# Do you have a Twitter strategy?

I follow more than 1,300 accounts on Twitter. Some of them are purely news sources and some are people I know “in real life.” Some are journalists and others “social media experts.”

Sand sculpture by Rosaura Ochoa via Flckr

Since I spend a good amount of my day on Twitter, I see a lot of tweets. Many of those tweets are interesting or funny or offer good advice. However, some tweets make me wonder if the person/account has ever considered why he/she is on Twitter. I see constant check-ins and bitter complaints about spouses. I see random quotes and people earning points for some action (usually checking in). I see people obviously brown-nosing (“Store X is the best, super customer service). And just today I saw a tweet about someone’s menstrual cycle (I wish I were kidding).

**Get strategic.**

Big brands probably have a written and codified Twitter strategy that is part of their larger content strategy. But if you are a freelancer, small business owner or just you, you may not have a “content strategy” much less a Twitter strategy? But should you?

If you want to get more out of Twitter, yes, you should develop a simple but effective strategy.

Here's how to develop a Twitter strategy:

1. **Decide what you want to achieve on Twitter.** This is also the answer to "why am I here?" Perhaps you want to make business contacts or you want to learn more about a subject or you want to promote your writing. Whatever it is, write it down.
2. **Now, figure out your audience.** What kinds of people or accounts are likely to have the type of information you are interested in? Who on Twitter would be interested in your stuff? Can you describe a group or groups of people that would be your audience? For example, if you are a knitter and sell stuff on Etsy, your audience would be other knitters, people interested in crafts and so forth.
3. **What defines success for you on Twitter?** Do you want to have a large following? Do you want to be an influencer? Do you want to meet like-minded folks in person?

By thinking about these issues, you will start being more focused or purposeful in your tweeting.

**Now, get tactical**

Tactics are what puts your strategy in motion.

1. **Engage.** See someone asking a question? Respond! Find somebody's tweet useful/inspiring/interesting? Retweet!
2. **Become a content curator.** Find sources (Twitter accounts, blogs, websites) and follow them. Collect and share the most relevant information for your audience (see above).
3. **Join/follow selected Twitter chats.** There are so many on a variety of topics, and folks that participate in those are folks that are interested in the same stuff as you are.

4. **Use lists**. Twitter gives you the ability to put accounts into lists, and then, when you use a Twitter client such as Hootsuite, you can put those lists into their own column. This way if you have a list of “Fiendish knitters” you can make sure to see what those crafters are up to.

**What am I trying to accomplish?**

Of course you will have the occasional “not on message” tweet. You are a person with a life and you want to share your interests or things that happen to you. But if this is all you tweet, you have a problem, and you are probably not seeing any results from Twitter.

***So, perhaps before you tweet anything, you should ask yourself : What am I trying to accomplish by sharing this?***

Let me know: do you have a Twitter strategy? Can you share it?