

Don't Be Afraid to Be Interesting

Nearly every significant business connection I've made has been because of my deep love of ideas.

The value of my radical, ideas-based network dwarfs that of my pure business/practical connections.

I spent most of the first ten years of my "professional" life getting lost in ideas. When I began fundraising, and then started Praxis, it was my deep love and knowledge of ideas and obscure thinkers thought brought the greatest returns – including both rounds of angel investment, pretty much all Praxis team members, nearly all my speaking gigs, and all of our best business partners.

It's not that hard to find business-savvy networkers, so those who try to access high-value people using that alone face steep competition. People who are both building things AND deeply philosophical have a huge advantage, because many high-value people are also deeply philosophical, and they love to talk ideas.

Don't underestimate the profound practical value of chasing ideas with abandon. Not name-dropping, angling type of idea-chasing. That is repugnant and can be smelled from a mile away. Genuine seeking.

Don't be afraid to be radical either. Stuff I've openly written and spoken about unschooling or anarchy have brought more high-value connections to me than the safer stuff, and though they doubtless ward some people off, the ones they attract tend to be better connections anyway.

My takeaway? Don't be afraid to be interesting. Don't hedge in pursuit of truth.