

7 Secrets to Networking Success by Darren Hardy

There is a great lesson Zig Ziglar taught that has always stuck with me.

Zig said, “If people like you they’ll listen to you [which is nice, but not very productive], but if they trust you, then they’ll do business with you.”

And that is the one big secret of Nozad, whom I introduced in last week’s article and in my Publisher’s letter of the December issue of SUCCESS. I also promised to pass along Nozad’s 7 networking secrets that has made him a master connector—secrets that any of us can apply.

Secrets that could make all of us as wealthy as a rug dealer.

Let me outline them for you now. I drew these from a great profile piece a fellow editor colleague, Victoria Barret from Forbes, did on Pejman Nozad.

Here is No. 1...

1. Always be willing and eager to help others with an introduction or your time. And do not expect anything in return.

Reminds me of a quote from another master networker, Harvey Mackay. He said, “My Golden Rule of Networking is simple: Don’t keep score.”

The profile of Nozad is sprinkled with names of successful entrepreneurs he has backed and advised. What’s missing is what happened in between those meetings. He is constantly having conversations with young people, some still in school, and helping them along. They may or may not end up working at startups. They may or may not raise funds in companies he could invest in. He doesn’t think about it that way. He calls this “one way love.”

“The currency of real networking is not greed but generosity.”

Keith Ferrazzi

Also note that Nozad went to the key contacts—to the influencers’ homes and to the schools the potential entrepreneurs attended. As Scott Stratten said to me in an interview recently, “Are you going to where your customers [or key contacts] are or just sitting and hoping they come to you?”

2. Be proud of where you came from and share that with others. It shows honesty and builds trust.

Nozad doesn’t represent himself as anything but a guy who sold rugs in Palo Alto and then started investing in startups. He talks openly and eagerly about his family’s background in Iran and the remarkable story of how he got to Silicon Valley. People who Nozad sold a rug to ten years ago, and had no contact with since, still felt like they knew and were close to him. [order viagra online](#) That is the social power you gain when you are willing to be completely human and authentic.

“If people like you they’ll listen to you,
but if they trust you they’ll do business with you.”

-Zig Ziglar

3. Compliment the achievements of those around you. And do it with a smile.

We all know that awkward feeling that comes with a superficial or flat compliment. It means well, but lands with a thud. Nozad deftly avoids that by focusing on what someone has accomplished and tying it to who they are deep down.

He tells one entrepreneur, “Starting things is in your DNA.” And with that, he nails exactly what this guy is proud of, and makes him feel good about it. His phrasing has so much more genuine punch to it than if he’d just said, “You’re a great entrepreneur.”

People yearn for validation, to feel important, to be recognized for their effort and achievements. You can build great bonds by looking for those things that people are proud of and pointing it out.

4. In conversations search for a common ground. It may take a while, but there is surely something to bring you closer.

This is perhaps the trickiest area for all of us. You meet someone at a cocktail party, and you know just enough about them to know you could both benefit from connecting and then... blah. You struggle to get beyond the “Any vacations coming up?” chatter. Instead Nozad Googled his early rug clients so he knew how to guide conversations. Now his own network of friends is wide enough that usually he can quickly make a personal connection with people simply by suggesting a common friend.

5. Use your Rolodex wisely and only for the right person at the right time, for the right cause.

Several of the top venture capitalists who do deals with Nozad rarely hear from him. That’s very intentional. He knows the importance of valuing other people’s time. People notice when you waste their time. They respond to your emails when you honor their time.

6. Make sure you understand what the person you want help from has to gain from it.

Nozad understands motivations. He knew the venture capitalists he sold rugs to were always hunting for undiscovered treasures: talented entrepreneurs no one else had yet spotted. The entrepreneurs, likewise, were eager to mingle with potential backers. That was Nozad’s “in.” He knew he could bridge both worlds.

7. Don’t create walls between your personal and professional lives. It is one big network of people.

Nozad starts most conversations very personally. How are the kids? How have you been? It is subtle, disarming, and endearing. Spend more time listening than you do talking. And you do that by asking questions and listening with genuine interest.

I’ve seen this trait in other successful networkers. They don’t exhaust themselves being slightly different personalities in work, family and social settings. They are just as personally helpful and at ease to a work colleague as they are to a family friend.

OK, so let me make this easy for you; here’s your \$50 million cheat sheet summary:

- 1. Give.**
- 2. Be real.**
- 3. Compliment.**
- 4. Find commonality.**
- 5. Use your network sparingly.**
- 6. Think WIIFT—What’s In It For Them.**
- 7. Be authentically YOU, always.**

“The richest people in the world look for and build networks,
everyone else looks for work.”

-Robert Kiyosaki

It's well known that 80% of business opportunities are filled through networking. And if you eventually want to become as rich as a rug dealer... then networking is the skill you want to continually work on and master.