

**EFFECTIVE NETWORKING  
WITHIN A  
GLOBAL ORGANISATION**

**MODELLING PROJECT BY  
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## ABSTRACT

This document describes a study to model four colleagues who are recognised by their peers as being very effective at networking. The ability to network in the organisation is defined as the "*Ability to establish and maintain connections with people across different boundaries. Establish contacts with a variety of people to accomplish things. Know how to use informal relations to get things done. Work easily with people from different levels of the organisation. Use different channels of influence to implement things. Maintain regular contacts with a variety of people throughout different organisations.*"

Due to the highly distributed nature of our business, and a relatively flat reporting structure, Networking is of critical importance within our organisation. The purpose of this study was to model this skill with a view to creating a "recipe" for competence transfer. Networking has been identified as a core skill for Project Managers and the Project Management Team are the primary audience for this study. However, most people within our business are required to network with their colleagues to some degree, so the intention is to make this report available to others also.

There were a number of reasons why I decided to model multiple people for this study. Firstly there were several clear candidates who perform this skill extremely well. Given that these people perform quite varied roles within the business, and have quite different working styles, I was interested to model the similarities and differences in how they network. This seemed appropriate given that the audience for this study are equally diverse in terms of their roles and styles.

The results show that these individuals are quite different in terms of their networking outcomes and their self-perceptions around how they perform this skill. They also show considerable diversity in their networking strategies. However, there are clear similarities in their preferences at the level of environment, behaviours, capabilities, beliefs and values.

# METHODOLOGY

A range of NLP modelling techniques were used to establish a detailed understanding of how four individuals, recognised as accomplished networkers, perform this skill. The primary deliverable was a “Recipe for Effective Networking within a Global Organisation”. The “Recipe” would define those features that are common across the sample group. It would also include the unique features employed by those modelled.

An interview was held with each of the four people modelled. This session was used to determine the networking Outcomes<sup>\*1</sup> for each person and to map their Neurological Levels<sup>\*2</sup> in relation to this skill. Full use of Meta Model<sup>\*3</sup> and Meta Program<sup>\*4</sup> questioning was made within these discussions.

Having collated information from first interviews, I returned to my networking experts as required to fill in any gaps and to focus in on Strategy<sup>\*5</sup> elicitation and T.O.T.E<sup>\*6</sup> elicitation.

## **\*1 Outcome**

*A clearly defined goal that an individual wants to achieve.*

## **\*2 Neurological Levels**

*The hierarchy of logical levels by which humans structure their experience: environment, behaviour, capability, belief, value, identity and spiritual.*

## **\*3 Meta Model**

*A questioning tool for gaining a fuller understanding for what people say. Specific questions to challenge imprecise language.*

## **\*4 Meta Program**

*Habitual and systemic filters that we use to categorise our experiences.*

## **\*5 Strategy**

*A sequence of thought and behaviour used to obtain a particular outcome.*

## **\*6 T.O.T.E**

*Test, Operate, Test, Exit. The feedback loop used to guide behaviour.*

# RESULTS

## 1. OUTCOMES

TABLE 1 summarises the outcomes for networking held by the individuals modelled.

**TABLE 1. NETWORKING OUTCOMES**

	<b>Operational Manager</b>	<b>Operational Manager</b>	<b>Program Manager</b>	<b>Global Quality Manager</b>
<b>OUTCOMES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Broaden out people interfaces – tie up with people at all levels within the organisation</li> <li>▪ Identify who/what are/is likely to impact us. What opportunities exist &amp; how to use this information to progress the site</li> <li>▪ Get “the heads up” before decisions are made. If necessary act to correct information or put someone in place to influence a decision</li> <li>▪ Iceberg check ! – early warning system for opportunities &amp; risks</li> <li>▪ Make sure that the site is represented correctly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Understand the big picture</li> <li>▪ Understand the framework that we are working in. If I understand the framework I can make better decisions</li> <li>▪ Share information with others</li> <li>▪ Promote the giving &amp; taking of information – establish a good two-way flow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Understand &amp; share information on what technology is coming in the future &amp; build a picture of new work</li> <li>▪ Obtain the information &amp; knowledge that I need to do my work &amp; to help &amp; connect others</li> <li>▪ Help others in the local environment form a picture</li> <li>▪ Share information when I can see that it will benefit others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keep my name in the frame</li> <li>▪ I network when long-term involvement with an individual is required. I need to see the benefits for the future &amp; for myself</li> </ul>

## 2. NEUROLOGICAL LEVELS

TABLE 2 summarises the results of modelling the Neurological Levels for four colleagues. The results show that whilst each individual is unique in their approach to networking, there are many common patterns which are highlighted in underlined text.

