



Seven Ways to Effectively Use Twitter

By MILTON MATTOX, PhD

I started using Twitter in earnest in January 2012. Since that time, I've learned a few tips that I have found very helpful. Hopefully, you will find some of these useful as well.

RE-TWEET (RT)

There is nothing more flattering than someone re-tweeting what you've tweeted. In fact, the more re-tweets you receive for a particular tweet, the better you feel. This is the case for others as well. I recommend that you pick a good category and look at tweets from others there. Then, re-tweet (RT) tweets that are particularly interesting to you. For example, I like to look at what people are saying under the category of "leadership." So, I regularly do a search for #leadership in Twitter. This lets me see all the tweets that include #leadership. I then RT the ones I like. The tweet shows up in my "stream" and it lets the individual know that I re-tweeted their tweet. It is an easy way to get started. Searching on #leadership allows me to RT people whom I may not currently be following or who may not be following me. By re-tweeting people I'm not following, I occasionally pick up new followers or I start to follow new people because I like their tweets. I usually pick one day a week to do my RTs. I only do about 2 or 3 max a day, separated by a few hours.

HASHTAGS (#) ARE YOUR FRIEND

The hashtag (#) is an awesome feature in Twitter. Whenever you do a tweet, try to include a category you would like your tweet to show up under. Sticking with my example from above, I regularly tweet about leadership and management. So, my tweets include #leadership or #management or both. This allows my tweets to show up whenever people search on these hashtags. Remember, this allows people to see your tweets even if they are not following you. I pick up about 20 to 30 new followers a week because people read my tweets in these categories. During the 2012 presidential election, I tweeted a couple of non-partisan tweets about presidential leadership and included a hashtag similar to #2012presidential. I tried to be as neutral as possible so as not to offend anyone from either party, as my intent was to share my thoughts on leadership in general. My tweet was viewed by hundreds of thousands, if not

millions of people, because that category was greatly watched at the time. So, hashtags, if used properly, can be a powerful friend and get your tweets viewed by many.

TWEET LINKS TO ARTICLES YOU ARE READING ONLINE

This is very easy. As you read articles online, there is a Twitter "tweet" button that allows you to tweet the article, including a link. This is by far the easiest, possibly most effective way to tweet about things that are meaningful to you and others. Pressing the Twitter tweet button as you read online articles automatically formats the tweet so that it is 140 characters or less. I then add my hashtag or hashtags (e.g., #leadership, #management, #quotes, etc.) and I'm done.

QUOTES

I like to tweet quotes about 2 to 3 times a week. You can find good quotes under #quotes (or by using Google, of course). I like to tweet original quotes every so often. This gives me a good sense for how a particular topic will resonate with people before I write an article or blog about it.

TRY NOT TO SPAM YOUR FOLLOWERS WITH TOO MANY TWEETS AT A TIME

Try not to do more than one tweet per 3 to 4 hours. I was once following a person who tweeted 8 to 10 tweets back-to-back multiple times a day. I finally had to stop following the person because the tweets were more like spam.

BECOME AN EXPERT IN A CATEGORY OR TWO

I recommend tweeting about something you are passionate about and then including a hashtag for that category. Over time, people will see that you are regularly showing up under that category and before you know it, *you are considered an expert.*

IN GENERAL, HAVE FUN

Lastly, have fun. Twitter is an amazing social networking tool and I have so much fun with it. I don't take myself too seriously and that keeps it fun. Don't worry if some followers stop following you, because people do that for various reasons. Others will follow you – especially if you stay true and passionate about a subject matter. 📣

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