

Transcript - Dorie Clark - How does networking work in a digital age?

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Ross D 00:07

Hello, you're listening to the Future Talent Learning podcast, developed to help you build your leadership and management skills. I'm Ross Dickey,

Ross G 00:12

and I'm Ross Garner. This week we're asking, how do we make the most of digital networking?

Ross D 00:18

To answer this question, we're speaking to consultant, speaker, and educator Dorie Clark, author of Stand Out. How are you doing, Dorie?

Dorie 00:26

I'm feelin' a little sad that my name isn't Ross, but I'll get it for you eventually.

Ross G 00:31

Boy, do you feel like the odd one out there.

Dorie 00:33

Yeah, it's a little bit alienating, but you know, I mean that's that point of digital networking, right? It's just bridging that gap.

Ross D 00:41

For sure. It would be a lot less confusing if one of us wasn't called Ross actually, but we get by. So to turn to networking, why is networking important? If you're good at your job and you can demonstrate that, then what role does networking play?

Dorie 00:58

It's true. I mean, if you're good at your job and you can demonstrate it, it goes a long way. But I think that one of the challenges is that, ultimately, there's only so many people in the world that we can work with directly.

Dorie 01:12

There's about 7 billion people in the world, and most of them are not on our team. And so therefore, they don't know anything about you. And your reputation only travels so far. And so networking is a way of being able to connect with new people outside of your existing circle, being exposed to new ideas, just keeping ourselves entertained, frankly, and also ensuring that you find out about opportunities and are able to build connections that can help you later on and enable you to help other people.

Dorie 01:53

This is very much a reciprocal thing as well. I think, frankly, it's just a form of making friends, and that makes everybody's life better.

Ross G 02:01

That's a very, let's say it's a very American attitude to networking, because I think over here in the UK, I think people are horrified by the prospect of networking. And one of the reasons for that is we just don't have very many occasions in our daily lives anymore where we interact with strangers in a chit-chatty fashion, so maybe like a non-transactional fashion.

Ross G 02:25

So you go through a supermarket and you speak to someone who's like at the cash register or whatever, then that's fine. I'm not someone who does that very much. I'm more of a hi, how are you? Just get on with it.

Ross G 02:35

You go to the self-checkout, so you don't have to speak to them. Yeah, exactly. I can talk to a robot. Exactly. That's a perfect example of another way we can avoid having any kind of interaction. And Robert Putnam writes about this in Bowling Alone, just the decline in membership of any organisation.

Ross G 02:51

So he's writing about bowling clubs, but also unions, churches, any kind of like area that you would go and constantly run into strangers, and that just doesn't exist anymore. So I think for a lot of our audience, probably they haven't practiced talking to strangers out of the blue, and it's probably a bit intimidating.

Ross G 03:09

Now, is that a UK perspective? Because you being in America, you refer to it as entertaining and making friends.

Dorie 03:17

I think in some ways we're we're feeling the same thing and just looking at it from different angles because I'm going to tell you the truth Ross, I hate talking to strangers too. That's not my thing.

Dorie 03:25

I'm an introvert. I feel like, you know, I live in New York City and, you know, there's there's so many millions of people here. And if you talk to everybody, they would think you're insane. And also, it's just cognitive overload.

Dorie 03:39

So basically, over time, you're just trained to like, look down, don't talk to anyone.

Ross G 03:45

Headphones in as well. There's ways of isolating yourself from the people around you. You've got your AirPods in or your beats. There's a clear sign. I don't want anyone to talk to me.

Dorie 03:54

Totally, totally. I'm too cool for them to talk to me. No, I mean, I think that certainly networking is about meeting new people, but that is a different thing than talking to strangers. I think that actually one of the biggest misconceptions about networking is that, you know, for so long and, you know, this is just sort of the the default networking has always been kind of optimised for extroverts, right?

Dorie 04:24

And because extroverts like it, they don't put a lot of thought into it. They're just like, oh, you just go into a room and talk to people. It's simple. And, you know, maybe it's simple for them. But I hate it.

Dorie 04:36

It's it's it's awful. There's 500 people. You don't know them. You're like, who are these people? What do I talk to them about? It's just miserable. And, you know, I mean, the same the same thing is true in a digital context.

