MASTERING YOUR NETWORK

It's the old adage writ large – quality over quantity, when it comes to who you need in your network and why. **Janine Garner** says you need just 12 people – and here's how to identify them.

Here's the bottom line - we don't need more contacts, we don't need more friends and we don't necessarily need to spend more time connecting on line. If all we needed was this, then every single one of us would be basking in unparalleled success just from the sheer number of opportunities we have to connect.

There is no doubt that networking and building a sales lead generation list is critical for business growth. However, to really succeed you must become the master of your personal network. It's the quality of who is in your network that really matters. I believe there are 12 key people needed in every successful network who, when working together will fast-track your success. So let's meet them:

1. CHEERLEADER

Your Cheerleader is your number one fan. They are the CEO of your personal cheer club, promoting you whenever they can, sponsoring your growth, creating opportunities for you to shine and pushing you to do more because they believe in you and your dreams.

2. EXPLORER

Your Explorer will question why, who, what, where, when and how. They will disrupt your present situation to introduce you to a new future. Your Explorer challenges norms and uncovers new paths. They want to know what you think and get excited about the road less travelled, courageously and fearlessly carving out previously unknown options for you to consider.

3. INSPIRER

No matter what you do and achieve, having an Inspirer in your network will change everything. They are ambitious; big-picture out of the box thinkers who never give in to 'I can't' thinking but instead believe you can accomplish anything you put your mind to.

4. LOVER

Although its tempting to nominate a significant other for this role, the danger is that those who love us the most will generally tell us what we want to hear, not what we need to hear. Your Lover in your network puts you and your needs first to help you become the best you can be in times of hardship as well as success.

5. CONNECTOR

Your Connector is a powerful broker of information and contacts. They have an innate ability to open doors and make connections between people and information, joining dots you can't see and creating opportunities that might have been unheard of previously.

6. BALANCER

The key word for a Balancer is self-care. They make sure you have everything aligned and in check, forcing you to attach your own oxygen mask before you see to anyone else's. They understand that any kind of success relies on a healthy balance between personal and professional goals.

7. INFLUENCER

'Been there, done that': say hello to your Influencer. Your Influencer will have reached a lever of success you aspire to. They will enrich your learning experience with their own knowledge sharing incredible insights and helping you avoid having to reinvent the wheel or learning everything the hard way.

8. PROFESSOR

Richard Branson once said, "The day you stop learning is the day you stop living. We should all pick up new skills, ideas, viewpoints and ways of working every day." Your Professor will constantly push you to think better think deeper and think differently, mastering your skill and capability.

9. ARCHITECT

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

10. TRUTH SAYER

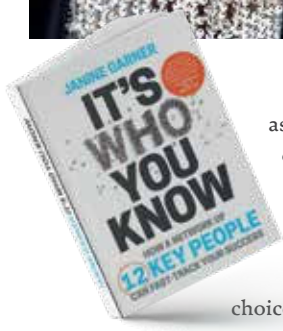
Your Truth Sayer is honest and loyal, forcing you to commit to your goals with integrity. They know the only judgement that matters is the one you have of yourself. If you don't start leading from within and fully owning who you are you will never be capable of being a better person.

11. ACCELERATOR

Your Accelerator is the master butt-kicker, grabbing procrastination by its ankles and hurling it out of the window. Whether you have a plan, a dream or a project to deliver on, they will kick your butt in to action so your ideas doesn't remain just that – an idea.

12. MENTOR

A survey of 45 CEOs with formal mentoring agreements found that 71% said they were certain that company performance had improved as a result. Whether in a formal or an informal arrangement, you are never too old for a Mentor. Mentors are crucial to your growth and success. They guide and inspire your choices, providing wisdom to keep you on track.



IN THE KNOW
Author and keynote speaker Janine Garner (above) is a partner at Thought Leaders Global and the founder of LBD Group.

It was leadership expert John C Maxwell who said: "Those closest to you determine your level of success, so choosing the right companions as partnership pursuit of your vision is an important decision."

There is no doubt that networking matters but it is YOUR network that matters more. MQ

Janine Garner is an internationally-acclaimed entrepreneur and Fortune 500 mentor, keynote speaker and author. She is a partner at Thought Leaders Global, and the founder and CEO of the LBDGroup, a networking community that connects like-minded women together to help them achieve extraordinary growth. Her new book, It's Who You Know: How a network of 12 key people can fast-track your success (Wiley), is out now. Visit janinegarner.com.au