

indienorth presents...

Stunted to Stunning

put your quirk to work, and fashion your ideal brand

by Beth A. Smith

Hey there!

I am so happy you've decided to join us on our adventure into small business success for artists, crafters and other flakes! I promise, you won't be disappointed!

Wouldn't you **love** to improve your business and increase your brand recognition in as little as seven days, without resorting to sleazy sales techniques, or blowing a month's worth of grocery money on advertising?

Of course you would! Sit back, read a little, and get ready to rock. You're already on your way.

Feeling a little out of your element? Relax...

There is nothing in the **Stunted to Stunning** program that will make you feel uncomfortable...just simple, easy to understand instructions that will help you get **clear** about how, where and to whom you should be selling your absolutely awesome work!

What are you in for?

It's very simple. Each day you will be given some information to read, and a few tasks to do. Your mission is simply to do the tasks to the very best of your ability. Don't worry, I've done my level best to keep the boring stuff to a minimum. Believe it or not, artists, crafters and other flakes generally find this sort of work fun...it requires lots of imagination!

As for when, and how often to do your tasks, well, that's entirely up to you. You can:

- Do one task per day, in the order they're presented.
- Do one task per day in any order you'd like.
- Do a couple of tasks per day and finish early.
- Do a task every few days and stretch the process out a bit.

See? It's like a choose your own adventure book!

So, what if I get stuck?

I don't think you're going to find this tricky, but just in case, hop on over to [IndieNorth](#) I'll be covering these topics right there on the blog from time to time. Feel free to introduce yourself, and ask any questions you'd like. I'll do my best to answer!

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I hate that I even need to put this in here, but, well, you know how it is...

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Okie Dokie...now that all the official stuff is out of the way, let's go outside and ride our bikes!

No. Let's get to work. :)

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Introduction:

What is the difference between totally unknown artists and crafters who battle to convince each customer to buy, and the “Rockstar” artists and crafters who manage to whip their fans into a buying frenzy every time they release a new product?

I can tell you now...it's not necessarily exceptional talent, (although that helps), or even exceptional marketing know-how. It is **especially** not a super secret, ultra guarded technique bestowed upon the deserving few by the Etsy gods on high. (Mind you, I say that with the hope that I don't get struck by a hand-knit lightening bolt by calling down their wrath).

The Rockstar artists and crafters simply understand that awesome sales result from **being clear** about a few specific factors that many hobby-business owners never learn. Learning these factors and putting them into play can make the difference between a “hobby” artist or crafter and a professional one who is eventually able to “quit her day job” and support herself with her passion.

How do they do it?

They allow their overall **brand** to do the selling for them.

Consider this:

Imagine you're going to purchase an item **you've never purchased before**. Just to keep things easy, let's say it's

dark brown hair dye. You wander over to the hair dye aisle in the drugstore, and come face to face with hundreds upon hundreds of boxes of hair dye, a good percentage of them in dark brown. How do you choose between:

- “Warm Espresso”, with the picture of a well dressed woman in her 40s on the box, promising “exceptional gray coverage”,
- “Natural Walnut”, with a picture of a girl in her early twenties, wearing a floaty embroidered blouse, promising “natural plant extracts inside”, or
- “Chocolate Shock”. With a picture of a young woman in her 30s with short spiky hair, promising “wild colour and crazy highlights”.

You're smart enough to know that the chemical make up of the three products is similar, right? You know that all three products will, in fact, dye your hair dark brown, and they'll all last more or less until your roots start to drive you mad.

But which do you choose?

You choose the one whose branding speaks to **you**. Without doing a thing, you've become a “target market”.

You've been **pre-sold**.

(Insert evil laugh here).

That's what you want for your business.

- You want to 'pre-sell' new customers, before they even begin to read your copy, or listen to your sales

pitch.

- You want to make sure that everything about your business funnels the right people to your website, your store, your gallery, your whatever, over and over again.
- You want your brand to be recognizable, even if a fan finds it without a tag...

Rockstar artists and crafters know this. It may be instinctual, they may know someone 'in the biz', or they may have had to learn it themselves...but they know it. They use it to their advantage, and their customers come running.