Dorie 04:48

But it is nice. I feel like for anybody, but the most seriously misanthropic people, it is nice to make friends. And so the question is, how do you turn a stranger into a friend or at least into an interesting acquaintance that you can talk to sometimes?

Dorie 05:04

And it's and it's fun. And for me, that's that's the interesting question. And there's there's a whole raft of different things. But I am literally imminently moving to Miami. And I'll give you an example.

Dorie 05:17

I was on a Zoom call yesterday and I just let people know. I'm like, hey, I'm moving to Miami. Who do you know there that's cool? And I already have like three different people who have sent me emails introducing me electronically to their friends in Miami.

Dorie 05:32

So that for the next few weeks, I am going to have a steady stream of people that I can have lunch or I can have, you know, a Zoom call or I can have cocktails with because people are generous enough to want to connect you with their friends.

Dorie 05:45

So it's a warm lead and that feels very different.

Ross G 05:48

I think it's super modern, but also super old school in the way that you've done it. Because I think before we had like the

telegram, I believe that people who traveled would carry like a letter of introduction from their sponsor or someone that was able to prove their good intent to the strangers that they would come across.

Ross G 06:06

It's interesting. You can trust them.

Ross D 06:14

I think part of the discomfort that people feel with it as well, you referred to it as making friends, but I think often that networking implies some sort of transaction is taking place and maybe that transaction is unknown to the person that you're networking with, but you're making friends with them in order to further your own interests rather than just making friends for its own sort of intrinsic value.

Ross D 06:35

So I like the way that you talk about it, about just sort of being interested in people and getting to know their stories and that sort of thing.

Dorie 06:42

Yeah, well, you raise a great point, Ross, which is that. I mean, everybody feels weird if the if what's actually happening is that somebody wants a thing from you. Like if you are the person who has been kind of preyed upon like, oh, I thought he wanted to be my friend and actually want some money or something like you feel bad, you feel used.

Dorie 07:05

And also, frankly, if you're the person who's doing it, that's not a comfortable thing either. Like you probably feel a little odd about it, which is why, which is why so many people feel discomfort about networking.

Dorie 07:15

They think like, oh, well, that's what I have to do. That's you know, that's the whole shtick. I went to a dinner once at somebody's house. And, you know, I this this was like this sort of sneak attack.

Dorie 07:27

I had had this woman over to my house, you know, a few weeks before as like part of a group dinner. And so then she invited me to her house for a dinner. And I thought, oh, how nice. Look at that. Somebody's actually reciprocating.

Dorie 07:41

Wow. So I'm your friend. Yeah, a new friend. Exactly. So I went to her house and she had cooked this amazing dinner. I was so excited. But literally, like during the appetiser course, she mentioned, she's like, oh, there's a thing I want to talk to you about.

Dorie 07:56

And I'm thinking, like, oh, God, where is this going? And sure enough, as the dinner progressed, you know, I mean, she was feeling weird, obviously, she was just acting odd. And eventually she let it be known like, oh, and I have this thing.

Dorie 08:10

And do you want to invest in this thing? And I'm like, oh, that is not that is not what I wanted. That is not how I thought this was going to go. And it was just awkward for everybody. So, in fact, in in my new book, *The Long Game*, I actually have a rule that I propose.

Dorie 08:26

This is something I follow. And this is something that, frankly, I hope everybody follows. And I call it no asks for a year. Because if you're trying to be friends with somebody like you, I mean, I don't mean no asks for a year.

Dorie 08:40

Like, obviously, you should invite them to things because that's the point of being friends. But I mean, no asks that involve political capital or financial capital for that matter for a year because capital or social.

Dorie 08:53

Exactly. Because ultimately, you don't want the other person feeling like, oh, that's the only reason he wanted to be my friend is this thing. If you can just let that go for a year and get to know somebody, then the truth is, by the time a year is

passed, you will be good enough friends that, you know, whatever, whatever you want to ask them or whatever, it'll be comfortable enough.

Dorie 09:17

They might even just offer it or it won't even matter because you're not going to think of them as a potential target. You're going to think of them as a friend.

Ross G 09:27

I think maybe that might sound slightly cynical because it's not like you're advocating that I'm going to I'm going to meet Dori and in 365 days I'm going to ask for money. I'm just counting down the days until then and in that time I'm going to be building up this relationship.

