



Building connections

Building a personal and professional network
that enriches your career and life.

Welcome

A deep professional network is not just about landing your next job. Sharing ideas, providing mentoring and support, and gaining different perspectives are among the vast benefits that come from a professional network built on reciprocity.

Improving your influence is another advantage available through effective networking. Effectively making the transition from functional manager to business leader depends on your ability to add to the organisation's strategic agenda, beyond your functional contribution. And that requires a strategic network.

Yet most emerging leaders find it painful and time wasting, and so avoid it at all cost or put little thought into the endeavour. Mindset is often the biggest barrier.

To unpack and reframe your networking mindset, approach and habits, we're using the framework academics Herminia Ibarra and Mark Lee Hunter built after studying 30 emerging leaders.

Their model sets out a path to shift beyond (1) the common focus on internal, operational networks, to (2) a more outward personal network focused on current imperatives, and finally (3) a future focused external network enabling greater organisational impact.

Once you've assessed your current strengths and limitations, we're returning to the Immunity to Change X-Ray to unpack how your mindset and identity needs to evolve to achieve the one big thing you could do differently to elevate your leadership impact with more strategic networking.

Please spend at least 30 mins assessing your current approach to networking using the self-assessment template on pages 6 and 7, and come to the session ready to pinpoint and unpack your networking adaptive challenge.



Yolanda Beattie
Director

3 forms of networking

	Operational	Personal	Strategic
Purpose	Get the job done	Professional development and referrals	Future priorities and stakeholder advocacy
Location and temporal orientation	Internal and current	External and current	External and future
Players and recruitment	Non-discretionary, clear / obvious	Discretionary; relevance not always clear	Informed by imperatives, discretionary members; relevance not always clear.
Network attributes and key behaviours	<i>Depth</i> : building strong working relationships.	<i>Breadth</i> : reaching out to contacts who can make referrals.	<i>Leverage</i> : creating inside-outside links.

Source: How Leaders Create and Use Networks by Herminia Ibarra and Mark Lee Hunter

Check-in

New insights and progress

Adaptive and communication challenge

- What progress have you made with the communications challenge you worked through in our last session? This was the major project you are leading or influencing. How did you go with establishing credibility and trust, common ground, compelling evidence and emotional connection?
- How did this link to your adaptive challenge? How did progress on your adaptive challenge support your communications challenge?

Sponsor conversations

- How are your sponsor catch ups going?
- Are they maintaining momentum?
- Are you getting what you need from this relationship?
- How could it evolve in the final stretch of the program to have even more impact?

Strategic networking self-assessment

- What insights did you gain from your strategic networking self-assessment?

Building a strategic network

	Operational	Personal	Strategic
Purpose	Getting work done efficiently; maintaining the capacities and functions required of the group.	Enhancing personal and professional development; providing referrals to useful information and contacts.	Figuring out future priorities and challenges; getting stakeholder support for them.
Location and temporal orientation	Contacts are mostly internal and oriented toward current demands.	Contacts are mostly external and oriented toward current interests and future potential interests.	Contacts are internal and external and oriented toward the future.
Players and recruitment	Key contacts are relatively nondiscretionary; they are prescribed mostly by the task and organisational structure, so it is very clear who is relevant.	Key contacts are mostly discretionary; It is not always clear who is relevant.	Key contacts follow from the strategic context and the organisational environment, but specific membership is discretionary; it is not always clear who is relevant.
Network attributes and key behaviours	<i>Depth</i> : building strong working relationships.	<i>Breadth</i> : reaching out to contacts who can make referrals.	<i>Leverage</i> : creating inside-outside links.
Key questions	What am I doing now and who do I need to work with to get the job done? What value do / can I offer in return?	What are my functional objectives? Who do I need to know outside my organisation to support these? What are my career development objectives? Who do I need to know internally and externally to support my next career move? What can I share in return?	What are my organisation's strategic imperatives? Who do I need to know to inform my thinking and support my position in pursuit of broader organisational goals? What can I share in return? How might we create mutual influence?

Self-assessment

Referring to the detailed breakdown of Ibarra and Hunter's networking framework above and their HBR article, reflect on your networking strengths and growth areas, and capture insights in the table below.

	Operational	Personal	Strategic
What are your strengths in each of these areas? Please be specific so you can share what you do well with the group and they can learn from your experience.			
What are your limitations? Think mindset, identity, knowledge, skill and behaviour... Eg networking is not essential It feels grubby I don't know who I need to know I can't answer key questions			

How can you overcome your limitations? What could you do differently to improve your impact in each of these areas? How can you reframe the stories? What knowledge do you need to get? What new habits can you build?			
What's the one big thing you could do differently that would have the biggest impact on your networking effectiveness?			

Let's now zero in on a single networking adaptive challenge that you can focus on this year and use the Immunity to Change X-Ray to map a change journey.

Your Immunity to Change

My adaptive challenge <i>What will you commit to doing to improve your networking effectiveness?</i>	Mindset and behaviours that work against my goal <i>What are you currently thinking, doing and saying that limiting your networking?</i>	Hidden commitments <i>Worry box: What payoff do you get from your current behaviour? What might you lose if you change?</i>	Big assumptions <i>What are the big assumptions underpinning your concerns? What stories are you telling yourself to justify your hidden commitments?</i>
<i>What will you and the team gain from you achieving this goal?</i>	<i>What are your current thoughts and behaviours costing you and your team?</i>	<i>Therefore, what are your competing commitments? What do you gain from not changing? This is NOT your new commitment but rather your current commitment.</i>	
		Currently, I'm actually committed to...	

Your change journey

Busting assumptions	Next steps
<i>What are the opposites of the stories that are working against your adaptive challenge. How are they equally as true as your current stories?</i>	<i>What are the next steps you will take to achieve your networking adaptive challenge? When will you take those steps?</i>
<i>How might you test those opposites?</i>	<i>Who will keep you accountable?</i>

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