



*Branding

PREPARED FOR ARTREACH BY THE REAL
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MUGAMMAR

101



GOAL Youth Workshop Series

The Grassroots Organizing and Leadership (GOAL) Youth Capacity Building Workshop Series was developed in 2007 by youth-led organizations, funders and other partners to provide access to learning opportunities to enhance the work of young people, artists and youth-led groups. Through different strategies and in different spaces, young people are working to make change and to have an impact on communities across the city of Toronto. To take this passion and commitment and channel it into a project, individuals or organizations require training, tools and supports that are not always available to emerging, youth-led groups.

Workshops are developed based on needs identified by young people in Toronto, and past topics have included financial management for non-profits, fundraising, grant writing, event planning, evaluation and documentation, self care, lawyers for the arts, branding and marketing, and models of youth work. These free sessions provide an accessible safe learning space for young people to ask questions, receive support, and access the resources that matter to them.

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Toolkit Contributors

The Real Sun

The Real Sun channels her passion, drive, talent, and purpose in life into Art, Healing, Social Justice, and Education. These four things are the pillars and foundation of everything The Real Sun does, is, and creates. Social Justice is at the core of The Real Sun's approach to Art, Education and Healing. She views each one of these elements as necessary components for creating positive and sustainable social change. The Real Sun was originally born in Anyang, Korea, and is now a proud resident of Jane-Finch, Toronto, by way of Peterborough and Kingston (Canada).

Pauleanna Reid

Pauleanna Reid is a Motivational Speaker, Millennial Mentor, Celebrity/CEO Ghostwriter and critically acclaimed Author of her fiction novel, *Everything I Couldn't Tell My Mother*. Through a whirlwind of inspirational lectures, round table discussions and media appearances she positively influences, challenges and reconnects youth with their passions. Pauleanna uses incredible wit and candor to empower women & girls.

Rania El Muggamar

Rania El Muggamar is a Sudanese Canadian NPO Director, Artist, Arts Educator, Equity and Anti-oppression Educator & Consultant, performer, speaker and published writer. Her work interrogates notions of home, belonging, womxnhood, blackness, and migration/exile as they intersect with the identities and places she identifies with. Rania is an advocate for womxn's rights, racial justice/black liberation and youth. Social justice anchors Rania's work as she is deeply committed to anti-oppressive practices and inclusion.

Let's Get Started

Understanding your brand and market are fundamental to your success as an entrepreneur, but many people do not fully understand what a brand really is. Your brand is not just your logo or your website- these are actually your tools for marketing through which you communicate your brand. Your brand is simply your core message, your promise, and your pledge to your target audience or market.

What is a Brand?

A BRAND is a product or service made/ provided by a particular company, organization, or individual.

A BRAND PROMISE is the pledge your brand makes about what makes your company/ product/ service different or unique. It is the promise of a particular kind of experience for your target market to have as an expectation. What is the one thing they can count on you to deliver consistently through your product or service? What is the one thing you want to be known for?

BRANDING is the process of embedding your Brand Promise into your marketing material or products. For example branding your website means finding ways to communicate your brand promise through the design, feel, and messaging of your website.

MARKETING is how you communicate your Brand Promise, and the tools you use to deliver the message of your promise to your target market. Your marketing tools are simply the platforms you use to communicate your brand to the people you want to reach.

TARGET MARKET describes your ideal customer. Think about what kind of person would benefit the most from your services or products- the one that would come back to you time and again because they love what you offer. A perfect fit exists because it meet the customer's needs and solves a problem they have.

Think of your *brand* as a very specific frequency or signal that has its own unique signature. Think about *branding* as the process of taking this unique frequency signal and programming it into a radio transmitter and tower at a radio station. That tower, and the radio waves that it sends out, carries your unique signature frequency. Think of these as your *marketing* tools. The person who would tune into your radio station because they LOVE the signature frequency you are sending out and because that signal actually adds value to their lives is your *target market*.





As an entrepreneur it is crucial that you have a clear idea about what your brand is, and that you communicate your brand in a concise and effective way. Many artists are creatively talented, but lack the skills and resources required to build a successful arts-based career. As you pursue business in the arts, keep in mind the value of branding yourself well.

