

For Your Success Episode 191: How To Keep Your Students Engaged by Brandy Agerback

Do you have a course that has performed below your expectations? It is so frustrating to pour your heart and soul into something that you know can serve the world and only make a couple of sales, but it's not a failure my friend you don't need to throw all that work away and start again. The first two (2) times I sold my signature program I didn't make more than five sales either time, but I found the formula and I want to share with you how to master the online course process. If you're a teacher or an expert with a course or online training or a coaching program you're invited to the course mastery live event coming up in just a few days where I'm going to be presenting our proprietary formula for successful online programs. This is 3 days of live training work time interactive networking and of course, those PDF downloads to refer back to later.

I'll be giving you the strategies you need to up-level your program your marketing, and the experience you deliver to your students so that your program sells and your students end up being raving fans and volunteer promoters of your programs. You'll walk away with all you need to build a business from your course so you can earn more, do more, and impact more people in the kingdom with your unique gifts.

Get all the details and register today at [course mastery live.com](http://course.mastery.live.com).

Hi, it's Tap Hornor thanks for tuning into the Podcast an inspirational program about creating the lifestyle and legacy impact you want to have. Your host today is a Christian author, speaker, business coach, and program development expert who will help you design grow, and delight in doing business as worship, because that is true success.

And now here's my lovely wife, Katie Horner,

Katie: You visual thinkers are going to love our show today we've got a very special guest who teaches transformational visual thinking, visual planning, and she also has a course for this believe it or not. I'm so excited to have my friend Brandy Agerback with us today of the Agerbeck method Brandy welcome to the For Your Success Podcast.

Brandy: Thank you so much, Katie, it's an absolute pleasure to get to geek out about teaching online that we love to do so much.

Katie: Yes, yes it is. And this topic particularly interests me of course, because one of the things that we focus on a lot in both our core successful online courses and in our master teacher program is the idea of being able to attract and serve all of the learning styles when you produce a program right.

And so the three learning styles, obviously the kinetics, the ones that have to do everything with their hands that would be moving to learn right, and then you have your audio people those of you that are probably really enjoying listening to the podcast right now. And then you have the visual people who. I see it and need to draw it and, you know, see the big picture and the map and all of that to understand. And that is your expertise that's what you get to do day in and day out. And so I'm very excited to hear your take on just how that improves your course So much to be able, to explain things visually to your people.

Brandy: Yeah, absolutely. And even though I say I teach visual thinking I am a hands-on learner one of my very best friends said that she could learn anything if she could turn it into a craft project that is very much my philosophy as well. And you know, the Agerbeck Method Course, which is the core course it's 90 days, it's 90 videos. So, you know, you may give this advice as well so many people say don't make the giant course right off the bat I did not follow that advice, but I can talk about making the giant course and then how you break it up into pieces. But knowing that it was going to be a very hefty, comprehensive course I had to think very clearly about those three learning styles absolutely how to help people kind of navigate where they are in the course to keep them motivated, for instance, when I was producing that course I had a bunch of different setups in my studio, and I was very clear about what's the best setup to teach this particular lesson and to make sure I was mixing up those different formats.

So just keeping people's attention that they weren't looking at the same thing every day through such a long course I think that continuity can be fine, especially for a shorter course that might be more auditor, but for my learners, I wanted to make sure that it was absolutely the best setup to demonstrate the ideas, and especially because what we do needs to be practiced. And especially because you do have to get your hands on what I just taught you every single one of those video lessons was followed with what I call a practice builder. So every one of them had very clear instructions on what you can do how you can practice that specific lesson.

Katie: I love it, I love it. And the idea of keeping their attention I know you've seen in some of the Marvel things or the Disney things, you know, they hide these little Easter eggs that are in a reference to something else because they

know those people who are fanatics are going to be like, “oh, I found it, I found it.” And it keeps them looking it keeps them interested what are some of your suggestions for that kind of thing when you're doing this kind of visual stuff?

Brandy: Well, that's a good question. You're just describing sort of the going micro and Easter eggs.

Katie: I might have gone too deep, too fast.

Brandy: No, I tend to always ladder up to the big picture in context so I have some things where you might see as the same flower arrangement like 3 weeks later because things were filmed asynchronously. But I think one of the biggest things is to show someone the shape of the course so they know exactly where they're going. So my particular course is 90 days with 90 modules so each module is 10 days around one set of choices within visual thinking. Visual thinking seems very simple because it's paper and pen you don't need fancy materials, but there's a whole lot of choices that happen when you're looking at that blank sheet of paper, like what kind of choices am I making that helped me make meaning by making this drawing on the page? So I'm very clear to say, you're starting in this module and in each module there is 3 topics each of those three topics is for three (3) days, and then every 10th day they get a review and reflection session.

