



BUSINESS BOOK Summaries

April 4, 2014

Your Network Is Your Net Worth

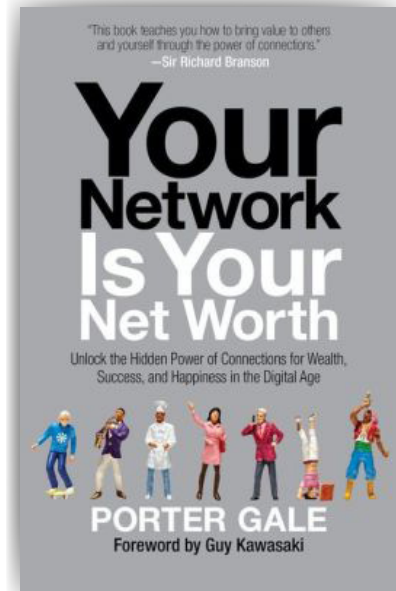
Unlock the Hidden Power of Connections for Wealth, Success, and Happiness in the Digital Age

Porter Gale

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KEY CONCEPTS

The networking methodologies of the past are losing their effectiveness. Networking is now a process that enables people to follow their true interests, map their own paths, and make consequential connections that lead to satisfaction and enhanced productivity. To build strong networks people should:

- *Create an attitude of positive productivity*, which means committing to optimizing time, connections, and relationships to increase satisfaction, success, and wealth.
- *Identify personal passions and purpose*. Analyzing personal strengths and weaknesses, activities that bring happiness, and desired life objectives will point people in the right direction to travel to achieve their goals.
- *Learn from “hub players.”* Hub players are people at the center of social or business environments, and they excel at connecting themselves and others. Their interactions with individuals and groups should be observed and their successful social skills absorbed.
- *Shake it up*. Change personal routines to unlock new growth, attend events designed to meet others, and be receptive to new conversations and connections.
- *Use technology to enhance connections*. Look over social media sites and use online research to find like-minded communities and connections. Use Skype, iPhone FaceTime, and other technologies to reduce virtual distance.
- *Accelerate networking through the right environment*. Physical space and the people with whom people surround themselves greatly affect output and productivity. Negative environments should be avoided in order to set up the best conditions for networking success.
- *Nurture relationships and give back*. Networking is much more than advancing personal interests, so committing oneself to giving more than one hopes to receive provides a solid basis for reaching out to others.
- *Consider carefully when choosing networking events*. Events should be chosen for their ability to inspire

in the areas of personal passions or purposes and their likelihood of providing potential future professional or personal contacts.

- *Show appreciation to network members.* Always show network people how they are valued—use personal contact to convey optimism, connection, and praise.

INTRODUCTION

In **Your Network Is Your Net Worth**, Porter Gale promotes the power of social capital to improve productivity, enlarge professional options, and improve the overall quality of life by building a network of genuine personal and professional relationships. Gale emphasizes that when people identify their passions and purposes to organize networking around their values and beliefs, it becomes much easier to achieve lasting affiliations, personal transformations, and earning opportunities that lead to success and happiness. Changing cultural values and advancing digital technologies facilitate these new approaches to networking. It is significant that networking efforts should be based on the desire to connect with people, share content, give insights, and live with purpose.

DEVELOP A TRANSFORMATIONAL ATTITUDE

Whether planning major or minor changes in networking efforts, it is important that people become comfortable with working outside their personal comfort zones and explore new territory. Initially, this will require that people assess the barriers that impede personal progress.

Barriers

Reflecting on negative self-evaluations and thoughts that produce discomfort is a useful start. Writing barriers down for reference is the next step as it can help to identify the sources of these impeding characteristics. Gale suggests using “I” statements and offers questions such as these to spark creation of barrier lists:

- Do you have barriers that get in the way of your success and happiness?
- Do you have any compulsive or addictive behaviors, or have others on more than one occasion singled any out?
- Do you make excuses or not follow through?

After spending a week or so considering the barrier list, it should be shared with a friend or adviser. The next step is to start planning specific actions to eliminate the barriers, using outside support if needed. Gale directs readers to the Mayo Clinic website if they feel they need support for depression, anxiety, or addiction.

People should concentrate on one barrier at a time and be sure to acknowledge each personal success as it is achieved. They should also examine personal qualities that could facilitate meeting people and expanding opportunities for change. Writing down these attitudes and behaviors is helpful in providing further guidance because it will provide a chart that leads people to identify goals.

Creating a focused purpose is important and to achieve this people must first define their interests. This contemplation will lead to people understand how their purpose aligns with others’. This is a crucial step in making connections and developing relationships.

