

BOSS UP!

THIS AIN'T
YOUR
MAMA'S
BUSINESS
BOOK



FOREWORD BY JON ACUFF
LINDSAY TEAGUE MORENO

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LINDSAY TEAGUE MORENO



THOMAS NELSON
Since 1798

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To my husband, Michael.

*My ten-year-old self knew this book
would be a reality one day, but
she could never have predicted a love like
ours. It takes a special man
to support me the way you do. Every ten-
year-old girl should dream bigger
about the kind of love that's available to her.*

CONTENTS

<i>Foreword by Jon Acuff</i>	xi
<i>Introduction: Why Is Nobody Else Losing It?</i>	xv
Chapter 1 The “Right Kind” of Mom	1
Chapter 2 The Road Map to Freedom	15
Chapter 3 Finding Your Thing	33
Chapter 4 Success Philosophy #1: Think Long Term	49
Chapter 5 Success Philosophy #2: Be Unapologetically Yourself	83
Chapter 6 Success Philosophy #3: Tell Stories and Connect through Feeling	95
Chapter 7 Success Philosophy #4: Brand Consistency Matters	107
Chapter 8 Success Philosophy #5: Use the Unsales Tactic	117
Chapter 9 Success Philosophy #6: Put on Your Positive Pants	143
Chapter 10 Success Philosophy #7: Keep Learning	161
Chapter 11 Success Philosophy #8: Understand Your Why	175
Chapter 12 Success Philosophy #9: Treat Your Business Like a Business	183
Chapter 13 Success Philosophy #10: Set Goals + Work Hard + Refuse to Fail	199
<i>Conclusion: What to Do with Opinions, Insecurities, and Fears</i>	219
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	221
<i>Notes</i>	224
<i>About the Author</i>	228

FOREWORD

The first time I met Lindsay Teague Moreno was in a field somewhere in the middle of Utah.

I was surrounded by snow-covered mountains, the kinds of horses you think exist only in movies, and hundreds of fancy tents.

In the center stood Lindsay, smiling and laughing amid the kindest audience I'd ever met. She created the event to teach a few hundred friends how she built her wildly successful business and thought it would be fun to "Hustle Under the Stars."

I thought I was there to teach, but I was wrong. I was there to learn.

There's just something different about Lindsay.

Have you ever been around people like that?

They see the world as an adventure. They see challenges as opportunities. They see horizons as invitations.

And the best part is they dare you to take the journey with them.

Fast forward a few years. I'm no longer in Utah. Now I'm sitting in Lindsay's living room, discussing my new book, *Finish*, with her and her husband, Michael. I speak and write for a living, so the release of a new book is a big moment for my business. As I am prone to do, I turned to Lindsay for some advice.

She gave me great feedback, including many of the ideas you'll find in this book, and then she called me out of my comfort zone.

“Let’s do a Facebook Live right now about your new book.”

I was a little hesitant. It wasn’t for sale yet; it didn’t even have a cover. Have you ever been apprehensive about your business idea? Maybe you thought it wasn’t ready for the light of day yet. Maybe you’ve been sitting quietly on a secret what-if idea for years. Then you better watch out about being around Lindsay. She’s going to convince you to launch.

She talked me into it, and that night, after a short Facebook live with her audience, my book became the fastest mover and shaker on Amazon. Presales skyrocketed. My publisher was stunned. “What happened last night?” they asked.

“Lindsay happened,” I said, marveling at her ability to build her own business audience and then the generosity to share it with me.

The generosity should not have surprised me. I once checked into my hotel for one of Lindsay’s events, and in my room were 150 presents perfectly displayed on the couch. As a surprise, months before the event, she had asked attendees to bring a special item from their home states for me. I was overwhelmed but, because I travel a lot, instantly thought, “How am I going to get all of this home?”

Then I looked at the mountain of presents a little closer. They were sitting in the world’s largest Tumi suitcase. Lindsay had already thought through every detail of this moment, which is what smart business leaders always do.

When I say that Lindsay is great at building a business, I think back to that event in Utah.

When I say that Lindsay is great at creating an audience and a platform, I think back to that night she blew up my book in a matter of minutes.

When I say that Lindsay approaches life with an infectious sense of fun, I think back to that hotel room overflowing with unexpected gifts.