Everything about their company: their logo, their products, their packaging, their language, their goals, their customer service, their favourite charities, their shipping policies...*everything* about their company fits their brand. This book will help you gain the **same clarity** about **your** business, so you can establish a comfortable brand that works with your own personality.

On Day 01, you'll:

- Learn why a unique brand is important.
- Recognize your brand personality as it stands right now.
- Discover how you can rework your brand and give it a sparkling and unique new personality.
- Test drive your new brand against **your own** personality, to be certain you'll feel comfortable and authentic about it.

On Day 02, you'll:

- Learn why you need to get to know your “Ideal Customer”.
- Learn how to put together an “Ideal Customer” profile.
- Discover all kinds of useful information that you can glean from that profile.

On Day 03, you'll:

- Determine **your** Core Values.
- Learn why your company should share your Core Values.
- Discover how you can work your Core Values into your business.

On Day 04, you'll:

- Learn what a 'Mission Statement' is.
- Learn why you need to have a Mission Statement.
- Craft your Mission Statement.

On Day 05, you'll:

- Learn what a 'Goal Statement' is.
- Learn why you need to have a Goal Statement.
- Determine your goals, and make your statement.

On Day 06, you'll:

- Learn what a 'Vision Statement' is.
- Learn why you should have one.
- Fashion the Vision Statement of your dreams. ;)

On Day 07, you'll:

- Determine how you can take all the information you've collected over the past week and mash it together to create a complete brand package for your company.

Now...before you run from this e-book in fear, remember...even though the units may sound suspiciously “businesslike” and not fun or flaky at all, I ask you to sit tight.

I promise I will make this as fun as possible. And the stuff that simply isn't fun? Well, I'll keep it short and sweet. Are ya with me?
Yay!!!!

You can make notes here:

(just in case you needed permission). ;)

Day One: Determining your brand personality

What's a brand, and why do I need one?

In the immortal words of Maria Rainer, “Let's start at the very beginning”. (Sorry about the earworm).

In the simplest of terms, your brand is the 'emotional afterglow' a customer feels when they encounter your business. It is not just your logo, the colours you use or your tag-line. It's the over all personality of your company. It's the reason a customer will buy from **you** rather than your competition, and it's the “little things” that make your business different from your competition in the first place.

It's terribly important, and sadly, it's lacking in many of the online shops I see while I'm surfing the net.

Seeing as I spend a whole lotta time checking out the online shops of artists and crafters, I can tell you first hand that before I'll even look further than the first page, I'm going to need to see some personality. Preferably, a personality I can be friends with. Consider this:

Here are several examples of how my personal buying patterns are affected by branding. In these examples I'm sticking with largish, well branded companies, because it's

easier to demonstrate my point.

- If I need a new hoodie, I immediately head over to [Life Is Good](#), rather than [Lululemon](#).
- If I have a hankerin' for ice cream, I set out to find a pint of [Ben and Jerry's](#), rather than [Haagan Dazs](#).
- When I'm in the market for a new car, I'll be sliding over to my nearest [Volkswagen](#) Dealership, rather than a [Honda](#) Dealership.

Why is this?

- **Do the choices I make represent better quality?** Not really.
- **Are my choices less expensive than the alternative?** Nope.
- **Do the places I choose to buy from offer more styles, more colours and a better selection?** I don't think so.

So why am I attracted to a specific brand? Because it speaks to me. I feel like I could be friends with these brands. I'm a natural world-changer with a quirky, laid back personality. So are the companies I choose to purchase from. I like their values, I like their missions and I like their sense of fun...Ergo, I buy their products.

“But...but...but...”

“But doesn't establishing a specific brand automatically make my product less appealing to certain buyers?”

Well, yes. But that's okay, because by establishing a strong

brand you'll be attracting customers who never would have been interested in your company in the first place. You will appeal to new people, who see your brand and recognize it as a friend. Whether you go out of your way to establish a brand or not, you're still only going to appeal to certain people. Wouldn't you rather have a core group of raving fans than a loose group of people who bought from you by chance?