PURPOSE

Meditating On Your Why

As an entrepreneur it is important that you believe in the product or service you are providing. If you don't believe in what you are offering or are only doing it to earn a paycheck- stop and reconsider if this is the right business for you. All successful brands are built on the passion and dedicated purpose of its creators.

Answer the questions below to establish more clarity around your passion and purpose:

 Do I believe in my product or service?

 Am I passionate about my idea?

 Why am I interested in this line of business?

 Does my business align with my purpose in life?

 What is the big vision? What is my end goal?

IDENTITY

Developing Your Brand Promise

Your brand promise is made up of the **benefits** you commit to delivering to your customers. The stronger your benefit, the stronger your brand.

Examples of benefits to customers could include:



More happiness



More money



More recognition



More security



More excitement



More time

Consider:

- What benefit does your brand offer customers?
- What do you do better or different than your competitors?
- What do you offer that is completely new or innovative?
- What is your guarantee?
- How does your product meet a customer's needs better than any other product?

Establishing your Niche

Resist the urge to be everything to everyone- instead, target your niche. Focus is everything. Effective brands specialize themselves to be the best at one or maybe two things. Even if you do many things well, choose one and zero in on it.

How do you want your brand to be perceived? What are the associations you want to be made with your brand? If you do not have clarity and command over how your brand is perceived, other people will take it upon themselves to create their own assumptions and perceptions for you, meaning you lose control over your brand identity (you definitely do not want this!)

Let's use laundry detergent for example. There are many kinds of laundry detergent, and while they all pretty much do the same thing, the big brands have been successful at controlling the perception of their market by being specific about their niche or specialty- their brand promise.

It's evident that they are appealing to their niche market by promising what their target customers want most from their laundry detergent based on their particular needs.

For example:



Cheer: Offers the best colour protection



Downy: Offers the most softness



Tide: Offers the whitest whites

Understanding your Target Market

When thinking on the question of your Brand Promise, it's important to understand *why* you are making this promise to your target market, and why it should matter to them. This means you have to understand the wants and needs of your target market as much as possible.

Answer the following questions to help you establish some more clarity about the relationship between your brand and your target market:

- What is the appeal of my brand for my market?
- What problem am I solving for my customers?
- Why should people believe in my product or service?



When thinking about your target market it helps to build an avatar - a model of your best customer. What would your ideal customer/ client be looking for in a product/ service like yours? Who are they? What do they like? How old are they? Where do they live? What kind of job do they have? What do they watch on TV? Where do they like to hang out? What kinds of activities do they enjoy? What are their values, their problems, and their needs?

Try to identify as many details as you can about your target market, this will help you to identify what are the most effective forms of marketing for your product/service, and also how to improve your product/service to better meet the needs/wants of your target market.

CONTENT

Writing and Storytelling



Powerful writing and content is all around us- from the books, articles, and blog posts we read, to the services and products we buy. In your life, you have inevitably felt connected to the copy of a business' website or other materials. You bought into their brand because they told their story to you in a way that you connected with. Good copy sells – it entertains the reader, it resonates with them, and it compels them to take action.

Writing can feel intimidating- sharing who you are and what you do through writing is a difficult process for many people. If you're hung up on your writing skills, don't worry! You don't need to be the best writer to have a powerful brand. What you **do** need is to be a great storyteller. But what makes a great story?

A great story is authentic, creative, inspires action and takes your audience on a journey- and most importantly, it evokes a feeling.

STORYTELLING TIPS:

START WITH WHAT YOU KNOW: It could be food, fashion, motivational tips or movies. Position yourself as an expert by sharing your background.

ADD A PERSONAL TOUCH: Be yourself. Show your scars. People want to interact with real people.

BE REMARKABLE: Exceed expectations. Think about how to go above and beyond

PRACTICE GENEROSITY: Always put your audience first. Take the time to understand their likes, dislikes, and habits.

BE CONSISTENT: Keep your message uniform.

Finding Your Voice

Creating great copy is difficult and takes commitment but once you find your voice, you will find your tribe and soar. You just have to put in the work and be consistent. Dan Harmon said “find your voice, shout it from the rooftops and keep doing it until the people who are looking for you find you.”

