



THE INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT



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How Sharing the Spotlight Can Help You Move Ahead

by Carl Friesen

Consider these scenarios:

- Your client is pleased. You've done great work on that project. You'd like to demonstrate your abilities through publishing a case study, but you have trouble getting magazine editors and website managers to accept an article that's really just you talking about how great you are.
- You want to build a strategic partnership with another business professional—possibly to get some referral work or to be brought in as a partner for a project. But your calls aren't returned. How do you offer this person something that benefits him or her enough to get you noticed?
- You want to publish an article in a professional journal, perhaps one for lawyers, or accountants, or actuaries. Problem is, you're not a lawyer, accountant or actuary, and the editor only takes articles by members of the profession.

One answer to these three situations lies in being willing to share the spotlight, through an article that is jointly authored by you and another person. We call it a "co-byline" article. Why would you do this?

In the first example above, if you can get your client to co-author the article, the message of your successful solution has greater credibility than if it's just you saying it. In the second example, offering the object of your desire the chance to have a byline in a prestigious publication will have its attractions—particularly if you offer to interview them for their views, and then do a first draft of the article. And in the third example, bringing along a member of the professional association as co-author

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will generate a lot more interest from editors.

If you think that jointly authoring an article will help you strategically, start by thinking of a market that both you and your potential co-author would like to reach. Then determine which medium, print or digital, will reach those markets. Next, think of a topic or theme that will show your thoughtleadership and that of your co-author, and also be of interest to the gatekeepers at that publication. Your fourth step is to develop a query letter that offers the editor a dual-view article. Take care not to mention the name of your co-author unless you've talked with him or her first.

If the editor is interested, you will be in a strong position when you approach your co-author: "I've already got the editor's go-ahead to write the article—do you want to be part of this?" Be sure to tell them that there's no cost, and that they will get a chance to review and edit the article before it gets published.

The result can be an article that meets your strategic objectives in more ways than one, and also helps another business professional move ahead.

Carl Friesen, CMC, is a chief associate with emerson consulting group inc., which specializes in transforming business experts and professional service firms into "thoughtleaders." Friesen can be contacted at carl@thoughtleading.com or visit Thoughtleading.com.

Actuaries
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475 North Martingale Road, Suite 600, Schaumburg, Illinois 60173
Phone: 847.706.3500 Fax: 847.706.3599 www.soa.org