Keeping Current

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The Power of Generosity: Why Helping Others is Your Best Career Investment

The **true power** of your professional network isn't measured by how many connections you have—it's measured by how many lives (and careers) you've positively impacted.

In a world obsessed with personal branding, metrics, and "what's in it for me," one principle stands out as both timeless and surprisingly effective: **using your network to help others first**.
Here's why making generosity your default networking mode is one of the smartest long-term investments you can make in your career.

1. Reciprocity Is Real (and Research-Backed)
The principle of reciprocity—when you help someone without expecting immediate return, people feel inclined to return the favor—is deeply wired into human behavior. Studies and countless career anecdotes show that professionals who actively make introductions, share advice, provide referrals, or offer feedback build stronger, more resilient networks.
When you help others land opportunities, solve problems, or gain visibility, you're not just being kind—you're depositing goodwill into a relational bank account that often pays unexpected dividends years later.

2. It Builds Trust Faster Than Any Elevator Pitch
People remember how you made them feel far more than what you told them about yourself. When someone reaches out for help and you respond thoughtfully—whether it's reviewing their resume, connecting them with the right person, or sharing an insight—you establish yourself as trustworthy and generous.

Trust compounds. Trusted connectors get pulled into more conversations, invited to more opportunities, and recommended more often.

3. It Expands Your Network Organically
Helping others introduces you to *their* networks. When you make a warm introduction or give meaningful advice, you're often thanked publicly (hello, LinkedIn shout-outs), tagged in conversations, or simply remembered as the person who "made it happen."
This creates a virtuous cycle: your network grows not because you're constantly asking for things, but because you're the person others want to keep close.

4. It Makes You More Resilient in Uncertain Times
Career paths are rarely linear. Layoffs, industry shifts, pivots—challenges come for everyone. The people who weather them best almost always have a strong, reciprocal network behind them.
And guess who tends to have the strongest support? Those who consistently showed up for others when times were good.

5. It Feels Good (and Performance Improves)
Helping others releases endorphins, reduces stress, and gives a deeper sense of purpose. Professionals who regularly support their network report higher career satisfaction and even better focus in their own roles.

When you're generous, you're not just building relationships—you're building a healthier, more motivated version of yourself.

Practical Ways to Start Today

- **Make one introduction per week** — Connect two people in your network who could benefit from knowing each other.
- **Respond to "reach-outs" thoughtfully** — Even if you can't help directly, offer advice or point them in the right direction.
- **Share knowledge freely** — Post an article that helped you, comment with genuine insight, or DM someone a relevant resource.
- **Celebrate others publicly** — Shout out a colleague's win, endorse skills, or congratulate promotions.
- **Offer help proactively** — If you see someone posting about a job search, career transition, or challenge, send a quick note: "Saw your post—happy to chat if it would help."

Networking isn't about collecting contacts. It's about creating value.

The most connected people I know aren't the ones with the biggest follower counts—they're the ones who quietly (or not so quietly) help others succeed.

So next time someone asks for 15 minutes of your time, an introduction, or your perspective—say yes when you can.

You might just change their trajectory.

And in ways you can't yet see, you'll be changing yours too.

What’s one small way you’ve helped someone in your network recently?