**TABLE 2. NEUROLOGICAL LEVELS**

<p><b>I: ENVIRONMENT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Network extensively at work</u> however, not extensively in personal life</li> <li>▪ <u>Strong preference for face-to-face</u></li> <li>▪ <u>If not able to meet, will use the phone</u></li> <li>▪ Occasional use of e-mail to share information</li> <li>▪ SMS for very simple information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Network extensively at work</u> with some hobby focused networking outside work</li> <li>▪ <u>Strong preference for face-to-face</u></li> <li>▪ <u>If not able to meet, will use the phone</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Network extensively at work</u> however, not extensively in personal life</li> <li>▪ <u>Preference for verbal contact, either face-to-face or phone</u></li> <li>▪ Preference for 1-2-1 contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Preference is face-to-face</u>, particularly to start a relationship going</li> <li>▪ <u>If I am unable to meet someone I will pick up the phone</u></li> <li>▪ Often when I am writing an e-mail, I stop &amp; "just pick up the phone" because it is so much easier to communicate directly</li> </ul>
<p><b>II: BEHAVIOURS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Informal chats with individuals with whom I need to network</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Walking about &amp; speaking to people</u></li> <li>▪ Introduce myself informally to new contacts</li> <li>▪ Drop into meetings</li> <li>▪ <u>Having time for people</u></li> <li>▪ <u>E-mail to share information</u> &amp;/or send a quick note</li> <li>▪ SMS to maintain regular contact</li> <li>▪ <u>Listening &amp; asking questions</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spend up to 40% of my time communicating &amp; information gathering</li> <li>▪ <u>Walk about &amp; speak to people</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Lots of informal discussion</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Ring global contacts for a chat</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Listening &amp; asking questions</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Bumping into others &amp; having a chat</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Having time for people</u></li> <li>▪ <u>E-mail to share information</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Keeping others in the loop</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Lots of informal discussion with people on site</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Spend a considerable amount of time walking about and talking to people</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Spend a considerable amount of time on phone to global colleagues</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Listen to others</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Keep asking others "what do you think?"</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Laugh &amp; joke with others</li> <li>▪ <u>Make good use of spontaneous, opportunistic contact with people, i.e. bumping into people in the corridor</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Listen to others &amp; ask questions about them</u></li> </ul>
<p><b>III: CAPABILITIES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Active listening &amp; questioning skills – staying with other persons agenda &amp; asking questions</u></li> <li>▪ Patience</li> <li>▪ Persistence – keep going back until I have the information I need</li> <li>▪ <u>Approachable</u></li> <li>▪ Sense of Humour</li> <li>▪ Credible – can talk credibly even when I do not know the subject well</li> <li>▪ Seeing the big picture</li> <li>▪ Strong company knowledge</li> <li>▪ Understanding what makes the company tick &amp; who the real decision makers are</li> <li>▪ <u>Differentiating fact from opinion</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Information sharing &amp; gathering (these go hand-in-hand)</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Eliciting information &amp; active listening</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Collating information from different sources</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Differentiating fact from fiction</u></li> <li>▪ Remain open minded &amp; <u>keep asking self &amp; others questions</u></li> <li>▪ Business Knowledge</li> <li>▪ <u>Establishing common ground</u></li> <li>▪ 2<sup>nd</sup> positioning skills (putting self in others shoes)</li> <li>▪ Excellent summary skills</li> <li>▪ <u>The piecing together of disjointed pieces of information</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Approachable</u></li> <li>▪ Recognising your own limitations, either in skills and/or knowledge &amp; information</li> <li>▪ <u>Recognising when you need something from others - i.e. taking a skill or piece of information from others &amp; building this into your own personal toolkit</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Recognising that when you do not have all the information or knowledge &amp; that one well placed phone call could give you all of that information</u></li> <li>▪ Listening beyond the words that people speak. Listening to e.g. tone of voice, observing people's motivation, listening to the things that they do not say to check how "congruent" someone is with what they are saying</li> <li>▪ <u>Listening to recognise what information you need &amp; what questions need to be asked</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Approachable</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Active listening</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Asking questions</u></li> <li>▪ Knowledgeable about own field</li> <li>▪ Speak in others language</li> <li>▪ <u>Information sharing – keeping others in the loop</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Establishing common ground</u></li> </ul>

