

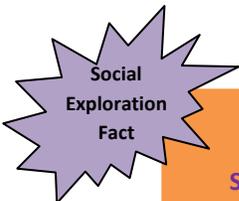
# Social Exploration<sup>®</sup> - The Next Generation of Networking

Flowork International, LCC

The latest research findings indicate that the majority of people have a difficult time connecting with others, especially individuals that they are not familiar with. Simple verbal instructions through traditional networking activities have had limited impact on these individuals' behavior, nor do these activities encourage an individual to explore the resources which exist within the network itself or even within themselves. In addition, other researchers have found that due to the rapidly increasing interconnectedness of modern society, this skill set is becoming critical to success. Although, traditional ways of teaching networking have provided some support, the need for a more systematic approach is needed, particularly in the area of specific goal setting and linking these goals to specific network resources.

So what are we to do?

One answer is Social Exploration<sup>®</sup>, the next generation, researched based, internationally proven system which takes the nebulous concept of networking and systematizes it into a teachable, accountable, and repeatable process. The Social Exploration<sup>®</sup> concept is a multi-phase system that has successfully been applied in both the for-profit and the non-profit sector. It has been used to capitalize on the potential that exists within an individual's social network to improve on-the-job performance. In other words, teach individuals to tap into the resources which exist within their network to help accomplish the goals they set; regardless of whether they are personal or career related.



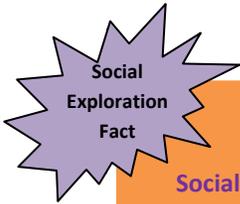
**Traditional Networking:** *Networkers say they have to be a people person to be successful at networking*

**Vs.**

**Social Exploration:** *Social Explorers focus on their own capabilities and what they bring to the relationship*

Before getting into the nuts and bolts of the system a few definitions are needed.

- Social networks - a set of people (or organizations or other social entities) connected by a series of inter-connected social relationships, such as friendship, co-working or information exchange.
- Network resources – the collection of skills and experiences of members in a network that have the potential to assist members of the network in achieving their respective goals.
- Social capital – network resources that have been identified and fully explored; that also has been accessed, and can be utilized.

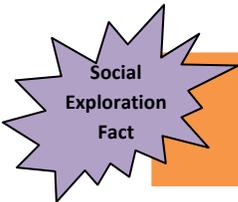


**Traditional Networking:** *Networkers know that better networkers have many contacts*

**Vs.**

**Social Exploration:** *Social Explorers know that it's more important to know as much as possible about the contacts they have*

- Networking – the act of making contact with an individual to explore each others network resources for the possible accomplishment of a specific goal.
- Social Explorer – a person who recognize his full potential to contribute to social networks, has the ability to garner knowledge about the network resources around herself, can develop tactics to gain access to these resources, and is able to utilize those resources as social capital.
- Social Exploration<sup>®</sup> - both a philosophy and an applied training system designed to assist in the development of the individual (or organization) to maximize his/her potential as a social explorer and to develop lifelong mutually beneficial relationships with each contact in his/her network.

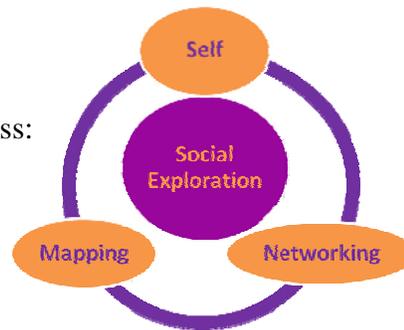


**Traditional Networking:** *Networkers know how to read others well*

**Vs.**

**Social Exploration:** *Social Explorers know themselves*

**Social Exploration** is a three phase process:



(1) **SELF- Networking Skill Assessment** - this assessment serves as the foundation to develop an action plan for networking skill improvement. It is based on extensive research which has identified seven crucial skills for successful networking. Another outcome of this assessment is the determination of what type of social explorer you currently are. This is viewed as a current snapshot of your networking behavior rather than a reflection on your networking ability. During this phase of self-examination the new “social explorer” is taken on a very systematic

