



WHO ARE YOU?

A Writers' Guide to Marketing or The Story of You!

An Easy way to answer the question:
"A Writer? What Do You Write?"

S. D. Anderson. PhD

Founder of the Cape Cod Writers' Studio

Introduction:

All writers are story-tellers by nature and are good at it, otherwise they would not become writers.

S. D. Anderson

Your Story:

This is the story of YOU.

When you are out mingling with people, and they ask, "What do you do?" You may respond, "I am a writer!" "Oh, yes," they answer, "What do you write?" What they really want to know is "WHO ARE YOU?" And possibly wonder, "Have I read your books?" Here is where you tell them your story.

You can stand there and choke up and feel totally embarrassed, OR you can tell them "who you are".

The purpose of this book is to introduce you to an easy way to tell anyone who has asked or will listen to Your Story... and maybe even buy your book. But the thing is, you need to prepare ahead of time. I have been in that embarrassing position and wish the floor would open up and I could disappear because I had no idea what to say. I was totally unprepared.

Most people are kind and want to really know your story, why you became a writer and what you have written lately. They are genuinely interested. Don't disappoint them. AND don't bore them to eye-rolling, either, another-words KISS.... Keep It Simple Silly...



WHAT IS YOUR STORY?

Years ago, different sites were pushing what they called, THE ELEVATOR PITCH. Some still hold to this format. A 'Elevator Pitch' is a 1 to 3 minute blurb a person could use to promote whatever it was they were selling. This might be a good format to follow and it worked for years and still does. Most people's attention span is pretty short now. My guess? because they are surfing the 'net' constantly, so you need to rethink how you want to present yourself and what you wish to say.

WAIT! There is a format that might help you get the ideas down in a sequence that people will understand and want to know more.



Here are a few ideas for you to think about:

Remember your first line **MUST** grab their attention...

"So glad you asked me that."

OR

"Thank you for asking."

And you are?

(Wait for their answer)

Nice to meet you.

"Are you a Writer, too?"

(Wait for their answer)

Then launch your story...

So nice to meet you...

My name is _____

Hello, I am _____

"I'm Sharon Anderson, Founder of the Cape Cod Writers' Studio and I have a passion for helping writers to become better writers' and authors.

You have just told them what you are passionate about....

"I've just finished my new book "A Writers' Guide to Marketing or The Story of You" to help struggling authors find an easier way to market their work.

This tells them you are aware of the problems for writers and authors to overcome.

"Being a writer myself I understand how difficult it is for writers and authors to launch themselves into the Marketing Realm."

This tells pinpoints their dilemmas....

"Hopefully my book will show them an easier way. One that won't make them feel "smarmy"."

And you have provided the solution..

Then turn the pitch around and do some marketing yourself.... If you haven't already asked this question. "Are you a writer?"

If they answer, "Yes, I am a writer." you know what to say to this

If they say, "oh no, I am a reader."

Your answer could be, "I am so glad to hear that because without readers what we do would be redundant."

This is one scenario I have used and it works. When I use this scenario, my goal is to sign up people to my mailing list. Stressing that we need readers and they are so important to authors so they leave your presence (in this case, my booth at a farm market) with a huge smile because they now realize that we need readers, too. And being a reader is important...So, even if they never write a book, they just might purchase yours. And you have their e-mail address to let them know what is new in the market and even a story of your newest book a year later.

Next we will discuss strategies.

Speaking of Farm Markets. I took a booth because I needed to get our name out there. We were a new entity to the Cape and what I had to offer were writing studios. Well, everyone is not a writer looking for a place to write. I found that out after my second week. People were not going to buy books from us either at \$15.00 per copy if two booths over they were selling used books from the library across the street for \$2.00 and \$3.00



CHANGE OF STRATEGY

That is when I launched the "Are you a writer or a reader?" Campaign. E-mail addresses were (and are) far more important than selling a book or two and when the attendees realized I was not trying to sell them a book they may never read, they willingly gave up their e-mail address.

Depending on where you are: an informal meet-and-greet, a networking venue, meeting someone in the grocery store, or a book signing at your local library, you have to have your "story" ready. And be well rehearsed.

