

flowing into the spring!

The end of winter is drawing near and we are finally finding ourselves preparing for the spring. I hope you'll also find yourself with a fresh enthusiasm in your awareness of the benefits of successful social capital development!

We're excited to focus this month's newsletter on demonstrating the importance of the setting clear goals and utilizing the contacts. Pay close attention to the seven steps we've outlined on pages 2 and 3; we hope they will assist you with reaching that ultimate bullseye. And keep in mind that we do offer two day workshops that take these discussions much further!

Our readers are encouraged to forward newsworthy articles or ideas for future editions. Feedback and article ideas can be emailed to newsletter@flowork.com at anytime to be evaluated for placement in the next suitable edition. Regards until next month!

John-Paul Hatala, Ph.D., flowork Founder



Making connections:
one contact at a time™

This month's FlowTIP:
Plan a connection strategy prior
to contacting someone.
See page 3 for more!

Flowork SCORES with the City of Toronto

In August of 2007 Flowork partnered up with the City of Toronto to deliver the first SCORE (Social Capital Opportunities Regarding Employment) program. The SCORE program is intended to mediate the utilization of social capital from one individual's network to another. In the case of Social Assistance Recipients, social resources may exist within the key contacts they possess (i.e., friends, family) and can be utilized to accomplish set goals. Therefore, a critical factor to accessing social resources is to have clear and concise goals (i.e., job search, academic, personal). By establishing goals, the utility of social resources becomes more focused and the act of accessing those resources within the network is specifically structured for relationship development. Through the SCORE program, Social Assistant Recipients were taught how to identify resources in their own network by using set goals which provide structure to making connections and the transition back to the labour market.

The purpose of the SCORE is threefold:

- (1) Assist SARs in the development of efficient and effective goal setting techniques to improve all aspects of their lives with special emphasis placed on the development of realistic and sustainable career goals.
- (2) Train Social Assistant Recipients to develop their personal networks to accomplish specific goals (i.e., job search, career).
- (3) Increase SAR motivation to re-enter the labor market through enhancement of their existing social support networks.

The SCORE program has two days of workshops; (1) social capital development, and (2) strategic job search management. Once a client has completed the workshops, they are then eligible to participate in a bi-weekly networking group. To find out more about the SCORE program, please email us at score@flowork.com for more information.

Are You Tapping Into Your Network?

7 Steps to Conducting Your Own Social Network Audit

Do you know people in your network that can help you accomplish your career goals? If not, you might be missing out on helpful information. A Social Network Audit will help you determine if you are presently accessing information from your network in just seven steps. The process involves listing your career goals and mapping contacts within your network to them to determine if there are some pathways to information that you are not taking advantage of.

Step 1: Identify and list your career goals. Now is the time to start thinking about what you want to do after graduation. One of the best ways to organize your goals is to label them (1) main goal and (2) sub goal. The following is an example of an individual looking for a job:

Name of goal:	(1) Main Goal—Find a job
Description:	Find a job in my field
Target date:	February 15, 2007
Name of goal:	(2) Sub Goal—Résumé
Description:	Write a functional résumé
Target date:	September 12, 2006
Name of goal:	(2) Sub Goal—Information interviews
Description:	Contact employers in my field for an informational interview
Target Date:	October 22, 2006

Take a piece of paper and start listing your goals. For each main goal, list all the supporting goals - this will make the task of achieving goals more manageable.

Step 2: Start thinking about those contacts that can help you. What are the different types of contacts that presently exist within your network? For example, list a family member, friend, work contact, school contact, or neighbour. In a column beside each name, indicate whether you know the contact directly, or through someone else. It should look something like this:

Name of goal:	(1) Main Goal – Find a job	John Smith	directly
Description:	Find a job in my field	Barbara Young	thru Jerry Ward
Target date:	February 15, 2007	Jerry Ward	directly

In addition, indicate the frequency of contact you have with each individual. For example, if you see “John Smith” every day and “Barbara Young” every six months, it’s possible that Barbara will share a lot of new information with you. It is also important to contact individuals within your network who you are not frequently in contact with in order to identify new information about career possibilities. Your piece of paper should now look like this:

Name of goal:	(1) Main Goal – Find a job	John Smith	directly	every day
Description:	Find a job in my field	Barbara Young	thru Jerry Ward	every six months
Target date:	February 15, 2007	Jerry Ward	directly	every month

Step 3: Make a list of all your other contacts that are not attached to a goal. Think of any agencies, service organizations, support groups, churches, or special interest groups that may help you.

