



LUCILIUS INTERIM
Dr Dietmar Scheja

Come as you are – my content strategy

A Lucilius Interim® Memo

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Since I started providing interim financial leadership to my clients, I have made a point of sharing my expertise freely on the web and on LinkedIn. I write about what is key for my work and my clients, e.g., activist business partnering, finance transformation, restructuring. This memo outlines the principles I follow in creating my content.

A few years ago, I attended a sales conference at the end of what was a very disappointing business year for the company. The sales director talked to his people about the poor sales and the need to do much better. He explained how their behavior had to change: be with your client more, have meaningful conversations, establish yourself as a category expert...

Then, to end with a flourish, he pulled up a video in which a well-known sales guru illustrated how to become a successful salesperson. It was a great speech, it had the right messages, wonderful intonation, and a rousing appeal at the end. And yet, it fell flat.

Looking at the audience, one could easily see what they were thinking: „If this is what the boss wants us to do, why doesn't he tell us himself? If he wants us to be pulling our weight, why isn't he? And how can a generic video from a someone totally unfamiliar with our situation show us the way out of this crisis?“ Both the sales director and the message shriveled away - the whole effort felt fake.

This episode did a lot to form my credo for how I work with content: whatever I say, write or publish, it always must be real.

Be the one

When it comes to content, interim management is, in fact, challenging.

It is, first of all, a highly personal business. Education, track record, and conceptual skills are important, but the biggest factor in all pitches where I have succeeded or failed was personal fit. In a game like this, any content not true to who I am is an own goal.

Interim management is also emergency-driven. Usually, the project has already foundered, the money vanished, the long-beleaguered CFO reported sick (two days ahead of the make-or-break bank negotiation), before the CEO or the owners make the call.

What clients need, after disaster has struck, is a package that allows them to make a super-fast decision. Am I the right guy or not?

In the interview, either there is a connection, or there is not. Either I have weathered a storm like the one closing in on the client or I have not. If I check both boxes, they may talk to a former client or colleague or mine; they may, finally, check out my posts and articles.

What I publish, therefore, needs to tell them, from a new perspective, who I am and what I could bring to their party or battle: In my content, therefore, I need to think through what I have experienced, look back at what I have done, assess what worked and what did not, offer learnings from these reflections, and explore new options.

No need certainly to compete with McKinsey's petabytes of output or Dua Lipa's 22.2 million Youtube subscribers (she doesn't seem to be on LinkedIn), but I have to be no less authentic about my skills and myself. And, ok, I also have to substantiate that I am good at what I do.

The guiding principles

So, when I write and publish on social media, here's what I let myself be guided by:

- I write about topics that I know, have struggled with and overcome, or care deeply about.
- When I co-write, it's with people who I have come to know and trust, people who solve real-world problems and create tangible progress.
- What I publish is my own and written by myself – I do not copy.
- What I write may not be perfect, but it is always me.
- I try to make it fun to read.
- I share freely.

If following these principles takes a lot of time and effort - which it does - so be it.

Kind regards,

Dietmar

Written in Frankfurt and Berlin (Wedding, not Mitte), November 2023

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Financial Leadership in Special Situations

« I head restructuring initiatives and guide your finance & admin teams through challenging projects, transitions, and transformations. I deliver ambitious improvements and help you achieve sustainable cost reductions, while ensuring robust day-to-day operations. »



For more about financial leadership and its benefits and about how I support clients, please visit my website www.lucilius-interim.com, drop me an email at ds@lucilius-interim.com or call me on +49 177 33 983 22.