

# Networking, Netweaving, Networthing — How To Know Who You're Hiring

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by Andy Greider

FOR MANY PEOPLE, THE CONCEPT OF NETWORKING is becoming less and less a foreign concept. People are connecting leads and vendors more and more. Still, going beyond simply passing leads and building relationship capital isn't something most people think of. Yet relationship capital holds great influence and should be a focus. Companies are currently heeding the trend that people do business with people and not the company they work for and are making hires based on who the candidate brings to the table with them - not just a client and former client list, but what network(s) they are associated with and whom they are connected to. With the surge of business networks liked Linked In, Fast Pitch, and Ryze the materials are there to establish an online network and bevy of contacts. In person networks are flourishing with the international explosion of BNI, and a morass of localized groups (in Atlanta, we have 5 or more that are simply Atlanta based, or southeast based). Companies are finding credence in who you know - and who trusts you...but...just like so many times before, corporations are missing critical questions. Put succinctly - hiring managers shouldn't be impressed with the size of someone's network - or even the quality of people on the list. They should instead be asking themselves if the candidate can truly leverage the network to bring together the various parts into wholes that are greater than the sum of those parts? Does the candidate know how to network, then netweave and even networth?

This is the true gauge of relationship capital - this is the glue someone should be hired for. Finding new employees who can either netweave or in fewer cases, networth, should be the goal - not simply employing people with a large network, or business-social club. So, how does a company go about applying a networking litmus test to see what they are dealing with? The first step is to ascertain if the candidate simply knows a lot of people - or if they are a true connector? The second is to understand if the same candidate is simply an idea advocate, or truly knows how to sell others on big concepts - if they are a person who can connect all the dots and rationalize why and how? Let's examine these points in further detail. If you find someone who knows how to move beyond just knowing people and has learned how to ask questions that allow for deeper introductions - ones that open gates, give connection and add to the bottom line - you have a netweaver. If that person can see positive connections between all those in their network and those they meet on a daily basis - and can express this in an introduction - they will be a huge asset to your company. From knowing personal traits that connect people (where did they attend college, what sports they like) - to recognizing professional synergies (same associations,

similar but not same goals). If the candidate is a connector, they should be able to increase company status and add value to current clients as they make strategic introductions to those in their network. If they routinely make these connections, the clients they assist will begin to follow the lead, and the reciprocation will begin. Netweavers are excellent to have on staff and are people who can greatly increase your brand and your value to both current and perspective clients.

If someone can both connect and also powerfully sell the ideas they are promoting - both those of your company and those tied into each connection - they are a networther - someone who networks to make deals happen. They are the highest form of networker - and they are an interesting myriad of communication skills and "alternative thinking." Networthers are a rare breed - a careful mix of Malcolm Gladwell's Connector and Salesperson with a dash of Maven. They are people who can recognize the extraordinary in each relationship, see how it could be bolstered and augmented by others in their network and then have the panache to sell this as an idea or partnership to those involved. They make the money flow many levels deep in a network, not through simple "lead passing" but through the pushing of bigger ideas - finding ground that provides traction for those in their network on various projects. They are the most valuable, and should be the most coveted of all the networkers out there. So, how do you hire a networker and groom them into a netweaver or networther? It is possible, although those with a natural propensity will of course, excel more quickly.



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