Building Strategic Relationships

Adam Guinther
What does building a connection really mean?

- Building long-term relationships over time
- Sharing Knowledge
- Sharing Ideas
- Giving and Receiving Advice
- Engaging with People... *Ones You Know and the Ones You Don’t*
- Having Conversations
Why Build Connections?

- As we strengthen ourselves as individual leaders our organizations directly benefit. *Introduces us to new opportunities.*
- Casual conversations may lead to a helpful bit of advice.
- Strength in numbers.
- We often feel we have something to offer others.
- It’s all who you know!
Take a moment and write down the 5 people you spend the most time with....

Who are the 5-10 people that matter the most in your professional life?
Professional Connections...

- Do those 5-10 names represent professional diversity in your network?
- How many of those people are inside your organization?
- How many are outside of your organization?
- As leaders, we should be striving for around 75% of those professional connections to be outside of our organization.
Personal Board of Directors
Personal Board of Directors

- **Peers** - Colleagues in our field that experience similar challenges
- **County Boards** - Superintendent, SSA Director, SSAs
- **DODD** - Contact within the Department ("go-to" person)
- **Trade Associations** - OPRA, ANCOR, OACB
- **Local Gov’t.** - County Commissioners (who approves levies to be on the ballot?), City Council, Mayor
Personal Board of Directors

- **Local Businesses** - Restaurants, Industry
- **Family and Friends** - Their connections can quickly become your connections
- **Industry Partners** - All of our vendors you see here this week!
- **Community Organizations** - YMCA, Rotary, ERN
- **Medical** - Doctors, Hospital Administrators, Nursing Homes
How do we build those connections?

We are almost always creating connections.

Can we be more deliberate in the way that we do it?
10 Ways to Connect
Get Involved

- Conferences
- Join a board outside of your field
- Volunteer
Establish Rapport

- This is something you should always do when meeting someone for the first time
- Find ONE thing in common
  - Where they went to school
  - Something about their family
  - What they do for a living
Be Sociable

- This is often easier for an extrovert
- Doesn’t mean you have to talk all the time
- Listen and observe
- Highlight other’s thoughts and comments
- Put yourself out there
Collaborate

Connecting with people works best when both parties bring something to the table

Connection will not last long-term if only one person contributes

Share your expertise

Give feedback
Show Appreciation

- Say thank you in person
- Don’t underestimate the importance of a simple thank you note
- Follow up email
- Send a gift
Host an Event

Start Small

Business after hours through local Chamber of Commerce

Fundraisers

Room 331
Be Strategic

- Might be the most important way of connecting
- Prepare - “Everyone wants to succeed, but not everyone is willing to prepare to succeed” - Bobby Knight
  - Schedule the necessary time
  - Who do you connect with on a regular basis?
  - Who should you be connecting with?
  - Opportunity costs
  - Be deliberate - connections, time (70/30), goal
- Example
Make a list of 3-5 people you’ve been meaning to connect with...

Write down the purpose for wanting to connect.
Take Advantage of All Encounters
Planned or Unplanned

- Never pass up an opportunity!!
- “You miss 100% of the shots you don’t take”
  - Wayne Gretzky
- Sometimes it’s better to be lucky
Continue to Check-In

- Email
- Text
- Quick Phone Call
- Holiday Card
- Zoom
- Keeps you fresh in their mind
- You MUST continue to put in effort towards maintaining the relationship!
Be Memorable
Intelligence
Funny
Ornery
Attire

IT'S NOT A MAN PURSE. IT'S CALLED A SATCHEL, INDIANA JONES WEARS ONE.
Feeling
Stay late
Summary

- Connections help us as individuals and as organizations
- Think about your personal Board of Directors
- Don’t be afraid...Put yourself out there!
- Importance of being strategic
- BE YOURSELF!
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