

STRATEGY

BASIC INTRODUCTION

The entire world revolves around a plan. Somebody planned your bottle of Whiskey to look the way it does, you plan your routine for the day when you wake up & in your venue there is a table plan, a method & strategy to execute your concept, your cocktails & your guest experience. It is no secret that even the best laid plans often get derailed in the bar world & that due to the chaotic nature of hospitality most bartenders become absolute experts at **'improvising'** on the spot. As a bartender's skill in **'thinking on the spot'** gets them out of difficult situations it also creates one huge problem - bartenders get into a comfort zone where their **'figure it out as I go along'** safety net becomes their only **'strategy'**.

The moment they are faced with a situation where it doesn't work or they simply can't think of anything it all falls apart. This usually leads to resentment, emotional damage & stupid decisions BUT more often than not they simply - **give up whatever they were doing!**

BUT WE CANT PREDICT THE FUTURE

Whenever we try to communicate our message & especially online we usually face 3 major questions that come up:

1. What content should I make?
2. Why would anyone care about anything I have to say?
3. Who is going to listen to me?

All of these questions are answered using specific mindsets known as 'Pyramids of Strategy & Execution'. These help us understand our audience, break it down into manageable groups & plan our content accordingly. First let's check out the Pyramid of Strategy:



UNDERSTANDING THE AUDIENCE

To help better put this into the perspective of bartending terms we need to look at the usual development of the career of your average bartender & the way they are taught by their superiors how to make cocktails:

Beginner Bartender:

The cocktail recipe for a Jameson Black Barrel Old Fashioned is 50ml of Whiskey, 2 dashes of Angostura Bitters & 10ml of rich 2:1 sugar syrup. Add all ingredients into an old fashioned glass & stir for 20 seconds until correct wash line is observed.

Key Details:

The beginner bartender is simply given a recipe & told to follow it down to the specifics. The key element at this stage is that they execute the correct recipe to the consistent level required by the drink program. By definition they are a robot that has to follow clear instructions.

Intermediate Bartender:

An Jameson Black Barrel Old Fashioned works better with Fee Bros Whiskey Barrel Bitters & a Demerara sugar syrup stirred in a mixing glass before being poured over a large block in a chilled old fashioned glass. The cola & leather notes of the bitters pairs well with the vanilla & charred oak of the whiskey & the demerara sugar syrup creates more depth of flavour. By stirring it in a mixing glass & then pouring over a large block in a chilled glass we ensure the cocktail stays at temperature at perfect dilution longer since it requires more time to enjoy due to its high ABV.

Key Details:

The intermediate bartender is explained the reasoning of why we pair certain bitters or syrups with specific products based on the production process & flavour notes of all elements. This deep dive into the why better gives insight to the bartender about the conditions of the drink & how it needs to be served to the guest.

Strategies are more like guidelines as opposed to strict recipes & specifically aimed at professionals who use them as templates that they cross-reference across their own specific venue conditions.

Expert Bartender:

Here we have 2 options for examples:

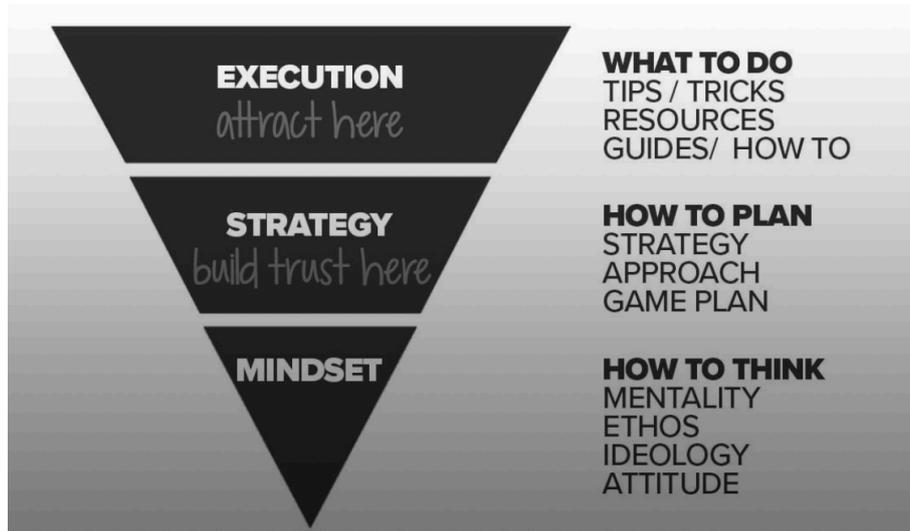
- Our Jameson Black Barrel Old Fashioned is built over ice in the glass. The dilution through melting makes sure it gets to the guest at optimum condition as it 'travels' to the table. We're a high volume cocktail bar in the centre of Manhattan with 400 covers on the tables. We want the drinks to come as fast as possible to be.
- Our Jameson Black Barrel Old Fashioned is stirred in a mixing glass & served over hand cut block ice made to order using an original cane syrup recipe & home-made aromatic bitters. We are a 20 seater cocktail bar in Tokyo focusing on the specific guest experience.