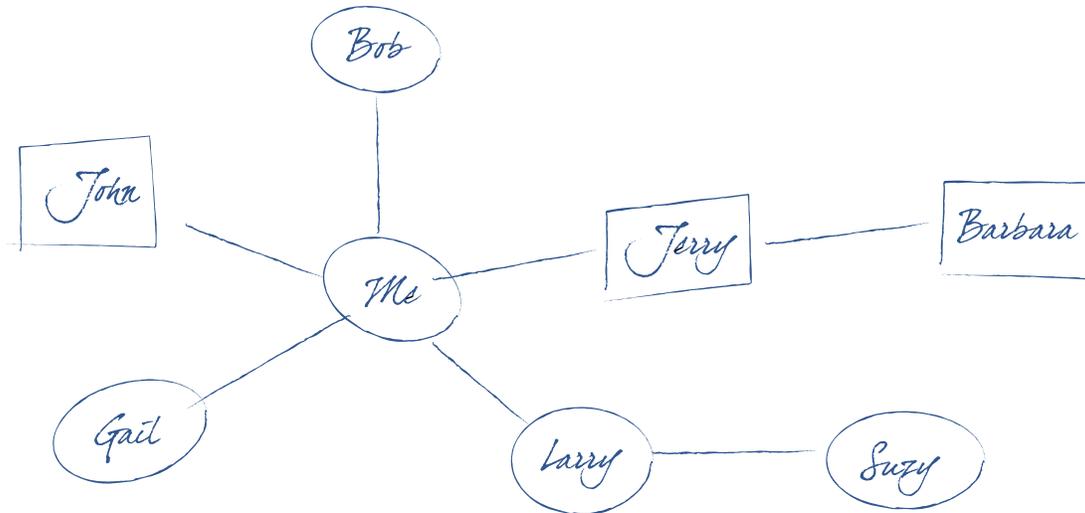
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Flowwork offers the benefits of social capital to anyone of any age. The Education Flowwork Program offers educational institutions (Kindergarten through higher education) to ensure their students, faculty and staff become aware of the power of information by networking. Corporate Flowwork and the Flowwork Workforce Development Program introduces corporations, non-profit organizations, government, and workforce development groups to ways they might increase the flow of information between individuals, departments, divisions and units. Flowworks founder Dr. John-Paul Hatala is available for speaking engagements nationwide. If you are interested in booking him for an on-site speaking engagement, please call us at 1-877-flowwork or visit www.flowwork.com and click “contact us” to discuss your needs.

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Step 4: Take another piece of paper and start mapping out your contacts. Simply put your name in the middle of the paper and draw a circle around it. Then draw a line and put another square for each individual that you have attached to a goal. For those individuals in your network who are not attached to a goal, put a circle around their name. If the individual is a contact of someone else, draw a line from his or her circle/square with the name attached to it.

Your map should look something like this:



Are there any contacts that you are missing? Why are the contacts in circles not linked to any goals? Do you need to find out more information about them? Do you know the people they associate with? Start thinking of the people your contacts know and determine whether they can help you achieve any of your goals. When you have identified new contacts, go back to your goal list and add their names.

Step 5: Identify contacts that can refer you to individuals that can help you reach your goals. Develop a plan on when and how you will contact these individuals.

Step 6: Ask yourself the following questions:

- Are there as many contacts in my network as I thought?
- Are the majority of my contacts “strong ties” (like immediate family and close friends)?
- Do I know many people and do not contact them frequently? These “weak ties” typically provide you with new information.
- How many contacts in my network are directly linked to me?
- How many of my contacts are tied to an organization? These contacts can link you to other individuals in their organization
- How many times have I requested referrals from my contacts?
- How many contacts have referred me to another contact?

Step 7: Continue growing your network. Do not worry about linking contacts to goals right away, as this will come with time. The goal is to know your network and identify the type of information your contacts can potentially provide.

Congratulations! You have just completed your Social Network Audit. Interested in conducting your audit online? Visit us at www.flowwork.com and sign up for free access. Start tapping into your network today!

This month's FlowTIP:

Plan a connection strategy prior to contacting someone. Make sure that you have a clear and concise objective for meeting with the person. The key here is to take the act of connecting to a conscious level so that we can determine the best method for approaching a contact. Connecting with a first degree contact (i.e. Family member) will be much different then connecting with a second degree contact (i.e. Friend of a friend). We need to think about how we will connect if we are going to increase the likelihood that they will be able to help us with our goal. Should you email or phone this person? Should you get someone to introduce you or simply mention that someone has referred you? These are all considerations and must be thought out prior to making contact if you are to maximize the potential of success.

Online Technical Support Forums Build Social Capital

Article adapted by Medical News Today from original press release.

Consumers in search of product related information and technical support often turn to virtual communities for help. A forthcoming examination in the April 2008 Journal of Consumer Research of virtual P3 communities - peer-to-peer problem solving communities - presents evidence that social capital, widely described as declining in face-to-face neighborhood communities, has migrated online.

"Social capital not only exists online, it strengthens over time, serving as the foundation for the development of community assets including archived technical assistance and broad social connections," explain Charla Mathwick (Portland State University), Caroline Wiertz (City University London), and Ko de Ruyter (Maastricht University, the Netherlands).

"With time, the community members come to think of each other as 'extended family,' available to serve as a sounding board, offering moral support and valuable advice as they work through the technical complexities of the products or services they consume," they add.

A collectively owned, intangible reserve of support, social capital has been described as the combination of resources that individuals and groups gain from their connections to one another. As the researchers explain, the value of social capital is based on the perception of its mutual benefits arising from social investments.

Mathwick, Wiertz, and de Ruyter observe a moral code of behavior in online social forums among the established volunteer experts of virtual P3 communities - known as "wikis" - who routinely come to the aid of floundering "newbies."

"Virtual communities are maintained by the normative influences that impose a moral responsibility to volunteer, to reciprocate,

and to act in a trustworthy manner," the researchers write.

Newbies initially click into the community seeking answers to very specific technical problems. Wikis, a small but vital subgroup of the community, rise to their coveted status through demonstrated expertise and a level of civic engagement that translates into months and even years of personal commitment to the needs of their peers.

"As newbies mature into wikis, the social capital that accumulates heightens the perceived value of community interaction and cements their commitment to the group," the researchers write.

P3 communities are also characterized by shared rituals that include a specific language that is only meaningful to informed members. In addition, members of virtual P3 communities often combine forces to achieve broader community goals.

"As time passes, the strength of the social connections these individuals build comes to define their community experience, turning what begins as a technical user group interaction into a social experience they cherish and are willing to work to maintain," the researchers conclude.

Charla Mathwick, Caroline Wiertz, and Ko de Ruyter. "Social Capital Production in a Virtual P3 Community" Journal of Consumer Research: April 2008.

*Source: Suzanne Wu
University of Chicago Press Journals*

