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MONTHLY INSPIRATION

Business Character

In business there are competitors. There's lots of confusion. Lots of conflicting ideas. A lot of complexity...

When laying down tracks and building businesses, I tell people "Be collaborative. Be caring. Do the very best you can. Know that not everyone will be a Right-Fit Client. Put information in front of anything you sell. Learn and study Great Marketing. Look at what people having success are doing." But maybe more importantly, "DO THE RIGHT THING versus do things right."

Jim Loehr wrote a book called "The Only Way To Win". It's a book about CHARACTER. I'm all for making as much money as you want to make, growing as big as you want, and achieving your desires and aspirations... but do it in a way where you never give anybody a reason to say you sold them crap or used scummy marketing. Don't sell stuff you wouldn't sell to the people you care about the most. Give people their money back when they are unhappy. Make your advertising VALUABLE. Put the information out to help people. Even if someone never hires you, teach them how to make informed, intelligent decisions. Most people that benefit from what I do have never paid me anything – and they won't pay me anything. But a handful will. I don't have fancy marketing for Genius Network®; I just try to be really useful and put out useful stuff.

Walt Disney said, "Do what you do so well that they will want to see it again and bring their friends." My sense is when you put your very best ideas into the world more people give back to you. If you have something valuable, it's only useful to the degree your communication ends up making it part of, and adds value to, their life. If there's anything I ultimately want to do for people, it's connecting them. Connect them with Ideas. Connect them with Skills. Connect them with Capabilities.

Before taking action, ask: What's the right thing to do?

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This Joe Polish Riff was brought to you by the
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5 Tips to Improve Your Networking Skills

People may be rusty after virtual events. How can they improve?

Due to the recent events of lockdowns and quarantines, in-person networking has been limited - if not removed completely. As a result, some of us may have gotten a little rusty on our pre-COVID wit. Here are a few things that may brush you up on skills you have been priorly accustomed to - or even encourage you to upgrade your habits to improve your networking game.

1. Ask Open Ended Questions

Conversations are between two individuals and should be conducted as such. What fun is a game of catch if you merely throw it up to yourself the whole time? I'll answer that for you – not fun at all. Engage with the person you are talking to and lead the situation into a progressive, enjoyable dialogue. An easy way to do that is always ask open ended questions. By asking “yes” or “no” questions you make an uncomfortably rigid conversation that most any sane person would want to back away from. You also gain no extra information than what you wish to know in the confines of your interrogation. The greatest connections sometimes come from the most unexpected places.

2. Listen

You may be the smartest person in the room, but you may not know that Jeremy Lin over in the corner has a cousin who is the owner of the company you are trying to connect with that would lead to an \$8 Million dollar offer. There are gajillions of things that we don't know. The point of several ancient philosophers encourage silence as a sign of wisdom. The purpose of networking is to connect – but you can't connect if you don't know what to connect. Every major opportunity I've had in my life came from listening. The more listening you do, the more obscure facts and connections you find that could solve the very problems you didn't realize you had.

3. Show Interest

The reason somebody is talking about something is because they care about it. You may not agree, and you may not share the same experiences, but their care should be respected as much as yours. Humans are social creatures, so it is no surprise that we feed off other's energy, especially if it is towards something we deeply enjoy or are associated with. Don't be fake or overly enthusiastic, but by you being encouraging and respectful you develop a comfortable and uplifting environment that networkers thrive in. When people are happy, they make great connections and even greater conversations.

Networking Skills continued...

4. Follow Up

A seemingly lost skill that brings out the greatest of rewards is merely following up. Studies have shown that people are substantially more likely to remember a picture, word, or phrase when they are presented these in succession. It may have been the greatest conversation of your life, but because neither party reconnected it stopped completely and may have even been forgotten entirely. After mulling over the essence of the prior conversation, following up would not only call the dialogue into recollection, but it may even spur forgotten resources that could be used to progress the connection into an even greater one. Keep in mind that the goal should always bring more value than what you receive. So don't approach merely for gain – but approach for growth.

