

Taking Social Capital Overseas

It's June, and we're embarking on a very busy month! I'll be spending two weeks in Togo and Zambia, working with Louisiana State University's Agricultural Center, in conjunction with USAID, on a project intended to help slow the spread of avian influenza occurring in poultry. I'm excited to be traveling to Africa; I'll be working with some key influencers, demonstrating the importance of social capital and how utilizing resources can truly help to accomplish production goals. I hope to show them how training and social network analysis can help farmers improve productivity and reduce the spread of avian influenza. I can't wait to tell you about it in next month's issue.

In the meantime, please take a moment to look through this issue; there's a lot of great information! We'll be introducing a board game in July, and there's a sneak preview on page two. I've have been happy to find that those who have had an opportunity to preview it found the game both fun and informative. I know you'll find it a great — and helpful — example of how social networking can actually work.

We've also shared advice on acknowledging career competencies and how they help job seekers determine whether they fit well with a potential employer. We explore how to focus on your best skills and abilities, and then analyze them to assess your true hiring "net value." After all, what's the point of struggling through the search when you only end up trying to fit a square peg in a round hole?

As usual, I strongly encourage you 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.



*Making connections:
one contact at a time™*



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

What's New?



Flowork in Africa

At the printing of this newsletter, Dr. Hatala will be in Africa working with the poultry sector in Togo and Zambia. The goal of the project is to disseminate best management practices to poultry farmers in order to reduce the spread of avian influenza. Upon his return, Dr. Hatala will update readers on the events that took place in the next issue of Flownotes.

City of Hamilton to Implement SCORE Program

The City of Hamilton, Social Services will be implementing the SCORE (Social Capital Opportunities Regarding Employment) program during the summer of 2008. Staff will be trained in social capital development and strategic job search management.

Social Exploration Learning Form to go Online

The Social Exploration Learning Form (SELF), which is presently offered in paper and pencil format, will be put online. The SELF is a self-assessment that walks users through a social resource accessibility assessment, goal setting activity, network mapping and connection strategy exercise. The SELF will be available online in the fall of 2008.



*This month's FlowTIP:
Build social capital by introducing
your contacts to each other
(see page 2 for more information)*

Stay Ahead of the Game

Flowork introduces a board game: *The Game of Networking*

The game of networking is now a board game!

Flowork has developed a social networking board game that takes the nebulous concept of social capital and presents it in a fun and interactive way. Utilizing Flowork's process of building social capital, the game takes players through the experience of acquiring social resources to accomplish their assigned goals. The game moves the player through a number of different processes vital to successful social networking, from making connections with other players to negotiating the use of resources. The first player to accomplish their goal and the list of tasks associated with it wins the game.

Flowork founder, Dr. John-Paul Hatala, is excited about how the game will take the abstract concept of effective networking and present them in a way that allows individuals to see how social networking actually works. "For the first time," he says, "individuals will be able to network in a simulated environment that allows them to see the potential value in their network and how they can utilize the embedded resources to help them accomplish their goals".

The Game of Networking will require the players to acquire the appropriate social resource cards to accomplish their goals just like in a real life situation.

Both the facilitator and the players will find the real value of the game in its ability to highlight key learning points throughout the playing process. Skills required for the game include the ability to get information from other players, strategizing and negotiation skills.

"As the players move through the game, they will be able to see quickly how it applies to real-life situations", states Dr. Hatala. Facilitators will be able to assist participants in reflecting on the various components of the game and how they relate to their own experiences.

If you're interested in reserving a copy of the game, you can put your name on a pre-order list by emailing gameofnetworking@flowork.com. The games will be available in July 2008.



This month's FlowTIP:

Build social capital by introducing your contacts to each other. When's the last time you introduced one of your contacts to someone you knew who was in need of help. Many times we tend to shy away from this practice for one reason or another. Subconsciously, we might be thinking that we will lose control by providing a direct connection to each member in our network. However, there is a greater upside to this practice and you don't need to feel that you will lose control. The act of connecting two of your contacts together provides you with the opportunity to 'give' to the network. This will enable you to build some social capital that will inevitably give you some return on your investment. When we help people accomplish their goals by connecting them to the right people, it helps us when we require help in the future. This is a great way to give to your network and strengthen the relationships you have.

Turning Career Competencies Into Career Capital

When we are thinking about purchasing a house, we typically look at the amount of capital we have access to and based on that decide what type of house we can afford. If there is an abundance of capital available to us, the decision to buy a home that meets our every need is much easier to make than if we had limited capital. Simply put, the more money available to us the easier it is to qualify for a mortgage and a lower the mortgage payment. Ultimately, we have more options and more banks are willing to work with us.

