

CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS

Growing Your Network

Develop **N**aturally & **A**uthentically



COACHING PROGRAM

Telling Your Story | Unique Success Blueprint
Sustainable Strategy | Attraction Principles | Power of Intention

Work doesn't always have to feel so much like, well...work!
Have more fun and get better results in less time by focusing on your strengths and becoming more intentional about your message.



Kathy Sipple

Phone: 219-440-4620
Email: kathy@mysocialmediacoach.com
Web: www.mysocialmediacoach.com

YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKING SUCCESS BLUEPRINT

“Begin with the end in mind.”

Dr. Stephen Covey

STEP 1: GOAL SETTING

Creating Your Social Media Success Blueprint began with setting goals. Likewise, it is useful to set some goals for measuring success around building your network.

Bigger is not always better. Some people are very successful with a carefully chosen, well-nourished network while others find benefit from a large, global network. You need to spend time defining your own success parameters.

Good example: “Send invitations to connect to 5 new LinkedIn contacts met at the Chamber of Commerce event.”

Bad example: “Get more business from LinkedIn.”

Good example: “Follow 20 targeted new accounts on Twitter, send 10 personalized messages and 10 retweets weekly.”

Bad example: “Get more Twitter followers.”

Create S.M.A.R.T. Goals



You have decided to use social media for your business or cause for a variety of reasons. It is called “social” media for a reason...you need people (and relationships with those people) to make it work. Strategy and content alone will not get you to your goals, though they are critical steps in the process. This module will focus on helping you create some success habits that will help you be a more effective networker, online and at live events as well.

Reminder: *direct selling via social media is not generally successful.* Focus on how to add **value** to your network. Determine what your connections want/need from you and give it to them!

STEP 2: COMMITMENT RECAP

How much time will you commit to your social media efforts? Of the overall budget you allow, you should invest at least half of it on strengthening your network: “listening”, adding new connections, strengthening existing connections, engaging with your network, etc.

I have committed _____ hours per _____ (day, week, month, etc.) to invest in achieving my social media marketing goals. _____% will be spent on content creation. _____% will be spent on cultivating connections.

Be honest! If you have less than 2 hours per week to spend on social media this will significantly limit your recommended strategies. If you have more money than time, it is possible to outsource some of the duties by choosing assistance wisely. Supplemental budget available for outsourcing, if applicable: \$_____ per month.

Note: Think carefully about delegating any task, but especially interacting with your network. It is often easier to outsource content creation and scheduling than engagement duties. Data entry tasks are easier to delegate than other network building tasks. (See “Additional Resources” section at the end of this workbook for ideas on this.)

Platforms Selected

I/my team have chosen the following social media platforms (up to 2) for our primary source of content distribution:

Blog Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Google+

Note: you can often share similar or even the same content across multiple channels.

Are the platforms selected based on a single-users network or an entire team’s?

List team members:

STEP 3: DEFINING & JUMPSTARTING YOUR NETWORK

TIP: See “Additional Resources: Contact Import/Export” section at the end of this workbook for specific, step by step instructions to add your email contacts en masse to your social networks.

EXERCISE, Part 1:

Online network resources:

Offline network resources:

EXERCISE, Part 2:

Network tags & categories:

Tip: Begin with the end in mind... Will you ever need to segment your message to different segments of your network? If you’re assembling your network from a variety of sources, it may be easiest to “tag” or “categorize” them as you add them to your network rather than to go back and label them later.

STEP 4: NETWORK STRATEGY

Now that you know who you want to invite/include in your network, it's time to decide "who", "when" and "how" to do all of this...

In the "Creating Content" module we looked at seasonality and developed an editorial calendar to fit your businesses unique fluctuations. Is your interaction with your network at all seasonal? Do you host events? Do you attend events like tradeshow? Are you planning any major product launches or sales?

Consider these factors when you prioritize what segments of your network to develop first and how much time to devote to each person (or segment) moving forward.

TIP: if you work with a team, consider creating shared documents using a free shared document service such as Google Drive (<https://drive.google.com>) for easy online file sharing and collaboration.

Are some members of staff responsible for particular market segments? Make sure everyone knows who is responsible for each task.

Exercise: List below known events you will be attending where you will likely have opportunity to make new network connections or reconnect with existing connections.

January: _____

February: _____

March: _____

April: _____

May: _____

June: _____

July: _____

August: _____

September: _____

October: _____

November: _____

December: _____

STEP 5: CONNECTING TIPS

- Look for win/win connections within your network.
- Make sure you express value when you reach out to a new contact.
- Do not use default language, example: “Kathy Sipple would like to add you to her LinkedIn network.”
- Personalize your message.
- Remind contacts how you met.
- Don’t just add connections—take the next step. Invite them to a meeting, phone call, event, etc.
- Pre-invite contacts to join you by mentioning in person (at time of meeting) that you would like to connect to them on LinkedIn (or wherever appropriate.)
- Make it easy for others to find you:
 - Put your social links and icons in your email signature and on your html template email marketing.
 - Put your social links and icons on your website, blog, and your other social profiles.
 - Put your social links and icons on your business card and other printed literature.
 - Fill out your profile completely.
- Give to get: recommend others, retweet, “like”, comment, share others’ content.
- Don’t overshare or ask too much of your network or you will burn them out. No spam!
- Keep sharing as relevant as possible by tagging and categorizing your connections to make it easier to personalize messaging.
- Don’t message more than a couple of people at once using social media (or at least no not allow them to see one another’s email address if you do.) If you use bulk messaging, still try to craft as personal sounding a message as possible.
- Set your intention before you begin connecting...what do you want to get out of each session? Remember win/win! Always strive to add value to your network instead of just being a taker.