*** Important Point! Which we will address in a later chapter. We need a few other items in place before we can 'wax poetic' on your "Story"



NOW TO BUSINESS CARDS

"You are joking, right?"

No matter what stage you are in for your writing: either a beginner, you have written some or a published author, you need a business card. Even if you are a dog-walker on the side, you still need a business card.



Business cards are part of your story, they are "The Story of You" in capsulated form and something you can give to a person so they will remember you. Yes, even years later...

Over the years I have collected hundreds of business cards and have them stored in a special file drawer. They are my references if I should need 'something' and I have sorted through them frequently. This file of business cards is my memory jogger. Yours should be in a file like that. To me, they are a special resource, like Wikipedia, only more personal. (Wikipersonal ?)

There is a new innovation with some printers which allows you to print additional information on the back of the card - perhaps the cover of your newest book or the title with a catch phrase??? Possibilities are endless.

Who do I recommend? VISTA-PRINT - they have been printing my cards for years and they are reasonably inexpensive. Their service is excellent, too.

<https://www.google.com/search?q=vistaprint+business+cards&oq=vista+print>



NOW, BACK TO YOUR STORY

First: the format or how to set it up.

Starting your story follows the same lines as any story you write. It has to have

A BEGINNING

A MIDDLE

AN END

The beginning or first line should grab your reader's or listener's attention.

Do you want to be courteous?

It is nice to thank people for asking, don't you think? So, how can you start this sentence? What can you say that will convey your appreciation for their time? Sometimes a little courtesy goes a long way. And so does a smile. Not a smirk or a grin, but an engaging smile. Let your face light up and make the smile reach your eyes. So much can be conveyed in that simple gesture. Let them see that you really are pleased that they asked. If you want to actually thank them, all the better. You are trying to win friends here.... Or better still, a 'fan'.



1. SMILE
2. "Thank you for asking"
3. "How nice of you to ask"
4. "I'm Sharon, and it is a pleasure to see you again"

After the intro, tell them what your passion is and what you have been doing.

"My passion is writing. I am currently in a writers' group and have just started my new novel.

OR

" I am so excited. I'm publishing my new novel on Amazon next week."

You have just told them up-front about your passion... now tell them what your writing is about...

"The Title is "A Writers' Guide to Marketing. The Story of You!" to help other writers work through their struggles with marketing."

OR

"It is a series of stories about how writers deal with their self-doubt about marketing their work."

This tells them there are problems for writers and authors to overcome.

"Hopefully my book will show them an easier way. One that won't make them feel isolated and have to face this "alone."

And you have provided the solution..

So, the format is:

1. Opening sentence or greeting with a genuine smile
2. What you are currently doing
3. What motivated you to write this book or story
4. What problem your book will solve
5. They might ask you where they can get a copy

Hand them your business card.



Yes, this is the beginning of your story and it is your 2 minute version.
Next, we write it down and then we practice it until we get it perfect...

It goes like this:

Hi, I'm _____

Thanks for asking.

I'm currently in a writers' group and starting a series of stories about writers and how they deal with self-doubt about marketing. Every writer has them, even Shakespeare over 400 years ago. My book will help writers work through their fears using research and interviews with other writers as they explain how they dealt with it.

I hope to have it published on Amazon in a few months. Would you like me to let you know when it will be available?

Hand them your business card...

Work this until you can 'wax poetic'



Fill in your own words and ideas...

Rehearse in front of a mirror. Record it on Garage Band or Audacity.

Expectations:

What do you expect after you have told your "story" to someone?

That the person you spoke with will walk away smiling and think, "nice person." And pocket your card. To place it later in their file drawer. Or business card file.

Worst case scenario: Even if they discard the card, you have still left a lasting impression because you were courteous and you SMILED.

"You never get a second chance to make a good first impression."

~~Will Rogers.

