

Coworker Friendships Are Underrated

If you've worked in a startup, the coworker connections you've made through the years are some of the most valuable assets you've collected – probably even more than those stock options you have.

And yet, coworker friendships don't get the respect that they deserve. Just because they're classified with the 9 to 5, many people write off these social ties as somehow less valuable than the friendships we form over ping-pong or football or video games outside of work. The way some people talk about it, it's a shameful thing if you don't have many friends outside of work.

But (if you have good work), your coworkers are the people who get to experience some of the highest highs and lowest lows of your life. They see you at your best and worst. They face down the same challenges with you. And together, you've probably done some things you didn't think were possible for you.

These are better than “pals” and acquaintances. They are comrades and fellow journeyers.

Even better, they don't have to put up with the same bullshit from you that your friends do. Your relationships with them are based around a shared mission and a shared set of values which that mission comes from. That's a strong lasting foundation for an alliance with someone.

You realize how valuable coworker friendships are when you reunite with former teammates.

If you have old coworkers you haven't spoken to in a while, take some time to reconnect with them. Tell old war stories and reminisce. But don't stop there.

Odds are, if your old coworkers were doing something interesting when they were working with you, they're doing something cool now. And the same things that made them great comrades on the job will make them great comrades as you go forward in your career.

You never know where your path will take you. Support each other. Help each other do cool things. There are few enough competent people in the world, and there are few enough people who care about the work they do. Be an ally to the people who are. Make your coworker friendships last.