Key Details:

An expert knows how to make the drink & understands the strategy being serving it. What they need is the context & mindset of why are we serving this drink this way at this time. It's not about a personal perceived 'perfect way to serve the cocktail' but rather what is the end goal of the venue & what it is trying to achieve.

All of these insights above can be directly reflected in online content for the bar industry. To help with this use the Pyramid of Planning...

PLAN YOUR CONTENT ACCORDINGLY



PYRAMID OF PLANNING

The infographic speaks for itself with regards to what you should be doing & how but it is important to point out the importance of the shape of the pyramids themselves as well as why they're upside down. The number of 'experts' in a field is much smaller than the number of beginners & as a result the quantity of your content in the field of 'mindset/ expert' should directly reflect that number.

This strategy is the most effective in building a well rounded online personal brand because it allows you to capture the attention of the largest group of people in different fields BUT most importantly it keeps their attention so you're able to share your ideas, your story & your work.

Let me explain:

1. The **Execution** content attracts the entire pyramid of beginners, intermediates & experts. There is always a new trick/tip you can learn or a new resource/guide that can inspire you. This content needs to be simple, easy to understand & share-able.
2. The **Strategy** content shows a high level of expertise. For beginners engaging with this content it becomes aspirational & for intermediates it is how trust/reputation is built. You essentially establish yourself as understanding your field of expertise.
3. The **Mindset** content is the final level that only longer term career bartenders will reach. This is usually when a person understands their specific field much better & is able to give more abstract advice in how to reach this level. This usually goes beyond the bar.

Modern Examples:

1. **Execution** // Many cocktail pages have a video/photo of a cocktail. In the description is usually a recipe of the drink itself. In the video itself they show the step by step process of creating the drink.
2. **Strategy** // [HERE](#) is an example of a strategy based IG post. Utilising my expertise in global travel & the current events happening around the world of bartending I made an analysis of different locations & gave the potential + challenges of these places.
3. **Mindset** // [HERE](#) is an example of a mindset based IG post. Here we tackle a difficult situation regarding behind the scenes worries of gender based issues. The point here is to always be supportive & give the right growth mindset to the person for a long term career in the bar industry.

Above all I push for honesty & transparency in your approach. Nobody is perfect & we're all just learning as we go along. These are just examples to help guide you on your way & as times changes you will too find new ways/techniques/ideas that work better than these. This is the nature of things & I just hope you **pass them on to the next generation of bartenders.**

MOVING FORWARD

The best way to start is to start this is by writing this out on physical paper & start filling in the blanks based on your experience & knowledge. If you identify yourself as a beginner bartender or an intermediate bartender it doesn't mean you have to wait until you're an expert to start creating content & sharing your story.

In fact here are some basic directions for bartenders of the different levels:

Beginners:

- You are on a path of discovery & education. You can use all the existing content that already exists on the internet & in books then just simply 'remake' it & share your findings. Nobody can fault you from trying to learn from others & usually this is the only way knowledge is passed down in the bar industry.
- The process of learning you might discover new ways of doing things & even collaborate with your 'heroes' on learning new techniques.

Intermediates:

- You have already an existing library of tricks/tips you can share with others.
- You also have specific strategies & game-plans based on your current job/veteran experience that can be helpful to other at your level or below
- You can try out 'mindset' ideas from the experts to try to get to their level

Experts:

- You have the guides/resources. Share.
- You have the how to plan/approach down. Share.
- You have developed a specific mindset/ideology in the bar industry. Explore it more. Share.

Using these 2 Pyramids alongside the other guides in the Jameson Education Series will allow you to step by step build a perfect online personal brand, a key plan & strategy laced around a storyline you can tell in multiple ways.