

McHugh & Novak

Networking Your Way to Success

By

John B. McHugh and Liz Novak

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"Networking is a long game. You need to give before you get. To use a baseball analogy, it's a game of singles and doubles, not grand slams. Every day look for an opportunity to introduce someone in your network to someone else they may have a need to meet. Stay in touch with key contacts -- across years, jobs, and careers. These days, your network is your greatest professional asset, so time and care need to be taken to seed, feed, and weed it over time. If you invest in building your network throughout your career, when you inevitably need to call in a favor, you will have people lining up to help you." -- *Pam Boiros, Bridge Marketing*

What Is Networking?

Networking, as we will use the term, is the human connection between people for their mutual benefit. Networking is based on the premise that anything good, beneficial, important, or life-changing in your professional life is based on your personal connections with the right people.

For example, every major sale, new job, consulting assignment, promotion and new recruit to your staff could be the result of networking. Networking can benefit you on a personal level as well: Someone in your professional network who knows you and

respects you may introduce you to a new area of personal enrichment you hadn't realized you were missing, which could add fulfillment to your life.

Networking is not just introducing yourself to someone at a reception and exchanging cards, although that is a start. Networking is not just the adept use of social media, although social media is an important part of successful networking. Networking is a mindset. It's having a philosophy so deeply ingrained in your persona that you can't help but network every chance you get. It doesn't necessarily come naturally to everyone, but it can be nurtured and developed.

Why Networking Is Important

Why is networking so important? There are numerous reasons, but the most important reason is that no one has job security. For example, look at the millions of capable people downsized in the economic crash of 2007-08.

There have been times over the past several decades when jobs were easier to come by, but even when it's relatively easy to find a job, you want to make sure you can find the best, most fulfilling job possible. You also never know what is going to happen; a sudden change in leadership could have your company closing its doors without warning. A merger or acquisition

could result in your job being eliminated.

Therefore, it pays to have a large and deep bench of networking contacts you have nurtured over time who would be happy to help you when you are in need. If you've done your networking well, they may even owe you a favor or two.

Networking is also a way to learn and grow professionally. For example, you may need competitive information or new product information. Or you may be recruiting for a top position in your organization and your network contacts will help you in your search. Your networking list will be a rich source of subject matter experts (SMEs). Jack McHugh has used his network contacts as a source of SMEs for his writing. (See **McHugh Acknowledgment** list [linkhttp://goo.gl/2V6A0H](http://goo.gl/2V6A0H).)

Antitrust and Networking

One caveat: U.S. Antitrust law prohibits any price setting or exclusion from a profession or restraint of trade, which is part of a long list of legally prohibited activities. Therefore, avoid these subjects when networking with colleagues in your industry or profession.

Future Papers on Networking

If you want to succeed, you can't afford not to network. We will explore the subject in- depth in a number of subsequent papers. We write for college students and alumni, self-employed, entry level workers and seasoned managers.

We plan to cover the following topics in future papers:

- How to Network
- Networking Methods
- Examples of Successful Networking and Unsuccessful Networking;
- Networking Opportunities

- Shy, Introspective, and Reserved People
- Trade Association Members

About the Authors

John B. McHugh

John B. "Jack" McHugh is a 40-year veteran of the publishing business. Jack has worked as an executive for Houghton Mifflin, Wadsworth, and Saint Mary's Press. Jack is also an experienced association publishing executive. For seven years, he was Publisher and Director of Programs at the American Society for Quality and for a two-year period, he served as the Interim Publisher at the Project Management Institute. He is a member of the ASAE Advisory Board for Publishing, Communications, and Media Issues and Practices.

Jack's specialties include association/nonprofit publishing, book publishing, executive recruiting, journal publishing, rights and permissions, new ventures, organizational design, and social media strategy and policy.

McHugh and Liz Novak, of IAPD, are co-authoring a series of papers on **Networking Techniques**. Jack Mc Hugh is also the manager of two LinkedIn™ groups, **Association** and **Nonprofit Publishing** and **The Self-Employment Forum**.

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Liz Novak began her publishing career in the early 1990s at *PC Magazine*. After enjoying 17 years as a magazine editor for various technical magazines, and seeing the impact of the internet on the publishing industry, she returned to school and earned her MBA. After graduation, her freshly minted MBA landed her a job as magazine editor for the flagship publication of the International Association of Plastics Distribution (IAPD). Six months into the job, she added Marketing Director to her title and has relished the opportunities that combining the association's publishing and marketing departments have afforded her. Contact: www.linkedin.com/in/lnovak.

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