

Personal Brand Voice Discovery Worksheet

A tool for teaching AI — and anyone who writes for you — exactly who you are.

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This is where we start shaping your brand and your voice. Your business is **you** — people are hiring you as a person, not a service — so the goal is to pull your actual personality onto the page in enough detail that Claude (or any tool, or any writer) can capture it.

Most voice docs fail because they're too abstract. We're going to get specific.

Ramble if you want. Write in bullets if it helps. The goal is to sound like you — or the most polished, intentional version of you.

PART 1 — QUESTIONS

Brand Foundation + Vision

Who are you building toward?

What are your goals for your personal brand over the next 6-12 months?

What's the bigger vision? Authority, community, clients, or something else entirely?

Your business is you. What does someone need to feel about you personally before they're ready to hire you?

What do you want to be known for? What kind of legacy do you want to leave behind?

How should people feel after interacting with your brand? What do you want them to say when you're not in the room?

Story + Values

What shaped you?

What's your origin story? (This is your About Page moment. Let it rip.)

What were the turning points or moments that shaped your current approach?

What values drive your decision-making in business and life?

Why do you do what you do this way? What makes your work different and important?

Personality Deep Dive - How You Actually Talk

The texture lives in the details.

What are 3-5 phrases, sayings, or verbal tics you say all the time? The stuff your friends would impersonate.

Example: "Ain't no thing but a chicken wing" when someone thanks me. I say "honestly" too much. I open emails with "hey hey!"

Do you curse? In what contexts? Are there specific words you love or hate?

Example: Curse freely with friends, never in client work. Love a well-placed "shit" for emphasis.

How do you greet people? How do you sign off? Hey friend, xx, Talk soon, Cheers, etc.

When you're excited about something, how does it come out in writing? Italics? All caps? A word you over-use?

When you're annoyed but still being professional, how does THAT come out in writing?

Example: "I get really clipped and direct. Short sentences. Lots of 'to be clear.' My politeness gets sharper, not warmer."

Sentence length: short punchy fragments? Long flowing sentences? A mix?

What's your relationship with em dashes, ellipses, parentheticals, lowercase, emoji?

Example: "I HATE em dashes. Use commas, parentheses, or two sentences. Emojis fine in Slack, kept out of polished writing."

Sense of Humor

Humor is personality. Don't skip this.

What kind of humor do you have? Give me an example of something you found genuinely funny recently.

Example: Dry, clever, tongue-in-cheek. Recently lost it at a fanfic tag: "why is no one talking about how Rhysand would be in a group chat called The Inner Circle."

What kind of humor do you NOT do?

Example: "I don't do mean humor or punching-down jokes. I don't do the coffee/girlboss/hustle LinkedIn cosplay."

Are there comedians, shows, or writers whose humor feels closest to yours? Why?

Example: John Mulaney for the rhythm. Bo Burnham for the meta layer. The way fanfic authors deliver a punchline - earned, in-on-it.

References + Cultural Footprint

What world do you live in?

What do you reference constantly? Give me 5-10 things you reach for over and over.

Example: Sarah J. Maas books (Rhysand specifically, always). Fanfic culture. Romantasy. My band McKittrick Buttonwillow. Colored pencil art.

What's a reference you'd NEVER make because it doesn't feel like you?

If your content had a soundtrack, what genre or 3 artists would be on it?

Example: Disney soundtracks. Weezer. Norah Jones.

Opinions + Edges

What do you actually think?

What's a hot take you have about your industry? The one you'd actually say out loud.

Example: Most "thought leadership" on LinkedIn is just confidence cosplay. The people who actually know things are too busy doing the work.

What's something you find genuinely annoying about how people in your field write or talk online?

Example: The em dash epidemic. The "Here's what I learned" listicle. People who use "delve" and "tapestry" unironically.

What are you a snob about?

Example: Romantasy. I will absolutely judge what you're reading. Also: punctuation, AP style.

What's an opinion you hold that other people in your space would probably disagree with?

Texture + Contradictions

The stuff that makes you a real person.

What's a contradiction in you?

Example: I'm a hard-nosed content strategist with 20 years of experience... who writes fanfic in my head about fictional High Lords and sings in a band.

What's a small, weird, specific detail about you that almost never makes it into your content but feels essential?

Example: I do colored pencil art. Slow, vibrant, emotionally indulgent - and it informs how I think about content.

How do you talk about yourself? Self-deprecating? Confident? Hard time bragging?

What's the thing you secretly know you're great at but never quite say out loud?

Aspirational Gap

The distance between page-you and in-person-you.

When you read your own writing back, where does it fall flat compared to how you sound in person?

Example: In person I'm quick, dry, specific. On the page I sometimes flatten that out into something safer.

If Claude could capture ONE thing about you that it currently isn't, what would it be?

Example: The cleverness. The specific, knowing, slightly-tongue-in-cheek thing.

Is the voice we're building meant to sound exactly like everyday-you, or a sharpened version?

Voice Boundaries

Your hard no's matter as much as your yes's.

What are 5 words you'd use to describe how you sound when you're at your best?

What are 3-5 words you NEVER want associated with your brand?

Example: Salesy. Corporate. Generic. Try-hard. "Delve."

What's the line between professional-you and personal-you in your content? Where do they overlap?

What are your hard no's? Topics, tones, trends, aesthetics, formats you refuse to touch.

Audience + Community

Who are you talking to?

Who are you trying to reach? Demographics, psychographics, any targeting data you've used.

What keeps them up at night? What goals or frustrations are they working through?

Where do they hang out online or in real life?

What's a misconception your audience has - and how do you want to reframe it?

What's the personality trait that makes someone want to hire YOU specifically over a similar person?

Content Style + Preferences

How do you want to show up?

What kind of content do you like to make or want to try?

What platforms are you drawn to or already playing on?

Are there creators or personalities whose voice speaks your language?

What kind of content feels totally off-brand for you?

PART 2 — MATERIALS + ARTIFACTS

The goal isn't to teach Claude to mimic exactly how you write today. It's to build the voice you want to show up as publicly. Range matters more than volume. 1-2 great samples in each category beats a dump of 30.

Voice Samples - How You Sound Now

Show, don't describe.

A piece of long-form writing: an article, a LinkedIn post, a newsletter, anything.

A personal note or letter you're proud of - somewhere the words really mattered.

An email where you were trying to land a point, pitch something, or push back.

A short-form sample: a caption, a text thread, a Slack message that captured your voice.

Anything you've posted publicly that felt the most like you - even the one you almost didn't publish.

Voice References - Where You Want to Go

What does better look like for your voice?

2-3 writers, creators, or thinkers whose voice you'd want to emulate (not copy). List them:

For each one: specific pieces you love, and what about their voice resonates with you.

Optional: a writer or brand whose voice is the opposite of what you want - the cautionary tale.

Branding + Content Materials

What already exists?

Existing bios - short, long, or platform-specific. Paste or summarize:

Links to current social profiles:

Past content you're proud of - social posts, articles, newsletters:

Once you've filled this out, head to the full workflow guide at melissapardo.com/blog-ai-voice.html

Free resource from Melissa Pardo · melissapardo.com/resources · melissapardo@gmail.com