

A Celebration of Relationships

The upcoming holidays always conjure up happy and heartwarming memories. Perhaps you remember Mom, searching through the freezer case at the grocery store for that perfectly plump turkey. Or maybe you recall the search through dark corners of the basement for that festive holiday tablecloth and matching placemats...too tacky for everyday use, but worth a thousand smiles when the smell of turkey and dressing linger in the air. Maybe your memories bring you back to sitting around a blazing fire after a filling meal, telling stories with family and friends of days gone by.

Acknowledging the relationships we possess becomes ever more important when we gather together in celebration, but it's an important thing to keep in mind throughout your year. Whether we are in school or working, the greatest opportunity for success in accomplishing our goals is the ability to tap into our network. The article on page 2 goes into great detail about the importance of these relationships.

The Game of Networking: The Board Game also presents a unique way to introduce the concept of relationship evaluation. On page 3, we detail the "human board game," a lifesize version of the valuable networking resource. It provides an extraordinary — and rather different — method of bringing together people from every walk of life.

I continue to 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.

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



This month's **FlowTIP:**
The key to strategic networking is not to get in and out but to develop long lasting, mutually beneficial relationships.
See page 3 for more information.

What's New?

The Job Search Cookbook Coming Soon



Dr. Hatala will be launching his long anticipated strategic job search management book entitled "The Job Search Cookbook: A Step-By-Step Recipe for Finding the Right Job." The book will be available online as well as directly from Flowork.com.

Flowork Certification Training Sessions Coming to Toronto

A Flowork Certification Training session will be held in January 2009 in Toronto, Ontario. Included in the two day training event will be social network management and strategic job search management. Scheduled dates for the sessions are January 28 and 29. If you or someone you know is interested in registering, visit the following link: www.socialnetworkaudit.com/about_flowork_certification.php. Only 30 seats will be available, so register soon!

The Social Network Audit website to be Redesigned

In December, the social network audit website will be revamped and updated. This means a faster and more efficient tool to monitor your network growth. Keep an eye on the site (www.socialnetworkaudit.com) for more details!

Have you checked out the new website for *The Game of Social Networking: The Board Game*? Housing complete information on playing the game, downloadable instructions and online ordering, the site is located at www.gameofnetworking.com



How Important is Social Capital, Anyway?

Social capital is not only part of our lives, it closely represents life itself. This may seem a bit extreme, but think back to the last time you accomplished a goal. Did you do it on your own or with the assistance of another individual? It is likely you had some help from a family member, friend or acquaintance. Following this logic, those individuals who have experienced some level of success (the achievement of their goals) likely have higher levels of social capital than those who have not.

Simply, social capital can be defined as the relationships an individual possesses. The key is to understand the importance of who we know, what we know about them and if we can link them to accomplishing something we set out to do.

Whether we are in school or working, the greatest opportunity for success in accomplishing our goals is the ability to tap into our network. Our network contains many different types of social resources (for example, our contacts, their addresses, their knowledge) that are capable of supporting our endeavors.

The key is to understand and remember that these types of resources are all around us. We first need to gain access to them, then ultimately utilize them to attain our objective.

At the same time we access and utilize the social resources, we also have to give back to the network in order to access them again in the future. Building mutually beneficial relationships is key to long-term resource access. Just like a savings account, if we continue to withdraw money and do not replace it, eventually the account will be depleted. This holds true with social capital, too. Even though it exists in spite of us, our social resources will quickly dry up if we do not offer an exchange of our own resources in return. Becoming knowledgeable of what we have to offer and taking the time to explore opportunities with contacts on both sides is critical to ensuring a win-win scenario.

If we want to increase our utilization of social resources we must fully explore the opportunities that exist between what we want to accomplish and what our contacts have to offer. The connection between goals and resources is the best way to determine what resources exist in the network and which ones are best

suited for accomplishing our objectives.

Social capital exists regardless of who we are and what we need. The value of this capital can only be determined by its utilization; whether we are leveraging our relationships for emotional, financial or goal support, we subconsciously tap into it. Imagine if we were to make a conscious effort to leverage our social capital in our lives, while at the same time providing our own resources to others in the network. Think about the difference this would make!



Some people are able to do this quite effectively, but most of us think little about it and therefore fail to tap into this valuable life resource. Perhaps we feel that it is a burden on someone to ask for help, or perhaps we do not wish to give anything in return. Whatever the reason, it is essential to success to think about what we hope to do and how the people in our lives can help us.

So is social capital important?

It is not only important, *it is essential to our success*. Whether you are looking for a job, vying for a promotion at work, buying a house, selling a car, or fixing a broken toilet, access to social resources will allow us to accomplish these tasks in a more efficient and effective manner. This is not to say that you cannot accomplish these tasks alone, but at what cost? Social capital leads to economic and human capital that is at the forefront of all our minds. We increase our annual earnings by accessing a contact who knows someone at an organization that pays above the typical salary offered elsewhere. Without the link between your contact and the organization, this opportunity would not be possible.

