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## ON NETWORKING GROUPS ( PART FIVE )

Online networking web sites. Are they really networking and are they really working?

They have been springing up all over. They are based on contact management. They are direct in messaging, emailing, and even in the six degrees of separation. They go by many different names and have various methods of finding people. The problem with these sites is that they are not really networking. Do you disagree?

To be effective in networking requires building a relationship with another person. This is difficult to do through messages and email. If you have ever had a discussion with a person through email or instant messaging, I would like to ask if you ever found yourself in a situation where you had to actually pick up the phone to find out what a person was really talking about?

In relationships conversation is extremely important. The communication is key. The thing that we may not really pay attention to is the importance of tonal inflection in the voice and the added benefits of body language in expressing ourselves. These are the things that online networking is lacking.

Since the most important aspect of having a relationship with another person is based in trust, it is difficult to develop trust in someone that you have never seen nor heard. It is even more difficult to get a person to do business with you without some type of face to face contact.

With this in mind, will these web sites last or are they merely a passing craze? Are they popular simply because we are looking for success in any way that it might come to us? Time will tell.

It is my advice that if you are looking for new contacts, step away from the desk and out into the community. Online networking is less effective for getting business than it is putting your resume online to get a job. All of the people are faceless and voiceless and no one really wants to do business with an email. Or do they? With the thousands of people out there who are selling what you need, including those in your own community, how do you decide what to buy? My guess is that you end up buying most premium products and services from someone that you have met in person, even if it is just a clerk in a store. I am of course excluding buying products through an online store.

So then what is the future of online networking? You are in control of it. Please take a moment and send me your opinion of online networking. Please be sure to tell me if you have ever gotten any business from it exclusively. I am guessing that you probably haven't and you probably won't.

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