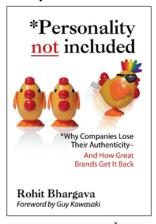**Bonus Content Inspired By The Book: <u>Personality Not Included</u>**

*How To Find Time To Blog (When It's Not Your Day Job)

* (Content Excerpted from Rohit's "Influential Marketing Blog")

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Blogging can be a time consuming thing. To help you find the time for it, here are some lessons I have learned through my time writing a blog for more than 3 years :

1. Set a realistic target. This is the first and most important rule. Expecting yourself to post every day is not only going to burn you out quickly ... it's probably also going to quickly make you feel like you are failing. My target is 3 high quality posts per week, and most weeks I can hit that. The quality is debatable ... but at least I don't have to finish each week feeling blog guilt ...

2. Let go of your blog guilt. I had a great conversation with John Bell, head of the 360 Digital Influence team at Ogilvy, many months ago about the idea of blog guilt. We both have it, as most other bloggers do. It's that moment when you realize that you haven't posted for some extended amount of time, and you feel guilty for it. Even more dangerous is after blog guilt often comes writing paralysis when you are not sure what to write or feel that you should apologize for being absent. Get over it.

3. Figure out where you can be consistent. Consistency will always be a struggle and there are several ways to deal with it. One of the most reliable is to create a "feature" or some kind of running style that you use on the same day each week. For example, post links from your del.icio.us account each friday. Or highlight an interesting story in the news every monday. Whatever you choose, thinking in terms of features can help you to keep momentum going and offer your readers something to look forward to. Kevin Dugan does this with his Friday Flickr photos, and Mack Collier also posts his new Top 25 feature every Wednesday on his blog; both are great examples of consistency.

4. Collect ideas to eliminate time staring at a blank page. One of my not-so-secret weapons is a simple text file that I keep on the desktop of my computer. It is always open during the day and anytime I find a new idea for a blog post through something I am working on or reading, I record it down. I tend to think in terms of headlines, so many of these ideas have headlines

written already and a few quick notes about the idea. When I go to write a blog post, this archive usually has 15-20 ideas for posts that I can refer to in order to start researching or writing. For me, this list means I never have to sit staring at an empty screen before writing a blog post.

5. Master the art of half-writing. When I am travelling, or commuting to work, or using some usual "down time" to write a post, I may not have time to finish it. About a year ago, I started realizing that writing the first paragraph of a post an then stopping was ok if I just didn't have the time to finish. This simple change meant that I could free up my time to write when I was inspired and stop when I wasn't. And it's much easier to write when the idea is fresh. Finishing it later always takes less time than not starting because you only have a few minutes. Half writing actually saves you time.

6. Add the extra stuff later. Sometimes, the things that take a long time about blogging are not related to the writing itself. Adding images, putting in links, or adding in metadata can be time consuming and a barrier to starting your posting. Don't let the extras keep you from writing by forgetting about them and posting your writing "naked" and without those links. You can always add them later.

7. Start the dialogue, don't always finish it. One of the elements that I struggled with on my blog early on was the desire to write a "complete" post. This meant finding every example, linking to all the relevant sites, and not leaving anything out. The better way is to start the list, or dialogue and let readers finish it. Demonstrating that openness is not only a great way to save yourself time and work, it can also foster an interesting dialogue with readers and invite them in to contribute ideas and thoughts to your blog.

8. Compose the post in your head. This probably sounds much harder than it actually is. Before I ever start writing, I try to think about the main point of the post and how I am going

to get it across. For this post, it was in a list format. For others, I might tell a story of a company or organization. Either way, I usually have the formatting and flow ideas done before I start writing.

9. Write fast. This is the one thing on my list that is very tough to explain, but the best thing you can do is figure out how to write fast. Whether this means adopting a less formal language for your blog (as I do), or simply taking a typing course to learn how to type faster. I wish I had the secret formula for doing this, but the best advice I can offer is to go with trial and error until you find the best way to help yourself write most efficiently.

  10. Use the 25 styles of blogging. One resource that I always point our clients (or anyone who contacts me for tips on blogging) towards is a presentation I put together several months ago for a contest on Slideshare. The presentation outlines 25 different styles of blogging, when and how often to use each one, and how difficult each was. The presentation is a great resource that I refer to myself when I need to think outside my normal styles of blogging or think more broadly about how to post and what to post about. It is also available on this site as a separate download.