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BE YOUR OWN INTERNET SUPERSTAR

By Polly Hummingbird

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When I first started setting up shop online I tried to do what everyone else was doing. I thought this would make my site, and my online activities, more "net-acceptable". But as the months went by, and I still had very little action, I decided to abandon this cooperative mode of behavior.

I began to do what I wanted to do on the Internet, in ways that I found pleasing. Even though I still followed the basic rules, I started doing things my own way.

I'll site you some examples.

Where most people set up banners or images that link to other sites on the web, I set up my banners to advertise my OWN webpages instead. These banners have no links, mind you, but they are super promoters.

Then I started to be more creative with the links that go to my other webpages. Instead of just having a little bit of underlined blue text saying "click here", I made my links nice and big and turned them into promo messages. Now they really get attention. Wow!

Many websites offer an email address at the bottom of the webpage so that someone can make contact with them. How boring can you be! I got rid of that little "mailto" link and put a message form instead. Now a visitor can send a message to me, or my company, right there and then. Isn't that a terrific service?

I'll admit that I haven't actually started an online advertising campaign yet, and that's probably the reason why I am my site's most popular visitor. But I'm already guessing that when I do, I'm going to run into the same kind of dumb—and-dull ideas that just don't work for me, or for anyone probably either.

So I'm planning ahead. I'm going to find a method of marketing that is effective – even if it isn't conventional.

My advice is simply this. If you can't attract visitors to your

site doing things the net-acceptable way, why not try doing things your own way. Be your own Internet superstar!

It's easy to use the multitude of available resources in unique and fabulous ways. Create your own systems. Design your own codes. Write your website copy so that you are impressed.

Forget about what everyone else does. When you're happy, what else matters? The worst thing that can happen is that you could go from 10 visitors a month to 6. Well, big deal! But the best thing that could happen to you is that you could go from 10 visitors a month to a thousand!

7 Steps To Hire The Best

By Michael Mercer, Ph.D.

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You can use this step-by-step method to hire applicants who are likely to be "superstar" employees:

- highly productive
- low-turnover

Important: Focus on hiring applicants you rate positively on all seven prediction methods.

1st Prediction Method = Brief Initial Screening Interview

If an applicant's application looks suitable, then conduct BISI, a customized 15–30 minute over-phone or in-person interview. BISI quickly reveals if an applicant has biographical data similar to your company's "superstar" employees.

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For example, at one company, we discovered "superstar" Sales Reps had many similarities before working for this company:

- * Work: (a) 1 or 2 previous sales jobs, (b) only 1 or 2 jobs before applying at the company, and (c) kept prior jobs 2 - 5 years
- * Education: (a) earned B.A. from state universities, (b) majored in business or liberal arts, (c) worked part-time throughout college, and (d) college jobs entailed a lot of people contact
- * Pay: Earned less than likely first year compensation at this company
- * Vocal Style: Exuded high energy

So, this company's BISI screened-in applicants with similar work, education, pay, and vocal style - and screened-out other applicants.

2nd Prediction Method = Customized Pre-employment Tests

If the applicant did well on 1st Prediction Method - BISI, then you can have applicant take customized pre-employment tests. Use tests specifically designed to screen applicants and predict:

- A. Work Behavior - e.g., interpersonal skills, personality, and motivations
- B. Mental Abilities - e.g., problem-solving, vocabulary, math, grammar, and small detail abilities

Importantly, the test must use customized "benchmark scores" based on scores of your "superstar" employees. With customized "benchmark scores," you quickly see if an applicant scored similar to your company's "superstar" employees.

3rd Prediction Method = In-Depth Interview Using Customized Interview Guide Form

If you decide the applicant did fine on 1st and 2nd Prediction Methods, then you may conduct an In-Depth Interview. Crucial: Create a customized Interview Guide document for each job, including (a) 6 - 9 key "make-or-brake" job talents, (b) questions to ask, (b) note-taking, and (c) ratings.

Importantly, you must provide seminar training to teach managers how to use your customized Interview Guides to assess applicants. Without superb training, interviewers fail to hire the best.

4th Prediction Method = Role-Play

If the applicant did well on 3rd Prediction Method, then have applicant do Role-Play immediately after In-Depth Interview. The 15 - 30 minute role-play lets you see if the applicant has critical job skills. For example, have a Sales Rep applicant role-play selling. Then, assess the applicant using a customized Role-Play Rating Checklist.

5th Prediction Method = Realistic Job Preview

If you decide applicant did well on 1st - 4th Prediction Methods, then do Realistic Job Preview: For RJP, the applicant spends ½ - 1 day watching an employee doing the job. Benefit: Applicants who received RJP are less likely to (a) accept job offer - but, if they accept, (b) turnover. Reason: The RJP assures they know what they are getting themselves into!

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6th Prediction Method = 1 Executive Must Approve All Hiring

If the applicant did well on 1st - 5th Prediction Methods, then one executive at your company reviews Applicant Rating Summary Form. Your company's quick Applicant Summary Rating Form

- * summarizes ratings - positive, average, or negative - on 1st - 5th Prediction Methods
- * "forces" managers to actually use your structured hiring steps

Important: If the applicant's ratings on 1st - 5th Prediction Methods include

- + all positive ratings, then executive may approve hiring applicant
- average or negative ratings, then the executive may not allow applicant to be hired

7th Prediction Method = Reference Checks

If your company decides the applicant did well on 1st - 6th Prediction Methods - plus accepts job offer - then you conduct Reference Checks. If they prove

- + positive, then your company keeps applicant as an employee
- negative, then you take appropriate action

How Much Time Do You Need to Hire the Best?

Many managers moan they are time–crunched, and ask how much time these seven steps require.

Two answers:

1. If an applicant does well on 1st - 7th Prediction Methods, then you invested 2 - 3 hours to hire the best
2. Ask yourself: How much time - and money - did you waste when you hired average or below–average applicants? You wasted many hours - plus salary, benefits and low productivity - because you failed to invest only 2 - 3 hours to hire the best!

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Michael Mercer, Ph.D., is America's Hire the Best Expert™. Dr. Mercer authored five books, including "Hire the Best — & Avoid the Rest™". Many companies rely on his pre–employment test - "Abilities & Behavior Forecaster™ Test" - to help hire the best. You can subscribe to his free e–Newsletter at www.DrMercer.com or call him at (847) 382–0690.



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