

# Richard's Big Idea Letter:

## The 'Jeet Kune Do' Of Design

*Dear friend*

Bruce Lee took the view that traditional martial arts techniques were too rigid to be effective in street fighting. Lee decided to develop a new approach with an emphasis on "practicality, flexibility, speed, and efficiency".

**"The style of no style"**

By getting rid of the formalised approach of traditional styles Lee created a philosophy and martial art he would call *Jeet Kune Do* or the *Way of the Intercepting Fist*.

Rather than try to improve existing categories of martial arts, Bruce Lee created his own.

### **The Power Of Creating Your Own Category**

There's only one thing better than winning more dream projects  
\_\_\_\_\_ (dramatic pause) \_\_\_\_\_

...winning LESS dream projects *but earning more money*. Simple!

Simple.

Simple but not easy!

**You can do this today but...**

Put your fees up is my #1 piece of advice to anyone selling professional services. Those who take heed are forever grateful. However most are too scared to follow this excellent advice because they believe

1 'If I raise fees I will win less projects'

#2 'If I lower my fees I will win more project'

This may or may not be the case, but the question should be **HOW CAN I INCREASE FEES AND BECOME EVEN MORE IN DEMAND?**

Your ability to charge higher fees is simply a matter of supply and demand. Demand for your services need to be higher than the supply of your services. The problem is how can you create extreme demand and reduce supply when there are so many architects ready and willing to drop their fees to win a project?

**The answer is YOU need to be 'special'**

The worst thing to be seen as is 'just another architect' (where supply is plentiful).

I shop at the fruit markets in the weekend. There are stalls and stalls of fruit and vegetable stands selling the same stuff. Lots of everything. If I want banana I can walk past five stalls in 20 seconds and see the same bananas and then compare prices. Most will pick the cheapest.

This is why you want to remove yourself from any selling environment where you appear lined up alongside other architects. Houz is a great example of a fruit market for architects. Architects complain that the leads from Houz are all price shoppers.

Why the surprised?

In this type of environment you are nothing more than a banana. Houz is a like beauty pageant where the contestants are all lined up in uniform fashion against the wall. This environment is great for Houz and maybe the client but is a meat market for architects.

Back to my fruit and vegetable market...

The only way to charge a premium price is to offer a super banana that has super qualities. Qualities that high performance athletes need or that provide superior quality of life for the elderly. Maybe these bananas are courier delivered and not available at the market. Only a 'special' category breaking banana stands any chance of receiving a premium price.

### **Who else creates new categories?**

Religions are the classic example of 'if you can't beat them, create a new religion and plant yourself at the throne'.

I sat beside a church leader on a plane from San Diego to LA who told me how Martin Luther was German monk who disagreed with the Catholic church that sins could be forgiven by donating money to the church leaders. Luther decided to write his suggested changes to make right where he felt the Catholic church was wrong.

The downside was that the Pope excommunicated Martin Luther. The upside was he now had his own shiny new religion and a horde of followers. By creating a new category he became the top dog for all those who bought into his version of the truth.

### **The Bruce Lee of architecture: #1 in a category of one.**

Smart architects throughout history have always created their own design category and instantly become the #1 in that newly formed category. For

example, Passivhaus was a new category of design standards created in May 1988 by Bo Adamson and Wolfgang Feist.

Sustainable and Universal design are also commonly used categories and clients might veer towards a 'specialist' but is there a design police that stops you from creating a new category all for yourself?

*Only if you limit your imagination!*

To reduce the supply of service providers then invent your own design style or standards. The supply is now reduced to just you and you become #1 in a category of one.

The process of creating a new category of design is nothing new.

If a client buys into the Passivhaus principles then you are limited in your architect options to those who fit within that category. The supply has been substantially reduced.

Lisa Bixler used the term '**Invisible design**' to create a new category of design when existing terms like 'aging in place' and 'universal design' seemed a little too focused on aging. Her big idea behind Invisible design is that people want style AND comfortable living. Like Cole Haan shoes you should have to choose one over the other.