- Which group is going to come looking for you again?
- Which group is going to rave about you to their friends? (Most of whom probably have similar taste).

Always remember to sell to your raving fans. That's not to say you ignore the people who come by your products by chance...after all, you have every opportunity to turn them into raving fans as well. Just don't waste your precious time trying to be all things to all people.

Taking Note:

Consider the sites, show booths and brick and mortar stores of the “Rockstar” artists and crafters you really admire. The ones who have “quit their day jobs”. Chances are you could recognize their business cards at 1000 paces. You could probably even recognize their work without being told in advance whose it was. You've probably been amazed by their packaging and their customer incentives. You've probably heard stories about their stellar customer service, and personable nature. Now **that's** branding.

So, where do I start?

As a small business, you have a unique branding opportunity. You can create a company based solely on **your own** personality. You can create a company that **you** would love to shop with. Your company's products, polices and values can (and should) match your own. Talk about awesome!

Taking Stock:

It's time to take a good, hard look at the brand personality you currently share with the world. Go grab the following items, or bring them up on the computer screen and lets go!

- Your Website or shop
- Your Blog
- Your Business Cards
- Your Product Packaging (Labels, hang tags)
- Your Shipping Packaging
- Your Stationary
- Fliers and Coupons you may offer
- A couple of your favourite products

Spread the physical products out in front of the computer where you can see everything. Now's the time to answer the hard questions:

- Does my company have a cohesive personality that is made obvious by looking at the items in front of me?
- Do I feel comfortable with the personality projected by my company?
- Do I use consistent themes, colours, graphics and

logos?

- Do my products and packaging reflect my brand
- Do they reflect my personal values?
- Are my products consistent?, do they make sense?
 - (Quick Note) I often come across websites on which the artist or crafter simply offers anything and everything they make, all in one place. Offering 6 delicious types of cookies is awesome. Offering 6 types of cookies, knitted shawls, a pair of beaded earrings and a bunch of vintage patterns is confusing and unprofessional.
- Do I have my company name on everything? How about my website? Email? Phone Number?
- Will my "Ideal Customer", (more on that later), recognize my work and know where to find more of it?
- Would a complete stranger be able to tell, just by looking at my shop banner that my products would be ideal for someone she knows?
 - IE. A Grandmother shopping for her gothic granddaughter, or the same granddaughter shopping for her world traveling grandmother.

Really take your time and answer these questions honestly. Take lots of notes. Write down where you're strong, and where your brand could use a bit of help.

Now...today is definitely the longest day in the whole **Stunted to Stunning Program**, so don't fret. Take a quick break, grab a drink and meet me back here in five minutes. We're not done yet.

On the next page we're going to start taking stock of your own likes and dislikes, in order to choose a **branding direction**. Why are these likes and dislikes relevant? Easy. If you love to spend your days wearing high heels, and your weekends at a luxury spa, you're probably not going to be very sincere about selling grease cutting hand soap to NASCAR fans.

When you are the only person representing your business, it is of vital importance that **you** represent your brand. Chances are, the more authentic your brand, the more sales you'll make. You'll feel good about what you sell, and confident in your ability to sell it. You'll know where to look for your Ideal Customers, and you won't be hurt if someone takes a pass on your work.

Time to figure out your personal brand! Are ya ready?

The Fun Stuff:

Answer the following questions as honestly as you possibly can. There really are no wrong answers.

1. What's your favourite colour?
2. What car would you love to own?
3. What is your favourite book of all time?
4. What's your favourite movie genre?
5. Where would you love to live?
6. What's your favourite food?
7. What is your favourite casual outfit?
8. What's your favourite "fancy" outfit?
9. Which charity is your favourite?
10. What do you love to do for fun?

11. Where do you dream of vacationing?
12. Where do you love to shop?

Okay, be honest. Are any of those favourites reflected in your brand? At least a few of them should be.

Now...onto a bit of personality mining. Which of the following either describes you as you are now, **or**, how you'd love to be perceived?

