Networking For The Benefit Of Others

In this resource we encourage students to network for the benefit of other people. Not only is this an effective self-promotion tool; it also seems to alleviate much of the embarrassment students feel when they first approach networking. This resource could be incorporated into the Speed Dating activities.

ANGELA’S POST

Angela Beeching (Manhattan School Of Music) has been a long-time member of The TILE Approach community and recently posted an attractive alternative to the usual networking ideas.

Angela’s post describes how her friend, composer/bassonist John Steinmetz, observed someone networking at a conference and realised the person “wasn’t promoting his own work so much as connecting people with each other. As a result, everybody stopped by to say hello to him.” The observation was made that helping other people to connect increases one’s value ‘to the ecosystem’.

Angela remarks that is a great way of thinking about your entire career. If you focus on yourself, you may view other people as competitors rather than colleagues; however,

“If on the other hand you see your mission as being a partner in building the creative life of your community, you may become not just a better collaborator and citizen but a happier person! Not only that, you may also find more opportunities. By focusing on the needs of others, you will naturally notice in what ways you can be of service—both as a person and as a professional.”

“Let’s remember that the measurable value of our work lies in its perceived value by others. As John reminds us, we are part of an ecosystem. Our quality of life is all about our relationships within our interwoven communities: our web of family, friends, colleagues, business contacts, customers, and clients.”

Angela’s challenge is to encourage students to turn their attention from themselves and their own career goals to the needs of those around them - their professional community. They need to shift their focus and see what happens.