If you buy into the invisible design philosophy then your design options are now reduced to one architect.

Eric Lam developed the new category of design called '**Mindfulness Design**.' By integrating Eastern Metaphysics and biophilic design home renovation to bring happiness, harmony, and serenity back into homes. The only place where East meets West in such harmonious balance in the form of **Mindfulness Design** is from Eric.

Michele Dempsey created a new category of design with **‘Strategic Branded Experiences’** to take branded design another level deeper by incorporating the experience into the design as well. ‘A promise wrapped in an experience’ and the only place to get **‘Strategic Branded Experiences’** is from Michele and her team.

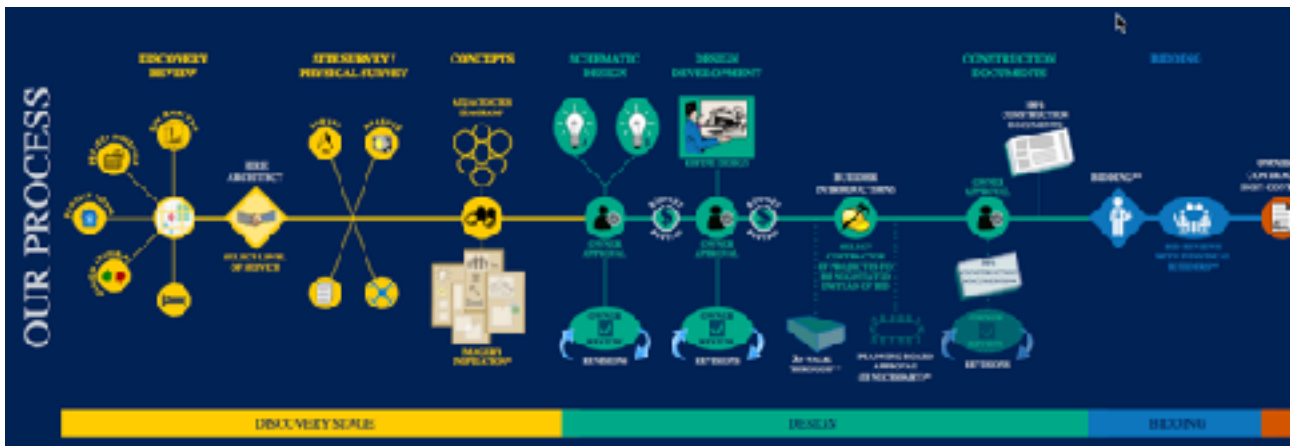
Julia Miner created a design philosophy called **‘Poetry of place’**, Mona Quinn created ‘Character Home Renovation’ as a specialist category she is now the leader in.

## **More than just a name**

Creating a new design category is not for everyone but it is a gamechanger. You do not need your own category Bible but it helps to have a few supporting props.

If your category has its own manifesto and proprietary tools then you are starting to create an ‘insiders’ set of tools and terminology which binds your followers.

You will be familiar with proprietary marketing systems I developed like the Dirty 30, Dream Team, Circle of Love and LCC. By formalising your methods and tools and giving them unique names your new category of design starts to gain a life of its own. Below is an example by Brendon McHugh (inspired greatly by Heather Faulding) of his unique process.



## Every great design category needs a great backstory

Terms and systems are great but the glue that holds them together is the story, and every great story needs a mission or purpose as its foundation.

Simon Sinek’s “Start with the Why” provides insight on how great leaders inspire action. When it comes to creating a new category people don’t buy “*what*” you do or “*how*” you do it, they buy *why* you do it. The *why* allows you to create a compelling story about a new direction they can follow. You have to have a compelling story or mission people want to be a part of you need to sell the BIG IDEA and behind the BIG IDEA is a powerful why.