There are a lot of people who write motivational books. There are a lot of people who write business books. There aren’t a lot of people who have actually built something that redefines an industry and then are kind enough to explain what they did.

That’s what Lindsay does.

It’s why I keep asking her for advice. It’s why I keep speaking at her

events. It's why I told her this book needed to exist years ago when it was just an idea.

You might not be standing in a field in Utah right now, though I wish you were because you wouldn't believe how majestic those horses are. I'm pretty sure that farm had unicorns.

You might be ten years down the road with your business or ten minutes into a brand-new idea.

You might know exactly what you want to do or haven't got a clue, except for a persistent belief that there's a business in your future.

Regardless of where you are right now, I know where you're about to be.

In Lindsay's world.

It's bright. It's honest. It's fun. It's creative. And it's going to do more for your business than you can possibly imagine.

Get ready to boss up.

—JON ACUFF,
New York Times bestselling author and speaker

Introduction

WHY IS NOBODY ELSE LOSING IT?

I find myself in the middle of one of my real-life nightmares: sitting on an airplane while it bounces wildly through the air. The pilot might call it “light turbulence,” but I call it a preplunge warning.

Flight attendants walk surefooted up and down the aisles, smiling through what has to be a prelude to certain death. The walking doesn’t help me. In my brain it’s like adding a pack of wild dogs into a room of screaming toddlers. Panic. Make it stop.

I’ve got to figure out how I’m going to explain this to my five-year-old sitting next to me. How do you explain, “Prepare for riding a fireball toward planet earth” to her? She’s watching *Minions* on my iPad, blissfully unaware, and downing boxes of orange Tic Tacs like it’s a sport.

The flight attendants are trying to serve me food. *Food? At a time like this?* I can’t eat this bag of pretzel mix at a time like this. What do you think this is? A party?

I ask myself, *Why is nobody else losing it?*

This is my life each and every time there is so much as a turn in an airplane. My husband, Michael, and I flew more than two hundred thousand miles last year. You can imagine how much he loves working on the road with me. He always looks at me like I’m out of my mind, saying things that

don't even help a tiny bit—like “It’s fine” or “Stop” or “Calm down”—while I grip my seat as if my hands were the jaws of life.*

I started my first business five years ago and, within months, built a seven-figure personal income for my family. This decision to “boss up” grew out of a time when I felt something akin to what I feel when flying—a feeling that my life was completely out of control and that I was losing it. I was constantly living in the belief that I was the only one panicking and that I should be ashamed of the fact that I didn’t love my role as a stay-at-home mom.

My path to entrepreneurship—or, as I sometimes like to call it, momtrepreneurship—was by no means easy or without mess, but ultimately it has afforded me and my family so many opportunities. My husband and I now own nine businesses, and as a podcaster and author I get to work in my purpose—equipping women, particularly moms, for entrepreneurship.

You guys, there’s some stuff in my life that has completely messed me up. I have learned through my thirty-eight years of mess that if I just sit in it and own it, that very mess is usually what leads to success. And y’all, I’ve seen a lot of mess. That’s why I refused to turn down travel last year when this fear of flying started to cause me complete panic attacks. I figure if I can sit through this long enough, eventually it’s going to lead to something awesome.**

Right now, though, it feels like our plane is basically a pinball in the sky. I look around to make the “Let’s hold hands while we die and pray together” eye contact with anyone on the plane who isn’t Michael. But it seems like he and everyone else don’t care that soon their lives will be over and our faces will be splashed across CNN for an hour until something more shocking happens. Nobody returns my stare of complete failure to keep it together.

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* Poor guy. I’m sure he’s second-guessed that day he said “I do” while accompanying me on a death flight.

** I’m just not sure what, though, as I sit writing this with sweat dripping down my back, blinking back tears, listening to the captain’s voice, which is failing to soothe me in any way whatsoever.

Why is nobody else losing it? I think again. All right, so I'm doing this one alone. Have it your way, 23C.

Flying really does put life into perspective, I guess. Nothing helps clarify the essential things in life like near death or the soggy ravioli they serve. That's why I want to share with you my story of wins and lessons and amazingly beautiful stuff, along with the loss and pain and downright ugly stuff that happened along the way to where I am now. I want my story to be the springboard on which you launch your long, successful, amazing career.