## IV: BELIEFS

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Networking is how I get my work done</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Networking is essential in connecting to the right people &amp; hence to identify the right issues &amp; targets</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Without face-to-face contact, the level of rapport can quickly drop off &amp; the relationship shift from informal to formal</u></li> <li>▪ Don't expect a result from every conversation: probably &lt; 50%</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If you give information you will generally receive information</li> <li>▪ <u>People react differently on the phone as compared with face-to-face</u></li> <li>▪ <u>More difficult to establish rapport over phone</u></li> <li>▪ Face-to-face supports non-verbal. You see what is not being said</li> <li>▪ Phone has important implications when speaking with someone whose first language is not English: they have to think &amp; speak in a foreign language</li> <li>▪ <u>People are the most important part of the organisation, therefore you need to be very well connected</u></li> <li>▪ If you have worked through a crisis with someone these relationships can last the longest with the least ongoing input &amp; effort</li> <li>▪ Important to be seen as someone who has helped others &amp; is trustworthy</li> <li>▪ <u>Networking is fundamental to understanding the bigger picture &amp; making good judgements &amp; decisions</u></li> <li>▪ When required to make quick decisions, prior networking will ensure that you have the information that you need</li> <li>▪ Taking time out to speak to people helps you achieve many things of which networking is just one: information sharing/gathering, progress chasing, Management by Walk About</li> <li>▪ This is not a conventional hierarchical organisation; rather it is a set of networks. Decisions are made via the network &amp; our success is due to it's networking culture</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Networking is something that I have to do</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Networking helps me solve my own work</u>. There is time &amp; hassle involved but the payback is tenfold</li> <li>▪ <u>It is always very easy to find reasons why not to contact someone</u></li> <li>▪ <u>If similar work is going on somewhere else in the business you cannot afford not to network</u></li> <li>▪ Most of what I need to achieve my work I can obtain from other people</li> <li>▪ The quickest way to solve problems that you do not have the answer to is to ask others. It would take a lot longer trying to do this independently e.g. reading a book. Talking to others gives you speedy collection of information rather than trying to solve problems in isolation</li> <li>▪ Other people have more information than me</li> <li>▪ <u>Networking is a key part of managing the direction of a project</u></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>I need to maintain contacts to fulfil the need of my job &amp; to achieve my goals</u></li> <li>▪ <u>I could not operate without a network</u></li> <li>▪ <u>It would be impossible to do well at any job in Engineering without a network</u></li> <li>▪ However, networking is more important in some jobs than others</li> <li>▪ It is who you know that gets the job done, not what you now.</li> <li>▪ Important to keep each networking relationship ticking over</li> <li>▪ Important to give all individuals continuity</li> <li>▪ <u>You need to meet someone face-to-face twice before you can network well with that person</u></li> <li>▪ <u>It is very easy not to keep people informed</u></li> <li>▪ It is easy to hide behind e-mail</li> <li>▪ A good and useful conversation does not need to be a long conversation</li> </ul> |
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<b>V: VALUES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Do's:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <u>Respect your network</u></li> <li>◦ <u>Respect confidentiality</u> &amp; the impact of different kinds of information</li> <li>◦ Be genuine &amp; true to yourself <u>Keep things professional</u> – not a social network</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Don'ts:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Think about the use of CC: on e-mail. It can be insulting when used inappropriately</li> <li>◦ <u>Use network for rumour mongering, politics or backstabbing</u></li> <li>◦ Name drop for the sake of it or over inflate your relationship with someone</li> <li>◦ Get into an emotional state</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Do's:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <u>Treat people with integrity</u></li> <li>◦ <u>Protect sources of confidential information</u></li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Don'ts:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Quote names</li> <li>◦ Press people for names of others</li> <li>◦ Use network to go around people</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Information is just information. It is not personal &amp; I would not use it against people i.e. don't shoot the messenger</li> <li>▪ I like giving &amp; receiving information</li> <li>▪ <u>I enjoy networking</u>. The piecing together of disjointed pieces of information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is much better to let people know what is going on rather than letting them form an opinion based on rumour. Effective networking lets you set the agenda</li> <li>▪ I feel extremely uncomfortable telling people what to do. I believe in consensus</li> <li>▪ I like to deal with "straight" people. i.e. people who demonstrate that they have time, show respect &amp; manners</li> <li>▪ I am very aware of people who just contact me when they want something</li> <li>▪ Feels good to know people in different parts of the organisation &amp; it is a privilege to have the opportunity to get to know people from different cultures</li> <li>▪ I love my subject matter &amp; enjoy talking about my work. My network is a common interest group</li> <li>▪ "If you know it pass it on"</li> <li>▪ It is good to be able to help others through use of your network if the opportunity arises, but this is a secondary driver</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Do's:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Be loyal to your network. Look after people &amp; they will look after you</li> <li>◦ <u>Be open &amp; honest</u></li> <li>◦ Demonstrate your interest &amp; consideration of others</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Don'ts:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <u>Don't let people down</u></li> <li>◦ <u>Don't manipulate others</u></li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <u>Networking is fun</u></li> <li>▪ I am always conscious that I may need people in the future &amp; that it only takes a few words &amp; a little thought &amp; consideration to keep a network ticking over</li> <li>▪ Make every effort to keep everybody involved</li> <li>▪ I do not delete people from my network - you never know when you might need to draw benefit from a relationship in the future</li> </ul>
<b>VI: IDENTITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ True to myself, chatty, informal, decisive, productive &amp; with purpose (not "just shooting the breeze"), collaborative, having influence, but relying on personal credibility, not on own or others status</li> <li>▪ I am tightly coupled to my role. If the site is doing well, this reflects on me</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information sharer. Facilitator of information flow within the company</li> <li>▪ Detective – piecing together information from many different sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In networking mode I do not view myself as the boss, but rather as a member of a common interest group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Just a corporate guy. Part of an organisation &amp; team that needs to get the job done</li> </ul>