The Funnel Test

The “Funnel Test” is a useful means of defining core passions and purpose. To evaluate themselves people

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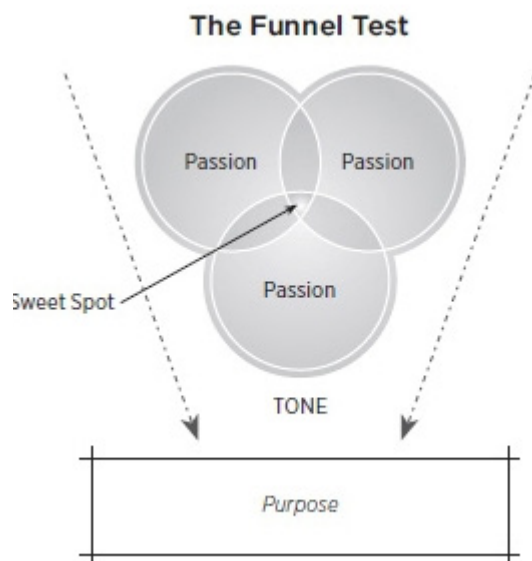
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draw three interlocking circles and write a different personal passion in each one. The passions should represent activities and interests that bring happiness and satisfaction. The area where the three passions overlap is a critical one. Finding activities, work, or relationships that combine two or more core passions will greatly facilitate making people more effective and committed in their pursuits. This overlap represents focused goals—the objectives that one wants to achieve in life.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Porter Gale is an internationally known public speaker, networker, and entrepreneur with more than 20 years of experience working in marketing, advertising, and independent filmmaking. From 2007 to 2011, she was vice president of marketing at Virgin America. Prior to Virgin America, she was a consultant and held the post of general manager at Kirshenbaum Bond + Partners San Francisco. She was awarded the Changing the Game Award by the Advertising Women of New York (AWNY), was on *AdAge's* Digital Hotlist and *iMedia's* Top 25-Digital Marketers, and named a Digital Passionista by *The Huffington Post*.

The passion words in the Funnel Test should be used to draft personal purpose statements of 20 words or less that describe the purpose (e.g., “To have a thriving consulting business that helps nonprofits with philanthropy efforts.”).

Positive Productivity

There may be numerous projects and tasks to be completed before progressing toward one’s purpose. Preparing an action list or a “Purpose Plan” will help people stay on track. Ideally, people should choose a project to be started, and then identify several small steps to initiate action. Before landing what she terms her “dream job,” Gale went through a personal low point but filled her days with tasks big and small that forced her to be productive and work her network, including:

- Doing laundry, making beds, and grocery shopping.
- Pitching an advertising project.
- Interviewing for a job and not getting it.
- Updating her resume and biography.
- Helping a friend with a public relations project.
- Interviewing, interviewing, interviewing.

Collaboration is an essential element of optimized networks. When people surround themselves with collaborative and intelligent people, productivity is enhanced. Taking active measures to become more team-oriented, such as joining like-minded groups or attending relevant conferences, is a move in the right direction.

The Internet is undoubtedly a powerful collaborative tool, but it must be used judiciously. Although social media offers countless opportunities for connecting it should not be used so carelessly as to result in haphazard linkages to nonproductive or potentially harmful contacts. It should be used to establish a quality network that lasts.

A quick assessment of time-wasting activities is also useful. Reflecting on daily routines, such as commuting, Internet roving, television viewing, and pre-work morning rituals may reveal some areas where people can use their time more efficiently. Most importantly, people should prioritize time usage to concentrate on

essentials, such as health, relationships, and personal finance over activities that diminish productivity.

Give Give Get

The true spirit of networking is not the furtherance of personal aims; it is the commitment to place more effort into giving than receiving. This “Give Give Get” philosophy energizes networking and enables practitioners to improve their emotional states, enhance relationships, raise personal happiness levels, and truly understand the significance of gratitude. Freely expressed generosity must be accepted for what it is—giving. The most important point in values-based networking is that people should not expect anything in return. This concept must be applied to all offline, online, and social media activities and relationships. Networking and social media efforts must be grounded in the sincere desire to connect with people, share content, and offer insights.

Opportunities for giving can be found in the community and in the workplace, as well as nonprofit organizations that would gratefully accept assistance. Looking for actions supportive of their personal passions and purpose will reveal the best ways for people to contribute.

Regardless of if you want to make major or minor shifts in your networking, it's important to learn to work outside your comfort zone and explore uncharted situations. Take action, start a conversation when you're feeling uncomfortable, or ask someone to join an activity: the results may happily surprise you.