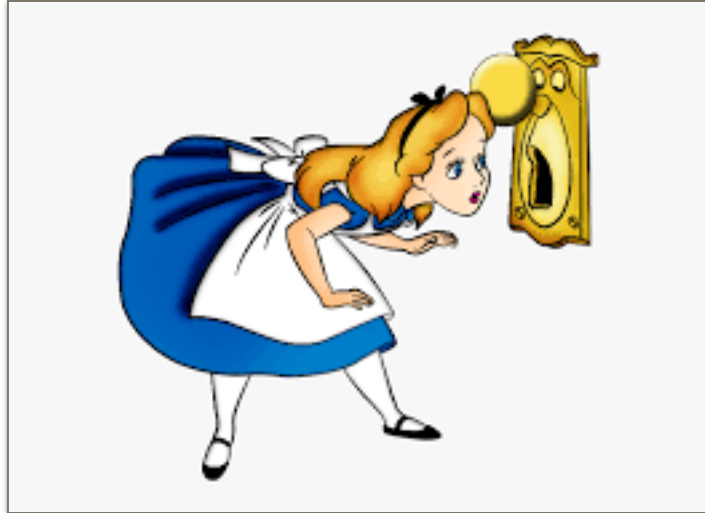
This is the beginning of "Your Story". Stay tuned for part 2

"Your Story of What."

Your Story Of What Part 2



1. What exactly is the story of *WHAT*?
2. This is the story that answers that question.
3. What Happened to *YOU*?
4. What experience happened to you that made you want to become a writer?
5. How did you know this was to be your life's work?
6. What was that pivotal experience?



Your story of WHAT has an urgency

1. Think Back to a Time and a Place -
2. AN EVENT in your life
3. Where were you when this happened?
4. Why were you surprised (the Light Bulb?)
5. How did you feel?
6. Was there a connection here?
7. Did your whole body feel this connection?
8. Then what happened?
9. Did you see yourself (in the future) doing this?
10. When did you know this was something you had to do???

Most of the time, we don't plan our story of WHAT. It just happens. The event is usually benign at first but something happens during this event that triggers a response from you that tells you to sit up and listen or take special notes here.

My story of What:

I was in a writers group which met every Tuesday morning. My stories were not well received by the group for whatever reason. My writing was terrible according to the members. I endured that group for three years, taking to heart their criticisms and comments, working on my writing skills and crying all the way home. Finally (the Event) I decided I had enough of their criticism and their condescending attitudes. I got ANGRY. I pounded my steering wheel and VOWED that if I had a writing group, no writer in my group would ever have to endure that abuse.

The members in my group (studio) would be compassionate and kind and help each other with their stories, no matter what their writing skills or subject was like. Someone in the group would find something positive or kind to say.

That was my future projection of what I would do. Much like Alice felt before she fell down that rabbit hole.

I left the group that final Tuesday and never looked back.

(I will continue my story of WHO in part 3.)

YOUR STORY OF WHAT IS VERY LIKE THAT.

Think back to that event, feel yourself connecting to whatever it was that was happening. Picture yourself doing whatever it was.

Scenario:

You attend a book signing at your local library. You have never met the author but your best friend suggested you come with her and then go out to lunch after.

You listen to the author speak about her book and marvel at her passion. Immediately, you feel that same passion. You see yourself writing books and helping others. Not in the same way of this author, but you immediately feel you could write books for struggling parents with some of your ideas to help make their life easier. You see yourself speaking to parenting groups. This is a life changing event for you. You know deep down that this is something you need to do.

Guess What?

EVENT!!!

Stay tuned for PART 3 YOUR STORY OF WHO...



Your Story Of Who

Part 3



Your Story of WHO explores WHO your writing is for.

WHO WILL BE THE BEST RECIPIENT FOR YOUR STORIES?

WHO WILL YOUR READERS BE?

Years ago, when I began writing, I never had a thought nor a clue as to who would read my books. I just cranked them out, launched them on Amazon and hoped for the best.

Times have shifted. Readers are very selective. And the market is glutted with print books and e-books.

Marketing is a (Bloody) merry-go-round.

I know nice girls aren't supposed to use swear language but I cannot think of any other word to use. Or would *%^\$#@! Work better?

That is one of the reasons I created this small book. Who knows, I may even get up the courage to actually publish it.

My intent in creating it is — and here is that story. Notice how it fits with what this book is about.

