

PIPELINE

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COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/INSTITUTIONAL MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS

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Numbers & Volume vs. Quality & Relationships

One of the best blogs I receive is named "Dumb Little Man - tips for life." I'm not sure how I got onto the distribution list, but it was a lucky day for me. In this issue of *Pipeline*, I'd like to share one of its articles regarding relationship building. What I found interesting here is the distinction drawn between networking and relationship building. At the end, I've included instructions on how to subscribe to Dumb Little Man. I hope you enjoy these tips as much as I have.

Stop Networking and Start Building Relationships

Creating working relationships should be the goal of networking, not meeting as many people as possible.

At traditional networking events and online networking sites such as MySpace, Facebook and LinkedIn, the focus is simply connecting you with as many people as possible. We need to shift our networking goals from numbers and volume to quality and relationships. After all, the point of networking is to connect yourself with others who can help you, as well as you help them. Relationships, communication and trust are fundamental for this. Simply exchanging business cards doesn't build communication or trust.

According to John C. Ango, an executive business coach, "The formula for success equals your human capital (what you know) times your social capital (who you know) times your reputation (who trusts you)."

When you build relationships you are increasing your social capital and reputation. You may even build your human capital, too, because you can learn a lot through your relationships.



Creating working relationships should be the goal of networking.

Building Relationships 101

When was the last time you've met an excellent contact and developed a relationship at a networking event? It's probably been a while, if it has ever happened to you at all. Networking situations aren't always conducive to creating relationships. There are many distractions, expectations and information hustlers—the people who collect massive stacks of business cards.

After you've met someone, when you call or e-mail, do you have to explain how and where you met? If so,

does that count as a contact and is it worth having? By building meaningful working relationships, you will know your contacts and they will know you. This builds trust, which can lead to amazing opportunities.

Relationships blossom in non-networking, low stress situations (dinner parties and social settings) because nothing is expected. This environment allows everyone to act natural. If you aren't expected to connect with someone, when you do connect it's

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piping systems inc.

32 Mill Street (Rt. 79)

P.O. Box 409

Assonet, MA 02702

TEL: 508/644-2221 • FAX: 508/644-2447

E-MAIL: psi@piping-systems-inc.com

WEBSITE: www.piping-systems-inc.com

Relationships...

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genuine and authentic; the spark is there and the ideas flow. Through these connections, relationships are formed. You should always be ready to start a new relationship. Here are some tips to help you:

Make New Relationships

Starting a relationship is like inspiration—you never know when it will hit. Taking a moment now to prepare will help you when your next relationship starts.

- **Always Be Prepared** - A business card is your most basic relationship tool; it allows others to connect with you. Step one is to make sure you always have your business card with you. This is the easy part and the challenge lays ahead.
- **Shareable Ideas** - Think of three interesting ideas and keep them in the back of your mind; current events and popular topics work well. These ideas will act as a springboard when you meet someone new. These topics allow you to open a dialog, which is the first step to building a relationship.
- **Empathize** - Think not only of yourself. Try to imagine the other person's needs. How could you help them? What can you offer? By giving a little, you can get a lot.
- **Spend The Time** - Spend the time to get to know someone. Don't pressure yourself into meeting as many people as possible. Slow down and connect with those who are around you. Like anything of value, a relationship takes time to build.

Reach Out

Once you focus on building relationships instead of gathering business cards, following up with others is easy and fun. For starters, you'll have less people to contact because you've spent time communicating and sharing ideas. Also, when you reach out to your contacts, you'll have something important and interesting to say, based on your previous conversations.

It's All About Relationships

Remember, the goal is to establish lasting working relationships. Reach out and talk to your peers, neighbors and those around you. Take an interest in them and you'll be surprised with the results.

—by Gregory Schnese, Web Producer for beYou.tv (www.beyou.tv)

To subscribe to Dumb Little Man - tips for life, log on to www.dumblittleman.com.

Our Mission...

Piping Systems, Inc. provides quality mechanical contracting services to the industrial and commercial sectors of Southeastern Massachusetts.

...and Our Values

At Piping Systems, our decisions and our actions are guided by the following values:

Our clients, personnel, suppliers and shareholders are the partners of our success; we are driven by the mutuality of our interests. We take pride in providing quality customized products to our clientele at a reasonable price. We are committed to providing competent services to our clientele. Our communications are based on trust, integrity and reliable information.

We provide our employees with a motivating and safe work environment; we are inspired by their dedication and their loyalty. Our leadership is visionary and focused on priority goals and objectives while being responsive to the changing environment. We manage our human, material and financial resources efficiently and effectively.

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www.piping-systems-inc.com



32 Mill Street (Rt. 79)
P.O. Box 409
Assonet, MA 02702

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