



THE GOLDEN EGG

How anyone can network



“Networking” is often understood as chatting with strangers at a social mixer, which can be daunting, especially for introverts. However, at its best, “networking” means either strengthening or activating one’s network. It’s less about small talk and more about taking the time to get to know the people around you, whether in a group or one-on-one.

Everyone depends on networks, from the electrical circuits in our homes to the airplane flight plans and hubs around the world. People form networks, too: Informal friendship circles, emergency supply systems, and membership in an organization.

Almost everyone participates in multiple networks. Social scientists call relationships in networks “links.”

“Strong links” happen with people you know well. “Weak links” happen with those you know in passing or just met. Strong links can also yield numerous distant, weak links for you, and these are important.

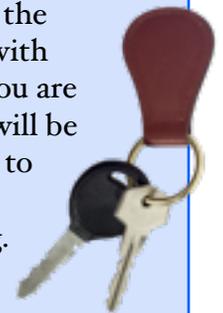
Imagine being at a party: Those at your table are your strong links and have already wracked their brains to help you (job, date, etc.). Now think of someone moving to another table and talking with people you don’t know. Your weak links -- people at the other tables -- may be able to help, or vice versa. Your strong link will no doubt love to connect you. Asking the question of any link, but especially the weak ones, “Do you know anyone who ...” is how you activate your network.

Present Yourself!

To get a big “yes,” make a little “yes” easy. When asking for something that’s important to you, start by saying something with which agreement is nearly certain. Once you have the person nodding his or her head, you have achieved momentum toward the “yes” you want from your “ask.”

Like an object in motion, the person with whom you are talking will be inclined to keep agreeing.

-Jennifer Lader



WORDLIFTING: ‘IT’S’ A TOUGH CALL

Even seasoned writers sometimes confuse “its” and “it’s.” The possessive form of “it,” “its” is used similarly to “his”

or “her”: *“the bird built its nest.”* In contrast, “it’s” is used in cases when it would work to substitute “it is”: *“It’s a sunny day.”*

