

Your Ideas Can Make You Famous (and Rich)

By Henry Stimpson

If you want to get rich in professional services—whether your field is finance, law, consulting, marketing, investing, insurance, accounting or whatever—get famous.

Do you need to have a megawatt smile full of white teeth, bulging muscles like Schwarzenegger or a glib motor mouth?

Nope. Your expertise—your *good ideas*—can make you famous—a media star recognized for your expertise.

Media coverage comes from just three main avenues.

Get quoted as an expert in newspapers, magazines, and websites. You offer your ideas and expertise to writers and nationally and locally. By staying in front of them—and by offering provocative ideas—they'll call you when they need to interview an expert. When you're quoted in the media, it provides both exposure to your audience and an implicit third-party endorsement. A neutral party deemed you're a credible expert and sought out your opinion. That carries weight with clients and prospects.

Get your articles published. You write—or have a ghostwriter write—articles for newspapers, business magazines, trade and professional publications. Having

your name and picture on an article is a prestige item. A bylined article—so called because the credit under the title says “By John Doe”—gives you the opportunity to develop your ideas at length and positions you a leader in your field. One of the beauties of writing articles is that you get total control—at most the publication will do some light editing.

Appear on television and radio programs as an expert guest. The third leg of the fame triangle. Appearing on a show is a bit like making a personal sale call to thousands at once. The audience gets a glimpse of you a person as well as hearing your ideas. You can start to build trust en masse.

So, how do you get quoted, published and invited to appear? You need a way to consistently convey your provocative ideas to the news media—anything from your local newspaper to the top trade magazine in your field to The Wall Street Journal.

Remember, the media is a hungry beast. It wants more stories, more ideas every day. It needs new content to fill up pages and airtime every day.

This is where you come in, with your ideas neatly packaged as story ideas. A story idea captures the essence of



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your idea in a few succinct paragraphs and offers you as a source of expert commentary. Dealing with your clients, you have your finger on the pulse of what they're concerned with—a real-world source for compelling story ideas.

Writing a story idea that attracts attention is an art, and you have to get to the point quickly and compellingly.

Depending on the media and your idea, a story idea can lead to any one or more of these three main avenues of media exposure. A reporter or broadcaster who gets a good idea

from you may become intrigued and call you for a quote or ask you to appear on a radio or TV show. An editor may ask you to write an article on the topic.

The funny thing about story ideas is that they often work indirectly. The reporter may have no interest in the story idea you've proposed but will call for commentary on a totally different story he or she is working on. Why? Because a well-written story idea shows that you're a smart,

available source. And don't underestimate available: As Woody Allen once said, "Eighty percent of success is showing up."

With continuing media exposure you'll become famous in a substantive way—not for your sparkling smile, but as a thought leader with top ideas. You can use your press clippings as part of your promotional materials, both in print and online. Media coverage can also lead to opportunities to speak locally.

You'll known as a force to be reckoned with in your field. And when you talk to prospects, they'll recognize your name and face, giving you a head start over the competition.