Jesus has a great backstory, Architect Marketing Institute has a backstory with Mona Quinn and my meeting up with Enoch and Eric (not quite of the same biblical proportions), Apple has a backstory with Steve Jobs. Virgin has a great backstory with Richard Branson.

People love stories in my experience most architects do have them but do not use them.

Below are a checklist of possible tools you can use to create your category.

	<b>The Category Creating Tools</b>
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<b>Your movement name</b>	The turn the abstract ideas into a concrete define package with a handle people can pick up and walk around with
<b>Your 'why' story</b>	Everyone wants to belong to something that has meaning and purpose, most don't. By standing for SOMETHING you become a more powerful figure others can get behind.
<b>Rules</b>	What are the rules for your new design category?  You may want to extend into the rules for doing business with you?
<b>The backstory</b>	The story about the beginnings of the leader, where did the philosophy behind the movement start why who was involved?
<b>Your system(s)</b>	Your proprietary systems become your IP and make what you offer unique. Use graphics to make your process(s) visual and easy to understand by all. The system could be the end to end journey or certain pieces you have developed.
<b>Polarizing point of view</b>	Views that might resonate with your target market but might offend others. It separates your market into believers and non believers. The denunciation of poor design practices that are cheating your market of value.
<b>Special phraseology</b>	Your iconic phrases and terminology that make you unique.

If you look at Jeet Kune Do you will notice it has all the category creating tools above.

## Next steps

I will admit creating a new category of design is a truly Big Idea for players who want to be special and command high fees. While others

compete as just another commodity architect competing on price - you will become the Bruce Lee of your design category.

Rather than try to improve existing categories of martial arts, Bruce Lee created his own. He needed a good story and a willingness to create a new option where he became #1.

Smart guy!





# Richard's Big Idea Letter:

## Part 2 of 3 'The Story'

*Dear Friend,*

'Whoever tells the best story wins' - one of my favourite sayings is true but really only one-third of the full picture. Today you get another third and next month the final third is coming your way.

Let's quickly review the key message from last month. To become an in demand (high fee) architect you need a

1. **Star**
2. **Story**
3. **Solution**

Last month we dug deep into your '**Solution**'. You learned the importance of creating your own design category - just like Bruce creating a new martial art Jeet Kune Do.

Remember?

Sure you do, so today you are going to receive step by step instructions for creating your hypnotic '**Story**'.

But first let's just pause a moment!

Let's just reflect on what you are about to receive because I am almost certain you will not fully appreciate the power. You see when things are

delivered so neatly into your possession many will be guilty of being asleep at the wheel, thinking *'this is just another thing'*.

STOP.

Wake UP!!! Make no mistake.... this is a life changing, career defining blueprint.

Be like a Jeff Krieger, one of our best mastermind members who implements 'no matter what'. Jeff reserves judgement on all strategies until AFTER he has implemented. Smart guy.

You will not learn this information at university, you will not learn this information from any marketing course and you certainly will not learn this from another architect no matter how successful he or she is BECAUSE even if they are DOING what I am about to reveal they will not be conscious of the real dynamics causing their success.

My point is you can and WILL change the trajectory of your income and career if you follow these reasonably simple steps. Back to the lesson.

So once you have defined your own category of design you are going to need a good story wrapped around you and your new design category.

## **The Story**

For thousands of years history was kept alive and passed down generations using nothing but stories. The wise would embed culture, powerful messages and important facts within stories because people could always remember a good story.

Stories have a strangely hypnotic trance inducing power that bypasses conscious defences and plants lasting images and emotions directly into our subconscious.

As a speaker I know people usually do not remember what you told them but they remember the stories and how you made them feel. Your income and demand is only as good as your story. Don't sell your prospects, story your prospects.

Maybe you are not a natural born teller ...fear not!

You are about to receive my step by step story formula. You will also receive an example of my story that launched my first business 'Mindset training' as an example.

I will NOT give you an architecture story because I don't want you to copy a made up example. You can do far better by following my process, seeing an example from outside your industry and constructing your own masterpiece.