Your voice is basically your online or real-life personality in print- it’s how you “speak” through your social media, blog posts, emails, advertising, newsletters, website content, thank you notes, etc. All of these form an impression on the audience you communicate with. Through reading just a few words or sentences, people will get an idea of who you are, what your brand offers, and whether or not this resonates with them.

Tell a story only you can tell

Because of your unique experiences and personality, the way that you process information and tell a story will be different from anyone else’s. Strive for this authenticity and transparency. Lean on elements of your personality to write what is authentic to you- all of these elements will help you stand out amongst the crowd and create your own lane.

Pay attention to your target audiences’ needs

Be in tune with what your audience is talking about and sharing, their interests, their dislikes and frustrations, and what problems they’re looking for a solution to. Create a conversation with your reader in ways that engage them and speak to their needs. We all want to feel understood - find a way to create that for your reader.

Read everything

The equation here is simple, in order to be a great writer, you have to read. Expose yourself to the wide variety of writing styles around you in order to develop your own style. Challenge yourself to read different types of content, and practice being open to different perspectives to help strengthen your own.

Be inspired

Study the voices of those you enjoy and pull from them. A helpful exercise is to determine the writers that you are drawn to and why. Perhaps you love the fun way that an author's content incorporates business advice with slang and a hip-hop tone. Or maybe another author's Zen-like tone and "tell-it-like-it-is" persona really speaks to you. Pull from these what fits with your own personality and allow it to inspire your own style of content- just be sure not to copy another author's voice!

Write often and consistently

The more you write, the easier your natural writing voice appears. Try free hand writing- block out 15-20 minutes every day to write. It can be on a specific topic, the events of your day, an opinion piece- just be sure to challenge yourself to do it consistently. This exercise will help you get used to translating your thoughts into writing, and can help you identify consistency in your voice.

Creating A Personal Brand Statement

A Personal Brand Statement is a one, two, or three sentence-long synopsis that defines and communicates your personal brand from your own vision.



- Your professional identity describes the role you play, such as your position in a company or organization, the type of artist you are, or your function in the community.
- Your target audience is the customers you reach
- Your unique solution is how you intend to meet the needs of your customers, and how your product or service will help resolve their problems

Here are some examples of Brand Statements:

"I'm a Speaker, Author and Mentor. I help millennial women see beyond the limits of their circumstances so they can make choices that liberate them in their lives and careers."

"I'm the Vice-President of the Social Committee at GTA University. I help organize fun, engaging after-school programs for freshmen students so they can feel comfortable in their new environment and confident navigating their education."

"I am a passionate, creative musician who brings excitement to open-minded, engaged and curious audiences (or students) in order to create a memorable experience they will want to share with their communities."

Creating a Tagline

A tagline is your brand's slogan- a one sentence "catchphrase" for your brand. Your tagline is key to winning over your target market over to your product or service. It should be effective in communicating what your target market wants to hear and conveying to them what makes you unique.

Get their Attention ("Oh wow!")	Create Desire ("I want that!")
Generate Interest ("That sounds interesting!")	Induce Action ("I'm going to do that right now!")

Your tagline should:

- Be short and catchy
- Communicate your Brand Promise
- Communicate your Brand Experience to the customer
- Communicate and addresses their wants and needs
- Create an emotional connection to the audience

Some examples of taglines include:

Nike- "Just do it"
L'Oreal- "Because you're worth it"
Bounty- "The quicker picker upper"
McDonalds- "I'm lovin' it"
Lays- "Bet you can't eat just one"
Campbell's Soup- "Mmm, mmm, good"

DESIGN

Designing Your Brand Identity

A **BRAND IDENTITY** is the outward expression of a brand- from its name, to how it looks, to its communications. A brand's identity is its fundamental means of consumer recognition and symbolizes how the brand is different than its competitors.

The Brand Identity Prism is a tool represented by a hexagon, which defines the 6 elements of a brand's identity. You can use the six dimensions explained below to build a new brand identify, or to evaluate a current brand's strengths and weaknesses.



↳ Physique

This includes your logo, colour scheme, packaging, website, print materials- anything that brings an image into the mind of the consumer when thinking or talking about your brand. This is the basis of your brand and is how the public will recognize you.

↳ Personality

Like human personalities, brands must also have a personality- one with clearly defined and consistent traits. Think of adjectives like playful, sophisticated, athletic, fun, intelligent, trendy, etc. This is communicated through your writing style, voice, colour scheme, and endorsements.

