IN THE NETWORK

THINK EFFECTIVE NETWORKING IS ALL ABOUT HOW MANY PEOPLE YOU KNOW? THINK AGAIN – IT'S ABOUT WHO YOU KNOW, AND HOW YOU INTERACT WITH THEM.
BY JOHN BURFITT

Think about the last time you were online on Facebook or LinkedIn and noticed that some people's profiles boasted over 1,000 friends or connections.

Did you take a moment to wonder just how many of those so-called 'friends' that person actually knows? Or could even call on to have a coffee, to help out or for a business referral?

Which is exactly the point that Sydney-based entrepreneur and author Janine Garner makes in her new book, *It's Who You Know*, which tackles the topic of networking.

In this social media age, we're reminded of the importance of networking when it comes to social success, career opportunities and personal achievements.

But Janine believes effective networking is not a numbers game of the more, the better.

"Here's the bottom line with networking – we don't need more contacts or more friends and we don't necessarily need to spend more time connecting online," she says. "If that's all any of us needed, we'd all be basking in unparalleled success!

"It's the quality of who is in your network that really matters, and I believe 12 key people is what you need."

It's having those right 12 people in your network and collaborating with them in genuine ways, which she insists is the best way forward.

THOSE 12 PEOPLE, JANINE EXPLAINS, ARE:

CHEERLEADER

This person is who you can rely on to always have your best interests in mind. "This is the person who is promoting you whenever they can, sponsoring your growth, creating opportunities and pushing you because they believe in you."

EXPLORER

This person keeps you accountable, by asking

questions about who, what, when, where, why and how. "Your Explorer challenges norms and uncovers new paths. They want to know what you think, carving out previously unknown options for you to consider."

INSPIRER

Having an Inspirer can change everything. "They are ambitious, big-picture thinkers who never give in to the 'I can't' approach. Instead, they believe you can accomplish anything you put your mind to."

LOVER

The danger of the person in this role is that those who love us will generally tell us what we want to hear, not what we need to hear. "The Lover in your network helps put you and your needs first to help you become the best you can be in times of hardship as well as success."

CONNECTOR

Connectors are powerful brokers of information and contacts. "These people have an innate ability to open doors and make connections between people and information, joining dots and creating opportunities."

BALANCER

The Balancer is all about self-care. "They make sure you have everything aligned and in check. They understand any kind of success relies on a healthy balance between personal and professional goals."

INFLUENCER

This is the person who has already, 'been there, done that'. "Your Influencer will have reached a level of success you aspire to. They will enrich your learning experience with their knowledge, sharing incredible insights and helping you avoid learning the hard way."

PROFESSOR

The Professor will push you to think better, think deeper and think differently. Richard Branson once said, "The day you stop learning is the day you stop living."

ARCHITECT

Your Architect is an expert at visualising your plans and how to reach that future. "They are methodical, astute and good at identifying potential gains, challenges and risks and at laying the stepping-stones to guide your path."

TRUTH SAYER

Your Truth Sayer forces you to commit to your goals with integrity. "They know if you don't start leading from within and fully owning who you are, you will never be capable of being a better person."

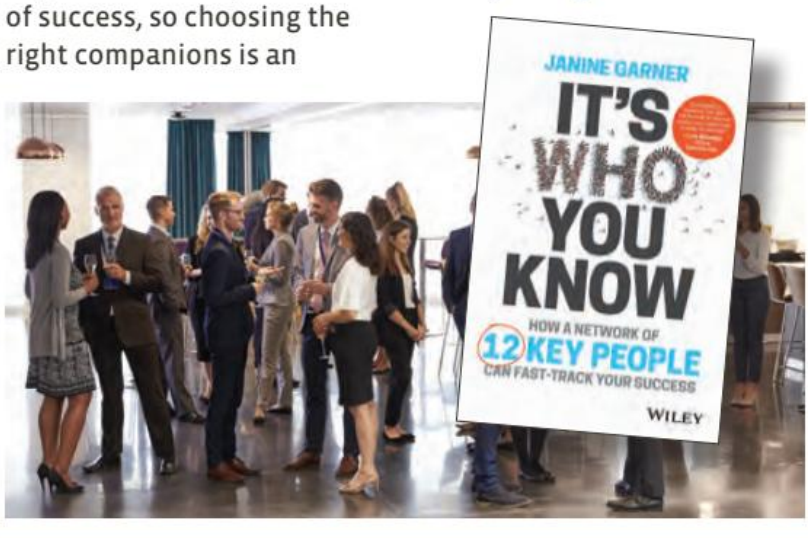
ACCELERATOR

This master butt-kicker hurls procrastination right out of the window. "Whether you have a plan, a dream or a project, they will kick you in to action so your ideas don't remain just that."

MENTOR

Whether in a formal or an informal arrangement, you are never too old for a Mentor. "This is a person who guides and inspires your choices, providing wisdom to keep you on track."

THE COMPANY YOU KEEP

Leadership expert John C. Maxwell, the author of such bestsellers as *Your Road Map for Success* and *How Successful People Think*, once famously said, "Those closest to you determine your level of success, so choosing the right companions is an important decision. There is no doubt that networking matters but it is your network that matters more."

It's Who You Know is available through www.janinegarner.com.au