Are You:

1. A Rebel, striving to upset the status quo?
2. A girl/boy next store, wholesome and sweet?
3. A Magician, making dreams come true?
4. A Saint, always striving to do the right thing?
5. An Explorer, outdoorsy and adventurous?
6. A Jester, always seeking to make people laugh?
7. A Hedonist, bringing beauty and passion to the world?
8. A Genius, lost in books and formula?
9. A Sophisticate, bringing good taste and elegance?
10. An Earth Lover, trying to save the planet?
11. A Nurturer, taking care of everyone around you?
12. A Defender, protecting the weak?
13. A Thrill Seeker, addicted to adrenaline?
14. An Athlete, proving yourself physically?
15. A World Traveler, seeking exciting new places to visit?
16. A Leader, guiding others to achieve a goal?
17. An Anti Hero, brooding, dark and sensual?
18. A Traditionalist, trying to keep the old ways alive?
19. A Lounger, looking for fun and good times?
20. A Visionary, trying to change the world?

Remember, these are somewhat cartoony in their explanation, but by choosing one or two that really speak to you, you can begin to imbue your brand with a personality that matches your own.

Homework:

Imagine that you have all 20 of the people mentioned in the earlier list lined up in front of you. Imagine they are all Rockstar Artists and Crafters. If they all made purses, what would each person's creation look like? How would they differ? What if they all made hats? Lip balm? What if they were all professional artists? Writers? How would their individual personalities shine through their work? Now...how could you imbue **your** company with strong personality? Start jotting down ideas as they come.

Day Two: Determining your ideal customer:

I can hear you already:

“My Ideal Customer is anyone who will buy my stuff”...

and you'd be right, to a certain extent.

However...

You will go broke or perish from exhaustion trying to market your products to everyone. In the past year several Fortune 500 companies have gone broke trying to water down their brand to appeal to as many people as possible.

Unlike those companies however, I'm willing to bet that you don't have a government waiting behind the scenes, ready to save your company with a sweet bailout package if you overspend and under deliver. If you go broke, you're on your own.

By identifying your ideal customer, you'll be able to figure out:

- How to price your products.
- What products to create.
- How to sell your products.
- Where to advertise your products.
- What sort of stores you could wholesale to.
- What sort of markets and shows would be a good fit for your products.
- Other selling venues that may not be immediately

obvious to you, (or to others who may sell similar products).

- What sort of copy you should use on your website.
- What sort sales and coupons and customer enticements you should use to get that first sale.
- What sort of payment options, shipping options and return terms you should put into place.

Let's get to it!

From now on, I want you to answer all the questions in this book as though you've already established a strong brand, based on the questions you answered on Day 01.

Today you're going to get a chance to stretch your imagination a bit. Developing an Ideal Customer profile is a little like creating a character for a novel.

Get quiet for a second and picture your Ideal Customer in your mind. Having trouble? Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Who would love to buy my products?
- Who can afford to buy my products?

Have a better idea now? Excellent. Let's fill that Ideal Customer out a bit!

- Are they Male? Female? Does it matter?
- How old are they? (Try to nail down an age range of 10-15 years or so).
- Are they Married? Single? Divorced?

- Do they have kids? How old are they?
- Where do they live?
- Where do they work?
- How much do they make?
- How much time do they spend online?
- Doing what?
- What do they do for fun?
- Why do they want my product?
- What excites them?
- What scares them?

Take your time answering the questions...I'll wait. :)

So, how do you use this info? Here are a couple of examples:

Scroll down to meet our imaginary business owners, Penny and Mimi...

Penny's Punk Rock Mittens provides handmade fleece mittens with somewhat naughty graphics applied to their backs.

Ideal Customer Profile for Penny's Punk Rock Mittens

- Gender: Could be male or female.
- Age: Between 14 and 24 years old.
- Marital Status: Single.
- Kids: No.
- Where do they live: With their parents, in the suburbs.
- Where do they work: Part time, retail and food services.
- How much do they make: Minimum wage. Not a lot, but since they live with their parents, their monthly expenses are very low.
- How much time do they spend online: minimum 2 hours per day.
- Doing What: Chatting, gaming, facebook.
- What do they do for fun: 'Hang out' looking cool, chat online, go to all ages clubs, spend the day 'downtown'.
- Why do they want your product: Because they will look cool to their peers, because they will annoy authority figures.
- What excites them: Positive attention from their peers.
- What scares them: Negative attention from their peers.