Shake It Up

Changing routine can have a dramatic effect on improving networking efforts. These changes can bring both learning and growth. One way to seek positive change is to attend events and programs set up to meet new people. These events can be found online or in a local newspaper. A personal hobby or a favorite recreational activity can be the basis for seeking out meetings with like-minded people.

BUILD A VALUES-BASED TEAM

Technology and Social Media

Social media and online tools offer tremendous opportunities for learning and can assist in enhancing

people's ability to make quality connections. Technology has greatly reduced the time needed to acclimate to new surroundings or situations. Social media is routinely used to organize informal meetings and events, and it greatly boosts the speed of networking efforts.

It is important that people realize that social technology and email do not displace the true value of friendship and professional collaboration. This means that building relationships, whether online or offline, should be characterized by following up on commitments, preserving trusted information, and showing appreciation for the value of the bond.

Online relationships can take numerous forms. LinkedIn is a particularly effective professional networking tool. Recruiters use LinkedIn as a means to locate promising candidates, so account-holders should keep their profiles updated. Those who search LinkedIn can find contacts by job title and also determine the existence of shared connections.

Online research is helpful in finding communities or people with similar interests. Pinterest is a useful site for this, and StumbleUpon is helpful in discovering new websites, videos, photos, and images from across the Web. People can search for bloggers who write about their personal interests and follow them, and send them a tweet to acknowledge approval. People can also follow others on Twitter who share their personal interests.

Hosting or attending a chat or a forum on a topic of personal interest is highly useful. This can be done by joining or starting a Facebook or LinkedIn group. There is also Meetup, which is an online network of events categorized by locality.

Technology has also reconfigured the methodology of job searching, meeting business contacts, and undergoing interviews. Once, personal interviews were commonplace realities for the hiring process; now, recruitment can entail analyzing personal profiles on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Google, as well as video chats and other events that may lead up to a personal interview.

For anyone who is actively seeking a job, online efforts should include looking for sites and email lists that post listings in their desired areas of interest

As well as updating LinkedIn profiles and resumes. Network contacts should be asked for recruiter and interview referrals. Intelligent use of technology will assist in finding new contacts, encourage widespread connections, and greatly improve both job searching and networking.

Build a Solid Core

As people build out their networking teams, it is essential that they have a solid core. When defining the core circle, they must identify those who are best at providing emotional, physical, employment, or financial advice. Core circles constitute the most essential lifelines, the trusted advisers who help support people's efforts. It is useful to periodically reflect on core members and determine whether they support or share personal passions, and if so, whether there are any barriers that might obstruct the open flow of communication and support. Outside the core, there may be secondary circles of support—available contacts with the same interests and passions that are part of networking efforts. Gaining access to secondary circles can be as easy as looking to online communities and applications, topical Twitter feeds, and classes or workshops.

Above all, it is crucial that the people within these circles know that they are valued and appreciated. This can be effectively expressed through the personal touch: a call, a conversation over coffee, or a handwritten note.

Power Pockets

There are certain places and events that accelerate networking, and they are called "power pockets." These are either locations where or situations in which performance is enhanced. Some environments clearly will not produce the best performance, often because of physical space or personal characteristics that negatively affect productivity. This is why any contemplation of a new employment opportunity should include the assessment of whether the new project will support people's personal purposes and passions, and if the new role will increase personal skills and knowledge.

Once, power pockets were the alumni clubs or country clubs where captains of industry could meet to discuss and negotiate significant business matters. Today, these places have been supplanted by events, online communities, and workplace areas where connections and relationship-building are highly energized.

Before joining a modern power pocket, people should consider whether the activity will be helpful in advancing personal passions or purposes and also consider the likelihood of meeting potential professional or personal contacts. However, even if the people present may not appear to be a perfect fit for their networks, different personalities and outlooks can sometimes make beneficial contacts. By concentrating on similarities rather than differences people are likely to improve the odds of making positive connections.

Having a producer mindset and demonstrating your talents via content, presentations, and or contests can spark new conversations, relationships, and revenue opportunities. In some cases, it can reverse the direction of networking from proactive to reactive.

Hub Players

The people with the best networking and relationship-building skills are called "hub players." They tend to be at the crossroads of social or business activities. They also show genuine interest in people and genuinely like making connections and socializing. Hub players are also generous in sharing their connections and are more than willing to make introductions or referrals. Those who do not have hub players' gregariousness can benefit from studying them to enhance personal social skills and abilities.

