



Are You Well-Connected? The Power of (Human) Trusted Networking

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You might know some people who are purchasing more and more personal products such as cosmetics, skincare, handbags, not really from the stores anymore. If you are a lady, you might be doing this already.

You probably know a few friends that happen to work in those companies that will give you special discounts or special offers. These friends, in a way, will somehow be able to get you what you want, based on what you like, either from them, or from someone they know. They are willing to go out of their way, and get you connected to those products and services that you need. Likewise, if any of you are traveling overseas or know someone who does, you will help each other get something that only those places have, or things that are available here, but can be bought at better prices from that place.

In other words, these people have "connections", and they themselves are the "connectors". The value that they have created are worth a lot to you, and you wonder if these values, i.e. knowing people, are worth more than a lot of other things.

The term "connectors" was used by the author of the book "The Tipping Point" (published in 2000), Malcolm Gladwell (British-born Canadian, born in 1963) to describe people who "link us up with the world ... people with a special gift for bringing the world together." They are "a handful of people with a truly extraordinary knack [...for] making friends and acquaintances."

Do you also want to be part of these "connections"?

"It isn't what you know, it's who you know" might be something of the 21st century, replacing "Knowledge is power".

In the world of business, especially in Asia, how well you are connected is probably even more important. For example, in countries like China and Japan, given the nature of Chinese or Japanese society and law over the ages, the foundation for virtually all behavior is personal relations. Personal connections, *guanxi* in Chinese, are sometimes the foundations of business, society, and even the entire country.

Howard Rheingold (born in 1947, an American critic, writer, and teacher specializing on the cultural, social and political implications of modern communication media) was one of the first people to understand the social potential of cyberspace. The question that he posed many years ago: 'Where is the [U.S.] Library of Congress, when it's on your laptop?' seemed like a meaningless question at that time. However, what lay behind it, was an attempt to think through a profound consequence of a networked society.

We are not referring to a society that are networked through just wired (or wireless); we are talking about a society that is just the same as 3,000 years ago: people networking. The difference is that in our era, we are well connected through the modern media, like the cables, and internets and telephony, and thus information can be flown around in the speed of light. People these days could be reached a lot faster, and only if the "connectors" are well positioned, the so-called physical network is of no use. And only if you know where the "connectors" are, or being known and well-known, would the power of human networking become really extremely powerful.

It is however, not only the quantity of "connectors" – how many people you know – but how the quality of "connectors". You can only create the true value of your existence or your business' existence only if you become a quality connector for others, and you can let others known. Networking brings people

together; networking brings referrals; networking brings opportunities; and networking lets you become somebody's preferred supplier – becoming their source.

Networking brings business from you and to you, without you having to go outside to the big real world.

Can you imagine if you know somebody that is hiring while you need a job? Can you imagine if you know somebody that is buying the products that you are making while you just happen to have a warehouse full of excess products that you need to get rid of?

Can you imagine how valuable you will be if your name appears on all your customers' preferred list every time? Can you imagine how valuable you will be if you are their preferred connectors?

Yes, preferred.

You see, not only do you want to become just another connector; you want to be the connector that they will call upon every time. Those that they prefer to call and to those that they trust, of course!

You remember that being trusted is always the key to any relationship, and that is something you rely on; something you want to build in the human networking, not just any networking.

In the buyer's world, they always look for trusted suppliers over other suppliers; those that are what we called the trusted "connectors".

It is a cliché, but it is so true.

So, when you are attending a networking event, for example, you better make sure that you are pay attention on others' interest, and mention not WHAT you do, but what you can bring to them. Showing CARE to them, is the key.

So, do you want to get well-connected? Definitely, and you want to be a reliable and trust-worthy connector, and that's how you show you true value and really unleash the full POWER of human (trusted) networking.

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William is a senior veteran in the business world, also helped to attract and confirm investors to set up overseas companies; and was involved in a few merger and acquisitions throughout his career. He earned his stripes through his practical experience in the actual market.

He is keen to help and coach companies to explore their own potential, understand their core competence, and ride through the adversity of the economy. He is especially interested in situation where companies have to deal with constant changes, new market developments, multicultural environments, fierce competitions, and leadership development, particularly in sales. His expertise lies in building and managing sales and marketing teams, key account management, tactical negotiation and closing deals, forming alliances and partnerships through training and coaching within the organization to develop a sales- and subsequently results-oriented culture.