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By this point in January, you are probably DONE with the tips on New Year's Resolutions and which goals you should set for your business and team. Instead, I come bearing tips on how to actually reach those goals. Not to mention, with so much content out there to read, consume, and try to act on, I deliver methods on cutting through the noise and really reaching your marketing goals.

Cheers to a productive 2020!

Kristin

P.S. Please read the bonus story at the bottom and share this important message with your loved ones and colleagues.

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USE THIS PROCESS TO MAKE YOUR GOAL A REALITY

It is that time of year when organizations develop their operational plans for the upcoming year. As well, on a personal basis, many of us will be making our New Year's resolutions. This is a custom with a history in very practical success outcomes.

Research has shown that the probability of achieving your dreams for success and happiness increases significantly when you visualize exactly what success means to you. This is why maintaining vision boards, recording, or even posting pictures of what specifically you want is practiced by many successful people.

Goals provide a roadmap to achieve a desired outcome which involves planning, preparing, and taking specific, timely action. For a goal to become a reality, the following process should be followed.

Be focused

How often and how much time you spend imagining that you have already achieved your goal is the first key to success. Studies have shown that the more you hold a clear picture of having already achieved your dream, or living the life you want, significantly increases the possibility of it becoming a reality. Psychiatrists have an expression: "You will be dragged kicking and screaming in the direction of your subconscious."

Be committed

Over the years, I have known many people who started with nothing, or had higher expectations for themselves than most people would think possible, but made it happen. That is when I discovered that for people who visualized it, wrote it down, made a plan to accomplish it, and told others about that plan – it magically transpired.

In the past, people have said about me: “Joe bites off more than he can chew – but then he somehow chews it.” You see, everyone has a dream, but very few are willing to make a plan, take the actions, and accept the consequences it takes to achieve it.

Be Clear

Another element of visualization is having absolute clarity about what it is you want. There is a direct correlation between how clearly you can see your desired goal in your mind, and how probable it is that it will actually become a reality. Visualization is the fuel that enables the powers of the Law of Attraction (as described in “[The Secret](#)”).

Be Passionate

From my experience, the hidden secret to success is unbending determination. The one common element of all the people I have studied is that at one point in their life they became emotional – angry, frustrated, or passionate. It has been my observation that if your emotion is intense enough, and your visual image is clear enough, your goal will happen.

Maintain a Gratitude Journal

The final element of ensuring your goal setting will work is gratitude. Every day, write down at least one thing for which you are truly grateful. It is better if you do this as soon as you wake up, because it is during this time that your brain is most susceptible to outside suggestion.

Please note the difference between a resolution and a goal: A resolution is more of a personal aspiration, a firm decision to do or not to do something. A resolution is something you will constantly be working toward. A goal, alternatively, is the object of your ambition to achieve a stated result.

My question for managers: Do you take the time to help your employees establish a plan for the coming year and support them in creating a personal roadmap to success and happiness?

16 TYPES OF QUESTIONS ASKED IN THE 2019 DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

Yes, we know that panel moderators should curate a list of brilliant questions to ask the panelists during a panel discussion. But how do you format the questions? Ahhhh....that’s a good question *about questions!* To look at this a bit methodically, I took a deeper dive into the 2019 Democratic Presidential Primary debates. Of the 425 questions asked over eight debate nights, sixteen different types of questions emerged:

The most simple and most used type of question is the **Statement Plus a Question** (often called Stem Plus Query – SPQ) in that it starts with a statement (or two) that provides context for the question. An example of this was when Moderator Rachel Maddow asked Mayor Pete Buttigieg, “American farmers are struggling under the effects of President Trump’s trade war with China. The Trump administration’s payments to farmers to offset those losses already have a price tag that is more than double what was spent on the Obama administration’s auto bailout. Mayor Buttigieg, would you continue those farm subsidies?” A type of an SPQ is one in which the **Statement Contains a Quote** and then followed up with a question:

- A **Quote From the Panelist** you are directing the question to. For example, a

question directed at Senator Warren during the 4th Democratic Debate: “Senator Warren, you wrote that blaming job loss on automation is, quote, ‘a good story, except it’s not really true.’ So should workers here in Ohio not be worried about losing their jobs to automation?”

- **A Quote From a Fellow Panelist** with an implied follow up question: “What do you think about that?” For example, a question directed at Senator Michael Bennet during the 2nd Democratic Debate: “Last night, on this stage, one of your democratic rivals suggested that running on Medicare for All would get Donald Trump reelected. Please respond.”
- **Someone Else is Quoted** (someone who is not on the dias!), prompting a relevant follow-up question. For example, a question directed at Senator Bernie Sanders during the 6th Democratic Debate: “Secretary of State Mike Pompeo recently declared that the United States believes Israeli settlements in the West Bank do not violate international law. That broke decades-long US precedent. How would you respond to Israeli expansion of settlements?”

Another type of SPQ is one in which the statement contains an intriguing **Statistic** with a relevant question. For example, a question directed at Mr. Andrew Yang during the 2nd Democratic Debate: “Mr. Yang, women on average earn 80 cents, about 80 cents for every dollar earned by men. Senator Kamala Harris wants to fine companies that don’t close their gender pay gaps. As an entrepreneur, do you think a stiff fine will change how companies pay their female employees?”

