It is estimated that about 40 per cent of the world's population use social media, and many of these billions of social media users look up to influencers to help them decide what to buy and what trends to follow.

So what is an influencer and how do we become one?

An influencer is a person who can influence the decisions of their followers because of their relationship with their audience and their knowledge and expertise in a particular area, e.g. fashion, travel or technology.

Influencers often have a large following of people who pay close attention to their views. They have the power to persuade people to buy things, and influencers are now seen by many companies as a direct way to customers' hearts. Brands are now asking powerful influencers to market their products. With some influencers charging up to $25,000 for one social media post, it is no surprise that more and more people are keen to become influencers too. If you are one of them, then here are five tips on how to do it.

1. Choose your niche

What is the area that you know most about? What do you feel most excited talking about? Find the specific area that you're most interested in and develop it.

2. Choose your medium and write an interesting bio

Most influencers these days are bloggers and micro-bloggers. Decide which medium – such as your own online blog, Instagram or Snapchat – is the best way to connect with your followers and chat about your niche area. When you have done that, write an attention-grabbing bio that describes you and your speciality area in an interesting and unique way. Make sure that people who read your bio will want to follow you.

3. Post regularly and consistently

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Many influencers post daily on their social media accounts. The more you post, the more likely people will follow you. Also, ensure that your posts are consistent and possibly follow a theme.

4. Tell an interesting story

Whether it is a photo or a comment that you are posting, use it to tell a story that will catch the attention of your followers and help them connect with you.

5. Make sure people can easily find your content

Publicise your posts on a variety of social media, use hashtags and catchy titles and make sure that they can be easily found. There is no point writing the most exciting blogposts or posting the most attractive photographs if no one is going to see them.

Most importantly, if you want to become a social media influencer, you need to have patience. Keep posting and your following will gradually increase. Good luck!

Task 1 Choose the best answer.

1. A social media influencer is not someone who …

a. guides the decisions of their followers.

b. is an expert in a particular area.

c. pays their followers to buy products.

d. has many followers who pay attention to their opinions.

Anwser:

2. Companies want to use influencers to help …

a. sell their products to their followers.

b. develop new products.

c. write their blogposts. d. design their websites.

Anwser:

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3. If you want to be an influencer, your bio on your social media account shouldn't …

a. say who you are.

b. talk about your niche area.

c. be interesting.

d. be the same as other people's bios.

Anwser:

4. You should make sure that you post …

a. once a month.

b. every day for the first month and then once a month after that.

c. about similar subjects.

d. about all sorts of different things.

Anwser:

5. You can make sure that people find your post by …

a. using hashtags.

b. using funny or memorable titles.

c. using different social media to link to your post.

d. doing all of the above.

Anwser:

6. What should the title of this blogpost be?

a. Five ways to influence people

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b. Five ways to use influencers in marketing

c. Five tips on becoming a social media influencer

d. Five tips on making money as an influencer

Anwser:

Task 2 Are the sentences true or false?

1. An influencer needs to know about as many topics as possible, e.g. fashion, travel, technology, etc.

2. Companies are paying some influencers up to $25,000 to post about their products.

3. Most influencers write regular posts on their blogs or micro-blogs.

4. You can chat with your followers using your bio.

5. Your posts should not only be attractive but should tell a story.

6. You can become a social media influencer in a short time.

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