<b>VII: MISSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Future viability &amp; prosperity of the site</li> <li>▪ Personal satisfaction &amp; recognition from others</li> <li>▪ Doing the things I like doing, especially interacting with people</li> <li>▪ Talking to all kinds of people about all kinds of stuff</li> <li>▪ Avoiding isolation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To understand the big picture so that I can 1) make quick, effective &amp; informed decisions 2) know who to speak to when I need to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To be part of a group of people who change the technology that we use</li> <li>▪ To be a part of the new way of doing things</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to see World Class Reliability within our organisation</li> </ul>
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### 3. STRATEGIES

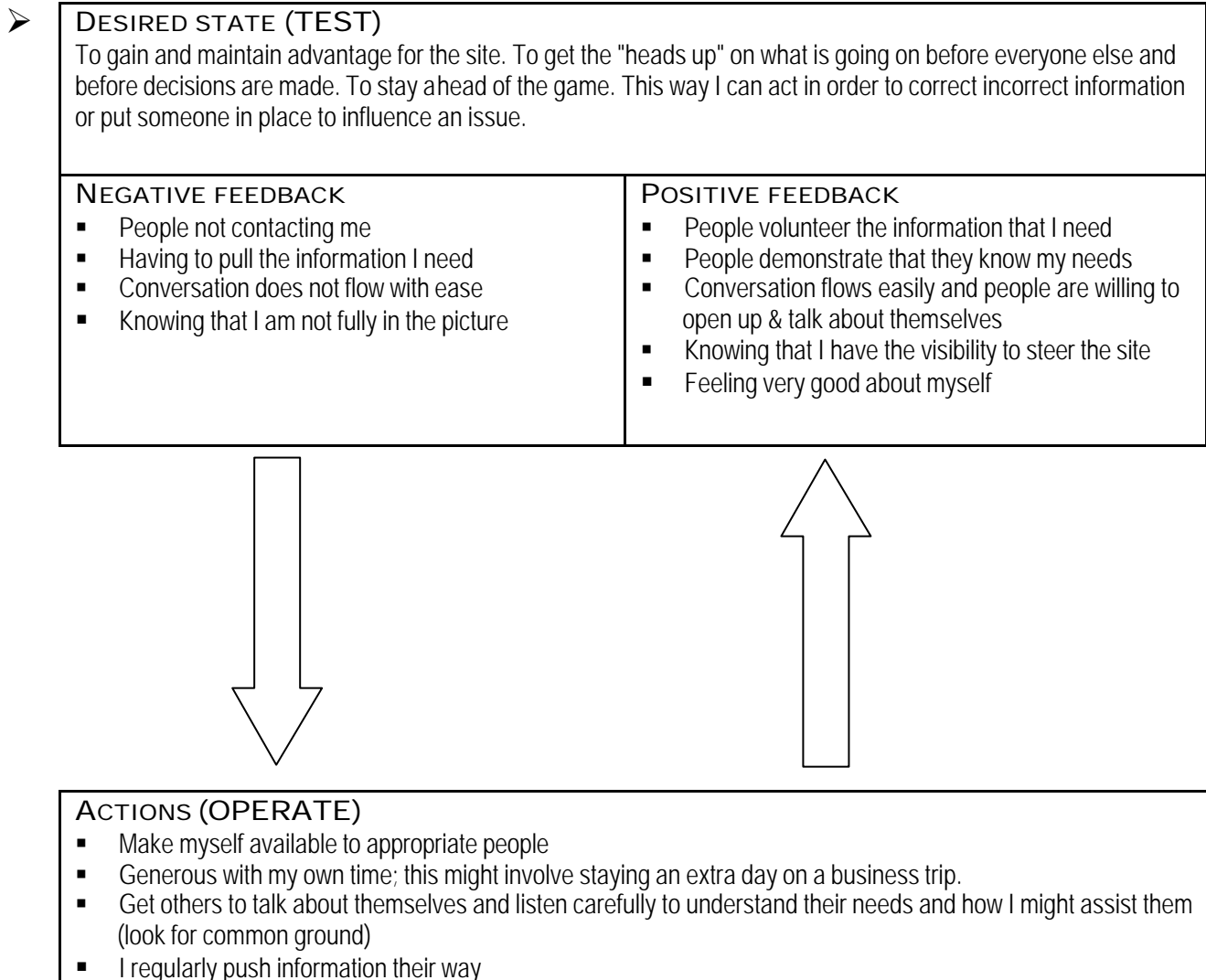
TABLE 3 summarises the strategies employed for effective networking.

**TABLE 3. STRATEGIES FOR NETWORKING**

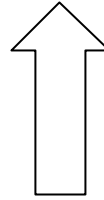
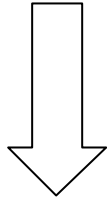
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seek informal chats with individuals with whom I need to network</li> <li>▪ Introduce myself informally to new contacts. Get them talking &amp; listen to what they say</li> <li>▪ Senior people, I listen for:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ decision making process &amp; who are decision makers</li> <li>◦ what is important to them? How can I/we help them? Them help us?</li> <li>◦ their level &amp; scope of influence</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Junior people, I listen for:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ what is going well, what is not</li> <li>◦ opinion vs. fact. If I get opinion I ask for substantiation</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Take time to drop into meetings – understand what is going on?, what are the issues?</li> <li>▪ Take time to reinforce relationships – give people time &amp; listen to what they say</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Set time aside to walk about &amp; speak to people – lots of informal discussion</li> <li>▪ Pick neutral territories, i.e. canteen, tearoom. Conversation starts on an informal basis &amp; often turns to work. A useful tactic is to turn up at the end of the tea break. If someone wants to talk they will typically hang on afterwards</li> <li>▪ A few days after an important presentation/information share I will deliberately bump into people &amp; check views on the street, clarify understanding. I will deliberately pick people at different levels &amp; I try to use different people each time</li> <li>▪ I will ring global contacts for a chat. If their first language is not English, I will have a clear reason for calling as it can be more difficult for them to make small talk</li> <li>▪ I frequently offer half of a plan &amp; ask people what they think. When working with global colleagues I frequently ask, “what do you think?”