



How to use Thought Leadership to build authority and trust

A guide for life science companies and leaders



THE BASICS

Thought leadership (TL) is the strategic process of establishing a person or organization as a go-to authority by providing **unique perspectives** on challenges, trends, and the future of a field.

TL has rapidly evolved from being optional to a strategic requirement. It focuses on what you know (even as a company) to drive positive **business outcomes** by gaining audiences' **trust**.

Why invest in Thought Leadership?



Build credibility: beat skepticism and build scientific credibility to prove your team understands biology or technology as your customers do.



Position yourself as a partner: address stakeholders in the buyer journey by positioning your company as a partner in their success.



Shorten the sales cycle: gain prospective clients' trust before any contact is made using TL to build your online reputation.



Attract top talent: showing that your leadership team cares about the future of medicine or technology attracts and retains top talent.



Show who you are: help your company become a natural leader in the field and avoid 'empty' missions or brand narratives.

GETTING STARTED

- 1 Identify your “face of expertise” (CEO, CSO, Head of R&D...)
- 2 Conduct extraction interviews, ask them lots of questions
- 3 Identify unique POVs, issues, and stands aligned with the brand
- 4 Choose the best format (webinar, LinkedIn, white paper, blog post)
- 5 Find a subject matter expert who can write/review or outsource
- 6 Distribute value and engage with your audience in conversations

Unsure about implementing Thought Leadership?

Start with a LinkedIn comment. Go to a popular post by an industry leader and, instead of just saying "Great post!", write 2-3 sentences explaining a different way to look at their data or one thing they may have missed. If the comment sparks conversation, you've found your first thought leadership topic.

How you **frame your expertise** determines whether you are viewed as a "vendor" or a "visionary." Thought leadership should help customers understand the future and offer value... even if they never buy.

DOs

VS

DON'Ts

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ✓ Lead with a point of view | ✗ Make it a sales pitch |
| ✓ Focus on how and why | ✗ Use generic buzzwords |
| ✓ Use named authors | ✗ Delay for perfection |
| ✓ Tackle issues before others | ✗ Rely on tech leads to write |
| ✓ Share internal or unique data | ✗ Expect AI to do the job |
| ✓ Cite high-quality sources | ✗ Lose sight of true market needs |
| ✓ Debunk common myths | ✗ Get lost in small details |

Before you hit publish, run a quick check....

Does this teach readers **something new**? (Must be yes)

Could a **competitor** put their logo on this? (Should be no)

Is there a **pitch** in the first three paragraphs (Aim for no)

Example 1 - Blog post: busting a myth

A 600-800-word article, identifying a standard piece of industry advice and explaining why it's becoming obsolete or challenging that view.

Example: "Why 'Big Data' is the biggest distraction in drug discovery." Instead of a tutorial on data storage, the post argues that "small, high-quality datasets" are the true future of precision medicine.

Example 2 - Social media: proof of life

A LinkedIn post with a 60-second video or a high-impact chart, sharing behind-the-scenes insight from a recent failure or conference.

Example: A photo of the CSO at a conference with a 3-point takeaway on a new FDA ruling. The caption avoids jargon and speaks directly to the strategic implications for fellow founders.

Example 3 - White paper: the strategic roadmap

A 5-page deep dive with original data or meta-analysis, moving from "how the tech works" to how it integrates into drug discovery.

Example: "From discovery to diagnostics: bridging the gap between spatial discovery and clinical validation," mapping the transition from spatial findings to clinical trials, positioning your company as a strategic partner that understands the long-term journey

Summary

High-quality content isn't always Thought Leadership. Product pitches, corporate news, basic SEO education, and "safe," generic opinions lack the **unique perspective required to lead a conversation.**

Thought Leadership proves scientific expertise, giving customers **the confidence to choose your solution** over competitors before they even talk to a sales rep.

For companies: if you want to build authority, don't hide behind a logo. **Put your smartest people in the spotlight.**

Do you need help with your
Thought Leadership strategy
or content?

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