

# CRAFTING A SUPERIOR ABOUT PAGE

*Or: Coming to Terms With the Most Spectacular You*

## FIVE QUESTIONS YOU'LL WANT TO ANSWER

### **1. Who are you writing for?**

Are you writing for sponsors and professional peers?

Diana Keeler is a journalist whose credits include The Wall Street Journal, Rolling Stone, Outside, Marie Claire, and NYLON. Her novel, *Smart Girls Like Me*, was published by St. Martins Press.

In short: Be a business.

Are you writing for your prospective audience?

Diana Keeler has traveled to over four dozen countries, most recently Portugal. She lives in Paris's Marais district, where she is working on her second novel.

In short: Be an inspiration.

Are you writing for your existing audience?

Diana Keeler loves sunshine, oranges, a cold Diet Coke and that guy on Facebook who makes the videos about being a redneck but not really. She once drove from London to Mongolia in a Nissan Micra.

In short: Be a person.

*Your target audience will change your tone and your credentials. You will likely have more than one bio or About page!*

### **2. Is your goal to connect?**

For most makers and bloggers, your goal is to connect, and I recommend a mix of existing and prospective. You want to connect as a flawed human beings — we are most beautiful, vulnerable, interesting when we display our whole, true self — but we also want to make clear why we're worth the time.

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### **3. *Is your goal to inspire?***

I recommend this slightly different approach for influencers (especially visual influencers), which leans more into the prospective audience take. If your brand is perfection — perfect taste, perfect style, perfect shoes, perfect skincare — you probably don't want your bio calling you out.

### **4. *What true thing would you put in your bio if you knew no one else would read it?***

This is, paradoxically, often our best quality.

We often hesitate to share our best qualities because we don't want to brag. #getoverit! A seductive About page requires strategic bragging. Hold your breath, hold your nose — whatever. Just realize that your competition is doing it. People believe what we tell them! If we tell them we're second-rate, they'll believe it — even if we're the best in the business.

Figure out a way to get it in there. Master the art of the humblebrag. God, or your mom, or your dog, or all the people who love you most want you to share your best self.

### **5. *Do you have a tendency to diminish your authority or achievements?***

This is basically everyone, so it's nothing to feel weird about. All it means is that writing your About page should be, at points, a collaborative process. You know that friend (or partner, or parent) who just thinks the world of you? Give her the job of ensuring that your About page matches up to you in your exceptional splendor.

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## THE KEY TO A GREAT ABOUT PAGE

The key to a great About page is the mastering **the art of the strategic brag**. It's coming up with the best thing about you and then using a bunch of examples to back it up in a way that is accessible and inspirational.

It's the art of saying "Oh, this old thing?" as you sweep down the stairs in Dior couture.

I think of it this way:

MY MISSION: To get people to read my blog and my books. And to sign up for my newsletter!

MY SELF-SUMMARY: I write things that you'll want to read because I am adventurous and an elegant writer. I lead a bold, rich life that will inspire others to do the same.

*(Note: Writing this, even in the context of this presentation, I was like "Ughghgh — why would I inspire anybody?" You just gotta get over it, write it down, move on.)*

MY BLOG'S/BOOK'S CORE ATTRIBUTES: Worldly. Inspirational. Affecting. Authentic.

THE TEST: Does every line of my About page support this? (Note: This is my bio, rather than my About page, but it'll work for our purposes.)

Diane Keller once drove from London to Mongolia by way of Siberia. [WORLDLY!] She is the author of *Smart Girls Like Me* (St. Martins Press, 2008) and the upcoming *Highveld* (2018). [INSPIRATIONAL?] She has also contributed to publications including *The Wall Street Journal*, *Rolling Stone*, *Travel & Leisure*, and *NYLON*, while her design work has been featured in *Brooklyn Magazine*, *Apartment Therapy*, and *The Nate Berkus Show*. [INSPIRATIONAL] She has a degree in English literature from Columbia University (please talk to her about *Mrs. Dalloway*) and most of a conceptual art degree from the San Francisco Art Institute. [BORING — I HONESTLY HAVE NO IDEA WHY I INCLUDED THIS]

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NOW WHAT ABOUT YOU?

YOUR MISSION:

YOUR SELF-SUMMARY:

YOUR PROJECTS CORE ATTRIBUTES:

WHAT ARE FIVE QUALITIES THAT TELL THE STORY YOU'VE LAID OUT ABOVE?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

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20 QUESTIONS TO GET YOU GOING.

1. What's your biggest achievement?
2. What's your favorite project?
3. What's your elevator pitch?
4. What does it freak you out that people might not know about you?
5. What's the biggest reason someone should connect with you?
6. What's the best thing you ever made?
7. What's the most [FILL IN YOUR CORE BRANDING ADJECTIVE HERE - FOR ME IT'D BE "ADVENTUROUS"] thing you ever did?
8. What's your best quality, according to your best friend?
9. What are you most proud of in your entire life?
10. What shows your dedication to your primary project more than anything else?
11. What's the compliment you get most often?
12. What can you do that most people can't?
13. Which of your past professional and educational accomplishments are relative to your current mission?
14. What's currently in your bio/About page that you don't care about anymore?

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## 20 QUESTIONS TO GET YOU GOING.

15. In reviewing your About page, what weaknesses or gaps do you see that require real-world resolution? (For example, if I call myself a travel blogger but haven't traveled for eight years, my About page can mask that, but that suggests a larger issue that needs to be addressed outside of the confines of the About page.)
16. What's an About page you really love and what can you steal without stealing (i.e. a tone, a structure)?
17. Are there branding advantages to not having an About page, having a one-sentence About page, etc.? (If your core branding attribute is "rebellious," you might not need a straightforward About page.)
18. Should your About page strategically link to other key projects and if so to where? Do they support your key mission?
19. Have I written in a manner that is clear, accessible, and grammatically correct?
20. Would hiring someone else (or asking a talented friend) be a more efficient use of your time than struggling over this?

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## A SEND-OFF

I hope this is helpful!

You can find me at:

- [farawayplaces.co](http://farawayplaces.co)
- [instagram/faraway\\_places\\_](https://www.instagram.com/faraway_places_)
- [facebook/farawayplacesforever](https://www.facebook.com/farawayplacesforever)

You can email me, too, at [hello@farawayplaces.co](mailto:hello@farawayplaces.co).

You are very probably great. Be sure your About page knows that.

If you don't believe me, believe Marianne Williamson:

*Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.  
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.  
It is our light, not our darkness  
That most frightens us. We ask ourselves  
Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?  
Actually, who are you not to be?*