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Most of what I need to achieve my role I can get from other people. I therefore focus my energies on who has the information that I require, how to get that information &amp; I reuse this information as much as possible. This gives me very efficient usage of my own time &amp; allows me to focus my creative energies on my core interests</li> <li>▪ Different approach with different people             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Abrupt people with little time: ask direct questions &amp; use long pause to draw information</li> <li>◦ Long rambling answers: let people speak (all info is important) &amp; agree actions if req. Then bring agenda back to my needs – I now have a receptive colleague</li> <li>◦ Headstrong: run ideas past these people &amp; then leave a few days gap. Then go back &amp; discuss ideas &amp; issues</li> <li>◦ Fact based: avoid academic debate &amp; selling. Influence these people with facts</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Influence people indirectly through other people in my network</li> <li>▪ Constant evaluation of how relevant different contacts are to current &amp; future work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrate your interest in others by, keeping people in the loop, asking about them, not just the work, listening to others</li> <li>▪ Highlight when you have common areas of interest with others</li> <li>▪ Show that you have knowledge that is useful to others</li> <li>▪ Speak other people’s “language”</li> <li>▪ When you need to bring someone round to your way of thinking, listen to their ideas &amp; views &amp; go along with their way of thinking, even if you have a differing opinion. Demonstrate synergy with them &amp; then gradually introduce your ideas &amp; bring them round</li> <li>▪ Take time out to send a mail, ask how someone is doing, share a snippet of information, ask a question, e.g. have you seen? have you done? how are you addressing? Show that you are thinking about &amp; considering other people</li> <li>▪ Make every effort to keep everyone involved</li> <li>▪ Send out material with deliberate flaws or gaps to get people working together</li> <li>▪ Play humble to achieve buy-in, involvement &amp; trust</li> <li>▪ Add people to my network when it is clear that they are important contacts for the future</li> <li>▪ Let people know that you are very happy for them to call you &amp; ask for help if they need to. However, make sure that you have the personal resources &amp; time to honour your commitments to others</li> </ul>
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#### 4. T.O.T.E

