

## Network, Network and Network again

According to John D. Rockefeller, “the ability to work with people is as purchasable a commodity as coffee or sugar, but I’ll pay more for it than any other ability under the sun.” And in the words of Tony Robbins, ‘the degree to which I manage my relationships is often the degree to which I am successful’.

There is no doubt that with the rise and rise of the internet and easy access to information, the old adage of ‘it is not what you know, but who you know’ becomes ever more significant. In this competitive world the ability to create and maintain rewarding relationships is significant tool for business success.

People do business with people they like. Or perhaps that should be people they know, like and trust. In order to do business we need to know and be aware of people, it’s preferable that we have some sort of connection, rapport and understanding and we need to trust them. I don’t mean we need to love the milk man or build rapport with the checkout manager at the supermarket, but at key levels of relationships we need to know, like and trust – the three pillars of networking.

Networking is not some sleazy word uttered in the same sentence as Network marketing or Pyramid selling, nor is it a collection of business cards or an email list. Networking is the ability the meet people, to strike up conversation, develop trustworthy relationships and build and maintain a foundation of respect from which you both can do business. Who can you call now who will take your call? Richard Branson or your mates down the pub? How likely are your colleagues to network you with their key relationships? Some 60% of your success at work is likely to come from who you know, who you network with and your visibility.

So before you qualify networking as a waste of time, give a think to the quality and depth of your relationships. Who are the people you can ring up who will speak to you, and who are the people who want to ring and speak to you?

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Leap runs communication and leadership programmes to develop rewarding relationships and network skills from Graduates to Fast Track managers, from School Caretakers to the Board of Directors. Clients include UBS, Siemens, LloydsTSB, Dior and Lauder.

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