Notes on Strategy:

If you have less than a few hours to devote per week, consider doing more listening than engaging, at least at first. Start by “liking” and sharing others’ content. These are lower time cost activities than starting and participating in discussions.

Assess what you’re “doing naturally already” (DNA!) to leverage your efforts. Take note of “connection building opportunities” that arise for you throughout the next day/week and think about what you can incorporate into your strategy on an ongoing basis.

What tools do you need to equip yourself (or staff) with to best capture these opportunities? Smart phone with business card scanner application? Download LinkedIn/Twitter/Facebook application to your smart phone? Practice using social connection language as you go about your day/week.

If you are severely limited on time, you can still be an effective social media marketer. You’ll just need to get a little more creative and resourceful with your methods.

Social Media takes TIME



Original concept by Beth Kanter

STEP 6: PRACTICE

Example: Planning for networking opportunities at an upcoming event

Before the event

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

At the event

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

After the event

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

CLASS EXERCISE:

It's time to sketch out a plan for how to put your ideas into action.

1. Do a mini networking calendar for the next 30-60 days.
2. Map out a plan to jumpstart your network building activities.

Include:

- Time per week allocated.
- Source of your contacts. If you need to get them into digital format, address that too.
- Once you upload the initial contacts, what are your plans for regular upkeep?

Content sources, plan to digitize:

Jumpstart plan:

Ongoing connecting plan:

STEP 7: MEASURING AND ADJUSTING FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS

GOALS

- Did you achieve the goal(s) you set for yourself? If not, do you have ideas why? What will you change for the next month to improve?
- If you use Facebook, check your Insights tab to learn more about the demographics behind your growing fan base: <https://www.facebook.com/FacebookInsights>. What surprises you? If growth is coming in areas you did not expect, try to discover if there is a trend there for a new marketing opportunity.
- If you have a blog or website, hopefully you have **Google Analytics** (or another analytics program) installed. This will provide you with useful feedback to learn more about your visitors.
- If you use email marketing like AWeber or MailChimp, you will also be able to gather data about which readers open, click and share the information you send. Make sure to give high priority to connections who are loyal.
- See “Measuring Success” in “Additional Resources” at end of workbook for tools to help with this.

What went well:

What needs improvement?:

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Data Entry

- Business card reader
- Temporary administrative help, virtual assistant
- Fiverr.com
- Volunteers or interns
- Tackle 5-10 a day...

Contact Import & Export

- What is CSV and how to save spreadsheet as one <http://bit.ly/11Ksdth>
- Export from Outlook to CSV (comma separated value file) <http://bit.ly/102JgJm>
- Import CSV to Gmail <http://bit.ly/1chYyMI>
- Upload Gmail to Twitter: <http://bit.ly/RO3AvQ>
- Invite email contacts to like Facebook page: <http://on.fb.me/SWpZIm>
- Invite email contacts to connect on LinkedIn: <http://linkd.in/TLdOUj>
- Exporting tagged or categorized contacts from LinkedIn: <http://bit.ly/o85Nky>

Q&A

- Quora.com – for asking and answering professional questions
- LinkedIn Group discussions

Customer Relationship Management

- Sage ACT! www.act.com
- Salesforce www.salesforce.com
- Goldmine www.goldmine.com
- Batchbooks www.batchbook.com

HTML Email Programs

- Aweber www.act.com
- Mailchimp www.salesforce.com
- Vertical Response
- Constant Contact

Making Email More Social

- Tips for a great email signature: <http://bit.ly/14T2FhI>
- Add social icons and links to your email signature: <http://bit.ly/17IS4hO>
- Rapportive: rich social profiles in Gmail: <http://rapportive.com/>
- Xobni Smartr: smarter inbox management for Gmail: <https://www.xobni.com/download/gmail>

Organizing Contacts:

- Creating contact groups in Gmail: <http://bit.ly/17pNEru>

Neat Stuff:

- LinkedIn Network Map: <http://inmaps.linkedinlabs.com/>

LinkedIn Network Growth Tips

- Building Your LinkedIn Network (my own training video, 1 hour), password: documents: <https://vimeo.com/65577603>

Twitter Network Growth Tips & Tools

- How to find people to follow on Twitter (from Twitter): <http://bit.ly/mlYuSh>
- 10 Ways to find people to follow on Twitter (from Mashable): <http://on.mash.to/atZvUi>
- Grow your Twitter followers by being nice and informative: <http://onforb.es/d9NAZp>
- Top 14 things that influence your Twitter account growth: <http://bit.ly/10FrhWL>
- Friend or Follow – helps you figure out who’s following you that you’re not following back and vice versa: <http://friendorfollow.com/>
- Tweet Grader: Use to find and follow most influential tweeters in your town or industry: <http://tweet.grader.com/>
- 9 tips to get more Twitter followers: <http://bit.ly/UIO7wz>

Facebook Fan Growth Tips

- 4 free ways to increase your Facebook followers: <http://bit.ly/XB5i5e>
- <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/facebook-page-likes/>

Measuring Success

- Klout.com
- Tweet Grader: rank your own Twitter profile to find out how you’re doing: <http://tweet.grader.com/>
- Measuring social media success with Google Analytics: <http://bit.ly/10c2FcV>