What can we learn from this profile?

1. Penny's online sales represent only a tiny fraction of possible sales. Why? Because these kids don't have credit cards, and they aren't dumping their money into a savings account from which they can transfer funds to Paypal. Most of them need their parents' money to order online. Most parents don't want their kids wearing naughty mittens.
2. No sense wasting her time trying to wholesale to upscale boutiques and tourist shops. They don't want risqué.
3. While a farmers' market probably isn't going to be a great venue, an alternative handmade festival might be.
4. A Handmade Market in November would be fabulous!
5. A little kiosk at the mall may work well.
6. Wholesaling to 'alternative' shops would be awesome.
7. Trying to get her work featured in "Today's Parent" would be a total waste of time.
8. Trying to get her work featured in alternative fan magazines? Perfect.

So, should Penny get rid of her website? Of course not. There are still plenty of people out there with a taste for "different" accessories. She should just realize that she's missing sales all over the place if she only sells online.

Continue down to meet Mimi.

Mimi's Elegant Mittens provides hand stitched sheepskin mittens, hand embroidered with various winter scenes on their backs.

Ideal Customer Profile for Mimi's Elegant Mittens

- Gender: Female.
- Age: Between 50 and 60 years old.
- Marital Status: Married.
- Kids: Yes, but they've grown up and moved out.
- Where does she live: An affluent neighbourhood, nice house, almost paid for.
- Where does she work: In the business sector, in real estate.
- How much does she make: 65 – 100K per year.
- How much time does she spend online: Up to one hour.
- Doing what: Emailing family, reading articles, shopping for gifts.
- What does she do for fun: Weekends at B&Bs, Shopping in tiny boutiques, brunch in cute tea houses.
- Why does she want Mimi's product: because she “deserves a treat”, because they 'finish off' a winter wardrobe beautifully, because she's looking for a unique gift for a friend.
- What excites her: Trips to the theater, a whole day of shopping in nifty little stores.
- What scares her: Aging, and age related illness.

What can we learn from this profile?

1. Mimi has a good chance of making online sales, since her ideal customer has her own money, her own credit cards and spends a portion of her money buying gifts online.
2. Wholesaling to pretty, upscale boutiques in pretty, upscale tourist towns would work beautifully.
3. Participating in studio tours would be a good way to bring in more sales.
4. Upscale Holiday shows would be a great bet.

Mimi really should keep, (and optimize) her website, no question, however, she's missing out on many selling opportunities if she keeps her sales strictly online.

Homework:

1. Spend a bit of time really getting to know your Ideal Customer. If you're into it, meditate a bit and have a little chat with her. Write your discoveries down in your notebook.
2. Write down ten (10) different places your Ideal Customer would love to shop besides online. Ideas include:

Health food stores
Sporting Goods Stores
Antique Malls
etc. etc. etc.

Stretch your imagination. When you've finished writing down those 10, write down 10 more.

Day 03: Determine Your Core Values

Uh-Oh...I know what you're thinking. It sounds like I'm going to lead you down the ultra boring pathway into "The Land of Corporate Rhetoric" today, doesn't it? Never fear. One of the coolest things about running your very own business is that you don't have to "do" rhetoric. Leave that to the big guys...nobody believes them anyway.

Your small business' core values can, (and should) be right in line with your personal values.

A word of warning before we begin today's task:

Customers can spot a phoney set of core values more quickly than you can imagine. For example:

- If you're touting "environmental responsibility" as one of your core values, you'd best not be sending your products out wrapped in non recycled tissue paper.
- If you're telling us that family is one of your top concerns, I'd better not hear you shrieking "shut up, mommy's on the phone" when I call to ask a question about a product.

Get it? I knew you would.

