

The Incredible Value of Networking

By Jonathan Farrington

To some, networking means simply meeting or calling someone new for what might be a one-off discussion or event. In this limited sense, networking is only a trading relationship in which two parties seek to discover whether they have anything of mutual interest to talk about. They either make some sort of exchange or quickly move on. This makes networking a highly 'transactional' subject, much like buying and selling or negotiating with someone.

My view is very different because I believe that networking has a much wider definition. In fact it can be a major social and life skill to be used in both a business/organizational and personal setting.

Network & Relationship Building:

The 'relationship building' aspect of networking is a long-term commitment to knowing more about yourself and others and what you may be able to do together that you couldn't do (or couldn't do as well) alone.

The reality is that anyone can systematically adopt effective networking as an individual strategy. It can play a key part in linking you with a wider range of people who can help you to achieve more - whatever 'more' means for you

The Benefits Of Networking:

The benefits of effective networking are many. Some of these are:

- It is the most cost effective marketing tool available
- Networking referrals will typically generate 80% more results than a cold call
- 70 - 80% of all jobs are found through networking
- Every person you meet has 200 - 250 people with whom they connect who can potentially assist you

Anyone that you might want to meet or contact in the world, is only five to six people contacts away from you

As if these reasons were not enough, a healthy and active link to a network is a vast resource available to every individual at a low personal cost. It can help you to achieve a range of goals that otherwise might be too hard or out of reach.

A key point to understand is that networking is achieved at low personal cost not no personal cost. I am not suggesting that networking is a quick fix or fad idea that can be easily adopted to make things better for a while. However, it can provide immediate results for those prepared to invest their time and energy.

The Concept Of Networking:

Many of the definitions of networking highlighted in the next paragraph may surprise some people, in as much as they suggest that networking is an altruistic activity involving giving and sharing, rather than taking.

In Summary: Networking Definitions:

- A power that comes from a spirit of giving and sharing
- A willingness to honor ourselves, our relationship and our connections with the universal flow
- A way of sending out into the system what we have and what we know, and having it return to re-calculate continually through the network
- An organized way of creating links from people we know to people they know for a specific purpose
- Giving, contributing to and supporting others without keeping score
- People caring about people
- Fostering self-help, and the exchange of information; seeking to change society and work life and to share resources
- Ensuring the right to ask a favor without hooks

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