During the modelling sessions a number of T.O.T.E patterns were identified. The T.O.T.E. models for three networking outcomes are out-lined below.

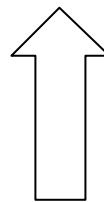
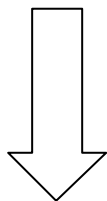


<b>DESIRED STATE (TEST)</b> Keep my network is in full flow	
<b>NEGATIVE FEEDBACK</b> Low self motivation to contact others and/or make a difficult call	<b>POSITIVE FEEDBACK</b> I feel happy and up beat, more active, good about myself.



**ACTIONS (OPERATE)**  
 Push myself to make a call. Call someone I know well first (i.e. make an easy call to increase my motivation)  
 The hard part is getting started, not the call!

<b>DESIRED STATE (TEST)</b> Keep everyone in my network in the loop. Make sure that I am kept in the loop	
<b>NEGATIVE FEEDBACK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I notice that I have missed someone in my communication</li> <li>▪ The individual/someone else informs me that I have missed someone in my communication</li> <li>▪ People ask questions that indicate that I have missed others in my communication</li> <li>▪ I notice that I have been missed out of the loop</li> </ul>	<b>POSITIVE FEEDBACK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ People ask me questions that demonstrate that they are fully involved</li> <li>▪ People in my network put me in contact with others</li> <li>▪ People push information my way</li> <li>▪ People pull information from me (rather than me having to push)</li> <li>▪ People ask for my advice and opinions</li> <li>▪ I gain peoples friendship and trust which can lead to social interaction</li> </ul>



**ACTIONS (OPERATE)**

- Apologise when I realise that I have missed someone & take time out to bring person(s) up-to-speed
- Keep everyone CC'd: on e-mails (don't keep changing/deleting people from the CC: list)
- Call people regularly
- Show individuals that you are interested in them, not just what they can give you
- When I have been excluded, simply call the individual(s) concerned and explain politely my interests and that I would like to be kept up-to-date

## PRACTICAL APPLICATION

This study demonstrates that for the individuals modelled, there are both similarities and differences in their approach to networking. The purpose of this work is to provide individuals who are looking to improve this skill with fresh insight, alternative options and approaches, and some useful hints and tips from individuals who are accomplished networkers.

### HOW TO USE THE RESULTS

If you are someone who is interested in improving your ability in networking, proceed through the following sections. Take time to reflect on how you network currently and take time to consider the questions within each section.

Alternatively, if you are intending to coach another individual in this skill, you may wish to use these sections as a coaching framework.