I've learned that people who seem to have the most success are those willing to admit they've been through some crap in their lives. I might even venture to say it's the common thread in the people that I watch and find myself wanting to emulate in business. They've got their master's degrees from the school of hard knocks. Learning through the loss and the hurt and the really horrible stuff in life has helped them think in a new way. I dare say it makes them appreciate the hustle. That's not something we should hide. If it creates in us a desire to do better and be more, why aren't we wearing our tragedies and even our failures like a badge of honor? Why are we afraid to show people the chinks in our armor? We all have them.

I'm a dedicated people watcher. Always have been, but I do it for a different reason now. I used to watch others mostly to compare myself with them. *Can I do what she's doing, only better? Does she have something I don't have? What makes him better than me?* Never living up, of course, but you better believe I tried. As I started to mature,* though, I started to see it more as a kind of mentorship—accomplished from afar, without the other person knowing it was happening.

That's not creepy, is it? Maybe it is. But the point is I now watch people to learn from them. And as I've watched, I've noticed that the people who seem to have it all together . . . usually *don't*. Not by a long shot. It's all a show. And chances are that one day those perfect stories will come completely unraveled, that you'll find those perfect people having fights on the Internet and posting long rants on their soon-to-be-radio-silent blogs.

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* I use that word lightly, friends.

Truth has a way of eventually pouring out. So why not own up to it from the start?

There are only so many hours in the day, and no one can do it all. No mom's kids smile all day while she turns out perfectly shaped pies and ingenious craft projects. Plus, who wants to try to live up to that? Not me. I don't have the freaking time to fill out a perfect planner while I meal plan on the cutest DIY family whiteboard that coordinates with the wall color and to beam over the state of my perfectly organized gift closet.*

This book is my story of entrepreneurship, interwoven with the great lessons I've learned along the way—lessons that anyone with any kind of business can use. I'm not here to say I've learned it all and that what I'm offering here is the path to perfect success. But I've learned a lot and done pretty well for myself, and if I can help you on your path to greatness, well, it's my goal to do so. Actually, it's more than that. It's my joy, my passion, my purpose to do so. I am going to try to be as honest, raw, and real as possible because when women—even bored stay-at-home moms like me—find their purpose, we all win. We need your genius.

As a successful momtrepreneur, I believe in targeting a precise audience for what I'm selling. So I want you to know up front that my target audience is moms like me who dream of running a successful business of their own. Maybe at this point you're like I was five years ago—a stay-at-home mom who wasn't feeling the bliss. Or maybe you're still in the workforce, juggling your job and family responsibilities and wondering if there's a better way. You may be married like I am, or maybe you're a single mom. Possibly you don't even have children yet, but you're looking ahead and trying to figure out how you can build the life you want for your future kids.

If any of these apply, this book is for you. Actually, the philosophies I've acquired in my journey to momtrepreneurship could benefit anyone who is thinking of starting their own business, so you could get something out of this book even if you're an unmarried dude who never plans to have

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 * To be honest, I could probably find the time if it was important, but I'm not that kind of mom, and I'm okay with that.

kids. You'll just have to filter out a few things about motherhood that don't apply to you. The heart of this book is to give you great advice that will help you grow your business, not to be a perfect mom while you do it.

So, friends, are you ready? It's time to buckle up. And it's okay if you feel like you're the only person around you who is losing it. It's okay if you don't know how you're going to pull off the success you have hidden inside of you. It's okay if you've failed in the past. It's all okay. The most important part is that you showed up for this ride in the first place—you're getting on the plane.

Let's be honest. For most people the fear of the journey is enough to squelch their dreams altogether. But not for you. You know as well as I do that there's more out there for you. It's time to boss up and go get it.

wake up
get up
stand up
show up
dress up
open up
charge up
speak up
mess up
clean up
sign up
screw up
shake up
follow up
rise up

boss up

7

SUCCESS PHILOSOPHY #4: BRAND CONSISTENCY MATTERS

As we discussed in chapter 4, your brand is not just your logo, colors, fonts, and icons. Your brand is so much more. It's the way you talk, the images you take, the feel of your social-media posts, the way you present yourself in public, your message, your theme, the people you target, the content you create.

