The Art of Networking Globally

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The industries of the future are knowledge-based industries. And teachers, trainers and researchers are a key part of these developments. Effective change requires effective change agents. Teachers, trainers, researchers and all workers in the education and training industry need to have the skills to both lead and participate in the change dynamics.

The outstanding priorities in networking globally are generic and specific skills enhancement, professional development, and addressing potential student disadvantage. The most productive outcomes of global networking could be obtained through the following types of network:

- **Strategic networks** involve continuing contact among top leaders to discuss broad goals or changes in societies and communities. The more contacts they have, the more chances they will hear about the more chances they will have to work things out, the more likely their organisations and institutions will evolve in complementary rather than conflicting activities.

- **Tactical networks** bring middle-level managers and professionals together to develop plans for specific programs or joint activities to identify organizational or system changes that will link their organizations and institutions better or to transfer knowledge.

- **Operational networks** provide ways for people carrying out day-to-day tasks to have timely access to information, resources or people they need to accomplish their tasks. For example, participation in each other’s conferences, seminars and training programs would help develop a common vocabulary, product development standards and/or agenda for action.

- **Interpersonal networks** build a necessary foundation for creating future knowledge and values. As human relationships mature beyond the early days of scribbling to create initial projects and erect structural frameworks to manage them, the network of interpersonal ties between members of separate organizations and institutions will grow in depth and density. Leaders of organizations and institutions will soon feel the need to bring their people together to share information. Strong interpersonal relationships could also help resolve small conflicts before they escalate.

- **Cultural networks** require people involved in the relationships to have the communication skills and cultural awareness to bridge their differences.

The Art or "Way", or more specifically "Tao" in Chinese philosophical thought, refers to a practical system of self-development that enables individuals to complete the harmonious evolution of their physical, mental and spiritual bodies. When applied to the management of globalization, it means creating a solid foundation of knowledge capability and capacity in a person or community or country, that would provide the basis for the fullest development of their intellectual, human, and spiritual potential.

By networking globally, a person tapped into and learned to leverage on the rich diversity of human and intellectual talents across nations and circumstances. The result is a learning person with the capacity to create impact and make a significant difference in the lives of the many around him/her by adding real value to enhance otherwise mundane and meaningless existence.

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