

Connect and Build



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It is an amazing feeling to wake up each and every day doing what you like (love) with the people you like (love). Well, it may not be a daily feeling, but let's frame it in terms of "much more often than not."

For the past 2+ years, I have stared down the uncertainty of an entrepreneurial journey, squashed what I had believed to be risk aversion, and given myself a shot at a life that I otherwise did not know was possible. As such, I am often asked what is the secret ingredient for success? Or how have you been able to do it?

Secret Revealed

For me, the answer is simple. It is the combination of Relationships (equal parts of constant cultivation, commitment, and compassion) and Passion (that motivational feeling that comes naturally).

The 24/7 access to information demands that we work even harder to connect with others.

Pedigree, Job Title, Years-In-Service...these are pertinent and can be what you lean on as critical success factors to obtaining your next promotion. Looking at it through a different lens, though, don't miss the opportunity to use every acquaintance as the springboard to a door that

is ajar. A door that embraces your passion! A door that leverages your wisdom! A door that networks your relationships!

Consider These

Here are a few considerations when presented with a chance to pivot from a work discussion to a personal connection:

- Doing business in (and among) the public and private sectors is less about the service offering and more about the trusted relationship. Nurturing these partnerships takes time, yet it will be time well spent.

- Accepting what you DO NOT KNOW can inspire a zeal to learn and, better yet, allow your colleagues to teach. It is admitting that I can't boil the ocean of knowledge that has made all the difference.

- In the working world, individuals are labeled Supervisor, CEO, Director. In life, these same people are Mom, Granddad, Friend. Titles are simply words. Human beings have feelings, undetected passions. Connect on a human level and opportunities result.

- Establishing a personal connection with someone can happen in an instant and can be the differentiator. They kind of feel like "light-bulb" moments. And shared interests pave new roads for success.

Sustainable Connections

During my 25-year run in the Federal Government, I generated a rolodex of colleagues across government, industry, academia, and investor domains, to name a few. And while my collegial index has expanded exponentially in my post-Federal career, I attribute my professional formation to these unique and sustainable connections.

As the Internet of Everything exponentially evolves and seeks to transform our lives and economies, the result is 24/7 accessibility to information. This is the new normal. As such, this phenomenon demands that we work (yes, it takes work) to connect with others.

Dots and Bridges may be three simple words, yet what they represent is a universal idiom: Connecting Dots and Building Bridges. It is both subliminal and explicit. We all maintain the capacity to do it. Make it a priority. Ignite your passion, and it will become infectious!

Every day I am mindful of those colleagues that have partnered with me for the past 27+ for their friendship, trust, and authenticity. I look forward to continued collaboration with these (and future) amazing individuals and fueling our mutual passions. Net Net...Relationships plus Passion trump any grind, seven days a week and twice on Sunday! ■

Pete Tseronis spent 25 years in the Federal government and was the Department of Energy's (DoE) first-ever appointed Chief Technology Officer (CTO). In this role, Pete served as an innovation advocate for the technology transfer and commercialization of intellectual property, was an effective and credible collaborator across the international research and development community, and leveraged intellect within the national laboratory enterprise to catalyze economic competitiveness.