

Networking—The Tipping Point Way! by Andy Greider

KNOWING WHERE YOU FIT in amongst the connectors, mavens and salespeople in your sphere of influence can greatly increase your viability and effectiveness as a networker. It had been a long time since I read “The Tipping Point” by Malcolm Gladwell. In fact, it had been long enough there was much of the material that had new perspective and fresh light for me. Out of all the marketing manuals, all the lengthy discourses on what works and what doesn’t, this book really nails things to a T. This time through, I had a new vantage point. I felt I was seeing things more in the way Gladwell describes in *Blink*, and then applying my own skills sets as a connector, as a maven and as a salesman - driving relationships and introductions from a gut level - and learning who was whom, and how I could best create positive flow and change within my own networks.

Over the past two years, since last reading the Tipping Point, I had grown my network extensively, acting mostly as a connector - bringing together people to altruistically assist each side. In the process, I found a little of the Maven in my delivery - I’ve always loved to educate folks about “why” they would work well together - and a little of the Salesman - “if I believe in something I will advocate it heavily.” Still being a Connector is my main calling. I love to bring people together through a three way email or phone call, sing the praises, and then present the reasons why I think they will work well together. What has grabbed my attention and piqued my curiosity has been the level to which this approach works in forging relations between those I am netweaving and networthing together. For some, my approach works very well. For others it seems to simply hold court. And for others, the approach is overkill. So, I stepped back, slowed things down and examined when the approach worked, when it was adequate and when it crashed...and with whom. What I found is that for two people who are in the salesperson persona first and foremost, they were not meant for lengthy intros - they just want to meet and be done. If I am introing a salesperson with a maven, the intro needs to be kept short, but with concise facts. If I am intro-ing a salesperson with a connector, the intro needs to contain who they each know who can help the other - gateopener commonalities, if you will.

When introducing connectors to connectors, my current approach works very well. Same with connectors to mavens. And when bringing together mavens with mavens, the more details and the thicker the under-

lying fabric the better. So, in order to more effectively network with those in your current stable - it is crucial to understand who you are bringing together, as well as why they will help each other and how they can progress best from here forward. To best leverage this type of networking, take a few minutes and figure out - are you a connector? a Maven? or a Salesperson? Then, think about all the people in your immediate network. List the five best connectors in your network, then make sure they all know each other. The five best mavens - and make a list of the niche they may advocate - and see who you know that needs that kind of expertise? And then the five best salespeople and be sure they know of the coolest and best new things you’ve come across. You’ll immediately expand your cache within the circle of 15 and allow you to take the next steps. From there work on your style of introduction. As an example, each week, I try to choose three people from my variety of networking channels and concentrate on finding them leads first and foremost. I also suggest reviewing who you will be meeting with - who do you know, what do you know, what can you share that will benefit them. As for them, are they a connector, a maven or a salesperson? If you don’t know, try to gauge in the first part of your meeting. Knowing how someone networks - we can know both how to communicate in the meeting itself and how to make introductions afterwards. Being aware of the tendencies of your network help you make it a more profitable one - for all involved - whether you are a novice who just passes leads or a master who makes deals happen, you need to have signposts to help guide you. Be sure to check out the next installment, tilted towards recruiters, called “Networking, Netweaving, Networthing - How to Know Who You’re Hiring.”



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