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Worksheet for David Burkus | How to Become a Networking Superconnector (Episode 36)

We tend to think of our network as a collection of people with whom we're close. And while it would seem these connections would be of the greatest value, research shows that our weak and dormant ties are the most effective for giving advice, making referrals, and providing us with a different perspective.

Joining us for [episode 36](#) is David Burkus, business school professor and author of *[Friend of a Friend...](#)*. He explains how networking operates from a social scientist's perspective, so if you thought you knew everything there is to know about connecting with others, you're in for a new kind of ride.

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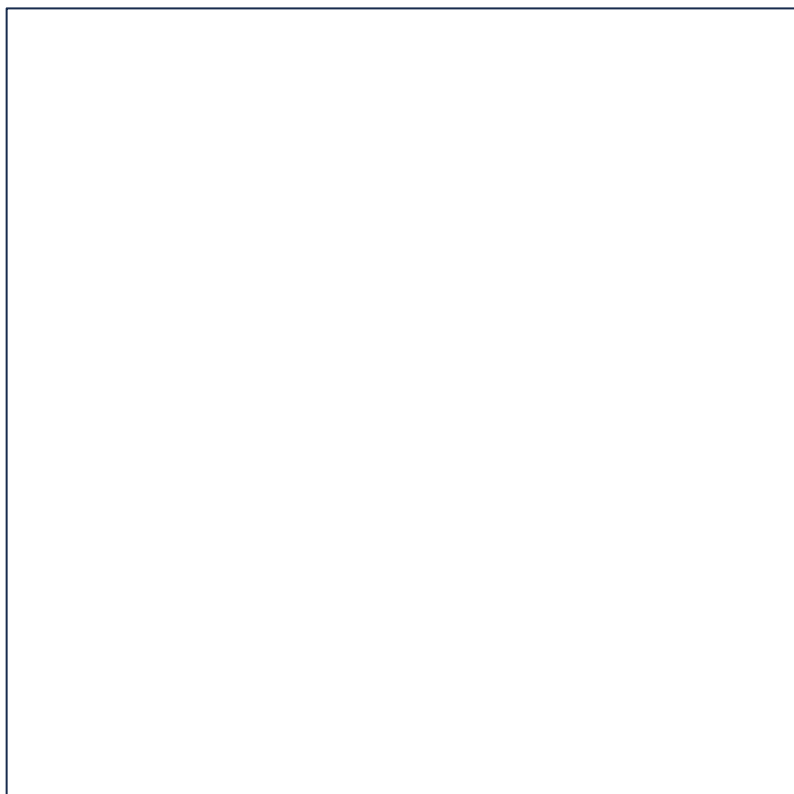
Engage Weak and Dormant Ties

Jordan and David reference the Harvey Mackay line “Dig your well before you’re thirsty” to highlight the idea that to successfully capitalize on our weak ties as a source of strength, we shouldn’t wait until we need something to put in effort. David uses an example of the “newsfeed trick” to illustrate using social media as a tool to develop an organic system that consists of four parts:

1. Find something noteworthy happening in a person’s life.
2. Reach out to that person using a deeper, non-public medium.
3. Provide something of value.
4. Close with a line that invites further engagement.

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Write down a couple of other ways that you could leverage these steps to engage weak or dormant ties that don't involve social media: one for professional relationships, and one for personal relationships. Try to be intentional about thinking through the people with whom you want to engage and try to anticipate hurdles as you plan out your steps.

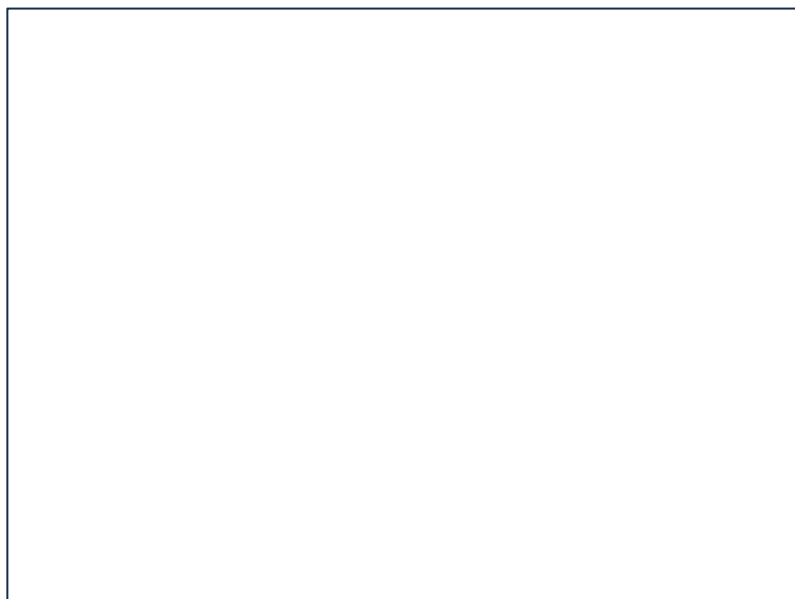


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Make Online Relationships Real

Research shows that effort put into online persona and networks isn't very worthwhile unless they aid "offline" relationships.

Think of a couple of relationships you wish to put effort into cultivating, but for which the entire context of those relationships are digitized. Brainstorm some relevant ideas to facilitate moving those relationships out of an online-only space, then execute.



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Plug Structural Holes

David highlights a concept in network science called “structural holes,” originally developed by social scientist Ronald Burt. People tend to cluster together, whether it be by industry, professional experience, political ideology, pursuit of shared activities, etc. and this clustering leaves gaps between different groups. People who unlock the most value for themselves and others are able to tie communities together and fill gaps.

Think about how you could become a broker between two seemingly disparate groups or communities. Think about questions such as the following: In which communities are you already established or embedded? In which other communities are you interested? Why are you interested in connecting these groups? What benefit would be provided to the groups, both individually and as a whole?

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Do you have any contacts in those communities? How are you going to be deliberate about cultivating those contacts and developing new contacts? How are you going to be deliberate about resisting the urge to be drawn back to your cluster?



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Law of Averages? Not the Whole Story

Jim Rohn famously said that we are the average of the five people with whom we spend the most time, however, this isn't really the full picture. David discusses research which shows that there is a statistically significant, causal relationship between the behavior of friends of your friends, and friends of their friends (even if you've never met them) and yours. Networking isn't something you do, *it's something of which you're a part*, and variables affect your behavior in ways you aren't even aware.

Reference the end of the episode where Jordan and David discuss the network effects of friendship. Take some time to think through the implications of this concept, both positive and negative. Write down some tactics that will help you be more intentional about seeing your *whole* network.

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In addition, make sure to document some steps you are willing to take over time that will help you cultivate a network that affects you positively. Writing this down now, along with outlining what you do and don't want out of your network, will help to remind you when you are inevitably faced with a tough choices in the future.



Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here](#).

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About



Join Jordan Harbinger (critically acclaimed host, formerly of The Art of Charm) as we get deep into the untapped wisdom of the world's top performers -- from legendary musicians to intelligence operatives, iconoclastic writers to visionary change-makers.

We deconstruct the playbooks of the most successful people on earth -- and learn new strategies, perspectives, and insights you can't find anywhere else. Then, take these insights into your own life and live what you listen.

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