<p><b>Strategic Social Explorer</b> These individuals think long term and tend to recognize and capitalize on the <b>potential</b> of people in their network.</p>	<p><b>Strategic Individual Explorer</b> These individuals think long term and tend to look <b>inwardly</b> for the solutions to their problems.</p>
<p><b>Non-Strategic Social Explorer</b> These individuals enjoy working and playing in groups but tend to <b>not</b> capitalize on the potential resources which may exist within their social networks.</p>	<p><b>Non-Strategic Individual Explorer</b> These individuals tend to <b>not seek</b> out the company of others and they also have a tendency to <b>not think</b> long term.</p>

exploration of his/her goals. These discovered and articulated goals are a key component of the next phase of social exploration

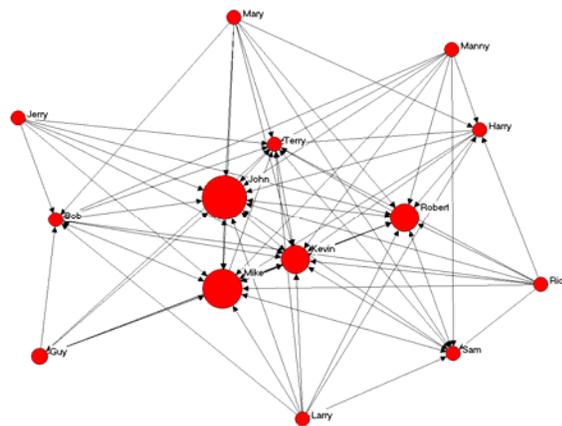
Social Exploration Phase 2	
Process	Action Step
Assign Individual to Specific Goal	Map out network with individuals assigned to specific goals
Identify Individuals in the social network not assigned to specific goals	Develop an interview plan to better know these individuals and ensure they know you
Identify goals not assigned to individuals	Re-examine goals for clarity, once established re-examine network and expand the network if needed

**(2) Network Auditing/Mapping** - using similar examination techniques the social explorer is now lead on a journey which involves mapping out your social networks, but in the very specific context of the goals identified in the previous phase. That is the identified goals are now compared and assigned to

specific individuals who can assist in the achievement of these goals. The social explorer then begins to map out others who are in his/her network but are not assigned to goals. Research indicates the normal cause of this non-assignment to a particular goal is a lack of knowledge about the individual. So an action plan is developed to get to know this person better so that they can help the explored and you can help them. Finally the SE examines the remainder of the goals that were developed in the previous step but have not been assigned to a particular individual. The normal problem in these cases is a lack of clarity about the goal so a careful examination of the goal is conducted. Once clarity is assured then the social network of the individual is examined and possibly expanded to meet the need of this goal.

**(3) Networking** – in the Social Explorer’s model of this activity a plan is developed for each goal and contact and a systematic methodology “My Flowwork Manager” is used to ensure “nothing” is missed. Each step of what is an intuitive process is well defined and perhaps most importantly is transparent.

Individuals using this system are accountable to themselves, a small group they might be assigned to, or their teacher for the results or lack of results they have in moving an opportunity towards goal attainment. This tool is viewed as the training wheels that will help a student transform herself into a fully functioning “Social Explorer” – one who can capitalize on his potential network resources and give back in a meaningful way to those in her network.



So what does this mean? First it means that soft-skill networking behavior modification training has been specifically developed for individuals, but even more importantly, the skills developed in this training do not stop at any one specific activity, rather this skill-set is something that can

and will have a positive impact on every aspect of a person's life. Because as the research proves and our life experiences bear out – we cannot escape our networks – so the question is not are we in social networks, but rather how well do we all perform in those networks.



**Traditional Networking:** *Networkers get jobs*

**Vs.**

**Social Exploration:** *Social Explorers continue to get to know the new contacts they meet on the job*