↳ Self-Image

This refers to how customers think others will perceive them for owning a specific brand's product. Brands can make customers feel like others will see them as sporty, rich, stylish, educated, etc. Consider how customers will feel about themselves as a result of owning your brand's product.

↳ Relationship

This is the relationship between your brand and your customers. A brand relationship is more significant than just purchasing the product itself- its about building long term connections with your customers. This can be carried out in concrete ways like personalizing your communications or offering special perks to repeat buyers, or in more symbolic ways like inviting customers into your brand's "community" or becoming a part of their identity.

↳ Culture

This is the system of values of your brand. Culture can be based on geography, demographics, or principles. Geographically, your brand's culture could be tied to its area of origin- whether on a national or local scale. Demographically, your brand's culture could be rooted in a particular community. And principle-based cultures could be tied to a commitment to social, political, or environmental issues.

↳ Reflection

This is a reflection of the personality and identity of your stereotypical buyer. This is not a representation of your entire target audience, but rather a snapshot of the person you would use to represent a customer in your brand's commercial

STRATEGY

Analyzing Your Brand

A SWOT Analysis is an exercise to determine your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A SWOT analysis can be carried out for a company, product, place, industry, or personal brand. Users of SWOT analysis must ask and answer questions that generate meaningful information for each of the four categories to make the analysis useful and find their competitive advantage.

A SWOT Analysis can help you set your objectives, track changes over time, determine over-saturation or gaps in products/ services, explore new ideas and directions, identify what makes you unique, and to determine your strategic plan for the future.

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- What do you do well?
- What unique resources can you draw on?
- What do others see as your strengths?

WEAKNESSES

- What could you improve?
- Where do you have fewer resources than others?
- What are others likely to see as weaknesses?

OPPORTUNITIES

- What opportunities are open to you?
- What trends could you take advantage of?
- How can you turn your strengths into opportunities?

THREATS

- What threats could harm you?
- What is your competition doing?
- What threats do your weaknesses expose you to?

TOOLS

Artist Portfolios

An artist portfolio is a collection of tangible documentation of your work. Your portfolio exists to illustrate your capacities, skills, education, experiences, awards, media coverage, etc. You will likely be asked for this information when applying for residencies, grants, employment opportunities, requests for proposals, exhibits, incubators, and educational opportunities. Having an updated, diverse, and well-constructed portfolio is critical for all professional and aspiring artists.

Your portfolio should include:

- A biography
- A press kit
- An artist statement
- A cover letter and artist resume
- Contact information
- Headshots
- Links to your website and social media pages
- A list of the grants or awards you've received
- Examples of media and press coverage you've received
- Learning tools or resources that you've created
- Video/ audio/ photos of you at your craft
- Posters/ programmes for projects you have participated in
- Past exhibits, features, publishing and performances
- Samples of your artwork (ensure these samples are of high quality and illustrate your diverse capacity as an artist)
- Reviews, testimonials, and letters of support from past mentors, colleagues, collaborators, funders, or producers

Portfolio Development Strategies and Tips

↘ Start by creating a mind map of the titles you give yourself (such as visual artist, arts educator, community organizer, consultant, program manager etc.) and begin to gather documentation to support each of your titles

↘ Developing your portfolio is a lengthy process, and it helps to have someone who can guide you through the process and provide honest and constructive feedback

↘ Your relationships are critical to building a successful portfolio. Do you have contacts you can reach out to for testimonials? Can your mentors write you letters of support?

↘ Building strong community relationships in the arts is critical, as you will need access to elements created by other people, such as footage of your work, live recordings and reviews

↘ Depending on your art form and medium, you can choose to have both print and digital portfolios

↘ Update your portfolio regularly

↘ You do not need to include every piece of work, just your best and brightest!

Artist Press Kits

What is a press kit and should you have one?

A press kit (sometimes called a media kit) is a valuable marketing tool for artists and entrepreneurs. A press kit can help you market yourself, connect with potential paid opportunities, and communicate your work to those seeking to hire you or collaborate with you. A press kit is essentially “you- in a package”.