Ross G 09:45

The final intent of which is to ask for cash. So all that that investment is like it's almost like I'm banking against the future relationship because then I can make a withdrawal but that's not what you're talking about you're talking about finding people where you have an affinity with them and a genuine relationship and building up goodwill and building up that social capital to the point that eventually there will come a time where you can help each other and you already have those reserves of social capital that is not weird that it's not like transactional you're just helping out each other because you've already built that network and established that relationship.

Dorie 10:16

Yeah, I mean, ultimately, if if someone is. Approaching this situation like they've got some kind of advent calendar in their head where they're just like opening little boxes and on a day three hundred and sixty six, they're like, now's the time.

Dorie 10:33

That person is probably a sociopath, frankly.

Ross G 10:38

That is how my mind works, how I interpreted your essay. I knew I was interpreting it wrongly. I just wanted to clarify.

Dorie 10:45

I mean, ultimately, the goal is just like get the get the asks out of your head. Like, just literally don't even go there. Don't even think about it because when when there's something looming in the back of your head about the go, when can I ask him about this?

Dorie 10:59

When can I ask for that introduction? Like, that's always going to be clouding things. So literally what you want to do is handcuff yourself. You want to say, you know what? I am totally not going to ask him for anything.

Dorie 11:10

And then you can just concentrate on being friends.

Ross G 11:15

Do you, are you strategic about that though? Do you, um, how do you identify the people that you wish to build a connection with?

Dorie 11:24

I mean, it's who's interesting? Who's who's cool? Who would you like to be with? Who do you feel a connection to? I mean, oftentimes these these are frankly accomplished people because those those are the interesting people.

Dorie 11:37

But there's plenty of people whom I think it would be, quote unquote, advantageous for me to cultivate friendships with. But they're dicks. And so I don't want anything to do with them.

Ross D 11:50

I mean, besides the no asks for a year, are there any other sort of general principles that people should bear in mind when they're approaching networking?

Dorie 12:04

Yeah, well, there's there's another framework that I share in the long game, which is about the different types of networking. And I think that sometimes this is helpful as we think about how to approach it.

Dorie 12:16

So basically, there are, as I see it, three different types of networking. There is short term networking, which is the kind that frankly, like no one likes. It's just the uncomfortable one, which is like, I need a thing.

Dorie 12:31

Maybe if I'm, you know, friends with this person or if I meet this person, I can get the thing. And I think whenever we can avoid being on either side of that equation, it is better because just I mean, we know like desperation, neediness, avarice.

Dorie 12:47

These are never attractive things. And it's never a good basis on which to form a relationship. And but then there's there's two other types of networking. There is long term networking, which is, hey, this person seems interesting.

Dorie 12:59

I'm sure they can probably help me someday, but I mean, I don't know how. I'm sure I can probably help them, too. Well, we'll see. We'll get to know each other. You know, and I think that's great. I think that's that's awesome.

Dorie 13:08

And that's how most good networkers operate. And, you know, awesome. The third kind is I think in some ways what I would call the secret weapon of networking, because even oftentimes good networkers fail to deploy this, and it is what I call infinite horizon networking.

Dorie 13:28

And the reason that people fail to use it is that often it seems random. If you if you are networking for the goal of advancing your business interests, you're never going to do it because it's connecting with people who on the surface may not have anything in common or may not have anything to do with you like, oh, well, that person's a comedian and I'm not a comedian.

Dorie 13:49

Why would I network with them? But some of the most powerful and transformational relationships actually can come from this because if you are building connections with people that are just wildly diverse, they're in a different part of the world or in a different industry, they're, you know, completely different from you.

Dorie 14:07

Those are the ones that actually have the potential to truly teach you something new or to truly expose you to new ideas that can really shake things up in interesting ways. And so I think being conscious of that and being willing to take the time in the interest to cultivate that can be quite powerful.

Ross G 14:25

I think probably as well that the digital world has made that easier because what you're talking about is networking with people who are completely different from you. You wouldn't run into them in your everyday walk of life.

Ross G 14:37

And they might be geographically distant as well if you're going to talk about interacting with people from different cultures and so on. And so I think that having, you know, social networks, Twitter, LinkedIn, whatever it might be, to find these people on Connect is a great way to do it and an excellent way to network is to start a podcast.