So they have those 9 experiences and then every 10th day they're getting the summary and the highlights. So it really helps to reinforce their learning and those patterns are repeated nine (9) times.

Katie: I love it.

Brandy: Yeah I know right. So as I go through that first, that first 10 days, they're going to be very well set up to understand the rhythm throughout those 90 days.

Katie: Right. And I know sometimes we have course creators in our audience who may be doing this because they're an expert, not necessarily a teacher right. I know my stuff, but I don't necessarily know the best practices for teaching my stuff. And if you're listening to this or watching the video right now, Brandy just gave you an amazing schema, if you will, or an amazing outline for how to organize your content, right?

You make it simple she's got (9) nine modules, and each of those modules is 10 days. And within that 10 days three (3) days each for a topic, and then a review

day, if you look at any kind of curriculum book that's the way a lot of them are set up my child's second-grade math book sitting right over here on the desk, beside me in the office, is set up that way. You know, there are so many chapters, and each chapter deals with this topic and this topic, and then a day of review. And that really helps to reinforce that learning for your students it gives them a success map so they can know where they're going and how long it's going to take them to get through this.

If they're goal-oriented, it gives them that push to conquer, right? If they're checklists people they get to check things off as they move through and it helps to motivate them to keep them going. And I think that's super important, and when you can draw it out visually like Brandy is talking about they get to see each of those steps or the list, or however that you decide to do it so that they know where they are and where they're going. And I think that's super, super important.

Brandy: Yeah one thing as you were describing this on my to-do list, but I haven't done yet. I mean the course is a few years old, and one thing I wanted to do is I talk about this course, being your foundation and early on, I talk about what kind of house you want to build on that foundation is your choice. So you might be learning visual thinking because you are a teacher or you want to use it for learning skills. You could be using it more as a personal productivity tool so each person in the course could have very different reasons for why they want to learn it, but this is the foundation that's going to help every one of them.

So I've got an icon from having those nine (9) review sessions I have an icon now for each one of those lessons, and what I wanted to do was actually make a graphic that was a PDF they got at the very beginning of the course that says foundation that has sort of brick by brick each of those icons. So they can like you said, with a checklist, fill it in, get that sense of accomplishment to see how far they are in the entire picture, and then at the very beginning of the course, actually draw out a metaphorical house what is their house? Why is this important to them to help keep them motivated? So I'm glad you brought this up and we're talking like I'm going to put that to the top of my list because that's a darn good idea to have that executed.

Katie: Yeah I love that and speaking of why, Brandy, what is your, what's your why behind the courses that you provide for people in the visual thinking world? What made you decide to put this out there? What made you decide to put it in course format?

Brandy: It's a great question. I think that like you said about the different learning styles, and I know some folks like to tear down that concept because there have been studies that is a whole other conversation, as you know, but I believe that each of us has different strengths. Each of us has different weaknesses, each of us has a different preference, and I'm somebody who considers myself extremely lucky that I got to work to my strengths as a kid. I had teachers that gave me a lot of space so I was able to grow by building out these visual listening skills just naturally.

And I think a lot of us when we were that kiddo who was 7 years old making that drawing we were making meaning for ourselves, and unfortunately what happens so often is somebody looks at that drawing maybe a teacher may be a parent, very often a teacher or a parent. And they're instantly judging that drawing is a product, you know, and thinking like, what is this? Instead of using it as a conversational tool, as like part of a process to say, oh, walk me through this drawing, tell me the story. So, unfortunately, when you get somebody very judgy, you know, when, when that joyful drawing becomes good or bad or pretty or ugly, that's when people just completely shut off that switch, that drawing switch, they lose this opportunity to use this tool for themselves. And I think, you know when we're kiddos and we're drawing dragons or we're drawing our house you know that's about imagination, that's about the world around us.

What I love is as we develop and as we grow, we get much more abstract reasoning with the ability to deal with more abstraction with spatial reasoning, figuring out just how do pieces fit together because a whole lot of what we're all working with is more complex than what can be drawn as a straight line. So, you know, having that opportunity to get that stuff out, push those pieces around to see how they fit together is an incredibly powerful tool now for my particular business, the trick is how do you help people recognize themselves as visual thinkers?

Hopefully, a lot of folks listening to this already do, or even if they don't yet to see that, oh, wow! I haven't used those tools, but I could see how those tools could be useful because again, it's about getting all that stuff out and onto paper.

