

STYLELIFE ACADEMY

Networking Mission

Networking

Of the life skills that can be cultivated, networking can open more doors and take you further in the world than any other skill. As such, it is a powerful tool worth developing and the good news is that you already have more resources than you realize.

Networking is simply the art of meeting and connecting with people as resources who can bring you more of what you want/need in your life. The only thing that limits your ability to do this is your own resourcefulness. If and as you can expand your notion of what is possible for you, you will find both your resourcefulness and your network providing all the opportunities you can ever want.

There are three aspects to networking and all three can be developed individually as parts of a whole. The three are:

- 1) Understanding and utilizing the network you already have
- 2) Expanding your network with new people
- 3) Connecting separate parts of your network

The exercise in this lesson is designed to help you with the first aspect, understanding the network you already have. Once you develop a level of comfort and skill with your current network, then it becomes easy to move onto expanding it.

Basic understandings for general networking:

- **You must bring value to the other person:** A network, to be effective, must be mutual in that both parties should feel value is being offered by the other person. Of course value may be in the form of what you do for work, people you know, or other skills or resources you may have but it also can be in the form of friendship, sincerity, or a desire to learn the other person's skill. The value you bring is relative; it is dependent on the individual relationship and you should make it a point to emphasize the aspect of you or your life that you think brings the most value to the other person. In a very real sense, you must communicate your value.
- **You must be able to elicit the other person's value:** The other person could be the key to that dream you have always had and you must learn if this is so. You cannot rely solely on introductions and connections, you should have the ability to engage in a conversation that will both elicit the other person's value and convey your own. As you engage in conversations, it is important that you LISTEN to the other person. Be careful of the tendency to be in your own head thinking about the next thing you can say. This will prevent you from catching an important detail that can open the conversation to where you want it to go. For example, perhaps you are speaking with a new acquaintance who mentions he has been working hard on a new business venture. Your opportunity is to question him about the new business venture and as he explains it, notice how you might be helpful or know someone who could be of value to him.
- **The ability to start simple fluid conversations anywhere and anytime will help you tremendously:** The skills in the conversation exercises taught in the rapport section of this

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program will go a long way in giving you the building blocks to seed a conversation. A few tips:

- 1) Throughout the day, comment on innocuous things to people you come into contact with. This could be as simple as mentioning the weather, the traffic, the news, or something about the other person.
 - 2) Have a list of 3 different conversation starters to use at parties and events. As before, these could be as simple as the weather, company business, or news. It is important to have these ready to go when you arrive so you can start a conversation with people who may appear shy.
 - 3) Always carry business cards
- **Introductions:** When introducing people, always comment on an aspect of each person that you think could have value for the other. For example if you are introducing Bill and Bob... and Bill is a wine salesman but also has a boat and Bob owns a restaurant and is a huge football fan, you will probably want to say "Bill you should meet Bob, he owns a fantastic restaurant...Bob, Bill has a very successful wine business." Then, let them do their thing.
 - **Social intelligence will take you a very long way:** The entire Stylelife program is teaching social intelligence and social calibration. When it comes to networking, these two skills will take you far. Social intelligence is the ability to fluidly move among interactions with different people and in different environments and comfortably fit in. Social calibration is knowing your relative place.... it is knowing when to assert yourself and when to be humble, when to ask questions and when to talk about yourself. If you can observe the dynamics of your social interactions, you will be able to effortlessly hone both of these skills through experience.
 - **Awareness is the golden key:** Carrying the intention with you of making the most of every opportunity will allow networking "magic" to just happen. As you are conversing with other people, think of how they can be of value to you and you to them. Chances are, you will find a connection and they will become a valuable part of your network. Hold in your mind the intentions of building your network and not letting any opportunities slip by. As you practice this, you may find yourself meeting people who can be of enormous value to you seemingly out of the blue. It's not magic; it is awareness and intention blended with mechanical skill.

The goal of this exercise is to open your mind to what's possible with networking. The most important thing is to go out and actively work to expand your network, the rest will fall into place and as it does, you will likely find this to be a pursuit that will transform your life.

Now, go out and network!