Hub players are good at remembering names; this is an asset when conversing with people at crowded events. When a recent (or not so recent) acquaintance addresses one by name, it signals a genuine interest and a sincere desire for meaningful communication. For those not blessed with the ability to learn names quickly, memorization devices (e.g., thinking of a similar-sounding name or a word that starts with the same first letter) can be helpful.

Gaining others' background information is also a useful social tool. At some conferences and meetings, invitees' biographical information is collected before the gathering and can be reviewed and memorized before the event in order to facilitate conversation. Even if this information is not available in advance, people can always introduce themselves and use friendly curiosity to draw out others' information. This may be a challenge to those who are not naturally outgoing, but it tends to get easier with practice.

Knowing others with similar interests, passions, and overlapping values is important because it means that relationships are stronger. This leads to greater satisfaction in business and social networking that will in turn lead to the discovery of new areas of learning and transformation.

One transformational networking tip is to focus on your "journey" and passions, both personally and professionally, not just paychecks. Collecting experiential moments or having a "bucket list" (of activities you want to accomplish in your life) is a great way to keep your passions in the forefront.

Cultivate Fields of Creativity

Networking means being a producer, and producers should energetically seek to create content, products, or services that support their passions. This activity results in creative happiness, sharable resources, and potential financial gain. Very often, successful content production leads to receiving recognition and raising people's profiles as experts. This can result in access to new contacts and new revenue opportunities.

Blogging is a good way to produce content. A 600-word limit is advisable, so the content should be kept short and concise. The headline should draw attention and interest, but not be trite. A good approach is to enable social sharing on all posts and post not only on personal blogs but also on social media channels. People should include their Twitter handles and URLs in the bylines of their blog posts. Many popular blogs incorporate easily understood "top tips" listings or Q and A designs.

Before producing content, products, or services, people should carefully assess their resources and

interests. This means keeping personal goals and purposes in mind when setting up a production strategy. The target audience is an essential consideration—identifying who one wants to reach should be highly influential in configuring content and its means of delivery. Assessing personal ability to produce is another consideration, as overextension may produce failure.

Networking efficiency is greatly boosted when influential parties, partners, and groups are coordinated to assist with change and growth. This involves building a brand to help with targeting message in order to gather a following. People can brand-build in a number of ways, including:

- Writing white papers or industry articles.
- Making themselves available for press interviews.
- Teaching a class.
- Volunteering for a relevant cause.
- Initiating fund-raising campaigns.
- Providing products or services to events or groups.

These activities can extend reach and recognition. Online platforms, such as Kickstarter or Change.org, are potential means for bringing a message to large numbers of people. The results of these branding efforts will be the stimulation of new conversations, relationships, and earning opportunities.

When building partnerships, people must always keep in mind their personal passions and purposes that provide inspiration. This helps to ensure that efforts are directed at the proper individuals and organizations that will actually extend personal reach and help construct personal networks.

The Ask

Being able to approach others and request the time to make a presentation may seem daunting, but it becomes simpler once people master "the Ask." The Ask is a skill that can be developed over time, and it is the means to arrange a meeting, get a foot in the door, or just obtain advice. It should be based on genuine intentions and shared passions, as well as the Give

Give Get mentality. When this is done, others may view requests more favorably and recognize them as invitations for collaboration rather than appeals for contributions.

It is essential that asks be made of the right person at the right time. This means knowing the audience, looking for insights that will facilitate connection, and delivering a simple presentation that is well-prepared.

The most effective presentations show people's passion, display good story-telling skills, and offer emotional stories and insights that the audience remembers. Considerations for presentation preparation may include:

- Prior results that can be shared or demonstrated.
- Images or video that illustrate the story.
- Endorsements or testimonials.
- The audience's ability to relate to or understand the idea or purpose.
- Details that bring the idea to life.

Perhaps the most important aspect of requesting time, advice, or resources from others is that one should never be afraid to ask. Practicing speech making and storytelling will help, and devising innovative ways to deliver a pitch or a story will result in communicating a resonant message to a receptive and responsive audience.



FEATURES OF THE BOOK

Estimated Reading Time: 4–5 hours, 289 pages

Your Network Is Your Net Worth sets out networking methods that reflect changing cultural values and improved digital technologies. Porter Gale provides numerous stories of people who encountered some difficulty in their personal or professional lives and overcame it through the use of innovative networking techniques. The book offers practical exercises for building networks using both online social media and face-to-face contacts. It would be of interest to anyone facing a career transition, entering a new life phase, or steering toward a challenging objective. The book

should be read sequentially to ensure the full benefit of its incremental flow. It includes exercises, comprehensive references, additional reading, and useful Twitter Handles for each chapter.

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