



THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL



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“You say, good fortune should meet you at every corner. But the fortunate person is the one who gives themselves a good fortune. And good fortunes are well-tuned social contacts, goodwill and good actions.”-**Marcus Aurelius, Meditations, 5.36**

The Key topics



- Development of your personal goodwill.
- Stability in employment.
- How 'japa' destroys social capital



What is Social Contact?

- Man is a social animal. Aristotle famously said, **“he who lives without society is either a beast or God.”** We were made to interact and socialise with one another. “Social” means relating to society while “Contact” involves meeting or communicating with someone. Social contact refers to the connection between persons and groups. For social contact, social proximity (mental contact) is essential.
- Examples of social capital are social ties of personal relationships, and professional connections.



Where did the concept of Social Capital come from?

There are 3 influential figures who helped develop our modern understanding of social capital:

- Pierre Bourdieu was the first to define social capital theory in 1985. He sought to understand how the upper classes maintained their statuses — he didn't believe economic capital could be the only reason. Instead, he argued that a lack of social capital prevented social mobility and reinforced social inequalities.
- Not too long after, sociologist James Coleman also wrote about social capital. He discussed how social capital was just one tool that humans had available to them as a resource, alongside tools (physical capital), their own skills or inventions (human or intellectual capital), and money (economic capital).
- Finally, Robert Putnam, a professor of public policy at Harvard University, is now known as the modern face of Social Capital Theory. Capital Theory.



Some people profit from socialising, while others don't. Some do not understand what it is to socialise and how to use social contacts for their benefit. Some people erroneously believe that because they know someone, they are entitled to that person's assistance when they have not invested in that relationship.

“Never underestimate the empowering effect of human connection.” – **Drishti Bablani.**



“Let all your efforts be directed to something, let it keep that end in view. It’s not an activity that disturbs people, but false conceptions of things that drive them mad.” – **Seneca, on the tranquillity of mind.**

- Plan all the way to the end. Gently guide fortune and help determine the future by thinking far ahead.
- Begin with an end in mind. Having an end in mind is no guarantee that you’ll reach it, but not having an end in mind is a guarantee you won’t.
- When your efforts are not directed at a cause or a purpose, how will you know what to do day in and day out?



How do you develop Social Contact?

- “Eventually everything connects – people, ideas, objects. The quality of the connections is the key to success” -**Chief Abiola Oshodi**.
- If you feel like you’re the awkward person at social events or you struggle to enter into conversations because you’re shy, it can impact your social life and your career.
- “interactions are valuable ways of accumulating social capital.” — **Juliana Barbassa**.



360 Degree Social Contact Development:

Horizontal (with peers within and outside industry), vertical upwards (those more senior), vertical downwards (those more junior).



Ask Yourself:

- Who are my social friends?
- In what ways have I benefitted from these interactions?
- Am I the highest or most successful amongst them or are they my peers or above me?



You develop Social Contact by

1. Knowing who is relevant to your life. Unlike family which we cannot choose, we can choose our friends, neighbours and acquaintances.
2. Target your social contacts. – met club crescent bearers example
3. Improve your emotional intelligence.
4. Practice effective communication skills.
5. Offer compliments generously.

Just like I do. Compliments can be a great way to open the door to a conversation. Offer a co-worker a compliment on a presentation he gave at a meeting or compliment your neighbour on his new car. Compliments can show others that you are friendly.





6. Read the news; stay up to date on current news.
7. Encourage Others to Talk About Themselves.
8. Practice Good Manners - Good manners go a long way in improving social skills. Practice being polite, showing gratitude, and using good table manners. Develop your listening skills.
9. Watching the wise – the role of wise people in our lives is to serve as a model and inspiration. To bounce our ideas off and test our presumptions. Who that person will be for you is up to you, your father or mother. But pick someone, watch what they do (and what they don't do), and do your best to do the same.



How do you sustain Social Contact?

“If you want to go fast go alone. if you want to go far, go together”.- **African Proverb**

You must invest in relationships. you invest time, energy, and in some cases money in your social capital. When you see people's needs and invest ahead, you will be able to leverage those investments in future.

“Even five-minute meaningful conversations with other people not only fuel us at the moment but also build up a reserve of social capital so that when hard times strike, we can draw down on that bank account.”- **Michelle Gielan.**





You invest in relationships to build your Social Capital by doing the following:

- Stay connected to people.
- Get involved with your community.
- Spend time with people.
- Go out and spend time with your network connections and share experiences and perspectives.
- Be a good listener.
- Be friendly, offer assistance, do favours for others, and be trustworthy and kind.
- Spend money and time.
- Open “doors” for others.

The Networking Fallacy.



- Unfortunately, many people take a limited view of social capital – seeing it as simply being a large network of contacts. i.e. knowing a lot of people. They ignore the other important aspects of social capital such as the quality of those relationships.
- You can have a huge network of friends and Not a Single Ounce of Social goodwill or Capital.
- These people take a selfish view of relationships, thinking only about how it can benefit them, whereas, building social capital not only considers the benefits to a person but how they can be beneficial to others as well.





