

Grow your network while you don't need it!

MY 2 CENTS ABOUT ONLINE BUSINESS NETWORKING

1st advice "Grow your network while you don't need it"

You don't need to network today, but what about tomorrow?

How do you know that you can't have any better opportunity than today?

This "Grow your network while you don't need it" statement may sound weird but it is essential as, to make your network grow, you need to dare inviting people who might decline your invitation. The people you sometimes "blindly" invite may consider you as a spammer. By extension you will also be seen as a spammer by LinkedIn administrators.

If you are in an urgent need of growing your network, for instance looking for your next job, you don't want to be considered as a spammer, so you want to grow your network before you really need it.

2nd advice "know why you want to network"

As an example, Here are my goals:

I have 3 types of connections corresponding to 3 different networking styles:

- connections (about 100) with people who really know me
- connections where we do not know each others but we have something in common
- connections for seeing, being visible and help people connecting.

I am networking applying concurrently these 3 networking styles.

The number of people that I really or better know is growing thanks to GLE face to face meetings for instance or to email exchange I have with several people through LinkedIn.

Regarding "weak" connections meant "for seeing and being visible", I spend about half an hour per day helping people to connect by forwarding requests, giving advices. I once forwarded a request between people of the same company (I am not part of this company).

These "weak" connections are also a way to rediscover people I really know from school or previous jobs.

Read more on this subject at [HOW DOES QUANTITY BRING QUALITY?](#)

3rd advice "never use standard boiler plate templates"

In your invitations be specific, explain clearly and honestly why YOU want to connect with them.

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4th advice "The more connections you have, the more time you must spend"

With 1000's of connections, I spend at least half an hour a day to keep my network alive. I forward requests, answer questions, give and read advices, Update some various wikis, participate to various Yahoo and Google groups.

5th advice "join yahoo networking groups. You will learn a lot"

<http://www.gle.ch>, [MyLinkedInPowerForum](#), [LinkedInnovators](#), [linkedinlions](#) and [LICM](#).

6th advice "Read other 2 cents advices"

<http://www.sacredcowdung.com/>

<http://gauteq.blogspot.com/2007/01/six-tips-for-networking-in-2007.html>

http://www.businessweek.com/technology/ceo_tipsheet/2006_5.htm

[The Art of Self-Promotion](#)

[Understanding the Law of Successful Giving and Successful Receiving](#)

7th advice "Do not forget other ways of networking"

- participate to face to face business networking in your region as GLE meetings.
- publish white papers
- participate to usenet groups.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eric Mariacher has held various positions in embedded software development, coder, architect, project manager at IBM and now functional manager for wireless keyboards and receivers at Logitech. These projects are of different sizes beginning with 8Kbytes of code running in 8bits microcontrollers coded by one programmer to projects requiring tens of developers, several megabytes of code and thousands of files on 32bits microcontrollers and PC computers.

Eric Mariacher main centers of interest are to set-up the right environment for software developers to deliver products, and also to give management the best visibility on software development process from requirement phase to field support phase. Setting up the right software development often requires reengineering software development processes. Eric Mariacher enjoys driving these software development processes reengineering measured following the CMMI best practice.

In parallel to those activities, Eric Mariacher is heavily involved in the professional social networking area. He regularly writes articles, give advices and connect people so that he and his connections can find new exciting opportunities.

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