It really is simple if you follow the steps. Let me show you.

<b>Story Formula</b>	
1. Backstory	Set the scene and explain the context of the situation
2. Problem	Explain the problems people are suffering from because the ‘current ways’ no longer work or maybe never really worked.
3. Cost (Logical)	Translate how these problems were causing specific quantifiable loss. Be creative, you may not know the actual cost but you can present a reasonable estimation.
4. Consequences (Emotional)	Explain how people are suffering and generally life is less than it can be because of the problem not being solved.
5. Discovery	Talk about your journey to discovery. How you searched high and low and tested different approaches to find the solution.
6. Decision	Many great movie storylines require the hero to find courage within to make the RIGHT decision to save the world.
7. Feature	Now finally explain the thing/process/secret you have discovered
8. Advantage	Explain what it DOES
9. Benefit	Explain how it changes people’s lives
10. Before and after comparison	Demonstrate the difference between the BEFORE results vs the AFTER results.

11. Transition	Transition the listener out of the hypnotic story by linking the messages in your story back to relate to your audiences situation.
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My first business was selling ‘Mindset’ training to sales people in London. It took me about 6 months to land my first contract because I couldn’t explain what I was offering effectively. No one had heard of mindset training and no one was looking for mindset training.

I used the story below in meetings to sell my training to business owners and sales managers.

### **The Mindset Training Story**

*Backstory:* I was 20 years old and had all the motivation in the world to become a professional cricketer, the problem was I was not being selected. Not for the under 20 team, not the representatives B team, not the ‘Emerging Players’ team.

*Problem:* The problem was that while my skills and fitness were good, I did not have any edge. I just had what everyone else had - a burning desire to succeed. That wasn’t enough.

*Cost (logical):* I remember turning down everything that took me away from my goal. A very good cadet role for a local brewing company was offered which would have set my career on its way but I knew if I took the job and the money my real dream was over.

*Consequences (emotional):* I didn’t care about the money, that could come later but I was missing out on being selected for all the key teams. As a sportsman you know when your dream is slowly starting to slip away. I always dreamed of ‘making it’ in cricket and I was facing the cold hard reality of failure. Nothing was happening.

There was one moment when my uncle said to me ‘you may have to accept that your current level might be the highest you ever play’. Talk about a dagger going into my heart. I tried not to react but inside I was hurting really bad because deep down it was what I feared most.

*Discovery:* One day while driving to town in my mother’s car there was an interview with the captain of the national team Geoff Howarth. The radio announcer asked ‘What’s the difference between and first class player and an international player?’

I pulled the car over and listened hoping he would give me some insight.

*‘It’s in the top 2 inches, most first class players have the skill and fitness but not the mindset’*

This instantly struck a chord with me. Then soon after I heard a statement that said.

*‘If you are going to be a champion you have to learn to think like one first’*

That was my problem, I wasn’t a champion I was a player WANTING to be a champion. I knew right then I needed to train myself to think like a top player NOW, even if my reality was different.

*Decision:* At that moment I decided I had to master my own mind first. Until I could think like a top sportsman I was never going to become a top sportsman.

*Feature:* I studied the subconscious mind and visualisation and then created a simple daily routine for myself to redesign my habitual thinking patterns.

*Advantage:* To start with nothing seemed to change but after 20 days of daily mind exercises the ‘hope’ in my head started to move to my gut and become ‘confidence’ I started to become a different person, started to train

like a top player, think like a top player and feel I was a top player even though nothing on the outside world had changed,

*Benefit:* Within 6 months I had become a professional cricketer, my outer world had reacted to what was going on in my inner world and within 18 months I was playing international cricket with heroes I had only ever seen on TV.

The transformation was that fast. Once I learned how I needed to think and who I needed to become everything fell into place.

My friends could not believe the speed of my success, but I could because I had trained myself to think like an international cricketer 12 months before it happened. In my mind I was already an international player.