I am a COACH of sorts...A writing coach, a publishing coach or whichever hat I choose to wear.





My coaching seems to have a life of its own... to describe my ideal client or recipient would be a writer who is struggling... With what? Not anything I could categorize. Sometimes they are writers or authors I have known or helped previously, sometimes they come to me through a referral, but they all have a struggle they are trying to work through. I use the term 'struggle' because it is that for them. They are looking for help, advice (free sometimes), guidance and a solution to their problem or struggle. If it is within my knowledge base, I help them, if not and I can refer them out, I do that also.



This is where you need to decide your WHO.

Children? Will you write books for children?

A Memoire? For friends and family?

Genealogy for ancestors?

How-to books for parents?

(I started writing how-to books for self-publishing)

Romance novels?

Action adventure?

Travel?

Science Fiction?

Horror?

Dystopian?

Cook Book?

The list is endless.



Writers frequently come into our studios with one idea in mind and after being with the group, decide to go in a completely different direction.

Amazon is constantly adding new categories to their lists. Romance alone now has over 700 categories according to Alex Newton of K-Lytic's. He has been analyzing Amazon categories for a few years, now.

Also in working with your WHO, you should know a lot about them. But especially where their challenges are and how you can help them work through these challenges.

That is the key!



The formula for this story is:

1. Write out a brief description of this WHO.
2. What are their challenges?
3. How can you help them?
4. What can YOU offer them that no one else can?





Now, to bring this 'story' to a close.

Writers are by nature hermits, or recluses to use a better word. We like to be in 'our space' with no interruptions, no extraneous interference. Sound familiar?

We are also shy about "Putting ourselves out-there".

Most of the authors I help would prefer to "just write" and leave the marketing alone or send it off to someone else. (Which can become extremely expensive).

Telling "Your Story" is your "built-in-marketing tool". And it is FREE!

I also teach writers how to HOOK their readers with these free marketing strategies they already have in their books. These are the other "Built-In Tools" that should hook your reader and get them interested in buying your book.

Here is the HOOK that we use.... We begin with:

1. Title
2. Cover
3. Blurb
4. First chapter or paragraph

And one of my students added this one

5. Author bio

Her reasoning was, she never purchased a book until she read the Author's Bio. She wanted to know who wrote the book...

So, you now see that YOUR STORY is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT.

READERS WILL PURCHASE YOUR BOOK IF THEY "KNOW" YOU, IF THEY KNOW WHO YOU ARE!

On the KDP Amazon site, each author (when published) has what we call "A Landing Page" where readers searching for a book to read can click on your title and have all this information readily available.

Your title

Your cover

Your Blurb or description

Your first chapter or Look Inside"

Your author bio

Amazon gives you this availability. Use it!



Now to summarize... (again)

Readers will buy your book if they "KNOW" you — if they know WHO YOU ARE

So you see how important this is.

Even if you have not finished your book or published it, someday you will have to write your bio. If you know "YOUR STORY" and can wax poetic, that is the beginning of your author bio. Readers don't care if you were valedictorian or if you won scholarships, they want to know the real YOU, the STORY OF YOU...

THAT IS WHAT MARKETING IS ALL ABOUT!

IT IS THAT *&^%\$#@! MERRY GO ROUND....

I would love to hear your story, or better still, get out that legal pad and start writing it down so you have it memorized and can "wax poetic" when someone asks,

"A writer? What do you write?"

P.S. there are four more segments to this "story"

Stay Tuned....





Author Bio:

Sharon D. Anderson, PhD, RMT

The Founder of the Cape Cod Writers' Studio, Sharon is an expert in the field of writing and self-publishing. She hosts two writing studios through Zoom each week and is the owner of Cape Cod Publishing, a unique personalized publishing service which she offers to her students.

She frequently presents on-line workshops and training courses where she teaches participants the intricacies of writing and professional self-publishing, plying them with countless cups of tea and biscuits when they are overwhelmed.

As an Author/Publisher, she has self-published over fifty of her own books on the Internet. She writes both fiction and non-fiction from a visionary background which reflects her wisdom, insights, and an abundance of wacky humor.

She is an active member in the Cape Cod Media Center.

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