

# 8 Words That Should Never Appear in Your Twitter Bio

By Jeff Haden | May 19, 2011

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Owners' Manual  
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I checked out a lot of Twitter bios when I was looking for a LinkedIn expert to help with a potential blog post. I didn't find an expert.

I did find a lot of awful Twitter bios, though.

Capturing the essence of your

business in 160 characters is tough. (It's also tough to know how many people are actually [reading or responding to your tweets](#).)

Since every word counts, pretend I'm a potential customer or client.

Here's how I react to the following words in a Twitter bio:

1. **"Passionate."** Can you be "passionate" about four or five things? One passion, maybe; four passions are interests, not passions. And really: Can anyone truly be passionate about "delivering lasting customer value" or "teaching small businesses to harness the power of social media" or "providing lasting solutions to common business problems"? Focused, yeah. Driven, sure. Passionate? Save that for your significant other.

2. **"Authority."** As Margaret Thatcher said, "Power is like being a lady; if you have to say you are, you aren't." If you have to say you're an authority, you aren't. *Show your expertise* instead. "Speaker at TED Conference" indicates a level of authority. "Social media authority" reads as "I spend way too much time on Facebook."

3. **"Workaholic."** I suppose the intent is to say, "My nose is to the grindstone 24/7." If you really do work that much, describe the successes all that effort produced instead. "Workaholic" has negative connotations and implies tremendous effort without tangible results. Potential customers don't care how much you work — they care about what you get done.

4. **"Guru."** Forget the explanation; I just hate this one. (If you respond positively to "guru," I would love to know *why*.) I also hate "sage," "connoisseur," "guerilla," "whiz," "ninja," and other allegedly clever descriptors. Don't be clever for clever's sake.

5. **"Serial entrepreneur."** A few people start multiple, successful, long-term businesses. They truly are serial entrepreneurs. The rest start one business that fails or does okay, try something else, and keep rinsing and repeating until they find a formula that works. Those people are entrepreneurs. (And there's nothing wrong with being "just" an entrepreneur!) If you have two or three solid successes under your belt, listing them can be powerful. If not, just say what you do now.



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6. **"Technologist."** I found lots of definitions for a technologist. My favorite is, "A person who uses scientific knowledge to solve practical problems." So: Is that really what you do? Many people who claim to be "technologists" just like cool new products and applications. They're *interested* in technology (again, nothing wrong with that!) but they are not *technologists*. If you use scientific knowledge to solve practical problems, share an example. Otherwise just say, "I love my new iPad 2!"
7. **"Strategist."** Strategists look at the present, envision something different, and develop approaches to make their vision a reality. For example, I sometimes help manufacturing plants improve productivity and quality. There are *strategies* I use to identify areas for improvement, but I'm in no way a *strategist*. I don't create something new; I apply my experience and a few proven methodologies. Very few people are strategists; most "strategists" are actually coaches, specialists, or consultants who use what they know to help others. 99% of the time *that's* what customers need — they don't need a strategist. Be who you are.
8. **"Unique."** We're all individuals, we're all different, we're all unique — and we all know it. If I'm considering hiring you or buying your products, "unique" means nothing to me. Tell me *why* you are *better*.

Here's what catches my eye: Plain language without hyperbole, exaggeration, or fluff.