

TAMING THE CHAOS OF NETWORKING.

Social Networking is so chaotic! You spent time and effort to land a meeting. And when you finally get the meeting, where is the conversation heading?

Networking is chaos.

By chaos, we mean nonlinear events that fail to follow the familiar logic of linear encounters.

Linear events are $A + B = C$. Baking a cake or getting gasoline through a machine are linear events.

Scientists believe that chaotic or non-linear events do obey logic and can be predicted. But our tools for prediction are imprecise. Random events, on the other hand, are unpredictable.

We can't turn chaotic events like networking into linear events for you. But we do have two free web resources to make networking a little more linear.

THE GARMINS OF NETWORKING

When you drive your car, you look through a windscreen. The windscreen displays the road you are traveling on right now. The rear view mirror displays the road you just traveled. A global positioning system like the Garmin allows you to see the road half a mile or more into the future.

Two websites are the Garmins of networking.

The first is to google "investing businessweek (name of person)" if you are networking someone someone on a public company board of directors.

For example:

"Shelia has a networking meeting with Timothy Collins, CEO of Ripplewood Holdings. Using "investing businessweek Timothy Collins" she finds that Tim knows 113 Board members in eleven different companies across nine different industries. Sheila clicks "See Board Relationships" to find out the networks of these 113 people. David Gross-Loh sits on the Board of Directors of D&M Holdings with Tim Collins. But he also is a partner at Bain Capital. Shelia is interested in talking with David Gross-Loh about opportunities at Bain Capital.

She asks Tim for an introduction to David.”

In the above example, Sheila was able to use “businessweek investing” to clearly articulate the networking relationships she wished to obtain. This simple process turns the nonlinear nature of networking into a more linear, predictable social event.

LINKEDIN.COM IS ALSO A GARMIN OF NETWORKING

Investing businessweek limits its focus to networks of members of boards of U.S. public companies. LinkedIn.com has rich networking value for you. It has the advantage of tapping into a younger population on a global level.

Some of our clients have discomfort saying, “I know you know David Gross-Loh. Would you introduce me to him?”

We respond by saying that if the person you are speaking with wants to help, that person will appreciate your helping the process move along rapidly. You are saving the person the time/effort required to think of good leads for you.

But suppose the person you are speaking with does not want to help you or cannot help you?

Business leaders say “no” all the time. And the best ones have mastered the art of communicating “no” in gentle ways. If they think helping you will benefit you and them, they will do so. And if they think it would harm their relationship, you will not get the referral.

Ask and you might be pleasantly surprised.

Don’t ask and your chance of failure is 100%. Why would you want such a linear event in your professional life?

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