The Networking Fallacy cont'd

These people are operating in the context of ego and individualism, and for many people this can be difficult to change. This is because the dominant mindset is 'rationality'. They tend to calculate utility, or usefulness, from their own perspective, thinking of immediate and future benefit for themselves, while devaluing or ignoring the costs and benefits for others, including other species and ecosystems.



Some others believe “since I am in paid employment and my salary or motivation is constant ... I don’t need to either network or acquire social capital... so long as I do my work well...”

Is this correct?



What is Employment?

- The Oxford Dictionary defines employment as the state of having paid work. Beyond this, employment is also about the development of social contact.
- For me, employment is the platform to achieving your life goals. The short-term objective of employment is to meet your immediate financial needs while the long-term objective is to act as a springboard to aid the attainment of your life goals.



What does Stability in Employment mean?

Job stability is the duration for which an employee stays with their current job without disruption.

The benefits of Stability in Employment are:

1. Actualising your life goals.
2. Consistent salary payments.
3. Increased skill development possibilities.
4. Opportunities for career advancement.



Relevance between Employment, Social and Professional Capital/Contact

- Social capital may not be a phrase you have heard before, and even if you have you may not really know what it means. Social capital is a combination of words that don't seem to belong together. How can 'social' be 'capital'? This can be rather perplexing on first consideration.
- Shonna Waters, PhD defined Social capital **"as the capital or resources we gain from existing within a social network."** Social capital is the practical outcome of informal interactions between people that can be attributed to networking in the business world. It's a concept from social science that's centered on our ability to leverage social connections in order to solve problems, improve well-being, pursue shared objectives, and take collective action.



- Higher levels of social capital mean you can achieve more, as an individual.
- Lower levels, or fewer social connections, will make it much harder to achieve the same goals.
- At the most basic level, social capital is the network of relationships invested among people who live and work in a community.



For me, employment should be a platform to build up a network for yourself. Those in private business will always need people, so what do you do?

While you're there, you ensure that you build up a good reputation for yourself:

- Amongst your colleagues so that they can speak for you.
- Amongst your professional colleagues so that whenever they see you, their impression of you is that you are brilliant and smart.
- Ensure to expand your friendships beyond the office and their clients.
- Build up a social contact that can work for you even beyond employment.

Some people become greedy and corrupt in their employment and by the time they leave the employment, they have no goodwill left to leverage on and no one to help them.



Social capital, integrity and the importance of having a good name – some names in law are associated with excellence and hard work.

. Prof Konyinsola Ajayi SAN example

How do you develop Personal Goodwill?



You cannot touch goodwill, but it is one of the most valuable assets. Although goodwill is intangible, it is a valuable asset. There is business goodwill and personal (or professional) goodwill. Personal goodwill is directly, attributable to an individual's characteristics or attributes. It does not only include the person's skills, knowledge and reputation but also their contacts and relationships. Personal goodwill is not saleable.



- Attend their events
 - Yusuf Alli, SAN event, ST Hon event at Abuja
- Show concern/care
- Never wait until you need them.

Social capital and personal goodwill – any difference?



- Personal goodwill enables and strengthens social contact. One leads to the other.
- Tristan Claridge postulates that social capital relates to goodwill, benevolence, and cooperation, and to personal characteristics of duty, respect, loyalty, solidarity, service, compromise, restraint, patience, tolerance, understanding, self-discipline, compassion, responsibility, friendship, perseverance, honesty, trust, faith, and numerous others.
- For an individual good social capital is about having lots of strong positive relationships with people in diverse positions from diverse backgrounds engendered with goodwill, trust, reciprocity, and norms of cooperation.
- Put simply a high level of social capital is to have a good relationship with a lot of people who have access to valuable, and different resources. Resources can be physical (such as financial capital) or can be social (such as connections to other people).



How does 'japa' destroy it?

Imagine someone who has spent 5 years building social contacts and investing in relationships in this environment. By japaing, you have abandoned those social contacts and connections to go to another environment to start again.





How does 'japa' destroy it?

- Compared with a person who stayed back and continued leveraging on 5 years' worth of social contacts and connections, who now has a springboard, while the person who leaves has to start over, the person who stays has levitated beyond the current social contacts and moves higher.
- Once you remove yourself from an environment, you have to start all over again.
- **"Winners Never Quit & Quitters Never Win" – Vince Lombardi.**
- **"Defeat doesn't finish a man, quitting does. A man is finished when he quits." - Richard Nixon.**



Disadvantages of Working Abroad

- A lot of financial capital is required.
- Higher taxes.
- lack of stability.
- Cultures different from your own.
- There is no guarantee of getting a good position in another country.
- Could be a cap to your prospects
- Employment can develop your personal goodwill and exiting a stable job to japa can destroy that by any of these disadvantages.



What is your view on the
Importance of Social Capital





“You get what you deserve. Instead of being a good person today, you choose instead to become one tomorrow.”

- **Marcus Aurelius.**

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Thank You