So you can make meaning for yourself I hope I answered your question I kind of got all of my.....

Katie: There is no right or wrong answer here.

Brandy: (12:03 inaudible)

Katie: That's fabulous and I love it that passion that comes through for you is sharing that with the world and bringing that imagination to life. You know we're restoring this old house here in Mexico, and when we first moved in I had this vision in my head of what it would look like when it was done. And I put it to paper I painted the watercolor picture of what this would look like, and it's so fascinating to see it coming to pass right?

Brandy: Isn't that amazing

Katie: I took that out of my head and now and now it's like 3D you know, and I'm just like I'm walking in my painting.

Brandy: That's so gratifying, isn't it?

Katie: Yeah, yeah.

Brandy: It's amazing the powers that our visions have absolutely.

Katie: I know. So with your, with your creativity and, this visual aspect, I'm sure you see a lot of very amazing visuals for course launches and some really very icky visuals for course launches. Can you give our listeners some visual tips for the images that you're using to represent the transformation you give with your course? What are some things we can take away and put into practice?

Brandy: You know, that's a really good question. I think a lot of times folks they've heard some kind of rule, especially when we think about things like presentation design, or even sales page design, but, you know, here are the components. Here's exactly how to do it. You know, you have to have 5 topics and, think like PowerPoint slides whereas you can, you can't have any more x points, and they can't be any more than Y words. And the deal is your work may not fit into that shape so I think the biggest thing is instead of kind of shoving your work into, you know, some rules, somebody has what I encourage folks to do, especially for those folks who are coming to online courses with a very deep knowledge base. So we are the nerds who are so excited to teach our learners what we know and get them excited about this topic.

So for those of us who have like the deep knowledge base to really sit down and kind of get all the different things you could teach out. So you can start thinking about how do I group these different lessons? How do I group these different topics so that it isn't just here's five (5) things or here are three (3) things maybe it could be five (5) things it could be three (3) things, but you could discover

through that process that you have first, you have a foundation. And then on top of that foundation is three pillars or, you know, whatever that shape could be to let it emerge from the content itself, because when you let it emerge and when you have that structure, maybe it is a metaphor like pillars or a house. When you do have that structure, that's going to make what you're teaching be in integrity that's going to give it a whole, a sense of a whole and be holistic.

So that not only do students as we've already talked about understanding how they're moving through what they're learning. You also have an opportunity to take that shape and say, okay like in my case, here are the nine (9) modules here are the nine (9) categories of visual thinking choices, and you can get all nine (9) of those in that foundational course. But hey, look over here I did a deep dive workshop, which became a course just on this one module so they're able to see that, okay this is the foundation of everything, but if I want to go deep on color then I can choose the spectrum savvy course. You know that kind of idea so that you can telescope in and out kind of microscope in and telescope out and people can learn at different levels.

But again, this is easiest when you are the person with the deep knowledge base, and maybe you're thinking this first core shouldn't be everything unlike what I did right. I made the comprehensive course first, but, even if you're not making that comprehensive course first, which I know is definitely what people suggest that you know, kind of where that piece fits in that bigger picture for yourself.

Katie: Yeah I love it.

Brandy: So I think as far as advice kind of get back to the question as good or bad, I'm not a snob about how things look I think somebody could be standing on a flip chart making a very basic drawing, but if it's showing that integrity, if it's showing that shape, then it's brilliant. It doesn't have to be a fancy polished graphic to be able to communicate.

Katie: I love it.

Brandy: I like to think more about the content and how you're expressing it, then it has to be you have to pay X number of dollars for a designer to make it, I think, you know that's...

Katie: Right. And that's what we say about courses and sales pages and podcasts sessions even it can never be too long, only, too boring right. So as long as you are getting your message across like that's what people are there for and whatever way you do that is going to be perfect.

So thank you so much, Brandy, for being with us today.

Brandy: Yeah, my pleasure.

Katie: It's been a joy to talk with you. You guys go check out Brandy's stuff over@loosetooth.com. We'll have that link in the show notes for you. Get on her list to see what she's doing get into that next offer of her visual thinking class and see how you can start to add more visuals to the courses that you're providing. Thank you so much, Brandy.

Brandy: Thank you, Katie it's a pleasure.

So I'm Katie Horner of handprint legacy.com obsessed with helping faith-based entrepreneurs design grow and delight in the business that affords you the lifestyle and legacy impact you want to have.

It's been my honor today to host you on the For Your Success Podcast, and I do hope you'll scroll down wherever you're hearing this and leave me a comment or review.

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