Another type of an SPQ is one in which the statement is a brief summary of the panelist’s position and the question is a request for the panelist to **Explain Their Position** for the benefit of the audience – usually to compare and contrast their position from the other panelists. For example, a question directed at Ms. Marianne Williamson during the 2nd Democratic Debate: “Ms. Williamson, many of your opponents support a commission to study the issue of reparations for slavery. But you are calling for up to \$500 billion in financial assistance. What makes you qualified to determine how much is owed in reparations?”

Perhaps the panelist’s position has changed over time. The moderator may state the prior position with a follow-up question: “Have you **Changed Your Mind?**” (Otherwise known as the “flip-flop” question). For example, a question directed at Vice President Joe Biden during the 3rd Democratic Debate: “In a conversation about how to deal with segregation in schools back in 1975, you told a reporter, ‘I don’t feel responsible for the sins of my father and grandfather, I feel responsible for what the situation is today, for the sins of my own generation, and I’ll be damned if I feel responsible to pay for what happened 300 years ago.’ You said that some 40 years ago. But as you stand here tonight, what responsibility do you think that Americans need to take to repair the legacy of slavery in our country?”

Speaking of positions, sometimes the panelist is asked to **Comment on a Fellow Panelist’s Position**. For example, a question directed at Congressman Booker during the 4th Democratic Debate: “Senator Booker, a [Sanders’] federal jobs guarantee or [Yang’s] \$1,000 a month, are those the best solutions there?”

A slight variation to commenting on a fellow panelist’s position is a simple question: “Do you **Agree with a Fellow Panelist’s Position?**” Of course, the panelist will follow up with some commentary! For example, a question directed at Senator Amy Klobuchar during the 2nd Democratic Debate: “In the last debate, Senator Warren said the politicians who are not supporting Medicare for All simply lack the will to fight for it. You do not support Medicare for All. Is Senator Warren correct?”

When the statement itself tees up a position, the question asks for **Details About the Plan** to accomplish the result and the ability to make it work. For example, a question directed at Governor Jay Inslee during the 1st Democratic Debate: “We’re here in Miami,

which is already experiencing serious flooding on sunny days as a result of sea-level rise. Parts of Miami Beach and the Keys could be underwater in our lifetimes. Does your plan save Miami?"

Sometimes, the question needs no embellishment. No statements, no quotes, no statistics. The moderator asks a **Direct Question**. No fanfare. No fluff. For example, a question directed at Secretary Julian Castro during the 4th Democratic Debate: Secretary Castro, is impeachment a distraction?

Sometimes, the question is so darn good, the **Question is Repeated** and directed to another panelist. For example, a question directed at Congressman Ryan during the 1st Democratic Debate: Congressman Ryan, same question. Should it be a crime to illegally cross the border? Or should it be a civil offense only?" I call this the "hot potato" and suggest using it sparingly.

There is also the **Hypothetical question** – the "what if" question. For example, a question directed at Congressman Beto O'Rourke during the 1st Democratic Debate: "What would you do, Congressman, day one at the White House [about immigration]?"

Then there is the **Human Interest** question which enables the audience to understand the panelists as everyday people. For example, a question directed at every candidate during the 3rd Democratic Debate: "No president can succeed without resilience. Every president confronts crises, defeats, and mistakes...What's the most significant professional setback you've had to face? How did you recover from it? And what did you learn from it?"

Finally, the debates used two different methods to **poll the panelists** quickly:

- Ask for a "**show of hands**" where a closed question is posed to the panel and all must indicate their position by raising their hand (or waving a flag or some other visual indicator showing support of a position). During the first Democratic Debate, Moderator Chuck Todd stated, "This is going to be a show of hands question. Many people watching at home have health insurance through their employers. Who here would abolish their private health insurance in favor of a government-run plan?"
- **Lightning Round** where the moderator asks a question and then goes down the line of panelists asking for a one-word/short answer from each panelist. For example, during that same debate, Moderator Todd asked, "What is the first relationship you would like to reset as president? I'm going to go down the line, and I'll start with Ms. Williamson."

(BTW, Moderator Todd [took a beating](#) for simplifying complex policy issues, so [polling was not allowed](#) during the next debate – and what seems to be the remaining Democratic debates!)

So there you have it: The sixteen most common types of questions used in the 2019 Democratic Primary Presidential Debates. There ARE more, but this is a good running start. Perhaps you can use these formats to help curate your questions for your next panel discussion!

FROM THE BOOKSHELF: RADICAL RELEVANCE

In an increasingly commoditized world, many companies and professional services are struggling with differentiating their products and showing relevancy in a crowded marketplace. Bill Cates, in his book "[Radical Relevance: Sharpen Your Marketing Message, Cut Through the Noise and Win More Ideal Clients](#)," provides a very thoughtful and practical guide to doing just that. I must admit, there is nothing really "new" here; however, Bill has packaged the information in a way that you:

- 1) can understand these marketing principles

- 2) can easily apply them to your business (LOVE the step-by-step approach that he uses with his clients)
- 3) feel confident that you can refine your own marketing message.