*Before and after comparison:* I had gone from playing in the local park in local competitions to playing in stadiums around the world in front of 50,000 people in two years. Suddenly I was recognised and being paid handsomely to play sport and live my dream. People say ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE IF YOU PUT YOUR MIND TO IT, but no one ever tells you *how* to put your mind to it.

*The transition:* Later when I moved into commission only sales I found myself back at the bottom of the pile again. Selling can be brutal but in many ways the mindset required of a top sales person is very similar to that of a top sportsman. Salespeople have to perform every month. They have to cope with failure and rejection, they have to find motivation and courage to keep going every day.

My company provided sales training - so we knew technically how to sell but I was struggling to make budget each month. More sales training wasn't going to make any difference.

So I applied the same mindset strategies to my selling to see if they would work in selling. Within 3 months I had quadrupled my sales and within a few months became the number one sales rep nationwide.

My company had no idea what I was doing but asked me to train the other reps in my office. We would meet every morning before work and I would give them exercises to do. It sounds weird but this is exactly what happened and within 3 months they too had all had their best ever months.

**[Now I move back to the sales manager I am selling to and ask these questions]**

*'You have a sales team.... Given they have the basic skills and tools for their role what % of your teams sales success would you attribute to their mindset?'*

**[The manager would almost always answer 80-100%]**

*'Given that your teams success is at least 80% then what % of their week do you invest in developing their mindset skills?'*

**[The manager would almost always answer 0]**

*'Do you think if you invested even a little time and effort into developing their mindset you might see a disproportionate return on your investment?'*

[The close rate was very high]

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This was my first ever business. I was earning over \$200,000 per year selling a mindset training program to sales managers and business owners who had never considered or even heard of this type of training before from a guy who made up his own course, had no qualifications, no teaching experience and no clients



... just a good story they could relate to.

Does it take effort to construct your story?

Yes. But I bet you have an untold story (with all the elements) you are not using and you are under earning because you are not telling YOUR story.

You do not need to make a story up, you need to find the story that already exists.

Everybody has a great story in them.

## **Next Steps**

1. Take your new category of design and think about why you started designing YOUR way, how you found YOUR methods and processes, the results that were achieved because you knew things or did things the way YOU do them.
2. Then use my 'Story Formula' to add structure and bring your story to life. Give people a story they can get excited about and easily share with others.
3. Be bold and share your passion.

You are only one good story away from a constant flow of great projects,

*'Whoever tells the best story wins'*

# Richard's Big Idea Letter

## (part 3 of 3):

### A Star Is Born

*Dear Friend,*

There is no easy way to say this to an introverted architect but...  
... we are going to put you out there a LOT more.

Why? If you want to **earn high fees and become even more in demand** then you need to start promoting yourself like a 'star'.

I know this is not what you WANT to hear, but I am telling you what you NEED to hear.

A high fee in demand architect position IS achievable but not by following the convention methods architects use that turn them into a commodity constantly battling on fees. To achieve outcomes other architects don't you are going to need to do things other architects don't. You are going to need to cultivate three key elements...

- 1. Star**
- 2. Story**
- 3. Solution**

We covered story and solution in previous issues so that only leaves us with the process of making you a star. Now STOP don't

you go running anywhere my shy little friend. Once you get over the initial shock or sharing more of yourself with your market you may actually enjoy getting the recognition you deserve.

Hear me out!

### **Firstly, we cannot think like other architects**

If go to ten architects websites I already know what I am going to see. Ten galleries of favourite projects and not a single image of the real star.

Wrong wrong wrong.

Most architects websites are designed to impress other architects with their most sophisticated work. The problem is other architects will never hire you.

There are lots of actors in a movie but it's Angelina Jolie who people pay to see. AJ gets the star billing on all trailers and posters because she is the star. People love stars and films wouldn't make money without them.

What about all the support actors? They don't count, only their mother pays to see them. In many cases the star is more important than the story.