5. Get Techy

As much as some may hate it, tech is an almost unavoidable necessity in the world of business today. Though you will not have successful networking skills without the prior points, technology is here to maximize efficiency with your already toned abilities. There are plenty of apps and websites that can help you stay in contact with your growing network. Scheduling applications help setup meeting times on the fly while video chat links can be attached to quickly designate times for conversation. Notification plugins can keep you adhere to a consistent follow up routine with your new connections. This and much more can maximize your efforts once the platform is learned. The skills of networking have been utilized and perfected since the dawn of man, but now is the easiest it has ever been to network with maximized working results both effectively and efficiently. ■

Featured Entrepreneur

Meet Agnes Chau

Not all entrepreneurial endeavors are centered around capitalism and profit. One such company that recently rose from the Covid pandemic is The Empowered Heart, located in Phoenix, AZ. **The Empowered Heart** is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization whose mission is to educate people, especially women, about strategies, tools, and techniques for self-defense, physical, mental and emotional well-being and empowering them to make a positive impact in their communities.

The visionary behind The Empowered Heart is Agnes Chau. Agnes was an engineering executive in the aerospace industry. Prior to COVID-19, Agnes had the vision to create The Empowered Heart and believed that destiny would guide her through the correct path. She incorporated in January 2020, a

corporate merger was then announced from her current employer in April 2020 and her position in the aerospace industry was eliminated in February. She also received her 501(c)3 status in February and felt comfortable receiving the proper “sign” that she was on the correct path to continue with her non-profit.

The Empowered Heart is focused on helping establish healthy balances in one's life by transforming emotions from fear-based to love-based. Programs currently being offered include: Self-defense for Women and Empowered Heart Circles. The self-defense portion teaches Gracie jiu-jitsu where the student learns 20 techniques to neutralize the most common threats to women in an assault. It also helps the student create a state of mind with the belief that your life is worth defending. Agnes also teaches how to tune into fre-



quencies for your well-being using a variety of methods.

Empowered Heart Circles are community gatherings for self-love and self-care to empower our hearts, minds, bodies and unleash the creator within. The intent is to help people regain power and to realize that they have more control of their life, and that happiness comes from within. ■

To learn more, visit theempoweredheart.org or email agnes@theempoweredheart.org



Gen Z Sees Largest Increase in Gig Works

Why is gig work appealing to teens?
What are the advantages?

The gig rush of Gen Z is here and it's taking the world by storm. During recent times, even a few years before Covid, the gig economy began to grow much bigger than it had in the past. Though gig work has been popular during every generation, the prioritization of gigs by our youngest Gen Z has started to put the idea of a full-time job on the backburner with growing gig success. This is entirely due to the new applications that have been programmed to ease the use of one's own assets, such as time and vehicles, and utilize them in a quick and easy gig to make instant cash.

Gen Z isn't the only one who has jumped on the growing wagon of gig work - but no other generation has prioritized it as a primary source of income as much as them.

Technology has made gigs so easily accessible that not only are they time efficient, but financially rewarding as well. As odd jobs in previous gener-

ations may have been abundant, the availability and payoffs were typically less. Now with newly advanced apps and websites, gigs can be strung together allowing individuals to work a part-time or full-time job whenever they choose. This allows flexibility in one's hours with no repercussions on their pay or value as an employee. Pay is also more cost effective than a typical hourly salary. Because of this, the tech-savvy Gen-Z has utilized the cost and timely benefits they receive from choosing what they want to do and when they want to do it.

This particularly appeals to Gen-Z because of their current tie-down to responsibilities with school and early work life. We will only have to wait to witness how this will affect the careers of full-time workers, part-time workers, and gig workers in the future. Without a doubt Gen-Z has prioritized gig-work the most, but how will this affect our future - if at all? ■

Exclusive Benefit

AFEUSA Member's Forum



Questions...
Answers...
Challenges...

