



LESSON 1:

NETWORKING

GENERAL NOTION





WARM UP



Think about **NETWORKING**.

- Have you ever come across this term?
- What does it mean for you?



READING

Read the text and answer the questions.

Business networking

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Business networking is a socioeconomic activity by which groups of like-minded business people recognize, create, or act upon business opportunities. A business network is a type of social network whose reason for existing is business activity. There are several **prominent** business networking organizations that create models of networking activity that, when followed, allow the business person to build new business relationships and generate business opportunities at the same time. A professional network service is an implementation of information technology in support of business networking. Many business people **contend** business networking is a more cost-effective method of generating new business than advertising or public relations efforts. This is because business networking is a low-cost activity that involves more personal **commitment** than company money.

As an example, a business network may agree to meet weekly or monthly with the purpose of exchanging business leads and referrals with **fellow** members. To complement this activity,

members often meet outside this circle, on their own time, and build their own one-to-one relationship with the fellow member.

Business networking can be conducted in a local business community, or on a larger scale via the Internet. Business networking websites have grown over recent years due to the Internet's ability to connect people from all over the world. Internet companies often set up business leads for sale to bigger corporations and companies looking for data sources.

Business networking can have a meaning also in the ICT domain, i.e. the provision of operating support to companies and organizations, and related value chains and value networks.

It refers to an activity coordination with a wider scope and a simpler implementation than pre-organized workflows or web-based **impromptu** searches for transaction counterparts (workflow is useful to coordinate activities, but it is complicated by the use of s.c. patterns to **deviate** the flow of work from a pure sequence, in order to compensate its **intrinsic linearity**; impromptu searches for transaction counterparts on the web are useful as well, but only for non-strategic supplies; both are complicated by a **plethora** of interfaces needed among different organizations and even between different IT applications within the same organization).

Understanding the text

Answer the questions below.

1. What kind of socioeconomic activity is business networking?
2. When does business networking take place?
3. What other domain can business networking refer to?



EXTENDING YOUR VOCABULARY

Exercise 1:

Try to deduce the meaning of the highlighted words and match them with their definitions.

Prominent	→		1. done or said without earlier planning or preparation
Impromptu	→		2. to do something that is different from the usual or common way of behaving
Contend	→		3. being an extremely important and basic characteristic of a person or thing
Deviate	→		4. a very large amount of something, especially a larger amount than you need, want, or can deal with
Intrinsic	→		5. a willingness to give your time and energy to something that you believe in, or a promise or firm decision to do something
Plethora	→		6. describes someone who has the same job or interests as you, or is in the same situation as you
Commitment	→		7. noticeable
Fellow	→		8. to say that something is true or is a fact

Exercise 2

Complete the sentences with the words from the previous exercise.

prominent	deviate	intrinsic	plethora
commitment	fellow	impromptu	contend

1. They often held _____ meetings in their house.
2. Women very often have to juggle work with their family _____.
3. I would _____ that the minister's thinking is flawed on this point.
4. The report contained a _____ of detail.
5. She has a very good reputation among her _____.

6. Small local shops are _____ to the town's character.
7. The story was given a _____ position on the front page.
8. Her version of the events _____ from the truth.

Exercise 3

Match the words with their synonyms.

Prominent	→		1. innate
Impromptu	→		2. associate
Contend	→		3. differ
Deviate	→		4. noticeable
Intrinsic	→		5. engagement
Plethora	→		6. adhoc
Commitment	→		7. abundance
Fellow	→		8. argue



UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT AND PRACTICING NEW VOCABULARY

Answer the detailed questions using the words from the previous exercise.

1. How many business networking organizations are there? Are they small or rather significant?
2. What do many business people argue about business networking?
3. What does business networking involve more than company money?
4. Describe in detail the meaning of business networking in the ICT domain.



PART TWO

Read the six rules for networking at work and decide whether you follow them!

Six Rules For Networking at Work

By Sarah Green, based on Collaboration by Morten Hansen.

Source: <http://hbr.org/web/slideshows/six-rules-for-networking-at-work/1-slide>

When we talk about networking, we often focus on connecting with people outside our organizations. But networking with colleagues is just as crucial. Well-networked people bridge the organizational silos that plague all organizations, and make their firms more collaborative and effective. But networking for the sake of networking? Adding as many contacts as humanly possible? That's a time-sink and a distraction. Below, we'll review the rules of being an effective organizational networker, a lynchpin of productivity.



Rule 1. Build outward, not inward.

The first four rules will help you get better at identifying effective networking opportunities. Start by remembering that the point of collaborative networking is to connect people who wouldn't ordinarily work together. Don't waste your time deepening connections with people you already know. Balance these connections by staying in touch with people on other teams or in other business units.



Rule 2: Go for diversity, not size.

A bloated Rolodex used to signal a skilled networker. Let's hope that idea soon goes the way of the Rolodex itself. Rather than aiming for a massive network, focus on building an efficient one. This requires knowing people with different skills and viewpoints. They should be different from you, of course, but also different from one another.



Rule 3: Build weak ties, not strong ones.

This might seem counterintuitive. After all, wouldn't your closest friends – your strongest ties – help you the most? But remember, strong ties are the people you already know well and talk to frequently. A strong tie is probably someone who knows a lot of the same people you do, whereas a weak tie forms a bridge to a world you don't walk in. And to keep a weak tie, you only need to touch base a couple of times a month.



Rule 4: Use hubs, not familiar faces.

When facing a problem at work, most of us will ask a close contact for help. But because we tend to befriend people at our own level, our closest contacts are unlikely to know more than we do. Instead, identify the "hubs" in your company — the people who are already great organizational networkers — and ask them to connect you to someone who knows more. Hubs tend to be long-tenured people who've worked on a variety of teams and projects. If you're in a leadership role, consider it part of your job to help develop more hubs.



Rule 5: Swarm the target.

This rule, and the next, will help you capture value. Say you've built a diverse network of weak ties. Using the help of a hub, you've identified someone who can help you: a target. Before you approach that person, you need to enlist the help of your network to increase the odds that she will come through. Ask a shared contact to reach out to the target person. Ask your boss to talk to your target's boss. Invoke your shared goal (after all, you do work for the same company) and remember reciprocity: offer to help in return.



Rule 6: If people aren't pulling together, strengthen ties.

"Team building" has become something of a punchline, but there are times when it's necessary. If you're managing a project that requires crossing organizational silos, and following the previous rules has not provided results, it's worth investing the time and resources to build stronger connections. Help the team get to know each other better. You'll start to see results.

Following these rules will help you become more collaborative without wasting your time. Teaching them to others will create organization-wide results. Start by mapping the networks in your business, both formal and informal. Look at the structure: who are the hubs and who are the islands? Evaluate for diversity: do networks cross organizational and geographic silos? Do they include senior and junior people, men and women, and people from different backgrounds? Identify the weak spots and tailor your intervention. The result will be an organization that collaborates, yes, but that does so with discipline.



What do you think? Are you a good networker at work?