The same holds true for our career. What career capital do we have as a down payment for an organization we're trying to become part of? DeFillippi and Arthur (1994) were the first to look at career capital and break it down into career competencies in order to measure an individual's present career net value. He divided career competencies into three main areas:

1. Knowing-Why Competencies 2. Knowing-How Competencies 3. Knowing-Whom Competencies

Our Knowing-Why competencies are concerned with issues of personal identity and meaning. Knowing-How competencies encompass the skills and abilities people accumulate through their work and education, and Knowing-Whom competencies are not only our ability to relate to others and develop contacts, but also networks of people and reputation with other people, which are built up as our career progresses.

Once we can identify our career competencies we can start to utilize them as a measure against an employer's core competencies. For example, if your values about work are more concerned about helping the greater society, you're more likely to match your Knowing-Why competency who shares similar values like a non-profit that works with battered women. The more we can step back and evaluate our competencies the easier it will be to identify organizations which are a better fit.

So the next time you go on an interview, make sure that you're knowledgeable about your career competencies and have done your homework on the organizations core competencies so that you can help determine for the employer is there is a fit. After all, the name of the job search game is being able to find a fit between job seeker and employer. If this can be accomplished, both parties can get what they want.

Flowork offers the benefits of social capital to anyone of any age. The Education Flowork 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 Flowork and the Flowork 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. Floworks 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-flowork or visit www.flowork.com and click "contact us" to discuss your needs.

Professionals, Politicians Tap Social-Networking Web Sites

GENESEE COUNTY, Michigan -- Angie Ridley wants you to find her.

On MySpace. On Facebook. On LinkedIn and several other social-networking sites.

A broker for Complete Realty in Burton and president-elect of the Flint Area Association of Realtors' board, Ridley, 42, has embraced social networking and blogging.

"I get referral business. I refer business," said Ridley, a social networker since 2006. "I've had clients call me. I've had people call me just because they can associate with something on my blog."

And a few personal tidbits on those pages haven't hurt, Ridley said.

"They know me before they call," she said.

As Facebook and MySpace and other social-networking sites grow in popularity and as more adults log on, expect to see more friend requests from decision makers, business leaders and mom-and-pop businesses trying to make names for themselves.

Instead of -- or maybe in addition to -- lunch with the local chamber of commerce, it's listing your favorite authors on MySpace or comparing personality profiles on Facebook.

And, really, it's not just teens and college students using these social networking Web sites.

Facebook, which launched in 2004 for college students, today has broadened to more than 70 million active users and its fastest-growing demographic is those 25 and older.

Politicians such as U.S. Rep. Dale Kildee, D-Flint; Lt. Gov. John D. Cherry Jr.; County Treasurer Daniel T. Kildee; and former Flint mayoral candidate Dayne Walling are Facebookers. The Michigan Association of Realtors, Mott Community College, Hurley Medical Center and General Motors are among the colleges, employers and organizations that have groups on Facebook.

And take Elba Township businessman Craig B. Parr, 65, as an example of someone from an older generation looking to network online.

Parr, vice president of Chippewa Capital in Grand Blanc, a capital leasing company, and chief executive officer and co-owner of Evergreen Commodities, a recycling company, has joined other Facebookers in the past few months. He's also using LinkedIn, which has more than 20 million professional members.

"Folks my age tend not to gravitate toward those sort of vehicles," Parr said. "But folks of a huge younger demographic are very aware and use those types of tools."

Parr said he sees the Web sites as a way to reach out to those he might otherwise not reach.

"I think they have a very proper role in business moving forward just because it's a vehicle of choice for so many people," said Parr, who already received some inquiries and calls through Facebook networking.

Flint attorney Terry R. Bankert, 57, has more than 480 friends on his Facebook page.

He joined the site a few months back to promote his daily "Good Morning Flint" blog about local and national events, available at www.flinttalk.com.

Since then he's joined more than 100 Facebook groups.

"I'm increasing my name awareness and indirectly" my business awareness, Bankert said of his Facebook page.

Even the Flint Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is looking to cast the social-networking net, planning to hire a Web-savvy person to boost its presence, said Jerry Preston, president of the bureau.

The Whiting, one of Genesee County's top tourist and local attractions, added a MySpace page late last year and is considering other social networks, director Christina Bellows said.

She said MySpace allows The Whiting to send to its more than 200 friends free bulletins for things such as complimentary tickets that usually are grabbed up quickly.

"It's kind of like having an e-blast service that most people charge for," Bellows said. "It also allows us to tap into artists we having coming and also connect our friends, our patrons with our artists."

And, social-networking sites also are being used by businesses to find employees, said Steve Jones, a professor of communications at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

"We are seeing some use for recruiting purposes to find people who match a particular profile," Jones said.

Nearly 17% of employers surveyed recently for the National Association of Colleges and Employers plan to use social-networking sites as part of recruiting, up from 11% surveyed in Fall 2006.

Those employers aren't using profiles only to check backgrounds of candidates. More than half who will use the sites said they plan to network with potential candidates, the association says.

