On Instagram, ENGAGEMENT is KING. NOT content.

Engagement shows instagram that your account is worth sharing. If you post a photo and people like and comment on that photo, Instagram rates your post as good and is more likely to show it to the rest of your followers. This increases your engagement even more and Instagram starts to show your content to people who DON'T follow you that are interested in the same type of content.
Get it? Remember... it's a cycle!

But how do you get that engagement in the first place? How do you even get those current followers to see your content so this cycle can start?

Remember: VISUALS ARE QUEEN

You CANNOT get around this. You don't have to be Anne Leibowitz, but you do have to have content that is

- Clear,

- Visually interesting

- In Focus

INSTAGRAM IS A VISUAL PLATFORM BASED ON PHOTOS.

Whatever you post has to grab people and make them want to engage with it. Like I said in a post on Facebook: ugly food does not translate. Neither do ugly photos.

The End.

There is no excuse these days for not having great visual content. There are free apps out there that will help you edit your photos. Even the Instagram App itself has a pretty good editing software.

ENGAGE BACK

I'm going to repeat myself again:

ENGAGEMENT IS KING ON INSTAGRAM

Likes and comments are currency on Instagram.

Why do you think Insta gave you the ability to "heart" a comment and then hit the reply button once you do?

THEY WANT YOU TO ENGAGE!

Not only do you want your followers to engage with you, you want to engage with your followers! Doing this creates a sense of community that makes your followers realize there is a person behind the account. Not just a bot.

DO:

- Respond to comments,

- Try to keep the conversation going

- Ask questions.

DON'T

- Ignore comments

- Post and then leave Instagram

- Respond with the same comment or emoji over and over again. Instagram thinks of it as spam and will penalize your account.

Create Challenges:

Another way to increase engagement is to create week long or 30 day challenges that fit your niche. Create a branded hashtag for everyone to use and build community around it.

Example: Every October, I Do a October Photo A Day Challenge. I created a branded hashtag: #everydayphotoaday and invite all of my followers to join. Each time I do a challenge I increase the engagement of my own account, get new eyes on my account and gain followers.

Engage with your Loyal Followers

Every account has them: those followers who are ride or die and ALWAYS like or comment on your content. Even as you grow, you want to thank these people by returning the favor. You want them to continue to visit your account and like and comment on their content.

Plan to:

- Take 5-10 minutes a day and engage on their content.

- Create a saved collection and go through every day and pick a few of these loyal followers to show some love too. You can also set up alerts for these VIPs.

- After you post a photo, go back and interact with those who commented on your previous posts by liking and commenting on their posts. It creates a community.