

Synapse Libate & Learn: Why Connections Matter More Than Your Resume

05.19.2020

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What to prioritize when building your network

- Give *before* you get - Ask: How Can I Add Value?
- Get Outside of Your Circle
- Focus on core values in common with different people - make sure you align with people with whom you connect
- Build a Genuine Relationship based on Trust - people will open their networks only if they know and trust you
- Network with a Purpose - Especially if you can network on behalf of a non-profit or community organization
- Quality of Relationships over Quantity
- Professional intimacy is knowing someone not only for what they do, but for who they are - Trust, knowing about a person's personal life, personal/religious beliefs
- People are serial and tend to re-emerge in your network time and again in different ways
- Try to make one valuable connection/intro after each meeting for that other person
- Be Open and Authentic - it's OK to be vulnerable and honest
- Use social media to augment your brand and stand out

How Do You Find Different Ways to Make Connections?

- Host Your Own Events! YOU are the connector and can speak at your event
- Take advantage of unique opportunities to meet new people with a purpose
- Think about what people really need to connect in a meaningful way - Synapse Libate & Learn, Wellness Connect w/ Venture Cafe Miami for yoga, cooking classes, and fun activities. People want to be seen, heard, acknowledged and valued.
- Volunteering can create some of the best opportunities - alumni groups are a great place to start
- Try connecting with someone on different platforms, esp. If you're not sure where they're most active - ReTweet, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, email, etc.
- If you're not sure where someone stands after you've made an ask, "loop" - i.e. "If I understand what you're saying..." - put the ball back in their court to clarify how they feel
- Stand out (in a good way) - Asking a question in an event draws attention
- Skip the usual questions and get to the heart of getting to know someone to break the ice - random questions are great! Or ask how they heard about the event - can reveal people or orgs in common, ask "what brings you here" - don't lead with "what do you do" or "how's the job search going"

Thank you to our panelists!

[Rich Heruska](#), Serial Entrepreneur and mentor, Tampa

[Leigh-Ann Buchanan](#), [Venture Cafe Miami](#), Instagram: leighann.buchanan

[Pablo Casilimas](#), [ONESIXONE Group](#), Gainesville

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When and How Do You Call In A Need from Your Connection?

- Just ask! Most people are generous and happy to help how they can.
- Be clear about Your Purpose - statet what you're asking for and why; often once people know what you're really looking for they'll have a different and better connection
- Set Very Clear Expectations - State the scope of what you're really asking for to manage expectations on both sides and prevent disappointment and be clear about what you can/cannot do for someone
- Make it easy for the person making the connection - include a summary/blurb they can share on your behalf
- Trust your gut - if you're not sure if the ask is appropriate or well timed, wait.
- If it isn't time sensitive bring it up casually to get a sense of interest based on initial response, body language, etc.
- Get pro-active about reaching out now especially if you're unemployed and searching for new opportunities
- Create a regular outreach list so you keep in contact with people with updates on your status and achievements; don't just reach out once and forget them
- Have your resume ready so if an opportunity does come up you're ready; emphasize interesting work experiences not just education or traditional professional experiences

How NOT to engage

- Don't be entitled in expecting a response - put yourself in their position when considering tone and language
- Know the best platform on which to connect with someone - it's OK to ask someone how to communicate with them
- Be clear if you're just saying hi and don't have an ask. Again, set expectations up front!
- Your reputation matters and things get around quickly - so treat others as you want to be treated and always deliver on your promises
- People will always remember **how you made them feel**, not what you said

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