Arts organizations, event planners, and other stakeholders often request press kits from the artists they engage. Having a well laid out, professional kit can garner you repeat bookings as well as gain you new business. Press kits can represent a person, company, event, or product, and they provide your target market with valuable insights on what you have to offer. A press kit will also ensure that your marketing is consistent across all of your platforms and engagements.

What are press kit components?

Depending on your art form and medium, a press kit may include any of the following. The underlined items are what all press kits must include, and other items are optional:

- ↘ Biography
- ↘ Headshot/ product shot
- ↘ Links to social media/ website
- ↘ Contact information
- ↘ Media articles/ coverage
- ↘ Music demo
- ↘ Media Features
- ↘ Writing and/ or Art Samples
- ↘ Performance footage
- ↘ Promotional Video
- ↘ Awards/Acknowledgements
- ↘ Testimonials/ Reviews
- ↘ Artist statement
- ↘ Collaborations and upcoming events/ media features

A press kit does not need to be long, or contain too much information. In fact, it's best to have a short, diverse press kit that showcases your skills, strengths and personality.

Press Kit Building Strategies



↘ Ensure that your press kit is of high quality- that photographs are professional, your biography is well written and laid out, and that all media materials are relevant and of professional caliber. Including old, irrelevant, or poor quality components can take away from your press kit and harm your brand and professional reputation.

↘ Some elements of a press kit can be expensive to create (promotional videos, professional headshots, etc.), so try collaborating and bartering with your networks to reduce costs and build community.

↘ In terms of format, you can create a digital or physical press kit, though it is becoming increasingly irrelevant to produce a print press kit as technology advances. You can use interesting tools to create a digital press kit that enable you to embed different elements in accessible and organized ways. Online presentation tools, video hosting websites, and social media outlets present unique opportunities for your kit.



↘ You can create multiple press kits to showcase particular events, projects, exhibits or products. Your press kit should be tailored to the opportunity at hand.



↘ A press kit does not need to be long, or contain too much information. In fact, it's best to have a short, diverse press kit that showcases your skills, strengths and personality.

Biographies

Your biography is a crucial element of your press kit; it provides an overview into the “story” element of who you are as an artist, as well as your education (formal or informal), your experience, collaborations, mentors, and previous work. You can write your biography in first or third person, just make sure to remain consistent. Biographies are a guide to your evolution as an artist and the experiences that have shaped your craft. Biographies should be written in chronological order and should include the personal details about your life that are relevant to your work, motivations, and processes as an artist.

Most artists have several biographies, varying in length and purpose. For example, you may choose to have a short biography for print in performance programs or as an introduction for media interviews, and a longer biography for grant applications, residency applications, your website, proposals and pitches, as well as longer term artist engaged work. Ensure your biography is well written, and consider regular edits and review from trusted colleagues and mentors.

A good biography:

- ↘ Is about you as an artist, not a particular work or collection
- ↘ Explores your evolution as an artist
- ↘ Includes biographical information such as place of birth, current place of practice
- ↘ Outlines the history and places that your work identifies with
- ↘ Explores your process and practice as an artist
- ↘ Includes information on your formal or informal education/training
- ↘ Can be used throughout your career, updated occasionally as new experiences influence your work

Artist Statements

An artist statement is a written text that speaks to your work as an artist either a collected body of work (collected visual works in an art show, poetry anthology, etc.) or a specific work (a play, dance routine, song etc.). An artist statement contextualizes your work and outlines motives, influences and themes for the collection or piece. It also explores the content of the piece, your art form, medium, and style, and speaks to your audience in your absence. Writing artist statements enables you to connect with your audience or target market in a direct, intimate, and lasting way.

Good guiding questions while planning your artist statements can include:

Does it influence, inform, or contextualize my work?
Does it offer insight into the work in question?

A good artist statement:

- ↳ Is about a particular work or body of work
- ↳ Is not a resume, not about your career, and is not autobiographical
- ↳ Does not tell your audience how to see the work, but provides insight by giving context and identifying your influences and motives for this work
- ↳ Complements your work
- ↳ Is carefully constructed and written with purpose by making it simple, direct, and to the point
- ↳ Is reflective of your voice, captures your style & personality
- ↳ Speaks to your audience in your absence
- ↳ Communicates the language component of your work

References

The following resources were consulted in the development of this toolkit:

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- <http://diytoolkit.org/tools/>
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