The truth is, your core values can be just about anything, and if you value something, it can be worked into your small business' ethic. Go over the list on the following pages, and circle the words that describe your own values. Try to keep the list smaller than 10...then we'll pare it down even more.

Accessibility	Accountability	Accuracy
Adventure	Attitude	Authenticity
Authority	Autonomy	Beauty
Challenge	Change	Cleanliness
Collaboration	Commitment	Communication
Community	Competition	Conformity
Courage	Cooperation	Creativity
Charity	Determination	Discovery
Discipline	Decisiveness	Education
Efficiency	Empowerment	Equality
Excellence	Experience	Expression
Fairness	Fame	Family
Fitness	Freedom	Free Will
Fun	Generosity	Global
Gratitude	Harmony	Heritage
Honesty	Honour	Hope
Humour	Influence	Inner Peace
Improvement	Integrity	Intuition
Involvement	Joy	Justice
Knowledge	Leadership	Learning
Leisure	Romance	Allure
Loyalty	Efficiency	Mobility
Peaceful	Nurturing	Open

Opportunity	Optimistic	Patriotism
Perfection	Flawless	Personal growth
Philosophy	Pleasure	Pioneering
Popularity	Positive attitude	Powerful
Practical	Preservation	Prestige
Pride	Privacy	Prosperity
Punctuality	Purity	Quality
Rationality	Regularity	Resourcefulness
Respect	Responsibility	Responsiveness
Earth friendly	Risk taking	Safety
Security	Self reliance	Service
Sexuality	Simplicity	Sincerity
Skill	Speed	Stability
Status	Strength	Maverick
Style	Success	Support
Tidiness	Tolerance	Tradition
Tranquility	Trust	Truth
Variety	Well being	Wellness
Wisdom	Natural	

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Obviously, if I missed any, you're welcome to add your own. So, now that you've circled a bunch of values that mean something to you, what do you do with them? Let's use my own process as an example:

The words I circled:

1. Adventure
2. Autonomy
3. Change
4. Freedom
5. Prosperity
6. Creativity
7. Resourcefulness

Now I can use these words as the basis for a series of statements that reflect the intrinsic values of my company.

1. I believe that the pursuit of prosperity should be undertaken with a sense of adventure.
2. I believe that people have the freedom to change their lives.
3. I believe that people should use their creativity to achieve a sense of autonomy.
4. I believe that with a little resourcefulness, and a lot of imagination, success is always possible.

Those are (basically) my core value statements. Naturally they're a little lumpy and awkward right now, but that's all right. This exercise isn't about crafting perfection on the first round. There will be lots of time to polish and perfect your Core Values as you go. For now you just need to get your values down on paper, and, ask yourself:

- Am I running my business in line with my Core Values?
- Does my Brand Personality reflect my Core Values?
- Will my Ideal Customer appreciate and identify with my Core Values?

Day Four: Write your mission statement:

The next few days will be much less taxing, although no less important than the first three.

There is a lot of confusion surrounding what a Mission Statement is, and what it isn't. Simply put, Your Mission Statement only needs to identify:

1. The business you're in.
2. The products you provide.
3. Your Ideal Customer.

That's it. It needs to be short, clear and to the point. That can be harder than it sounds, *especially* for Artists, Crafters and Other Flakes. Never Fear though...there will be plenty of time to get all "high falootin'" when we get to your Vision Statement.

Why do I need a Mission Statement?

You need it because it will help reign you in, and keep you from 'going off' in a thousand directions that don't serve your business. It will help you decide which products to offer, and which shows to do. All extremely valuable important factors when you're naturally flaky.

Remember to keep in mind that you'll be doing this (and all other) exercises as though you've already established your brand. Sometimes it's much easier to work backwards than it is to start from scratch.

Ready?

Answer the following questions:

1. What business are you in?
2. What product (or service) do you provide?
3. Who do you provide it to?

So again, if I was going to fill out my own information as an example:

1. I promote small Canadian businesses
2. I provide blog promotions, counseling, seminars, classes and e-books.
3. I provide my services to Canadian small business owners

Once you can answer those questions without any flowery speech or fancy words, you're ready to craft your Mission Statement.