Your brand, in other words, is everything you do. It's your entire online and in-person presence.

The great news is that you get to decide the kind of brand you want to create around your business. Part of that process is thinking through all the things we talked about in chapter 4, when we laid the foundation for your business. But another important part is creating content and messaging that is consistent to that brand. The more off-brand you go, the more confused your audience will become—and guys, confusion kills.

Make sure your message is consistent and represents you. This includes any time you're representing your brand. Consistency is a critical part in the trust-building that you will need to have between your brand (you) and your customer.

Understanding Your Audience

My first business that really took off for me was my essential oils business. What I noticed when I fell in love with the product was that the current market for it largely consisted of people who were outside of my target customer. I wanted to reach young moms between the ages of twenty-five and forty. But it became quickly and abundantly clear to me that the standard marketing and branding for these products were such a turnoff to people in my chosen market (read: people like me) that my target customers wouldn't even consider those tiny little bottles of awesome. I didn't want to be responsible for that misconception. I knew that if I was going to serve my customers the right way, I would have to take responsibility for reaching them in a different way.

My business was born out of a vision to bring essential oils to a younger market than was currently being catered to. This market cares a lot about what the things they purchase look like, which is especially true if they're going to be spending a good chunk of their money on it. So I did a lot of thinking about packaging. I wanted to offer something young, fresh, clean, bright, and cute.

I also wanted to make it clear that oils weren't just for forty-five-to-sixty-year-old women or the tofu and granola natural-foods crowd. That's where most of the essential-oils marketing seemed to be aimed at the time. I wanted to show that oils can be for anyone at any level of commitment to a natural lifestyle. In reaching my customers, I wanted to create a home for people who hadn't gone all-in on everything health and wellness yet, a place for the misfits in the barrage of information and products that is the health and wellness industry.

I myself am part-time crunchy granola and part-time Chick-fil-A,* and I knew a lot of women like me. So I decided my target market and my team would be largely made up of people who love their oils and use them but also aren't afraid to stop for a Happy Meal if it had been one of those

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* #1, no pickles, with sweet tea.

days with the kids. I wanted to make sure our brand represented that. I wanted it to say, “Oils don’t have to be weird. Trust us. We use them too, and we’re just like you.”

Once I understood who I was trying to reach, I immediately saw a need for better marketing, educational materials, and customer service, so I set out to rectify that for my people by offering exactly that. Understanding my audience and what they were looking for in a brand made all the difference in my business. Even without having control of what the product packaging looked like, I was able to connect with my customer by changing what I did have control over.

Was it difficult? Yes. Did it take a lot of hours? Yes. Did I have to invest my time and money into it? Yes. A lot of hours, issues, frustration—plus a lot of money from my paycheck that went back into my businesses.

Did it work? Absolutely.

I will continue to work my hardest to fill holes in the market and meet the needs of the people I serve so they can succeed faster and with more ease. I make it a priority to find ways to solve issues that don’t involve depending on others; I believe it’s up to me to create wins for both my teams and myself. Personally, I rely on God to do the rest. You can do that too. Be original, think outside the box, and go get what you want—just do it consistently.

Target Your Marketing to Your Target Market

One thing I see a lot of women who are trying to sell product do is basically throw up all over their social media feeds with information about their products, no matter who made it or compiled the info or what it looks like. That desperation is felt by potential customers, and it feels both manipulative and inauthentic. Hammering potential customers over the head with information from all over the World Wide Web sends the message that “I’m just looking for sales,” not “I’m sharing information to help people.”

I don’t share *any* marketing pieces for my businesses if they aren’t consistent to my brand. If I shared everything I see, it would confuse my

potential customer. It's important to me that I keep things consistent and clean in the way I communicate and the way my brand looks. I absolutely don't want people to get the impression that I'm desperate for sales.

Make sure you think about your target market each time you're about to put out information about the product or service you are selling. My business started with a post on Instagram to help moms, and I haven't wavered from that. Don't worry about what everyone else is doing. Instead, be conscious about how your brand is perceived by your potential customers.

If you're targeting a new market, consistency of approach is especially important. The net you cast shouldn't be all-encompassing. It's really okay and definitely smarter to find a niche market and meet the needs of those specific people. Become an expert on your target market, and you'll have a huge advantage.