Ross G 14:52

You write about this in your book, Stand Out, but it's certainly resonated with me because it's what we've done. You know, Ross and I have both podcasts for five years and met loads of people that way.

Ross G 15:04

One of the things I find useful when I first kind of started in this digital learning career that I'm on was tapping into my boss's network. So the first conference I went to, a big industry conference, I went in and I did not know anyone who was there and I stood smiling, waiting for them to approach me.

Ross G 15:22

I'm inviting, talk to me. And no one did. And they were all standing on their phones. It's like, these people are so unfriendly, they're all on their phones. And I found out afterwards, the reason they're on their phones is they were all tweeting at one another because they already had this relationship they established online and it was a way of having these much bigger conversations.

Ross G 15:35

And my boss was in. And so, you know, it's similar to you with your letter of introduction. I kind of leveraged him to get into this network and started to build relationships that way. But it wasn't, again, with a particular end insight.

Ross G 15:48

It was just these people are interesting and they keep going to the same events that I do. And this apparently is how I'm going to meet them. Because again, this is a British attitude. It's easier to speak to someone online than it is to walk up to them in person and say, hi, do you want to have lunch?

Dorie 16:03

Well, I think that you're pointing to something true, which is, I mean, it is a little weird to just walk up to a stranger. What's nice is when we have contacts. And I think the power of digital networking is, I mean, you know, obviously we have been constrained by the pandemic and have had to rely on digital networking for, in some ways, all of our networking.

Dorie 16:28

But in, you know, even in non-pandemic circumstances, what's great about digital networking is its ability to kind of grease the wheels and make in-person networking easier. And what I mean by that specifically is, we have a cat incursion here.

Dorie 16:45

There we go. Hi. What I mean by making it easier.

Ross G 16:50

Just for listeners, the cat just walked right in front of Dorie's webcam there and blocked everything that we could see was just fur.

Dorie 16:59

It was, it was a tabby tidal wave yes, but, you know, ultimately, if you're, if you're going up to somebody cold and you literally don't know anything about them, I mean, what do you do with that? That's really hard.

Dorie 17:13

But if you, you know, are meeting somebody at an event, a conference, something like that, if you have connected with them online beforehand, so they at least know who you are, it makes it a lot easier.

Dorie 17:23

And certainly if you've met somebody in person, staying in touch with them digitally is a fantastic way to keep the relationship warm, make sure they don't forget about you, follow up on things you talked about, you know, oh, hey, how was that vacation or, or whatever.

Dorie 17:39

So it can be a fantastic compliment. But during the pandemic, digital networking definitely took on a disproportionate share of the, of the networking burden. And I know that for about a year, once a month, or sometimes even twice a month, I was hosting with a, with a colleague of mine, virtual networking cocktails.

Dorie 18:02

And we would do these kind of zoom cocktails for six or eight people and just get to know each other that way. And you know, it's, it's not necessarily the same as connecting in person. You don't have that easy rapport and repartee, but it is better than not meeting them.

Dorie 18:21

And some of those connections actually are things that now that in some ways people are feeling better about meeting up in person, they, they become the on-ramp or the entry point to forming in-person relationships later on.

Dorie 18:34

you

Ross G 18:35

I almost think that the opposite is true in so far as it used the word constrained that the COVID and working from home would constrain their ability to network. I almost think it's liberated it because I think about, so you and I met yesterday for the first time and we met on this platform.

Ross G 18:49

So we're doing a video call just now, but I saw your cat going about on the background and you can see, for example, I've got a picture by me of my wedding and I've got a stormtrooper on the shelf behind me.

Ross G 19:00

More prominently, you've got a stormtrooper on you. Yeah. Well, probably there's a stormtrooper action figure. Yeah, exactly. But I think pre-pandemic when you would meet people at industry events, say, so somewhere you're going to meet strangers, often they would be wearing some sort of formal attire and you almost know absolutely nothing about them.

Ross G 19:16

But now that everyone's at home and become increasingly comfortable with having their webcams on and you can see aspects of their personal life in their background, it's almost like they're bringing context to that first conversation.

