How to launch your online course

If you take nothing else away from this guide, it's this.

You have everything you need right now to create a beautiful online course *and* community, all in one place.

With a Mighty Network, you can launch a beautiful course *and* a community together in one place—where you can introduce your most important people to each other, unlock real relationships between them, and, hopefully, learn something together along the way.

This guide reflects the successful experiences of thousands of community builders, coaches, and educators like you over the past decade, so you too can quickly get up and running with your own beautiful online course—and create a new kind of personal connection between the people you're bringing together.

Ready? Let's go.

Who do you want to serve with your online course?

If your online course is for everyone, it's for no one.

The clearer and more specific you define the interests of your students or what makes them unique, the better your new online course can serve them.

The most obvious place to start is with **you**. Your unique combination of experiences or take on the world may be just the hook that attracts your students to join and participate in your new online course.

So, who are you motivated to bring together?

- People who want to learn **a specific skill**
- People who share the same **specialty**
- People who share the same **profession**
- People with the same **interests**
- People who care about the same **cause**
- People who **follow your work**
- People at the same **stage in life**
- People who can **benefit from your expertise**
- People who care about the same **issues**
- People with a **common condition or diagnosis**

Who do you want to bring together? The more specific, the better.

What are the 5 or 10 characteristics or experiences that define your potential members or students?

Why will people be motivated to join?

With so many apps available today, you might think that people are too busy to take an online course. You'd be wrong.

In 2018, busy people from all walks of life remain highly motivated to join a community of people like them when it will help them achieve a common goal or feel less isolated.

There are three overwhelming reasons why people will join an online course:

- Learn a new skill that will allow you to elevate your career
- Access exclusive content, conversations, and experiences
- Meet people like you for support, encouragement, and to learn from each other
- Navigate topics that don't have easy or obvious answers (the stuff you can't Google)

Reinforcing the "why"—or the motivations for joining—in your invitations, your social media posts, or your emails will make it much easier to get people to join your new online course.

Which of these reasons will most appeal to your students?

What other benefits would someone want to see from joining your new online course?

How will you make your online course stand out?

People decide if something is right for them in the first few seconds. The best way to seize this moment is with a memorable name—or "hook"—that captures your unique take on the world.

The easiest place to start is with **you**. You can feature your name and your story as the focal point of your new online course in the Course Overview. Or, you can come up with a fun name that reflects the topics or interests you will be covering together in your course.

A few of our favorites include:

- **Change School** for educational leaders
- **Hairbrained** for craft hairdressers
- **Beyond Type 1** for people thriving with Type 1 diabetes
- **The Offbeat Bride Tribe** for brides who are looking for non-traditional wedding inspiration
- **Beat Infertility** for women navigating fertility issues

Don't yet have a name you love? Grab a friend and generate as many names you can think of below. The more you generate, the faster you'll find a name that will click.

What do you want people to do together in your online course?

There are a number of activities that are proven to build real relationships between people who are part of an online course together:

- Connect likeminded people to each other based on where they live or their common interests
- Organize conversations and activities by specific topics they care about
- Use polls to crowdsource answers to specific questions that are relevant to their experiences
- Use questions to gather stories, experiences, and practical feedback
- Post your own story and experiences, and encourage your students or members to post theirs
- Host virtual events like live chats (with text chat, photos, and emojis) or a video conference
- Host real world meetups or conferences

What do you want people to do together in your online course and community? Jot down as many ideas as you can for the best results.

What questions will help course takers break the ice?

Connecting people to each other in an online course isn't so different from your first day at camp or kicking off a retreat. A round of icebreaker questions goes a long way in getting people talking to each other right from their very first session.

Here are a few of our most popular icebreaker questions:

- What do you want to get from taking this course?
- What's the one thing you want to accomplish today?
- What is your main goal for 2018?
- What is your favorite part of being a _____?
- What's one new thing you're hoping to learn from the other people here?

Whether you choose something general or more specific, these questions are proven to put your students at ease and get them talking.

What are a few of your favorite icebreaker questions?

What topics are important to the people taking your online course?

Topics are a great way to organize all the resources you're sharing and the great conversations happening between you the folks who are taking an online course inside your Mighty Network.

What do we mean by topics? Let's take one example. In an online course for people who are taking a creative writing class together, the topics could be:

- Goal setting
- Accountability
- Daily prompts
- Story structure
- Short stories
- Poetry

What topics do *your* people care about? We recommend defining between 4 and 10 to start.

How will you measure success for your online course?

You're almost there! The last step before inviting people in is the most important one. How will you measure success for the investment of time and energy you're making in your online course?

Think about how you want to measure success. We recommend starting with:

- Number of people who join
- Percentage of people who contribute by commenting or attending virtual events
- Popularity of specific polls, prompts, posts, and events
- Percentage of people who are returning every week

How will you define success for your new online course?
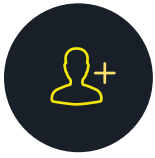
You're ready to invite!

Congratulations! By following this guide, you've defined a strategy for your new online course that reflects the most successful experiences of other Mighty Hosts like you who are bringing people together and creating unique opportunities for them to meet and learn from each other.

Now you're ready to invite in your first members. Who are the best folks to invite upfront? This is where a clear definition of who your online course serves will come in handy.

If you have an email list already, start there. If you're building one from scratch before you launch your online course, your best bet is to:

Browse your contacts and pick 10 or 20 friends who fit the profile you've laid out in this guide:

From there, make a list of friends who can provide recommendations for who to share it with next:

Lastly, share the launch of your new online course daily on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, Snapchat, or anywhere else where you can get it in front of the right people.

Congratulations!
You're ready to go.

You now have everything you need to launch a beautiful online course *and* community on Mighty Networks that people will love.

Have questions or want to go to the next level with your Mighty Network? Join us in **Mighty Hosts** at **hosts.mn.co** 💪

See you on the other side!