### ESTABLISH A CLEAR OUTCOME

The first step for anyone looking to improve their networking skills is to establish a clear outcome or outcomes. Ask yourself, ***“in what capacity am I looking to network” (work, social, my entire role, a specific project, etc.)?*** For each of your networks ask, ***“what is it I am looking to achieve?”***

The importance of having a clear goal is confirmed in Table 1, which shows that each of the individuals modelled had a very clear understanding of their outcome(s).

### EXPLORE YOUR OWN NEUROLOGICAL LEVELS

Neurological levels describe the hierarchy of logical levels by which we structure our experience.

When trying to understand how someone performs a particular skill, it is very powerful to map out the separate neurological levels in relation to that skill. This study unpacked the neurological levels of four individuals who are successful in networking. You already have your own neurological levels in place for how you network. The trick to getting the most value from this work is to understand your own style and preferences when networking and then compare this to the approaches detailed in this study. You will find similarities, but it is the differences that are of most value to you. At each of the neurological levels compare your own style and preferences with those presented here. Where you see a difference, ask, ***“how might this alternative approach serve me in my networking needs?”*** Try the new and different approaches on for size, i.e. imagine that you are adapting your **environment**, demonstrating a new **behaviour**, developing and using a new **capability** or exploring a new **belief/value**. ***Which of the new approaches would improve your networking ability?***

You have freedom and choice to make changes at any of the levels. The higher the level, the greater the impact of the change. It is important to understand that the levels are tightly coupled; together they form the complete picture. Changes to environment are important because they underpin the other levels. If the environment is non-supportive, then changes at the other levels will be much harder to achieve. However, changing the environment will have no impact on beliefs. Adapting behaviours may change beliefs about self, and yet modifying beliefs will definitely change behaviours. Changes at a higher level will always impact the lower levels (Introducing NLP, Joseph O'Connor & John Seymour).

### ENVIRONMENT

Think about the environmental factors around networking. ***What factors will assist you in networking? What factors could potentially hinder your ability to Network?*** The study shows

that verbal interaction with others is the preferred method of communication; face-to-face being the firm favourite, but where this is not possible, the next step is to pick up the phone. E-mail and SMS are considered to be useful tools for passing specific items of information and maintaining contact, but are not used as a substitute for verbal interaction.

## **BEHAVIOURS**

Think about a time recently when you were networking effectively. ***What behaviours did you demonstrate? If someone had been observing you, what would they have seen?*** This study suggests that the following behaviours are important when networking:

- Walking about & speaking to people
- Bumping into others & having a chat
- Calling remote colleagues for a chat
- Using e-mail to share information
- Having time for people
- Informal discussion
- Showing interest & consideration for others
- Listening to what people say & asking questions
- Keeping people in the loop

Now ask yourself, ***“which of these behaviours do I already display?”*** and ***“would adopting any of these behaviours improve my ability to network?”***

## **CAPABILITIES**

Ask yourself, ***“what skills do I already have that enable me to network?”*** This study shows that the following skills are important to networking:

- Active listening
- Asking questions
- Information sharing and gathering
- Interactive communication
- Collating information from different sources
- Differentiating fact from fiction/opinion
- Establishing common ground
- Approachability
- Persistence

Having reviewed this list, ***are there any skills that you need to develop in order to improve your impact as a networker? What skills do you already have that you could develop further?***

## **BELIEFS**

### ***What beliefs do you hold around networking?***

The beliefs that were common between the individuals modelled in this study were as follows:

- Networking is essential to me fulfilling the needs of my role
- I rely on others for the information that I need to achieve my goals
- Networking is a key part of managing the direction of a project
- Decisions are made via the network rather than the hierarchy
- Face-to-face contact is very important
- People are the most important part of the organisation, therefore you need to be very well connected

- Networking is fundamental to understanding the big picture and making effective judgements and decisions
- A good and useful conversation does not need to be a long conversation

Compare the list that you generated for yourself with this list. ***Are there any new beliefs that might empower you?*** Try these new beliefs on one at a time and ask, ***“how could this belief enable me to be a better networker?”*** Now consider the other beliefs listed in Table 2 and consider, ***“would any of these beliefs serve me in achieving my networking outcome(s)?”***

## VALUES

***Why is networking important to you? What values do you hold in relation to this skill?***

This study revealed some common Do’s and Don’ts around networking as follows:

### Do’s

- Respect your network
- Respect confidentiality
- Be open and honest
- Be professional
- Demonstrate your interest in others

### Don’ts

- Manipulate others
- Let other people down
- Play politics

Compare the list that you generated for yourself with this list and the full list previously. ***Are there any new values that might serve you?***

## IDENTITY

***How do you view yourself when networking?*** This study shows that the self-perceptions for the individuals modelled were quite individual. However, there is a clear link between identity and outcome in each case. ***How does your view of yourself as a networker compare with your networking outcome?*** As you go forward over the next few months, notice how getting clear about your networking outcome(s) impacts your self-perception in relation to networking.

