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What Skills Really Matter Online?

By Jeff Grant & Cindy Kappler

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If you've been online for more than 15 minutes you have probably noticed that the Internet can seem like a strange new world.

And the language these people use! Online marketers talk about such strange things as hits and ROI (return on investment) as if you will automatically understand what they mean.

If you have ever been discouraged by what seems like a million things to learn, take heart.

The truth is that the skills needed to succeed online can be easily learned by anyone ... and that includes you!

Let's look together at the top five skills you need to succeed online. Some of them may surprise you.

1. The Ability To Market.

"Marketing" is just a fancy term for selling something. After all, the Internet is the biggest marketplace known to humankind. If you want your piece of the pie, at some point you are going to ask someone to buy your product or service.

INSIDER TIP: You don't have to be a "natural born salesperson" to make lots of sales. You can model the selling text (called 'copy') from people who are already successful. Simply modify the copy in their sales letters

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and marketing materials to fit your own product or service. Almost all online marketers use this technique.

To sell effectively remember to tell people what your product or service will do for them. Not just what it does; what it does for them.

2. Provide Excellent Customer Service.

Providing excellent customer service is simply treating others as you would like to be treated.

When you want more information, when do you want it? You want it now and so will *your* customer. The more you can think like your customer the easier it will be to provide world-class customer service.

Remember that when a person has bought something from you once they will be much more likely to buy again. When they have questions or concerns follow up with them quickly.

INSIDER TIP: Create a message containing answers to the top ten questions about your product or service and deliver it via autoresponder.

This will ensure that people get an immediate, personalized response from you even if it's 2:00 in the morning and you are asleep!

3. Have a Vision.

Knowing what you want to accomplish online is perhaps the #1 skill necessary. It's not enough to say, "I want to make money".

Ask yourself these questions before you begin. The answers to these questions may just reveal your perfect business idea.

1. What am I passionate about?
2. What skills do I possess that will be helpful online?
3. What do I really hate to do?

The more you know about what you love to do (and hate to do) the more wisely you will be able to choose or create

products that both fit your personality and are popular in the marketplace.

When you find something that matches both your interests and the need of the market, you will have found your 'niche'.

4. Know Something About Money

You don't need to be a bookkeeper to succeed online but you do need to understand how to handle money. You will need to calculate how much you can afford to spend on things like advertising, Internet access, online services like web hosting and more in order to become profitable.

INSIDER TIP: Keep things as simple as you can. Use a program like Quicken to keep up with details and visit financial

websites like Quicken.com to fill in any gaps in your financial knowledge.

5. Learn How to Model Success

"Modeling success" is a popular idea online. It simply means finding someone who is very successful and copying the things they do so you will be successful too.

It works and it's easy to do!

Simply find people who have been super successful over a long period of time. Then look at the types of things they do and see how those things can apply to your business.

Choose someone like Yanik Silver (the author of '33 Days To Online Profits' and other excellent eBooks) and see how he or she follows up with his or her prospects and customers.

See what their websites look like and how the words sound. Look at how often they ask for the order on their sales page. Do they give 10 bonus items or two? Where do they advertise? What do *their* ads say?

Modeling successful online business people will lead to your success perhaps faster than any other one technique you can employ.

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INSIDER TIP: Find people that you admire and get on their mailing list. You will learn from reading their sales messages and see first-hand how often they follow up with prospect and customers. Do the same in your business and good things will follow!

The skills you need to succeed online are all within your grasp. The Internet can be a confusing and frustrating place to do business if you feel that you have to "reinvent the wheel" and start from scratch.

The good news is that people have gone before you who can show you the way to success. If you lack a certain skill, just find someone who has that skill in abundance and copy his or her success.

Do this consistently and soon you will be the one people look to when they need to know what really works online.

WRITING YOUR WRITING JOB DESCRIPTION

By Mary Anne Hahn

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Have you ever heard about the "motivational" concept of writing your own obituary?

The idea is, you write what you would like your obit to say, by summarizing all those accomplishments that you most want to achieve during the course of your life. Motivation gurus suggest that this enables us to focus on what's most important to us, while discarding those activities that truly don't matter in the long run.

Along similar—but less morbid—lines, I believe that we writers might find it helpful if we took the time to write our own writing job descriptions. If we could lead the writing lives of our dreams, what types of writing would we be doing? Who would our customers and/or readers be? In what niches would we specialize? What would we consider to be our strongest skills, our areas of expertise?

Or let's say that you want to diversify your writing goals. You could develop a job description for each niche. In this way, you could identify the experience and skills you already possess, and which ones you still need to work on.

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Here's an example: suppose one of your writing career goals involves writing profile articles—of celebrities, politicians, business leaders, scientists, or just ordinary people who do extraordinary things. What attributes would such a writer need to possess? Excellent interviewing skills, obviously. Research skills would help as well; you certainly wouldn't want to walk into the interview with absolutely no background knowledge of your interviewee or his/her subject matter. Attention to detail would come in handy, too. What is your interviewee wearing? What can you say about his smile, or her vocal qualities? What does the interviewee's home or office tell us about him?

So your profile writing job description might look like this:

Job Title: Profile Article Writer

Job Description: Interview famous, influential and or interesting people, and write article profiles on them for publication in local and national magazines.

Skills/Experience Needed: Excellent writing skills and attention to detail required. Experience in conducting interviews with people in a wide variety of occupations. Proven online and library research skills. Knowledge of publications with a track record of running article profiles.

Do you see how creating a writing job description for yourself might help direct you towards the kinds of writing assignments that you want to land? If so, spend some time today developing your own.

Mary Anne Hahn is editor and publisher of WriteSuccess, the free biweekly ezine of ideas, information and inspiration for people who want to launch and maintain successful writing careers. To subscribe, [mailto: writesuccess-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:writesuccess-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)



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