

How your personal experience can drive business success

“Don’t take it personally,” and “It’s not personal, it’s just business,” are two of the most common phrases heard around the proverbial water cooler. But I think business should be personal. Because the difference between a successful and an unsuccessful startup is a founder’s ability to be passionate about, and committed to, their business’ success. Personal experience fuels this passion and commitment in a way that stats from market research just can’t.

Temps de lecture : minute

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It was my personal experience that inspired me to start a sex therapy app called [Blueheart](#). Almost everyone in the world has had relationship problems, there is nothing remarkable about my experience here other than being human. What is different is the fact I reached out for help, went through therapy and now feel confident enough to talk about these issues openly. That is something far fewer people have gone through. It allowed me to see that a different, better world is possible and how the current systems are failing us in the one thing that actually makes us happy - healthy relationships.

The best predictor of whether other people want your product is that you want your product. You are patient zero. That's why making business personal is so integral.

People buy from humans, not just brands

You might think no one really cares about your founding story and that, as long as your business is growing, that's all that matters. But the human behind the brand does matter. If you've been dumbfounded by startups with no product, raising huge rounds from investors despite poor company performance, you're probably underestimating the importance of storytelling. Investors are people and people love stories. Every business has huge inherent risks and existential threats at every turn. Once people start assessing the risks, you've already lost. You don't want people to think about your business, you want them to dream about it. You get up every day to make some corner of the world a little bit sweeter, your ability to convey why you do that through powerful storytelling will determine your success as a company.

An authentic, emotive founding story creates a bridge between the hearts of others as opposed to their brain. That's not just investors but existing employees, potential hires and your customers. If you want the best employees, the top tier investors and the most loyal customers, spend time crafting your story.

You know how your target audience wants to be approached

There's big value in building a trustworthy brand, and a large chunk of that process is down to how you communicate with your audience. Whether it's through social media, a website or any other marketing materials, being too formal or writing content that fails to resonate with the consumer, will result in your messaging falling on deaf ears. Striking the balance between pithy, thought-provoking prose and emotive messaging is no easy feat, but drawing on your personal experience can help you craft authentic content that will resonate with your audience on

a deeper level.

During my experience of sexual dysfunction, I didn't feel as though any company spoke to me in a way that made me feel human. The messages were clinical, apathetic and archaic at best, and as a young person with this issue, I felt isolated.

At Blueheart, we like to take a *human approach* when it comes to our message - we meet people on their level. This is not a branding exercise but a way to connect with our users authentically, and we know that it's effective because our users tell us it is. It's how I would've wanted to be spoken to when I was experiencing the same issues.

Personal experience can create a commitment to making your business a success

When you're dealing with sexual problems, the most impactful way to make yourself feel better is hearing that someone else is experiencing the exact same thing. Even the world's greatest therapist advising you on what to do is not half as effective as listening to someone tell you how they feel, and recognising it's identical to your own struggle. That empathy gives me the passion that is necessary to make it through the bad times.

As a result of founding Blueheart I've been through back pain, hair loss, lack of sleep and constant stress, but knowing there is someone else suffering (how I once was) who needs the help I know Blueheart can provide, enables you to kick straight through those hurdles. It's why Nike founder Phil Knight was once an up and coming track star and why Andy Puddicombe from Headspace was formerly a Buddhist monk. They were willing to endure the trials and tribulations of building companies that

changed the world because they had a meaningful connection to their cause.

Your personal experience can act as a powerful personal motivator; it can provide the foundation of your brand, and it can create a compelling story that captures the attention of your audience. Personal experience can help you identify the impact you want your business to have on the world, which in turn, will lead to the profits, engaged team, and sustainable success you need to thrive.



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Sharing your story isn't without challenges

Broadcasting your story doesn't come without its challenges, and this is

coming from someone whose story is about sexual problems. Being vulnerable and talking about your personal life comes with a lot of fear, even from those that seemingly feel comfortable telling it. The Fear comes in many forms.

- The Fear is believing that your story isn't good enough.
- The Fear is worrying what your parents will think.
- The Fear is worrying what your friends will think.
- The Fear is how this might impact your relationship.
- The Fear is losing all of your privacy.
- The Fear is believing that telling your story is egotistical.
- The Fear is believing you are egotistical.

We all have the fear, and all of these emotions are justified. I am an incredibly private person and the thought of becoming anything more public than zero was super uncomfortable. My last post on social media was over 4 years ago. However, I was the face of Blueheart and our mission was to put sexual issues on the public health agenda. That is my life's goal. If I wasn't able to talk about it, how could I expect anyone else to? So if you've had The Fear about telling your story, that's how we all feel.

However, the sooner you can overcome The Fear and tell your story, the quicker you'll find passionate employees, aligned investors and loyal fans.

Sachin Raoul is the cofounder of the on-demand sexual health app *Blueheart*. The app aims to democratise and de-stigmatise the sex therapy process by offering affordable, judgement-free sessions to those seeking accessible treatment services.