### **How does this relate to selling design services?**

You need a star character in your firm to carry your new design category and story.

We need a Bruce Lee or a Richard Branson or an Oprah Winfrey - someone your audience can relate to. Your personality doesn't need to as colourful as Jesus or Steve Jobs because look at your competition. Your competition is a local supply of architects who hide on the back streets of their websites and reveal nothing about themselves. Your competition is most likely private, modest, introverted artists who'd rather *let their work speak for itself*.

Huh!!! Most of your clients are like me, we cannot tell the difference between good and great when it comes to design, so a sea of building images and yet more images of yet another building washes over us like waves at the beach.

**Here is the secret** - your brand is YOU. Not your work, not your company name and not your logo. People hire people and generally the person who is going to do the work is you. You may present a certain image with your logos, office space and home page but as soon as they meet you in person, your personality dominates any previous perception.

So what needs to happen, and it needs to happen now, is we need to establish who you are. Your PERSONA.

Who is the character behind your **solution** and your **story**? The term 'character' is a good description of what we need because I want you to think about your character creation similar to that of a character in a movie. The movies main characters job is to sell the story to the audience. The character has to be relatable and engaging, interesting - he or she needs to have a few flaws and scars to make her real and relatable. A Bill Clinton, Shane Warne, Princess Diana are more intriguing because while they have their super powers they also have their weaknesses, we relate better to someone who has amazing skills but at the same time is not perfect.

**'But my life is boring'**

Here is the truth... In reality we are all a little boring.

I get to travel, speak to large audiences and live in what you might think is an semi exotic location (New Zealand) but if you followed me around for a couple of days you would come to the conclusion that my life is hardly James Bond.

Most of my time is spent writing articles like this, studying marketing or coming up with new strategies. Typically I am sitting at a desk or couch with a laptop on my legs. So when I write, especially when I include myself in the blog or email or video I make sure that there is some 'better than real life' aspect to my story.

For example...

Lessons from Vietnam, Lessons from Las Vegas, Lessons from New York are always going to be far more interesting to my audience than 'Lessons from my couch - watching tv - eating yesterday's leftover spaghetti bolognese'.

The fact is we are all pretty boring so we have to EMBELLISH our personality. Not lie but accentuate some of our traits and characteristics so our character becomes **larger than life**. We need to become **someone worth following** - a star, even if only in a star in a very small universe.

**'But where do I tell my stories?'**

You have a captured audience... your lists. These lists contain clients, Dirty 30, prospects and people who have downloaded your monkey's fist. This list should be growing every week if you are promoting your monkey's fist properly.

Now while the Project planning pack or the 'Dream team directory' may be the reason you GOT them on the list originally the way you KEEP on the list and engaged is by the stories you tell and the personality telling those stories.

You have a newsletter you should be writing, circle of love emails you should be sending and a website which should be studded with stories that reveal who you are and what you stand for (and against).

You get my emails and videos so the best example I can give you right now is to say somehow you got on our list. You probably downloaded something or attended a webinar and **here we still are - you and me and you reading my stories and stuff.**

I am no Ernest Hemingway but you know a few things about me and can probably remember at least one story I have told you. You are reading this newsletter and while I may not be famous to the general public I am famous to the people on our architects marketing list.

Everything I have shared with you in these last 3 newsletters is what I am constantly DOING to you as an example to follow. It works. We sell a lot of stuff not just because we have great content but because we have people like you, engaged.

Ok, enough said, and besides I have a game of cricket to play today against the Australian masters team, so I need to start some stretching.