Ross G 19:27

So you can immediately see behind them, you know, as you were talking about, you're moving to Miami. We talked about that. Yes. We talked about your cat. Yes. Your cat was going about the background.

Ross G 19:35

So there's things that you can identify, you know, that person's got a kid, that person's got an animal, that person's got a photo op that's interesting. How are they dressed? I have clients who used to turn up in a suit.

Ross G 19:43

Now they turn up in their gym gear because they do CrossFit. I wouldn't know that if they, you know, if I didn't have this insight into their, their home life. So it's actually, as it might be, I've also signed because I'm quite introverted as well when I'm not doing this podcast.

Ross G 19:57

I quite like meeting people online. I feel like I have slightly more control over it and I can have something to latch on to and talk to. I don't have to like suddenly panic and think of something.

Ross D 20:08

I'm certainly more comfortable with meeting people online. I think the pandemic has forced me to get comfortable with it. I think for the reasons that Ross says, you know, you get a bit more of an insight into people's home lives.

Ross D 20:18

I think where it's tricky is not everybody listening is going to want to start a podcast and not everybody listening is going to spend as much time on video conferencing calls potentially as we do. So how would you approach digital networking in those circumstances?

Ross D 20:34

Or what are some of the other ways that people can start networking online or beyond sort of LinkedIn, which is the obvious answer, I guess.

Dorie 20:42

Yeah, exactly. Well, I think one of the ways that we can think about it is because we do need to have different strategies for meeting new people versus keeping in touch with people that we already know.

Dorie 20:55

Those are kind of different animals when it comes to online networking. So in terms of keeping in touch with people that we already know, kind of keeping those relationships warm, this is something that is important not to forget about actually.

Dorie 21:07

Often when we think networking, we think, oh, meeting new people. That's great. Of course, we need to do it. But there was an interesting study that Microsoft did a few months ago where over the course of the pandemic, they had been tracking through their software systems, the connections and interrelationships of teams working within Microsoft.

Dorie 21:29

And they discovered that during the pandemic, when everybody shifted to remote work, connections within teams, team members talking to each other dramatically rose. But interestingly enough, as you might expect, connections between teams decreased significantly.

Dorie 21:45

In fact, like over 20%. And that, of course, that's not a crisis. That's not like a huge problem in the near term. But if you think about it over time, if that pattern were to continue, that could become pretty problematic because you begin to get a little bit of an echo chamber just talking to the same people all the time.

Dorie 22:02

So we have to be a lot more conscious about how we are keeping our connections alive with people that we're not seeing every day or we're not talking to every day. So maintaining relationships becomes important.

Dorie 22:16

So you know, one thing that I think is actually useful that LinkedIn can serve, we often think about LinkedIn is like, oh, you know, I can just see what's going on. And then I'll hit the like button or something like that.

Dorie 22:30

I would argue that is not really sufficient. Because you know, if you have enough people liking your stuff, you don't even know who they are, right? You're not like really, oh, Ross likes my post. But what is helpful, if you can spend, I don't know, it doesn't have to be huge, five minutes a day, five minutes a week, if you can't spare five minutes a day to scroll through your LinkedIn feed and see what is going on with colleagues you're connected to.

Dorie 22:56

And if something is memorable or interesting enough, you know, I'm not talking about here's my lunch, but I'm talking about, oh, this person got a new job, or this person won an award, or this person is moving to a different state or country, actually, beyond liking, take the time to send them a message, you can send them a message on LinkedIn, even better, send them a text message or send them a, you know, an email, depending on what the nature of your relationship is.

Dorie 23:21

So it's essentially a prompt for you to do outreach to people that you might not necessarily otherwise think to do. So I think that's an important way that we can just have ambient awareness of our network and have reminders to keep in touch.

Dorie 23:36

Now, when it comes to connecting with new people, that involves a different strategy. And, you know, part of it is thinking through like what, what your goals are. But as an example, in my case, I am moving to Miami for somebody else, maybe they're shifting industries or, you know, whatever.

Dorie 23:54

And so it's actually not a bad idea to reach out to your friends that you think would be in a good position. You know, in my case, it's like, who do I know that are connectors? Or who do I know that used to live in Miami?

