

TOOLS YOU CAN USE TO MAKE NETWORKING MORE LINEAR.

Networking is so nonlinear!

In the linear world, you control the set up and can make a reasonable prediction about the outcome. Sometimes you are right. Sometimes you are wrong. But you do believe you can make reasonable predictions. For example, if I save all receipts, record payments faithfully, and send tax forms in on time I have a reasonable belief that I am not going to jail for tax evasion.

In the nonlinear dimension, you can control the set-up but you have no control over the outcome. My golf game is a nonlinear event. I attend a trade association cocktail party. While I know that I will be at the party and what time it is, I have no idea who I will meet or what I will learn.

Social and business networking is a classic nonlinear event. A friend suggests you met Timothy Collins of Ripplewood Holdings. He is a Director at a public company. He agrees to meet you for breakfast. You know the time and place you will meet. But you have no idea what will happen.

Below are two free resources to help you create more linearity when engaged in nonlinear networking events.

THE GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEMS OF NETWORKING

When you drive your car using a global positioning device, you are able to view the road through three time dimensions at once: The windscreen displays the road you are traveling on--- the present; the rear view mirror displays the road you just traveled—the past. And the global positioning device provides a visual representation of where the road will curve over the next quarter of a mile—the future.

Wouldn't it be great if there was something like a global positioning system for networking?

If you are going to be meeting someone who is on the Board of a public company, consider googling “investing businessweek (name of person)”

For example:

“Shelia has a networking meeting with Timothy Collins, CEO of Ripplewood Holdings. Using “investing businessweek Timothy Collins” she finds that Tim knows 113 Board members in eleven different companies across nine different industries. Sheila clicks “See Board Relationships” to find out the networks of these 113 people. David Gross-Loh sits on the Board of Directors of D&M

Holdings with Tim Collins. But he also is a partner at Bain Capital. Shelia is interested in talking with David Gross-Loh about opportunities at Bain Capital.

She asks Tim for an introduction to David.”

In the above example, Sheila was able to use “investing businessweek (name of person) to clearly articulate the networking relationships she wished to obtain. This simple process allowed Sheila to transform a nonlinear event into a more linear interaction.

LINKEDIN.COM

Investing businessweek limits its focus to networks of members of boards of U.S. public companies. LinkedIn.com contains information about millions of professionals around the world.

You can also look up Tim Collins and view his networks.

Some of our clients have discomfort saying to Tim Collins, “I know you know David Gross-Loh. Would you introduce me to him?”

We respond by saying that if the person you are speaking with wants to help, that person will appreciate your helping efficiently move things along. You are saving the person the time/effort required to charge brain synapses to think of good leads for you. Leaders like decisive people.

But suppose the person you are speaking with does not want to help you or cannot help you?

Leaders say “no” all the time. And the better ones are masters in the art of saying “no” in very gentle ways.

The most nonlinear event I can think of is failing to ask. You have a 100% probability of failure.

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