## Use my checklist to help you flesh out your magnetic persona

<b>Maven Marketing Tactic</b>		<b>Examples Bruce Lee and others</b>
<b>1. Gain your markets trust</b>	Clearly articulate your markets hopes fears problems, feel their pain. Articulate their problems better than anyone else. Identify gaps in service or quality.	Bruce Lee was anti the traditional fighting methods which he felt we too rigid and mechanical for practical use in street fighting.
<b>2. Establish Persona</b>	Personality traits that make the maven more memorable in mind of the market. Anchor your traits in the mind of the market.	Master at martial arts. Super fit. High pitched noises while fighting.
<b>3. Vision for design</b>	Why your design style exists. What is your ultimate goal. What is the dream vision you want other to become part of?	According to Bruce Lee, life is in constant change, and unless we learn to adapt to it, we're bound to experience tremendous resistance that will entrap us in a constant state of suffering.
<b>4. The backstory</b>	The STORY about the beginnings of the hero, where did it start why who was involved?	Born in the US, raised in Hong Kong and then back to the US after falling into trouble with organised crime. Later to appear in moviesand develop his own fighting methods.
<b>5. Predictable behaviours</b>	Unique things you do or say that the clients can expect you to do or say. We like to be able to predict how a friend will act.	One finger press ups. One armed pull ups. One inch punch

<p><b>6. Polarizing point of view</b></p>	<p>Views that might resonate with your target market but might offend others. It separates your market into believers and non believers. The denunciation of inferior philosophies and practices that are cheating your market of opportunities and value.</p>	<p>According to Lee, the Chinese community issued an ultimatum to him to stop teaching non-Chinese people. When he refused to comply, he was challenged to a combat match with Wong. The arrangement was that if Lee lost, he would have to shut down his school, while if he won, he would be free to teach white people, or anyone else.</p>
<p><b>7. Special phraseology</b></p>	<p>Your iconic phrases and terminology that make you unique eg monkey's fist, dirty 30, circle of love</p>	<p>'Be like water'. Jeet Kune Do. "The style of no style"</p>
<p><b>8. Communication channel</b></p>	<p>The communication channels that your project list grows accustomed to when receiving information from you eg email, video, webinar books</p>	<p>Movies. Books</p>
<p><b>9. Relationships</b></p>	<p>Who are you connected with that add to your credibility. Do you have any clients worthy of mentioning in your story that shaped your philosophies?</p>	<p>Yip Man, Wong Jack Man, Steve McQueen, James Coburn, Chuck Norris, George Lazenby</p>
<p><b>10.. Label</b></p>	<p>The title that explains you eg The 'Caped Crusader for Batman, Elvis was 'The King', you could be 'Boston's leading xxxxx'</p>	<p>Architect could be 'Wellingtons leading high performance and sustainable design specialist' Hint</p>



<p><b>11. Your super power</b></p>	<p>Is it your ability to listen? Your ability to create solutions to problems no one else can solve? Your ability to apply a certain style in any situation? The understanding of psychology of design to create spaces that make people feel a certain way that increases their ability to spend money?</p>	<p>Lee was renowned for his physical fitness and vigor, achieved by using a dedicated fitness regimen to become as strong as possible. Lee maintained that mental and spiritual preparation are fundamental to the success of physical training in martial arts skills</p>
<p><b>12. Your flaw</b></p>	<p>All interesting characters have a flaw. In movies the heroes flaws make them interesting and real, someone we can relate to. Obviously make your flaw interesting but not a show stopper.</p>	<p>Bruce Lee had to leave Hong Kong after many street fights and police threatened to put him into jail. A contract was put on Lee after he beat up a crime families son.</p>

**Next steps**

Go through the 12 point checklist and force yourself to come up with your example of each category. Next combine you character, your story and your solution in all communication to your lists from this day hence.

Remember... YOU are the reason they will sign your design contract over anyone else's. Get the project gallery off the front page of your website and start sharing your story. Jeet Kune Do would be nothing without Bruce Lee and his incredible backstory.

Grab part 1-2-3 and read them again and again. Then TAKE ACTION. The world's best content must be acted upon before you can extract an ounce of benefit. Until you take action this advice is just ink dots on white paper.

With your **Star, Story** and **Solution** you have the powerful building blocks to communicate why your value is greater than any other

architect even when more expensive. Turn these ink dots into money and a better life.