


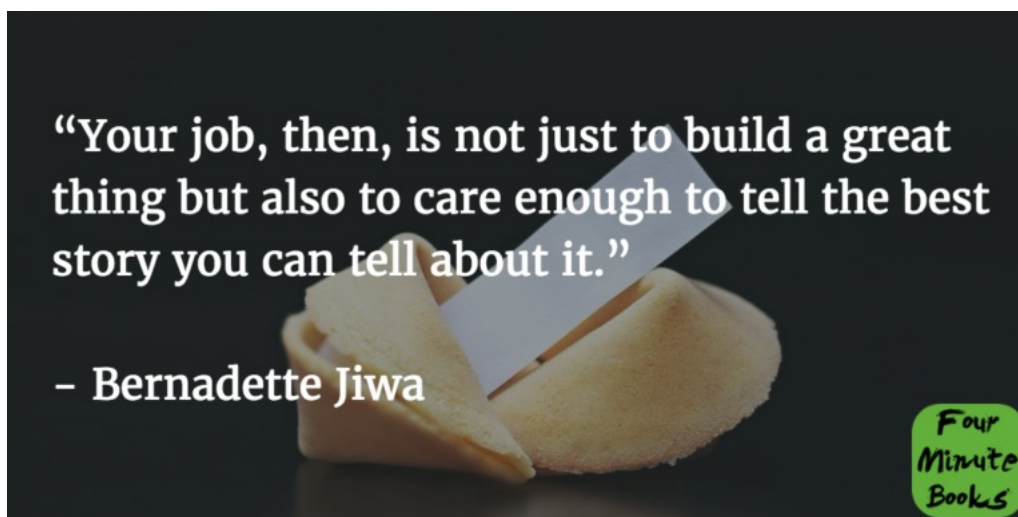
The Fortune Cookie Principle Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/the-fortune-cookie-principle-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *The Fortune Cookie Principle explains why a great product or service isn't enough, how you can tell a compelling story about your brand and why that's the most important aspect of running a business today.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



What's the best line you've ever gotten in a fortune cookie? Here's mine: "Your wealth is where your friends are." It came right at a time when I felt sad about having to leave everything behind and it reminded me that while I'll always have to move on, true friendships will last a lifetime. That's the difference between being wealthy and just rich, I think.

Bernadette Jiwa likes to think our favorite companies, products and brands are also like fortune cookies: we love them just as much for the story as we do for what they have to offer. She says in today's world, good products aren't enough any more. What you say about them makes all the difference.

In The Fortune Cookie Principle, she's identified 20 keys to a great brand story. Here are my favorite three:

1. Each brand comes with a fortune and a cookie, so you have to think about both.
2. Develop your brand's vision with three questions.
3. Make sure your brand's location and content align with the story you want it to tell.

Whether your brand is just you or backed by a huge group of people, let's make sure there's a fortune inside your cookie!

Lesson 1: Your brand is more than your product, so think about the story you want to tell.

When you're done eating at a Chinese restaurant, the fortune cookie comes just at the right time. It satisfies your craving for something sweet after having a hearty entree. But that's just one half of the story. The cookie's not the reason you come back to the restaurant. The fortune inside *might* be.

If you get a quote about friendship inside like I did and it makes the night feel special and memorable, guess which restaurant will pop into your head the next time you want to get dinner with friends?

That's how the two pieces of the fortune cookie metaphor work together:

1. **The cookie is the tangible product or service you're offering to people.** It fulfills a rational need, it's useful and it makes your customers' lives easier the same way each time.
2. **The fortune is the intangible story you tell about your brand.** This is what carries your values, purpose and vision into the world and hopefully, your fans will make it part of their identity over time.

Most of our behavior as consumers isn't driven by rational thought, so without a good fortune, even the best cookie won't sell.

Lesson 2: Use three questions to develop your brand's vision.

One of the most powerful parts of your story, which consumers judge you by, is your vision. Like the cat told Alice when she landed in Wonderland: If you don't know where you want to go, it won't matter which road you take. People always want to know where you'll take your brand next, so they can decide whether you're still worth following.

Bernadette suggests these three questions to figure out your vision:

1. **How will your company affect the future?** Do you want to bring education to those, who can't afford it? Abolish single-use coffee cups? Make a certain group of people laugh?
2. **How will your day-to-day work support this vision?** Are you going to donate books? Offer only reusable cups to employees? Upload weekly comedy videos?
3. **How will your vision make customers feel and act?** Will they get smarter? Have a clear conscience? Happier?

This vision will change over time. That's normal. It doesn't have to be particularly noble or profound either. Those help, of course, because people want to feel like they're part of something bigger than themselves, but even a small change for a large group of people goes a long way.

Lesson 3: Every piece of content you create must match your brand story.

Imagine an organic, healthy, jungle-themed café squeezed right in-between a Versace and a Gucci store on Rodeo Drive in LA. Not very convincing, is it? Just like the location's part of your story, so is your company name. Four Minute Books describes the premise of the site in a nutshell. It's short and snappy, but it still stands out.

As important as those two are, however, in an online world, your most important tool for marketing, communicating, selling and telling your story all at once is content. **Every piece of content, whether that's audio, video, a press release, an internal email, a production guideline, a tweet or a blog post, must be in line with the story you're trying to tell.**

Let the brand be the people behind it. Use the language you and your customers would use. Make the things you want to make. Tell the story only you can tell.

It's the bread and butter of any good business – the fortune that keeps people coming back for more cookies.

The Fortune Cookie Principle Review

The Fortune Cookie Principle delivers a very simple metaphor you can use to guide all your marketing efforts. Whether you're marketing yourself as a freelancer, writer, or opera singer or your company as a startup or global brand, this idea keeps it simple. You can return to it again and again, to check in each instance if your storytelling matches your offering – and that's a valuable ace up your sleeve. Also check out Bernadette's TEDx talk. It's a good place to start.

[Read full summary on Blinkist >>](#)

[Free Preview >>](#)

[Learn more about the author >>](#)

What else can you learn from the blinks?

- Why Apple is a fortune cookie company
- Various examples from big companies' purposes
- Why Lego had to deal with \$300 million losses not too long ago
- How AirBnB's vision has changed over the years
- The reason Patagonia told its customers not to buy its jackets

Who would I recommend The Fortune Cookie Principle summary to?

The 19 year old college student, who wonders why no one goes to her campus group's events,

even though they're cheap and fun, the 44 year old manager, who just took over marketing of a company in a crisis, and anyone who likes fortune cookies.