Dorie 24:05

And I would reach out and say, Hey, who do you know, can you introduce me to your most interesting, coolest friends and get that, you know, personal thing. And then I will follow up with that person.

Dorie 24:15

If you're switching, you're like, Oh, I'm going into marketing now, maybe you reach out to your connected friends and say, Hey, I'm trying, I'm trying to land a job in marketing. Who can you connect to me with?

Dorie 24:24

That would be great. And most often those people will want to be helpful.

Ross G 24:28

Yeah, that's one of the things I think I've found since podcasting is when you ask people for something like to come on a podcast, you know, in this case, almost no one says no, it is unbelievable how keen people are to be helpful.

Ross G 24:41

And I think it is worth, I think probably one of the, there's a huge selection bias in the sample there, because the people that we're asking are normally, they have a big network and they've done that by networking themselves.

Ross G 24:55

I think the lesson there is not necessarily just ask people for stuff. It is think about when people ask you for stuff, how you can be reciprocal, because what you're talking about with the LinkedIn thing, it is strategic, but it's also just kind and taking an interest in people and not being self-centered.

Ross G 25:10

And I think if you take that approach to networking, you'll probably get more rewards than just asking people for favors all the time. Definitely. I've been with strangers for favors.

Dorie 25:20

You do not want to do that, that's for sure.

Ross D 25:23

Yeah, totally. I mean, we were talking about conferences earlier. I think like if you go to a conference, part of your considerations of attending a conference might be, oh, I'll meet people there who I can network with.

Ross D 25:32

And that might ultimately be beneficial to me. But you go mainly because you're interested in your field and you want to meet other people who share those interests and expand your sort of horizons in that area.

Ross D 25:42

So I think you go to not thinking, how am I going to meet people that can get something out of, but like what? You'll meet people who you can connect with. They may have something valuable to offer me, but I might also something valuable to offer them.

Dorie 25:55

Yeah, I think Ross raises an important point, which is people really misunderstand the role of networking as a business development tool. What we have to understand is that networking is a great business development tool, but it is on a slow burn timeline.

Dorie 26:12

If you network today, that's going to get you business in five years. That's going to get you business in 10 years. If you think that networking is going to get you business tomorrow, that is the surest way to not get business tomorrow because you're going to come in with this predatory attitude.

Dorie 26:27

You need to approach networking in the most super chill way because otherwise you're going to scare people off.

Ross G 26:35

And that's like, you know, whether on LinkedIn or Twitter or at a conference or whatever it might be, 90% of the people there are going to be doing that. They're going to be predators who are there to sell in some way.

Ross G 26:45

So if you're not doing that, then that is also a way of standing out and making yourself more approachable to others. Also, that 90% figure is not backed up by evidence. I just plucked a fake number out of there.

Ross G 26:56

Just to fact check myself before we get a complaint.

Dorie 26:59

It's an important study conducted by Lost Garden.

Ross D 27:03

Sample size of one. Just before we move on, we're talking a little bit about LinkedIn. Actually, I was on LinkedIn the other week. I don't update LinkedIn as much as I should, but I was looking weirdly at my number of connections, which is not as prominent as your number of followers on Twitter or Instagram as an example.

Ross D 27:21

So I never really actually knew how many connections I had or hadn't thought about it. And I looked at it and it was less than I imagined. And I then started connecting with colleagues who I wasn't connected with because I thought, I need to get this number up.

Ross D 27:32

But I think LinkedIn creates this incentive for you to increase the quantity of your network rather than necessarily the quality. So it's interested in your thoughts on that.

Dorie 27:47

Well, you know, I, I have a couple of thoughts. I mean, actually one thing that's interesting depends, you know, how many connections you had or didn't have. But one thing that I find interesting is that for connections, if it's above 500 connections, LinkedIn just says more than 500 plus, right?

Dorie 28:05

So it's not, I think Ross has five.

Ross D 28:11

I don't have five. I have less than 500. I was looking at all these other people have gone more than 500 I'm like, oh, I'm not big as well as other people are

Dorie 28:19

Yes, that's right. That's right. So I do think you're right. They certainly incentivise you to have more than, you know, more than 500 or more. But it also it doesn't necessarily matter to LinkedIn whether you have 500 or if you have 10 ,000.

