

## 4 Rules of Engagement Online

You know those personal injury attorneys that are on all the TV commercials in your home city? A while back I got a telephone call from one of them. It was kind of surreal, talking to this guy from the commercials. The conversation went a little bit like this.

“I missed your Bar Association presentation about bringing in business with social media, but I would like to know- how can we get started with that at our firm?”

I then explained to this attorney the basics of social media, and the power of tools like LinkedIn, blogs, and Twitter to engage with potential clients.

“I don’t have time to do any of it myself, do you have some one that could just ghostwrite or ghost-blog for me?” Was his next question for me.

What he was really asking me was this: can I be social without having to actually talk to anybody? Nope, sorry- it doesn’t work that way. So I want to outline for attorneys, professionals, or anybody looking forward to bringing in business from social media the 4 basic rules of engagement for social media.

### *Be Active*

To use social media effectively, you need to be actively using social media. This needs to be a daily process. This may be very different from person to person, but having success online requires a certain level of activity. 15 minutes per day at least is required if you want to make meaningful connections online. 1 hour per day is recommended if you want to become a thought leader. YOU need to be active, because your assistant isn’t likely to have the same intellectual capital to share. As a thought leader you need to make sure your DNA is all over your interaction through social media.

### *Be Responsive*

Just yesterday I ordered the book *Trust Agent* by [Chris Brogan](#), and *Socialnomics* by [Erik Qualman](#). I mentioned the purchase on Twitter, and within 10 minutes Erik himself, who I had never spoken with before, sent me a personal message thanking me for buying the book. He connected with me. He isn’t just a persona, he is a person. Individuals looking to hire attorneys don’t want a persona either, they want a human being they feel like they can interact with. I imagine it is much the same for whatever business you are in.

### *Be Creative*

To really succeed online you need to create new and dynamic content. This can be accomplished in a number of different ways- podcasts, blog posts, LinkedIn discussions,

or even video blogging. You need to create content to get positive attention and for your brand to grow.

*Be Attentive (Listen)*

“We can write content for your site that will bring you new clients, because we know exactly how your clients think.” This was the statement made by a law website salesman to one of my current clients. She was completely turned off by the pitch, because she feels she has a very good understanding of how they think, because she talks to them.

Memo to the old school website people: those of us using social media know how our clients think, because we are talking to them and listening to them. By using social media you can be tuned in to the needs and problems of your customers. The biggest power in social media is not in pushing out content, but in listening.

For social media to work, the most important ingredient is YOU. That’s how Zappo’s CEO Tony Hsieh took a 500,000 online shoe company and turned around 6 years later and sold it for 800 Million to Amazon.com. He was on Twitter, he was engaging with customers, responding to complaints, and being himself. If he found time for social media, so can you.

To learn more about how to ENGAGE online, listen in this Friday morning’s FREE call at 10:00 AM EST to talk about starting conversations. The title of the call is “Ice Breaking 101: Secrets to Starting Great Conversations