Here's mine:

I provide Canadian small business people with the promotion and tools necessary to grow their businesses.

Pretty boring, eh? Yuppos. But then, I promised you that I'd keep the boring tasks short and sweet.

Craft your Mission Statement, and you're done for the day.

Day 05: Write your goal statement:

Disclaimer:

If there is any section of the **Stunted to Stunning** program that you're going to give up and quit on, it's probably this one.

Why?

Because setting concrete goals scares the bejezuz out of artists crafters and other flakes.

I'm begging you to stick with me. You can do it...I have utter faith in you.

Get through this, and it's smooth sailing right to the end of the program.

Go get a drink and a snack, close Facebook and Twitter and get ready to "hit this thing".

Let's Rock!

Creating your Goal Statement isn't physically difficult. It's not even that mentally taxing. The problem is that artists, crafter and other flakes often have deep seated fears that center around our goals.

1. We might be afraid of failure
2. We might be afraid of success
3. We might be afraid that our loved ones will disagree

with our goals

4. We might be afraid of ridicule
5. We might be afraid to be wrong
6. etc. etc. etc.

The Good News:

Your goal for your business can be anything you want.

The Bad News:

You're going to have to work very hard to achieve it.

Still with me?

Although you really can choose any goal you'd like to be the "overriding Goal Statement" for your business, they usually cover one or more of the following topics:

- Your productivity
- Your sales
- Your market share
- Your cash coming in
- Your competitiveness

Here are a few examples to give you some ideas:

- I plan to be one of the top ten selling businesses on Etsy in 2012.
- I plan to top \$60,000 in sales per year after two years in business.
- I plan to be the leading supplier of hemp dishcloths in

North America after 5 years in business.

- I plan to have my lotion in every Whole Foods Store in North American by 2015.
- I want to make at least \$40,000 per year so I can support my family with my business.

Get it?

The Rulz:

Your Goal needs to stretch your imagination. Do not choose something like:

- I plan to make one sale on Etsy by 2015.

Because it's boring. It won't light a fire under your bum.

Your Goal also needs to be honestly achievable. Please, if you've been making \$34.00 every couple of months, pleeeeeeassse don't set a goal like:

- I want to make \$12,000,000 by December 2012.

It's too much of a stretch. You'll give up mentally and spiritually long before you hit on that million dollar idea. If that **is** your goal, please find a Law of Attraction Coach. I won't say it's impossible, but I haven't reached that level in my own journey to help you. I'm guessing that if you're at all concerned about making more money **with your business**, you haven't either. ;))

It's cool...you will.

A Challenge For You:

Choose a goal that you know will be achievable, but will take more work, more determination and more dedication than you are already giving to your business.

That is what it's all about, after all.

Set your goal and write it, in handwriting somewhere you'll see it every day. Step back. Take a couple of deep breaths. There it is. Your Goal Statement. Let's Do it!

Day 06: Write Your Vision Statement

Well hey there! You're still with me. I'm so glad...I can imagine yesterday's goal setting gave you the jitters. I'm proud of you for showing up today!

So...your Vision Statement. This is where you get to be your beautiful, idealistic, generous most awesome self!

See? It was worth sticking around for Day 06!

Your Vision Statement is basically a combination of your Mission Statement and your Goal Statement, with a pinch of your quirky awesomeness and a bit of extra altruism in the form of your Core Values thrown in for good measure.

This is where you really get to shine. This is where you get to ask yourself...

How do I want to be perceived by my customers? How do I want my community to view my business? How do I want to treat my customers, my business contacts and my peers?

You can have a bit of fun with this one. You should really dream up the best possibly perception of your company you can ever imagine.

Don't worry, you don't actually have to show anyone your vision statement if you don't want to.

It isn't *necessary* to have a Vision Statement in order to apply for a business license or a bank loan.

The only person who is going to hold you accountable to your Vision Statement is...

...you.

How do you want to be perceived?

Since there's no right or wrong way to write a Vision Statement, I'll give you a few examples to get your creative juices flowing.