I often see people fishing for every kind of person, and the things they post and talk about make me feel like they're just casting a line randomly into every pond, hoping to catch something. Customers sense that and steer clear. Our businesses can't successfully be all things to all people, and when we try, we're likely to alienate the very customers we want to reach.

My friend Elizabeth and I are alike in a lot of ways. She often knows what I'm thinking before I say it. She and I share a love for a lot of color, good music, food, and cute Internet animal videos. We laugh about the dumbest things together, and we've been coworkers now for the past four years. One thing we do not have in common is that Elizabeth is not a mom, which is one of the biggest parts of my life. She has no plans to be a mother, and I commend her for making the choice that is right for her. Liz isn't in my target market and I don't intentionally create content for people without kids. Liz is an outlier for me. She bought product from me despite the fact that I don't specifically market to her.

Just because I serve moms and talk a lot about my own parenting journey doesn't mean I won't pull in outliers like Elizabeth. In fact, I polled my followers last year and found that 30 percent of them do not have kids. Does that mean I abandon talking to moms? No. It simply proves that you and I can affect people outside our target markets with our brands even

while keeping our marketing consistently focused on our target markets. It's great to get outliers, but stay consistent in who you're serving. Let the people who want to be a part of your tribe stay, and don't worry about the others.

Market You More Than Your Product

Part of being brand consistent is making sure the brand of you doesn't get taken over by your product or service. When you're starting out (before you have a slew of amazing employees and your business starts generating millions), it's so important that you as a person connect directly with your potential customers. That means you must put yourself into your conversations and social media posts as much (read: more) as you put your product.

I realize this might sound counterproductive. "Lindsay, if I want people to know I have a product to sell, don't I have to talk about it all the time?" I wish it was that simple, y'all. If only we lived in a world where we could just mention what we have to sell and people would fall all over themselves to book us or buy from us. But we don't.

It's one thing for a company that's well-established and has insane brand recognition to talk about their product all the time. It's quite another for a small business to do the same. We have to give our potential customers time to get to know us and our product, time to like us, time to trust us, and time to decide whether our product or service will meet their needs. That means that doing social media is going to be harder for us than it is for a company like Coke or Starbucks.

It's my firm belief that you as a small business owner don't have the luxury to just advertise your product on your feed. To get the best results, you have to ease your customer into the sale by letting them get to know both you and your product—but especially you. The winning combination I found while I was building my own business was to post once about my product and what I do and then post another four times on my feed about other things. The other posts could be industry-related information, little

tips and tricks, insights into my personal life, behind-the-scenes posts, funny posts, or entertaining or educational reads. But they couldn't be a hard sell for my product or service.

Our customers aren't stupid. They know how to block out content that isn't going to relate to them. When our customers get used to seeing the same exact post worded in 174 different ways over and over again in our social media feeds, they condition themselves to scroll right past what we're saying.

Sister, our brains are capable of making twenty quadrillion (yea, that's totally a number) calculations in a single second. Making the decision to scroll past content that isn't going to entertain, teach, help, or excite us is so easy, we often don't even realize when we've made the choice. It happens without even having to think about it because we are amazing creatures with super computers for brains.

With that reality in mind, it's your job to keep your customers on their toes and create a desire in them to make sure they don't miss a post from you. Do that by mixing up your content and making sure you're spending enough time on that part of your business. Talk about your product, of course, but do it in that one-to-five ratio above. Make them fall in love with you, and they'll fall in love with the things you love—like your product or service. People will want to work with you, and you won't have to sell them if they feel like they know you. They'll know the person they're working with, and that is how you get repeat customers who tell their friends about you.

Delete Your Share Button

I see it all the time. One photographer or artist does something that creates some momentum in her business, and before you know it, every other photographer and artist is doing the same thing to try to recreate the buzz. When social media fads happen, the only way a consumer can get away from it is to scroll past the posts or unfollow the poster. I'm sure we can all think of multiple examples of this from our own social media feeds, often

from people who sell a product through network marketing. I often think, *I've seen this before*, only to scroll through my feed and see the same post seventeen other times from people representing the same product.

