

# Thought leadership tips – help yourself to become an expert

Thought leadership can really help differentiate you in a crowded marketplace. It can also help you to protect fee levels and win business when everything is being commoditised. Here are 10 tips to help you in your thought leadership efforts.

1. Thought leadership isn't about knowing everything or being the first to comment on something. It's about being passionate about one topic and explaining it in a way that is easy to grasp and enthuse.
2. Give your visibility a good vantage. Raise your profile quickly by writing articles, blogs or white papers for key target publications in your chosen market. You can even publish a collection of these pieces later in a book.
3. Which magazines, publications and other media best serve your target market or audience? Get a copy and read them. Who are the editors in those publications? Start planning how to forge a relationship with them.
4. What are the hot topics in your chosen market? What are people currently facing? Tailor your expertise to comment specifically on these issues. The more 'easy to apply' advice you can give, the faster your following will grow. Go for several short snappy commentaries rather than one massive article.
5. Treat journalists or editors as you would a valued contact, customer or client. Don't let them down and take an interest in them and their goals. They can really help you build your profile if treated well.
6. Familiarise yourself with the style and tone of any media you write for before you start authoring a piece for them. If you adapt your style to fit theirs, you'll find that editors cut or adapt very little of your content.
7. If you get asked to write an article, comment or give insight on something, try and rehearse or run your words by someone outside of your specialist area. They'll help you to speak in plain English and explain your expertise in a way that's easily understood.
8. If you get asked to write an article, comment, guest blog or give a presentation, always check how much content is required. Your message then won't be weakened by being edited or cut short. Also, the people who've given you this opportunity are then more likely to pass more your way in the future.
9. Don't forget the power of social media to position your expertise. Used strategically, the likes of facebook, twitter, LinkedIn and Google+ can give you a valuable 'touch point' with your fan base. Remember though that these are just another communications tool in your reputation-building kitbag. Keep your message consistent across all of them so as not to confuse or weaken your position. Track engagement levels to see which messages resonate the most.
10. Avoid being a one-hit wonder by keeping your thought leadership fresh. Consider different ways to apply your thoughts to the changing world/ situation/ economy. Give yourself mini 'away days' to brainstorm new thoughts and ideas.

Still too daunting a prospect? If you need an extra pair of hands to develop your thought leadership and expert status, we'd love to help.

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