The next time you attempt to accomplish something think about the best way to do it. You must weigh your options to go it alone or locate someone who can help you. If you believe the research stating that those individuals with higher levels of social capital are more likely to accomplish their objectives, finding a contact that can help you is likely your best chance for success.

The Human Board Game

Practice Networking In A Structured Environment

Playing The Game of Networking: The Board Game as a human board game puts a unique slant on the new Flowork resource.

In the tabletop board game version, participants are given a goal and set of tasks to complete. The objective is to find as many people as they can who can help them accomplish the assigned goal by moving their playing piece through a structured networking process printed directly on the board in front of them.

In the lifesize version, humans replace the playing pieces. Individuals experience networking in a simulated environment by seeking and connecting with actual people. The Flowork networking process allows individuals to break down the phenomenon of networking and focus in on areas that may require improvement. Ultimately, this will offer them the chance to improve their ability to convert opportunities into solutions that help them accomplish their goals. Their objective is simply to collect the appropriate resource cards from other players to complete their tasks and accomplish their goal. The first person to do this wins the game. The game can be played with as few as 20 people, with up to 1000 players in total.

Playing the human board game not only provides the opportunity to practice networking, but also the chance to meet other people. This makes it a great activity for college, corporate and conference workshops. The human board game not only provides an icebreaker but also gives participants an understanding of the phenomenon of networking and how to move an opportunity to a solution.

For example, a typical conference already has networking opportunities scheduled for delegates to meet. Problems, however, arise when a delegate is not a natural networker because there is generally no structure in the scheduled activity. It is unrealistic to expect conference organizers to provide person-

alized and individual introductions, obviously the most effective way of getting delegates to speak to one another. As such, simply having a networking time slot does not accomplish anything for most attendees. It is, in fact, a point of intimidation for a number of individuals, which only results in a reduction of participation and the total failure to meet the purpose of the event.

Playing the human board game as a kickoff networking event allows individuals who are not natural networkers the opportunity to get involved and meet people right from the beginning. The game thereby helps to set the tone for the whole conference. In addition to breaking the ice, it also gets delegates to think of what they want to accomplish and then link people from the conference to help them do it. This provides a clear picture of the value of the conference, as they will see the benefit of attending right from the beginning.

By providing structure through the assigned goals and tasks, it gives participants a reason to open the lines of communication with other attendees. Once the game is complete, participants can create their own goals and then approach people to see whether they can help them. Because this is part of the event, people expect others to ask for help.

Whether the event is a conference, orientation for college students or a corporate affair, the human board game provides an opportunity to directly involve a number of people who would otherwise get lost in the attempt to connect everyone. If the event's intention is to bring people closer together, the human board game will encourage this awareness and allow people to interact in a non-threatening manner. So many events have a networking component to it; this is one way of ensuring that people actually do meet and are encouraged to connect with other delegates, students or employees. Ultimately, by incorporating the human board game, participants might even learn something along the way.

This month's FlowTIP:

The key to strategic networking is not to get in and out but to develop long lasting, mutually beneficial

relationships. Most of the time we make connections with one person that leads to a referral to another contact. This means that we spend time exploring with one person and find out that they can't help us directly but know someone who may be able to help. This starts the process all over again and does take time. Too often we fail to follow-up with the referral and potentially lose out on a great opportunity to accomplish our goal. In addition to losing out on the opportunity, we take the chance of impacting our relationship with the referrer. This is something that we need to consider when we do ask for help. If the contact can't help us directly are we willing to follow-up with their referral to someone who can? We need to think about our networking activities from the long-term perspective and if we do we're more likely to gain the benefits the network has to offer.

Social Networking Sites “Good for Businesses”



Posted on Wednesday, October 29, 2008, on Yahoo! Tech News

LONDON (Reuters) - Good news for workers addicted to Facebook, Bebo and MySpace -- a British think-tank says bosses should not stop their staff using social networking sites because they could actually benefit their firms.

The report by Demos said encouraging employees to use networking technologies to build relationships and closer links with colleagues and customers could help businesses rather than damage them.

Author Peter Bradwell said that while companies were using specific systems to share information, online social networking sites could also play a role, helping with productivity, innovation and democratic working.

However, he said there should be practical guidelines to limit non-work usage.

“Bans on Facebook or YouTube are in any case almost impossible to enforce; firms may as well try to put a time limit on the numbers of minutes allowed each day for gossiping,” he wrote.

“The answer is not to close down staff access to social network platforms, nor is it investing blindly in collaborative platforms.

“Rather, we argue that we need to understand how, once we accept the implications of social networks, we can manage the new challenges and trade-offs.”

His research concluded that trying to control the use of sites such as Facebook, which alone boasts more than 100 million users

worldwide, could even harm organizations.

“Smart” businesses recognized that social networking could not easily be separated from “professional” networking, he argued.

“In today’s difficult business environment, the instinctive reaction can be to batten down the hatches and return to the traditional ‘command and control’ techniques that enable managers to closely monitor and measure productivity,” he said.

“Allowing workers to have more freedom and flexibility might seem counterintuitive, but it appears to create business more capable of maintaining stability.”



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.



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