Copying, pasting, and sharing are easier than creating your own original content, of course, and it can easily become your default. But using other's stuff (even really good stuff) is not going to help you stand out from the competition, and your customer will only hang around for so much of it. Your voice is missing when you don't take the time to write your own content. And your tribe needs your voice.

Let's explore how customers might feel if they see multiple social media posts that are simply copied and pasted and perhaps just like those from your competition.

Reaction #1: "I Feel Sold To"

The first thing I feel when I keep seeing the same thing popping up in my news feed from different people is "sold to." I start to wonder if the post is intended to actually help and engage me or just to get my money. And I think your customers probably feel that way too.

When people choose to buy a product from you, it's because they trust you to connect what they need with what you have. They're trusting that your product or service will work for them like you said it would. And they like to feel that you see them as something more than a source of income. But when they see a big group of people all posting the same thing, if the words aren't yours, then the natural assumption is that they're being sold something, and when a product needs to be sold like that, there's a good chance it's not that great. The trust starts to go backward and not forward.

Reaction #2: "I Can't Hear You!"

In addition, as people get used to your posts sneaking into their social media feeds or they read or watch your video stories, they'll become accustomed to your tone and the way you communicate. They'll start to "hear" you speaking through your written posts as well and be more likely to read them. But when you copy and paste someone else's writing, that connection you have with your customers is missing.

Let your online customers relate to the way you talk, the way you position your words, the slang you use. As you write original content, imagine your target customer sitting in front of you, poised to hear what you have to say today. Write to that one person, but—this is important—do it the way you speak.

This might be a challenge, especially if you were born before 1985, if you grew up before texts and social media, or if you had a really good (or really opinionated) English teacher. I often see people get onto their social media feed and write what sounds like a formal letter instead of natural speech.

Writing like you speak probably isn't what your teacher taught you in school, but it's the right way to communicate on social media. Slang and text abbreviations are fine. Contractions are great. Sentence fragments and emoticons are preferred. The only thing that really matters is developing a consistent and recognizable voice. The better you get at maintaining it online, the easier it will be for you to remain brand consistent. The way you speak and write are a part of your brand.

PRO TIP

Here's an excellent way to practice the art of writing like you speak. You'll need pencil and paper, a cellphone, and a good friend you're comfortable talking to.

First, pick one of the questions below—whichever would be easiest for you to answer—and write out the answer as if you were going to post it on social media. (This should take about two minutes.)

- Question 1: What do you wish you did more often?
- Question 2: If life ended today, what would you regret not doing?
- Question 3: What habit would you most like to start/stop?

Now set your answer aside and grab your phone and your friend. (You can do this over Skype, Zoom, or FaceTime if your friend isn't with you in person.)

Have your friend hold your phone, open the voice memo app, and start recording, then take about a minute to answer the same question out loud. Look at your friend and talk to her normally, the way you would if she'd asked you the question.

When the recording is finished, transcribe your voice memo onto a different piece of paper so you can see the exact words you used and how the information flowed when you spoke the answer rather than wrote it. Then compare your two answers. How are they similar? How are they different? How might you be able to practice writing more like you speak so your audience can hear your voice as they read your words? You can always keep transcribing your spoken words into written words, if needed, until it becomes easier.

Reaction #3: "I've Seen That One Before"

So if you're reposting others' pictures, your audience will remember, and your credibility will go out the window because they'll know you're not using genuine content. Take the time to get yourself a subscription to a really great stock photo library or learn how to take eye-catching images of your product and your life for your customers to see. Great images compel your audience to take the time to read what you've written—but they need to be original.

Reaction #4: "What's the Story?"

When you share posts from others, instead of your own, your audience misses the story—your story—that connects her, the customer, to you, the salesperson. Remember, we are hardwired to connect through story. Facts and figures only go so far to actually get people to buy the product. Your customers need your story. They need your experience. They need *you*.

Again, there's a simple remedy to these four potential responses. Simple, but not easy.

Take the time to create your own content.*

Be inspired by how other people present information. Let their ideas help you create ones of your own. But come up with your own materials so your customers have the benefit of your voice, your brand, your point of view.

Your social media posts should be a big part of your job. You should be spending time on them to make your posts unique and on-brand. Don't let what's easy take you on a shortcut to nowhere.

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* I know. I'm blowing your mind. Best money you've ever spent on a book.