## UNDERSTAND YOUR OWN STRATEGIES

A strategy is a set of thinking and behavioural steps used to achieve a particular outcome. Consider what strategies you employ when networking. Now consider those summarised in table 3. ***How does your list compare? Are there any new strategies that might help you improve this skill?***

## UNDERSTANDING T.O.T.E

A T.O.T.E is a simple process that takes a single outcome and details how the individual keeps monitoring the results that they are getting against that outcome. T.O.T.E stands for Test (look for what you are getting compared with your outcome), if corrective action needs to be taken then Operate (make adjustments), Test again (results against outcome) and if all is progressing correctly, Exit.

A number of T.O.T.E patterns were identified during this study. For each of your networking outcomes, ask yourself ***“How do I know when I am achieving the results that I want?”*** ***What***

***tells me that I am going off track? What corrective actions would I need to take to get things back on track?***

Being aware of your goals, and constantly monitoring the results that you are getting, is fundamental to achieving your outcomes.

## CONCLUSIONS

This project made a detailed analysis of the way that four individuals, each an accomplished networker within their own field, perform this skill. The results show that these individuals are quite different in terms of their networking outcomes and their self-perceptions around how they perform this skill. They also show considerable diversity in their networking strategies. However, there are clear similarities in their preferences at the level of **environment, behaviours, capabilities, beliefs and values**.

The “Recipe for Effective Networking”, shown on the next page, combines and summarises the common features identified from this modelling exercise. The circle represents a hypothetical individual “The Effective Networker”, a hybrid of the individuals modelled in this study. It summarises the **behaviours** displayed, the **strategies** employed, the **beliefs and values** held and **internal feedback** mechanisms that confirm that all is on track. Also included in the “Recipe” are the common **environmental** factors which support effective networking and **external feedback** that indicates that effective networking is in place.

## RECIPE FOR EFFECTIVE NETWORKING

- Networking is essential to me fulfilling the needs of my role
- I rely on others for the info. that I need to achieve my goals
- Networking is a key part of managing the direction of a project
- Decisions are made via the network rather than the hierarchy
- Face-to-face contact is very important
- People are the most important part of the organisation; therefore you need to be very well connected
- Networking is fundamental to understanding the big picture & making effective judgements & decisions
- A good and useful conversation does not need to be a long conversation
- I respect the people, information & confidentiality in my network
- Balance the giving & receiving of information

### BELIEFS & VALUES

### FEEDBACK (internal)

- Feeling good about myself
- Feeling good about where I fit in
- Feeling informed to make decisions
- Knowing that I have visibility
- Feeling happy, up-beat, more active

- Walking about & speaking to people
- Bumping into others & having a chat
- Calling remote colleagues for a chat
- Using e-mail to share information
- Having time for people
- Informal discussion
- Showing interest & consideration for others
- Listening to what people say & asking questions
- Keeping people in the loop

### BEHAVIOURS

### STRATEGIES (conscious thought)

- Set time aside to walk about & speak to people
- Get people talking & listen to what they say
- Keep discussions open & informal where possible
- Identify common ground/interests
- Demonstrate that you have time for people & are interested in them
- Understand other person's agenda/objectives. Satisfy their needs before bringing agenda around to your needs
- Keep asking people "what do you think?"
- Listen to what people say & ask questions
- Keep people involved verbally & by e-mail
- Conscious decision about when & with whom to network. How does this person link to what I am trying to achieve today/tomorrow?

## ENVIRONMENT

Whenever possible, network face-to-face  
If can't meet face-to-face then pick up the phone  
Use e-mail & SMS to share information & to maintain contact  
Don't use e-mail for discussion or debate

### FEEDBACK (external)

#### People

- ask for my opinion
- push information my way
- connect me with others
- demonstrate that they know my needs

Similar info. from different sources  
Conversation flows easily

**THE EFFECTIVE**