Here's Mine: I want to help at **least** 100 people per year achieve their dream of supporting themselves, (and their families) by running their own business. (It's pretty hard to tell people about your Vision Statement, because then they'll hold you to accounts. Now that you know mine. Feel free to hold my feet to the flame).

Here's a couple more imaginary vision statements:

"I want to be known as the awesome-est formulator of mineral makeup in North America."

"I want to be known as a company that sincerely strives to protect our nation's forests."

"I want my products to make life easier for tired, frustrated and exhausted parents everywhere."

As I said earlier, you don't have to publicize your Vision Statement, but your customers will love it if you do. As I said in the lessons in Day 01, people like to think of

their favourite companies as a friend, and people enjoy friends who share the same values as they do. A word of caution however, if you decide to make your Vision Statement Public:

Be prepared to walk your talk. Just like we discussed in the Core Values section, if you aren't 100% committed to your Vision Statement, customers will recognize that. They won't trust you or your company, and no amount of fancy talk about your vision will fix that. News travels faster than light these days, with the help of sites like Facebook and Twitter.

I firmly believe that truth and sincerity are the cornerstones of the next age in retail. We'll be held to accounts by our customers, our associates and our peers. Let's make a pact to be the first in a long line of truly awesome small businesses!

Day 07: Pulling it all together:

What follows is a whole series of questions and a checklist to help you pull all the information you've gathered in the **07 Days to Awesome** program together in a nice tight package. This will help you achieve even more clarity about your brand, and you'll feel even more confident than ever about your company.

Note:

Don't run off in a panic thinking you need to lay down some serious cash right away in order to change your logos, packaging or website etc. Once you have your brand firmly established, on paper, and you've shown your ideas to supportive people you trust, *then* you can start to plan your "real life" re branding.

Like anything to do with your business, creating a strong brand takes time, know how and a certain amount of money.

Do what you can afford, save up for what you can't. Easy, peasy.

The Super Duper Awesome Branding Integration List!

1. Company Name: _____
2. Overall Brand Personality: _____
3. Ideal Customer: _____
4. Core Values:
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
 - d) _____
5. Mission Statement: _____
6. Goal Statement: _____
7. Vision Statement: _____

Notes:

For each of the following elements of your business, check how well it integrates with your new brand:

	Awesome	Okay	Needs Work
Company Impression Overall:			
Company Name			
Slogan			
Logo			
Colours			
Fonts			
Products You Offer:			
Products			
Product Names			
Copy / Descriptions			
Price			
Product Packaging:			
Labels			
Hang Tags			
Wrapping			
Extras			
Inserts			

	Awesome	Okay	Needs Work
Stationary:			
Business Cards			
Letterhead			
Envelopes			
Brochures			
Fliers			
Postcards			
Coupons			
Labels			
Shipping Materials:			
Addy Labels			
Return Addy Labels			
Boxes / Cartons			
Wrapping Supplies			
"Real Life" Show Supplies:			
Banner			
Shelving			

Displays			
Testers / Freebies			
	Awesome	Okay	Needs Work
Outfit			
Apron			
Web Presence:			
Domain Name			
Website / Shop			
Email Signatures			
Email Newsletter			
E-Zines			
Blog			
Twitter			
Facebook			
Other Social Sites			
Contests			
Directory Listings			
Advertising			

Avatar			
Forum Presence			
	Awesome	Okay	Needs Work
Other			
Other			
Other			
Other			
Other Ideas To Consider:			
'Company Vehicle'			
Vehicle Signage			
			Needs
Other Ideas To Consider Continued:			
Street Level Signage			
"Swag" (Stickers, buttons, pens etc.			
Media Kits			
Press Releases			
Other			
Other			

Other			
Other			

Thank you so much for playing along with me during the **Stunted to Stunning program!** I really hope you've found it helpful!

I would absolutely love to connect with you online...

visit <http://indienorth.com/>
 tweet me on twitter: @indienorth
 find me on facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/indienorth>

In the coming year, I'll be working more branding and small business info into the site...come visit often, and check out what's new!

Thank you so much,

Love Beth

(Beth A. Smith, if you want to be all formal about it).