Dorie 28:33

And I think that's that's the key because they actually advise you. I mean, you know, people have different views about this. But what LinkedIn specifically says if you go to their frequently asked questions, like who should you connect with?

Dorie 28:43

They tell you, hey, don't just connect with anybody. Like, that's kind of not the point because your network on LinkedIn becomes not very useful if all you get is spammy messages from strangers where it actually is useful to you as if you're seeing updates from people you genuinely know.

Dorie 29:00

So they advise you connect with people you know, or, you know, at a minimum, people who have some rational connection like maybe maybe you don't know them personally, but you work at the same company or something like that.

Dorie 29:11

So I think that that is helpful. For a while, there was a vogue. People sometimes would put it in their LinkedIn profile. People are so weird where they would list, you know, Joe Smith, lion. And it's like, what is lion?

Dorie 29:27

And it was linked in open networking. And that basically means all connect with anyone. Tens of thousands of dollars. So that's a little that was a little strange. But but yeah, now the tide has turned such that, you know, if you are a sort of public public profile person, you can actually switch it for followers so that people can follow you without without them having to connect.

Dorie 29:57

There's a there's a limit of 30 ,000 connections that you can have on LinkedIn. But yeah, I think ultimately where the tool is useful is in connecting with people that you actually have a relationship or at least some kind of rational connection to.

Ross G 30:14

Okay.

Ross D 30:15

Okay, let's wrap up. Ross, what will you be taking away from this conversation and applying in your life this week?

Ross G 30:22

Well, I actually think I've ruined LinkedIn. This is going to sound like a humble brag, so I will apologise in advance for it.

Ross D 30:30

I have so many connections.

Ross G 30:32

No, no, no. It's even worse than that. No, my job title changed ahead of two years ago, and LinkedIn just became a cesspit, because until that point, no one would have been that interested in connecting with me.

Ross G 30:41

So when people had sent an invite, I normally just accepted it, just straight away as I'll see what this person has to say. But now that I've got a head of title, so people assume I have some sort of budgetary responsibility.

Ross G 30:52

So they connect, and then send me a direct message about something I want to buy. And I was still in that habit of just accepting everyone. And I think I now need to look back at LinkedIn and treat it a bit differently, take Dorie's advice, and maybe limit it to people who I actually know and I'm interested in.

Ross G 31:09

So that's what I'll do.

Ross D 31:10

Yeah. I think for me, the main thing is focusing on making new friends. I really like that as a way of sort of framing networking. And I also particularly like the no asks for a year rule. I think that seems like a good general principle to follow.

Ross D 31:26

Dorie, what are your main takeaways?

Dorie 31:28

Well, my, my main takeaways is, uh, um, boy, you know, British people, they're skeptical of everything. I know. I know Americans are so enthusiastic.

Ross G 31:42

It's gaudish as well, so it's even worse.

Dorie 31:45

Yeah, that is tough, that is tough. But you know, ultimately, I think that networking is, you know, if we do it right, we just, we need to divorce it from business outcomes. It's something that, you know, it can and it does lead to business outcomes, but it's almost like a sort of Zen Coen.

Dorie 32:09

In order to get business outcomes, you cannot be thinking about business outcomes. It has to be about something totally different. And as long as it is, then it actually really, you know, can be a nice thing.

Dorie 32:20

I mean, I think most people in the world would like more nice friends. And so as long as we treat it like that, it will have a positive benefit downstream, but it's one that we can't predict. And so for me, in terms of takeaways or actions, I'm going to be leaning in, especially now.

Dorie 32:38

I've lived in New York for about, you know, seven, eight years and, you know, the last couple of years, of course, with the pandemic, it's been harder to meet up with people in person. But you kind of over index on meeting new people when you

first come to a city and then you get a little lazy about it, I think sometimes.

Dorie 32:59

And so this is going to be a period where I very consciously and concerted in over the course of this year, I'm going to be focusing in on like, yes, it will be a concerted strategic effort to meet new people.

Dorie 33:11

So I'm going to be focusing on that.

Ross D 33:19

Okay, let's move on to our regular feature one thing I've learnt this week. Ross, do you want to get a start?

Ross G 33:25

Well, indeed. So I have been enjoying President Obama's memoir of his presidency, A Promised Land, and last night I was reading about his first G20 summit. So G20 world leaders gather around, probably seen photos of massive circular table.

