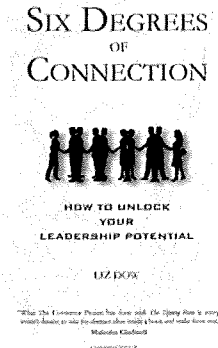
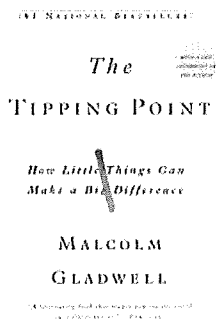


Women2Women “Growth2Go” Leadership Series
“Beyond Networking: Becoming a Connector, Not a Collector.”
November 18, 2014

References (page #)

MG = Malcolm Gladwell **LD = Liz Dow**



Connectors have something intrinsic: a combination of curiosity, self-confidence, sociability, and positive energy

How do Connectors achieve results?

1. Enrolling a diverse group of others in their cause
2. Serving the common good (and having an established reputation among others for doing so)
3. Articulating visions that inspire others
4. Staying under the radar (not being concerned with who receives credit)

Nancy Dunleavy’s Cliff Notes on Connectors

Connectors manage to occupy diverse worlds

- *Outside* the work place: “The point about Connectors is that by having a foot in so many different worlds, they have the effect of bringing them all together.” (MG, 51) → Connectors are “social glue”
- *At work*, Connectors are the people who foster innovation by bringing together a range of thoughts and thinkers. They work across functional lines to create a culture of collaboration.” (LD, 14)

Connectors master the “weak tie”

- Friendly acquaintances can become his/her best resource in business development
- The farther out of the network the more valuable in establishing a new connection

Connectors become the go-to person

“It’s not who you know, it’s who knows you...” (Nancy Dunleavy, Connector 2006)

- It’s about *trust*, and all of these other attributes that a Connector brings to personal and business relationships (connectors are “trusted advisors” not collectors of business cards)
- It’s all about *attitude*:
 - “Connectors can be agents of change because of their appetite for the new, their ability to articulate a compelling vision, and their confidence that their actions drive results.” (LD, 114)
 - “Part of what it means to have a powerful or persuasive personality, then, is that you can draw others into your own rhythms and dictate the terms of the interaction.” (MG, 83)
 - *“If you think you can – or, you think you can’t, you are absolutely correct”* – Henry Ford

Connectors are the eternal optimists

- Bring an optimistic view about people's potential and their ability to rise to expectations
- "...Connectors create contagious enthusiasm, which inspires others to achieve more than they thought possible" (LD, 75)
 - A micromanaging mentality decreases team energy and enthusiasm – connectors function like the energizer bunnies in teams
- In a professional setting, connectors move conversations and vocabulary away from barriers, obstacles, negatives → create and seize on opportunities to create positive moments with others
 - "Commit to being a positive voice for the work that you do. If it is a project, identify, emphasize, and reinforce its merit." (LD, 82)
 - Connectors are the "positive pragmatists" – always focusing on what works instead of what does not

Connectors take care of their relationships

- Good stewards of the relationships they have created or fostered
 - "Connectors are willing to give more than they receive in a given interaction...a reputation for being generous gets your call returned." (LD, 81)
 - "Business goes where it is invited and stays where it is taken care of." (Hugh Long, Regional President of Community Banking, Wachovia)
 - Be consistent in your follow-up: a Connector does not (and cannot) shy away from the obligation that a connection requires...**DO WHAT YOU SAY YOU'RE GOING TO DO!!** (*enough said...*)

Connectors are "other-oriented", not self-serving

- Other oriented strategy: "Daily exercise for your ASK muscle" (Nancy Dunleavy)
- "one of the great strengths and key traits of a true Connector is his/her skill at "pulling together the right people and then getting out of the way." (LD, 51)
- "Real Connectors are about **'connecting' people, not 'collecting' people**. This is not about self-interest. It's about trust." (David Thornburgh, ED, The Fels Institute, University of Pennsylvania)
 - Because acquaintances outside your usual and comfortable circle are so important (especially in business development), maintain an open-minded and inclusive attitude
 - Operate on the belief that you can learn something from everyone, and that, accordingly, everyone deserves your attention (rank is not important)
 - It is always worth it to make that little extra effort to lift someone's spirits – Constant customer service attitude (be alert for opportunities to make genuine compliments)
 - Listen well and remember people's answers (this also builds a wealth of knowledge which you can use to bring people together)
 - Strive to make others feel better about themselves as a result of their contact with you and you will earn the reputation of making others look good

To remember the key Connector competencies, use Liz Dow's handy acronym:

- C – community catalyst (civic & self improvement, the common good)
- O – other-oriented (galvanizing personality, listener)
- N – network hub (organizing groups for mutual benefit)
- N – navigating mazes (culture of collaboration across fields)
- E – empowering passions (practice empowering others)
- C – constantly curious (desire to learn and share knowledge)
- T – trustworthy
- O – optimistic (fearlessly positive)
- R – results-achievers
- S – self-starters