me to really pay attention.

Other people may like to learn as they drive or exercise, so audio would be their preference. Either way, a certain amount of text is always helpful to highlight important points.

Ecourses are either hosted online or sent by email, the way this course is. You can record videos, do screencasts (recordings of your computer screen) or do live video classes. You can record audio lessons or use written lessons. Your topic will also dictate which method you use. If your topic includes showing how to use a certain software program, you would need to record your screen. If you were giving a cooking lesson, video might be the best choice.

Video - With video your students are able to see visual elements such as images and written content. You can either be on-screen (called talking head video), which allows your viewers to connect and engage with you or you can do a screenshare where you show what you are teaching. Seeing your face or hearing your voice allows people to feel more connected with you. Showing slides while speaking, or animated lessons are all options for video as well.

Audio - If your ecourse doesn't require visual aids, you can present it through a podcast-style audio file. You can show your personality without having to be seen. All you need is a high-quality microphone and the software to record audio.

Written - If you're really uncomfortable being in front of a camera or microphone, written course content is a good option. You can create an email series sent out at a scheduled time or create and upload PDF files or slide presentations for your audience to download. Include personal stories and images in your writing so that you can still connect with people.

Combination - Use a mix of different media in your ecourse content. A combination of different styles keeps your course interesting. The simple tools I use are as follows (most of these have advanced features, I use only the basics):

To record a tutorial on my computer screen I use [Screencastomatic](#). I can also record talking head videos, or a tutorial with a small video of me in the corner as I do the explanation. [Click here](#) for a short video I created for you about Screencastomatic.

* To record audio I use a free program called Audacity. It can be confusing, but I use it mainly to record. My microphone is a Blue Snowball and works very well for me. [Click here](#) for a short video showing my quick and easy way.

* Did you know you can easily record your audio using the telephone? With a service such as Free Conference Calling, you can do just that. Most of these services are free and you'll be given a phone number and a special bridge number that you can use over and over again, as often as you like. Push a button and talk and your call is recorded. Once the call is finished, simply hang up and the recording stops. Then later in the day, login to your account and the mp3 of your call will be there waiting for you. The audio can then be downloaded to your computer for use on your website or anywhere else you choose to put it. I've even recorded my mother's history to be kept as a forever memory for the family. For business or personal use, go ahead and see how easy it can be.

* Creating a pdf document is easy and allows you to have your text and images attractively displayed. If your word processor doesn't have a pdf option, you can use the Primo PDF Creator (it's free). Then to change a document into a pdf, click Print, choose Primo PDF and presto, there's a lovely pdf document to share with others. ***If you'd rather create a professional-looking ebook, check out [Designrr.](#)***

Creating Your Course

Create an outline of the points you want to cover and use it to go back and create content for each lesson. An outline can make creating the ecourse go quickly. For most types of content including text, video, or screensharing, bullet points will help you remember the points you want to stress and questions you want to answer. Try to keep your lessons fairly short because people taking a course are often limited on time. They want courses that they can work on bit by bit.

Sometimes I like to use bullet points on a slide presentation to keep me on track and to provide something for my audience to look at. Add images where appropriate. When using slides, try to put as little as possible on each one. Better to have more slides than crowd too much information on them.

If you are recording videos, write out a rough script for each one, rather than word for word. People can tell that you are reading. When you know your topic, you should be able to talk about it with an outline. Record all your videos the same day if you can, although I find that can be difficult, especially if you decide to change outfits in between. Then get the videos edited and ready to upload another day. Sometimes the editing is the hardest part.

As for written content, create all your templates, worksheets, workbooks or other handouts at one time whenever possible. Then you are in the flow of doing one type of work and aren't jumping around doing different tasks.

Decide on the types of images you will need to enhance your course. You don't want to add an image just as a fill-in, but photos and screenshots can add interest to your course, especially if it's mainly text content.

Don't feel that you have to create the entire course before you can offer it to people. Instead, create the first one or two modules of content, then work on the rest while your students are learning the first sections. Make sure you stay ahead though, you want to have your content ready before any student is ready for it.

This method won't work if you decide to add your course to Udemy. It will have to be self-contained enough to stand-alone right from the beginning, although you could always start with a short course and build it out.

Click here for a video showing how I organize my courses on Udemy.

Hosting or Delivering Your Content?

Once your content is created you need to decide how you're going to deliver the course content to your community.

- You can mark your videos as Unlisted and host them on YouTube. That way you have the advantage of a free service plus no one would be able to access one of your videos without the link for it.
- Audio can be hosted on a service such as SoundCloud.
- If you're doing written content only, you'll need to upload your files. You could use a cloud service like Amazon S3, although it can be pretty intimidating to learn.
- Or turn the written content into a pdf document and upload it to your website (I use **Momwebs** for my hosting) the same way you would an image. You may have to also upload an actual image to represent the content and then link it to the pdf.
- You could use a course platform like Udemy, Teachable, or Thinkific.
- If you feel confident finding your way around Wordpress, a membership plugin might work for you.
- The most simple ways are to either offer your course through email, or to deliver it by way of a service like SendOwl. I use Aweber as my email service and you can sign up for a free plan to try them out.

If you offer your course on your own website, you'll need a sales page to explain the benefits and attract people to sign up for your course. You'll also need a way to take payments if you will be charging for access. The ecourse will have to be connected to your payment processor, which is linked to your buy or download button. All of these little details can often be more difficult than the actual course creation.

The easiest ways for me are either to use **_Udemy_** or **_Sendowl_**.

Udemy takes care of all the hosting of the videos, creates a nice custom graphic and sales page, markets for me, and allows an easy way for my students to access the content. Yes, they take a large percentage of the income I take in, but it's worth it to me to have all of those things taken care of. I can still sell my courses elsewhere too, a lot more people find out about me, and it allows me to test course ideas without any cost but my time.

With **_Sendowl_** I can add the link to my sales page and they take care of collecting the money and delivering the course. I can even use Sendowl with a Shopify store, which I plan to try out.

No matter what delivery method you use, you'll want to test everything multiple times to make sure it's all working properly.

Instructor Best Practices

Congratulations! You've reached the final lesson of this course. Thanks so much for sticking with me and I hope you found the information helpful.

I've created a PDF for you to give you some tips for being the best instructor possible. I spent some time going through student feedback for a number of the most popular courses and instructors on **_Udemy_** and gathered their comments together. By reading actual reviews of why a course was liked or disliked, it will help you to avoid the mistakes. I hope you find it helpful.

[Click here to access the Instructor Best Practices report.](#)

All the best with your course creation and don't let technology intimidate you,

Carol Bremner
Your Chief Encourager