Truth be told, there is A LOT of information packed into this 200-page book. It's not something that you can read and immediately apply. This is a book that will require a bit of thoughtful reflection: Read a chapter, ponder on the questions, share with your team, talk to a few treasured clients, solidify your ideas and then move on to the next chapter.

There are 21 chapters – so I'm thinking of dedicating time to complete one chapter a week as a 2020 goal. If I was starting from scratch OR in a world of hurt, I would immerse myself completely in this book, take all 17 Rules of Radical Relevance and live and breathe life into them!

P.S. There are a ton of additional resources online once you register – such a gift!

A STORY THAT NEEDS TO BE TOLD

One of my dearest friends and colleagues, [Laura Stack](#), just lost her 19-year-old son, Johnny Stack. He was a smart, funny, and affable young man who jumped off a six-story parking garage on November 20, 2019. It's a tragic story (see below) with three lessons that need to be widely shared:

1. Excessive use of high-THC marijuana and concentrated oil is linked to psychotic episodes that in some cases develop into full-blown schizophrenia. FIVE PERCENT of 18-to 25-year old's smoking high-THC pot develop Marijuana Use Disorder. PLEASE tell your kids, parents of kids and grandparents of [these dangers](#).
2. A few months before Johnny died, he wrote a college paper on the five most important values (Altruism, Patience, Conviction, Enthusiasm, and Gratitude). This short paper provided valuable insight and comfort to his family and all those he left behind. Laura has created a challenge for us to pick one of these values and become a "value ambassador" – working to promote and demonstrate that value. Feel free to join [the challenge](#)! But more importantly, if something happened to you today, would your loved ones know what was most important to you? And *how* would they know?
3. Finally, let us have compassion for one another. As the Reverend John Watson said, "Be kind. Everyone you meet is carrying a heavy burden." How true. As we move into 2020, let us show compassion to ourselves and with those around us.

Here's the full story as Laura shared with us:

Johnny Stack struggled with social anxiety and panic attacks in high school, which were successfully managed with support, prescription medications, and therapy. He could have been fine. Then at about 16 years old (when he could drive), Johnny discovered marijuana and believed it helped his anxiety. (Yes, we live in Colorado. Yes, it is everywhere. Yes, your kids can get it too unless you chain them to their beds.) He started "dabbing" high-THC marijuana (they smoke a very potent wax or shatter form), which triggered bizarre episodes of psychosis, a first suicide attempt, and delusional thinking (the FBI was after him, the world "knew about him," the mob had it in for him, we were "in on it," etc.). We would disenroll him from his current university, admit him to mental hospitals, and they would stabilize him with medications, and he'd recover...until he did the drugs again. He would try other illicit drugs as well.

Eventually, even when he stopped using marijuana, the psychosis did not go away, and he developed full-blown schizophrenia. He was put on anti-psychotics to control the delusion, but he didn't like how "stupid" they made him feel, because he was extremely intelligent. So, he would stop taking them without telling us (a common problem with the disorder). When he died, he had given up smoking, he wasn't on drugs, and he wasn't

depressed. But because he wouldn't take the medications he now needed, the paranoid delusions told him to stop the pain, and he jumped.

I'm not making judgments about your right to use marijuana where it's legal if you're over 21, and I am not arguing that it helps you with chronic pain, etc. I'm sharing my direct experience with my 19-year-old son using high-potency marijuana, which triggered psychosis, which led to suicide. Can this be proven medically? Yes.

If you would be willing to help by having conversations with a young adult about the effects of THC on the developing brain, here is a portion of a BREAKPOINT podcast that I would ask you to read/listen and share: "A just-published study in the Lancet involving, among others, researchers at King's College London, compared 900 people who had been treated for psychosis with 1,200 people who had not. Sample participants were drawn from across Europe and Brazil. Both groups were surveyed on a host of factors, including their use of marijuana and other drugs. The study's authors concluded that "people who smoked marijuana on a daily basis were three times more likely to be diagnosed with psychosis compared with people who never used the drug. For those who used high-potency marijuana daily, the risk jumped to nearly FIVE TIMES" (capitals added by me). Read more at <https://breakpoint.org/marijuana-and-psychosis>

In another article, doctors in Colorado, California, and Massachusetts, where marijuana is legal for recreational use, say the facts are irrefutable: "Excessive use of high-THC pot and concentrated oil is linked to psychotic episodes that in some cases develop into full-blown schizophrenia." FIVE PERCENT of 18-to 25-year old's smoking high-THC pot develop Marijuana Use Disorder. <https://www.usatoday.com/.../weed-psychosis-high-.../4168315002/>.

Johnny was fiercely loved and constantly cared for...and is desperately missed. His heart was in the right place, but his brain turned on him. **Please help me make sure this doesn't happen to the young adults in your life.** People blow off marijuana as no big deal, or it's not going to happen to me. Well, it doesn't always happen the 1st or the 2nd or 50th time they do it...marijuana is a sneaky, insidious beast waiting to take the life of our young ones. Talk to them! How do you know if they won't be one of those 5%?