



How to Present & Establish Yourself as an Expert

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November 2018

Central Oregon boasts individuals who are experts in nearly every professional field. The challenge is that most work remotely. They work in their home office or in small offices. How do we know who they are and where to find these 'experts'?

According to Wikipedia: "An expert is somebody who obtains results that are vastly superior to those obtained by the majority of the population."

Experts have special knowledge that others need; are fascinated in; or don't have and typically don't want to learn. For example, I need a computer expert; am fascinated with architecture and don't have nor do I want to learn the skills to be a computer programmer or architect.

Yet I'm eagerly going to hire an expert that I can trust to do these jobs. Your expertise is valuable.

In my experience, expert entrepreneurs and professionals who are attracted to Central Oregon are not arrogant. They don't go around with the attitude of: "Hey, I'm the best at what I do so you should hire me."

Rather they are active, fun loving, healthy, balanced individuals who work and play hard.

Still, it's important for us to know who they are. Why would we, the consumer, want to hire anyone who is not an expert in their field? It's also important to their livelihood for these experts to let the world know just how great they are.

The dilemma: a lot of people who are not experts present themselves as one. And, true experts are so busy working at their craft that they don't find the time or believe they have the skills to present themselves as an actual expert.

How do you know if someone is an actual expert? Listen closely for specifics.

Are they speaking in general terms of what individuals in their field accomplish, or specifically about their achievements? Are they more interested in talking about themselves than intrigued with how they might be able to help you? Ask why they entered their field, what fascinates them about it, what specific successes they've had with someone like you.

Getting back to you as an expert, if you work by yourself and want the world to know just how dedicated and talented you are, where do you begin? Consider one or more of my **Top '7' Tips** to present and establish yourself as an expert.

Credentials. Up front, clients want to know with whom they will be dealing. Your credentials speak volumes. When sharing your credentials let the prospect know what they mean, not just the letters. For example, I wouldn't merely say that I am an MCC. What the heck is that? I would say that I am one of less than 500 coaches in the US who have been awarded the Master Certified Coach designation, MCC. Give thought to what your credentials mean in lay terms.

Social Media. We all know by now how important social media is. My tip here is to hire an expert. You cannot be an expert in everything. Ask around, who locally has had success. Interview at least three companies. Study their own social media presence. Who are their customers, are they anyone like you?

Passion. Passion. Passion. You may think that talking about how much you love your work or how excited you are about a recent success would be boring to others, or too egotistical. Absolutely not. We are starved for good news these days and enthusiasm is contagious. Timing and appropriate audience are critical.

Show intrigue before being intriguing. People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Show genuine interest with whomever you're speaking, whether they are a prospect or not. People are fascinating given the opportunity to share. Problem is, so few people take time to really listen. You will stand out and be remembered if you take time to focus and listen. Once they feel heard and valued, they will willingly listen and value you.

Network. I know this is a nasty word for most sole proprietors who would rather communicate with their computers than another individual. Start slowly with something that interests you. For example, public speaking — join Toastmasters; trivia — attend one of Worthy Brewing Pub Trivia or one of their other intriguing events; local issues — attend a City Club of Central Oregon forum. There are also five Chambers of Commerce's. Select something that truly interests 'you' and thus your prospective clients. Still reluctant, Google Harry Beckwith's book 'Selling the Invisible'.

Success Story. Have one clear three-minute success story to share to let prospects know how you've helped someone like them. People are much more intrigued by stories that relate to them than a random case study. Rehearse with someone outside of your industry for feedback.

Dress the part. People make their mind up about whether to spend their valuable time with you within three seconds of seeing you. Bend is casual. There are different levels of casual. Admit it, if someone approaches you in a professional setting with a sloppy appearance — wrinkled shirt, sloppy hair, unshaven (not the cool type of unshaven) or look like they're on their way back from a camping trip, you may not be intrigued. Present yourself like the serious expert that you are.

Bonus tip: while many of the above tips take only time, not money, be willing to invest in yourself. Hire professionals who will help you attain what you want; pay to join organizations and attend events; get a haircut and update your wardrobe. It all matters.

Whether you are already an expert or in the process of becoming one, I challenge you to put one of these tips into practice this coming week. The world needs to know who you are, why we should care and most importantly how your expertise will make our lives better.

Present and establish yourself as an expert. There are more prospects than you may currently be aware of who will thrive through their connection with you. Make it easy for them to know and find you.

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