Ross G 33:42

Dorie, you worked in political communications, didn't you? So you were attended one of these big sort of leaderly summit things?

Dorie 33:50

No, I only worked for candidates that lost, so I never got that far enough.

Ross G 33:56

OK, sorry to bring that up. So anyone who hasn't attended the G20 Summit with world leaders in the past, it kind of looks like the scene from Dr. Strangelove when they're all sat around a massive table.

Ross G 34:10

I remember seeing this on the news and thinking, how can these people possibly have a conversation that is in any way meaningful with that many people around such a large table all talking different languages and with aids talking in their ears the whole time?

Ross G 34:21

And so Obama reveals they're not having a conversation at all. They're all reading from pre-prepared talking points and no one's listening to one another. And all of the actual conversations take place in the networking that happens afterwards.

Ross G 34:33

They all go off in side rooms or they talk to the person next to them while Putin's talking or whoever it might be. And so it's just a question it always had is, how does this work in practice, this massive table?

Ross G 34:43

And the answer is, it doesn't at all. It's all for sure.

Ross D 34:47

Nice. Uh, Dorie, what did you learn this week?

Dorie 34:51

Well, so I've been reading a book called The Circadian Code by Sachin Panda, and that has been really interesting. It's a book about how we can get more savvy about how circadian rhythms impact our health and our well-being.

Dorie 35:08

And one of the tips that I learned from it, which I'm going to be applying in Miami, actually, is that one of the most important things that we can do is when we first wake up to try to get 15 minutes of sunlight, because it's a way of essentially telling your circadian rhythm like, hey, you're awake now, like you're really awake, look, light.

Dorie 35:30

And so sunglasses that block UV rays, I mean, that's a good thing in general, but actually it's not helpful if you go out having your sunglasses blocking it right then. The way that the light comes in, in terms of really letting your circadian rhythm know, is through your eyes, not just your skin.

Dorie 35:51

So actually going out without sunglasses and just being out in the sun for a little bit in the morning is kind of a way to kickstart your day. And it apparently makes it easier for your body to go to sleep at night because it's understanding more clearly what is light, what is dark, because a lot of what we do these days being inside and having artificial lights on all the time, essentially we're kind of confusing our body like, gosh, is it morning?

Dorie 36:18

Is it night? I don't know. So the more we can make that clear to our bodies, the better we will sleep and the healthier we will be.

Ross D 36:26

We don't have the option here in Scotland, but you should be fine in Miami.

Ross G 36:30

I'm really thinking exactly the same thing.

Ross D 36:34

Well, I was going to talk about something different, but what you've learned has prompted me to think of something else. So actually I've been reading a book by Matthew Walker called *Why We Sleep*, which is around the same topic and discovered the origin of circadian rhythm, where that comes from.

Ross D 36:53

So there's a study by researchers at the University of Chicago. So basically these two researchers went into, I think it was a mine for 31 days to see if their bodies still knew that it was day and night and if their bodies would stay in touch with that.

Ross D 37:11

What they found ultimately was that the body generally did have this internal clock, but it was slightly more, I think, generally than 24 hours, which is where circadian comes from. Circa Dien is roughly a day or a roundabout day.

Ross D 37:26

So that's another great book. We'll put a link to all of those books that were mentioned in our show notes. Dorie, before we go, is there anything else that you'd like to mention?

Dorie 37:36

Ah, well, thank you. Well, in a place where I actually talk more about networking, I wrote an e-book, actually, a number of years ago, which folks can get on Amazon or wherever, called *Standout Networking*.

Dorie 37:51

So I kind of do a deep dive on the topic there. But I also have a chapter where I talk about things like the No Asks for a Year rule in my newest book, which is called *The Long Game*. And if people are interested in getting a free resource, a free long game, strategic thinking, self-assessment, they can get it for free at [doriclark .com slash The Long Game](https://doriclark.com/slash/The-Long-Game).

Ross D 38:12

Excellent. Put a link to that in our show notes as well. And that's it. You've listened to the Future Talent learning podcast with me, Ross Dickey and Ross Garner. Our guest this week was Dorie Clark.

Ross D 38:26

Until next time, bye for now.