Open only to AFEUSA members, this platform allows AFEUSA members to post various issues related to their business or idea and allows other members to comment or give advice/suggestions on how best to resolve those challenges.

To get started, log in to AFEUSA, select Membership Benefits, and click on the link to the Member's Open Forum. Be sure to read the Code of Conduct prior to posting any question or answer.

Let's start posting!

Take a Break



How to Plan for Retirement as a Gig Worker

Retirement. The time of your life that you look forward to since the day you started in the workforce. Heaven on Earth. No stress, soaking up the sunshine, all the golfing in the world, but most importantly no work.

While retirement is meant to be a beautiful harmonious phase of life, it takes years of preparation to ensure this financial stability is attainable. As a gig worker, you are either picking up jobs as slight side work, or you are in for some serious money. If you fall under the second option, do not fear, the gig economy is bursting at the seams with money opportunities to keep you on track toward your retirement dreams.

Embed retirement in your business plan. Have a wage in mind and charge your clients slightly above that line, intentionally putting the extra profit towards retirement.

Because the gig economy requires you to manage your finances, it already allows for a deep understanding on how to properly manage your money. You get the freedom to take charge of your finances unlike full-time jobs. Opening a Roth IRA is one of the simplest ways to start planning for retirement through gig work. The contribution limits are flexible, just as you like it!



A solo 401(k) allows for self-employers to manage and contribute to both sides of their retirement plan. Similarly, a SEP IRA (simplified employee pension) allows you to contribute as the employer rather than the employee making it more financially beneficial.

It is important to use your status of being a “gig worker” to its advantage. Several retirement plans grow tax-free for self-employed individuals! Take time to research what strategy works best for you.

The perfect time to start planning for your retirement heaven is *yesterday*. ■

We Want to Hear From **You!**

You are unique — so is your story.

AFEUSA is home to a community of successful entrepreneurs. We know that you likely listen to and read success stories from fellow business owners all the time, but have you ever thought that you might be a voice for others to listen to and learn from?

Would you like to be featured in our monthly newsletter?

For more information, contact Ashley Goshkarian, President of AFEUSA, at president@afeusa.org.



Is the **FLEX Economy** the new **GIG Economy**?

Big tech companies prevail in this economy and have for many years now. Many challenges arise from working under such a ruling and gig workers are fed up with exploitation from big tech.

the recent flex labor economy surpassing the gig economy?

The flex economy gives workers the autonomy to monetize their existing skills on their own time and set their

through freelancing. An individual can offer their skills such as building a website, writing a blog, creating promotional videos, etc. Gig Proposition 22 raised prices for rideshares while decreasing the pay of drivers and classifying them as “contractors” rather than “employees”. Unlike the gig economy, individuals in flex can set their expectations when partnering with a business and fall under worker protection.

Moving Forward

We are all drained from talk of COVID-19, but the inevitability of how our economy is forever changed is still prominent in how we live. Mobilizing jobs has become astonishingly popular, if not essential for individuals. American workers naturally desire to have the world accessible at their fingertips; gig work and flex work opens these doors. Depending on your degree of income and reliability, either one of these economies may suit your needs in this ever-changing world. ■



While gig workers have benefited from flexibility and individual productivity, they have been deprived of worker protection, employee benefits, and fair wages. The flex economy indulges in the dignity of an American economy booming with active participants and fair work. Is

wages. Similar to the gig economy, workers can either dive in full time, be more of a casual earner, or use their skills as a complete side-hustle.

The Flex Difference

Flex economy empowers both the individual and business with assets



For help finding a new job (flex, gig, or other) utilize your AFEUSA membership benefits with **Eric's Jobs** by visiting <https://afeusa.org/join-afeusa/membership-benefits/erics-jobs/>