



that something special happens when people are together; earlier this year she mandated that company employees work in the office in lieu of working virtually from home. She said she enacted the policy to promote exciting ideas, noting at a conference in April that people are “more collaborative and innovative when they’re together.”

Business Travelers Go the Extra Mile

I have noticed that the number of million-mile business travelers has increased; perhaps because sales and high-level executives know the importance of going the distance to meet their clients. Personal encounters, including hand-shaking, establish and set the tone for business relationships.

In meetings, some of my clients include associates from around the world. They expect members of their team, including executives, sales representatives, office staff and managers, to meet, mingle, connect, engage and converse. Executives want to build team spirit, and so they foster cross-platform and cross-division communication.

Tech Tactics

Still, staying in contact virtually to share facts and data makes sense. Skype, FaceTime, GoToMeeting and web-based conferences provide users with an opportunity to have a visual presence. However, these types of virtual connections, while beneficial, are not the ideal substitute for in-person communications. If you embrace the opportunity to build rapport, trust and connections with people, you will glean the unexpected benefits that only occur as a result of face-to-face communication. **T**

SUSAN ROANE is a speaker and the author of *How to Work a Room and Face to Face: How to Reclaim the Personal Touch in a Digital World*. For more information, or to take her *Schmooze Quotient Quiz*, visit www.susanroane.com or Twitter @SusanRoAne.

Are You Digitally Dependent?

Millennials: Unplug yourselves to form meaningful connections.

BY RYAN JENKINS, ACB

Ever had this internal conversation: Why meet when you can call? Why call when you can email? Why email when you can text? Why text when you can tweet? I have this internal conversation daily.

For many millennials (people born in the 1980s or 1990s, according to Merriam-Webster), the art of face-to-face communication seems archaic and outdated, since we can shoot off a text or tweet in a few finger flicks, or connect with a group instantly via Google+ Hangouts. However, face-to-face communication is alive and well; if used correctly it can make you stand out in today’s crowded talent pool.

In my studies as a millennial speaker, different generations have varying communication preferences. Younger generations prefer high-tech while older generations prefer high-touch (aka face-to-face communication). Many of today’s hiring managers and decision makers are seasoned leaders who still prefer to connect in person before making decisions. Give yourself the best shot to succeed by harnessing both high-tech and high-touch communication.



Millennials can boost their careers by learning how to connect genuinely offline.

Connect Online and Offline

I get feedback all the time that millennials miss opportunities for promotions or closing deals due to their lack of offline connection skills. I urge you to become a “double threat,” someone who can connect quickly online *and* connect genuinely offline. (To the older generations reading this article: The pendulum swings both ways, and you may need to stretch yourselves to become more agile in your high-tech communication abilities.)

Offline communication can take a multitude of forms, such as one-on-one meetings, team meetings, conferences, parties, impromptu connections and live speeches. Each situation has its own ripe opportunity to make an impression and solidify a connection. Elevate your influence with the five rules of face-to-face communication, which apply whether you are on the receiving or delivering end.

1 Be prepared. Face-to-face communication deserves forethought. Every communication (whether offline or online) has a purpose. Spend time before such an interaction to gather your

MAKING CONNECTIONS

thoughts and establish the purpose and desired outcome. I recommend using the app Evernote to capture any necessary information before, during and after the communication. If you use your smartphone to take notes, inform the individual so she doesn't mistake you for rudely texting during the conversation.

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2 Be present. Face-to-face communication deserves full attention. Much like when we drive a car, if we allow our mobile devices to distract us, the likelihood of veering off course increases dramatically. Effective preparedness and intentional note taking will help you stay on track. Establish strong eye contact. Resist the urge to multitask. Silence your

phone, and do not check it unless you are expecting an urgent message. (If you are, mention it before you start conversing.)

3 Be responsive. Face-to-face communication deserves full participation. Great conversation is like a tennis match: One person serves up his thoughts and the other reciprocates, back and forth, back and forth. But in order to successfully hit the ball over the net, you must be paying close attention to every detail of the communicator's words, body language and tone of voice. Add to the dialogue with relevant questions, stories, analogies, thoughts or facts.

4 Be concise. Face-to-face communication deserves brevity. These days, people have more than they can handle, so be respectful and keep your communication succinct. Building rapport with small talk can be helpful, but limit it to less than five minutes. Put a time limit on the conversation so you both can stay on point.

5 Be consistent. Face-to-face communication deserves the real you.

Social media enables us to create online personal brands that allow others to learn more about us. Many people will search for you online so they can size you up. Make sure your online presence communicates who you truly are.

Time will tell how new technology such as augmented reality or holograms will alter how we communicate in person in the future; but for today, face-to-face communication resonates with many of today's leaders. Arm yourself with these five rules today and thrive tomorrow. **T**

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