


Becoming Indispensable: How to Increase Your Visibility and Demand as a Technical Communicator

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What Do I Mean by Visibility?

- Internal Visibility within your company or organization
- External Visibility outside your company or organization
- Visibility as a form of advertising
- Visibility used to persuade
- Visibility and relationship management

First things first

- Make sure your product is the best it can be
- Understand your starting point
- Know your scope of influence

Starting Point

- Know your own strengths and weaknesses
- Understand your audience
- Find a good match between your strength and their needs

Easy, right?

Scope of Influence

- Team
- Department
- Division
- Company
- Organization
- Friends
- Family
- Neighbors
- SELF

According to a recent study, the Average American knows 290 people (H. Russell Bernard, University of Florida anthropologist)

Increasing Internal Visibility

- Encourage and acknowledge professional development
- Keep up with changing technologies
- Become known as SME
- Understand upper management's "hot buttons"
- Use internal communication channels
- Participate in external evaluations

Some Internal Trouble Signs

- Depending too much on any one person
- Letting poor performance reflect on the whole department
- Getting too much “help” from other groups

Go for Personal Glory? YES

- Display awards and acknowledgements
- Show off your skills
- Emphasize your expertise
- Don't just tell, show!
- Offer to help wherever you can
- Don't overcommit

Relate Person-to-Person

- Network, network, network
- Mind your manners
- Don't forget you are dealing with people, even when you're talking to management
- Don't make assumptions
- Learn the real system, not just the published procedures

Increasing External Visibility

- Belong and PARTICIPATE
- Professional and personal interests
- Volunteer
 - STC (of course!)
 - IEEE PCS
 - technical organizations that relate to your product (TCS, AMS, SPIN, etc.)

Remember...

- Do great work
- Keep your promises
- Listen to what's going on around you
- Talk about what you do
- Do great work

Stay Informed

- Listservs

- <http://www.raycomm.com/techwhirl/techwhirllist/webinterface.html>
- <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HATT>
- <http://www.stcsig.org/mgt/mdomo.htm>

- Newspapers

- STC publications and events

Stay Informed

- Current books
 - <http://www.ideawatch.org>
 - *Games Mother Never Taught You*, Betty Lehan Harrigan, Warner Books, 1978, reissued 1992
 - *Influence without Authority*, Allan R. Cohen and David L. Bradford, John Wiley & Sons, 1991



Thank You!

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