

Lecture 6: Foci

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Sociology 204: Social Networks, Spring 2021
Princeton University

1/3: Lois Weisberg and social structure



Review

- ▶ growth + preferential attachment \rightarrow power law degree distribution

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- ▶ some (but not all) real networks have a power law degree distribution

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- ▶ networks with power law degree distribution are robust to random failure but fragile to targeted attack
- ▶ “hubs” seem important



Her story connects 2 ideas: power law degree distributions and foci

Source: www.wbez.org

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A key point is that these people don't know each other. That enables Lois to be a “broker.”



Michael Simmons
Contributor

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The No. 1 Predictor Of Career Success According To Network Science

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It has been over three years since [Steve Jobs](#) died.

Since then, books have been written and movies have been made.

Each has celebrated his legacy and aimed to share the secrets he used to build the largest company in the world; things like attention to detail, attracting world-class talent and holding them to high standards.

We think we understand what caused his success.

We don't.

We dismiss usable principles of success by labeling them as personality quirks.

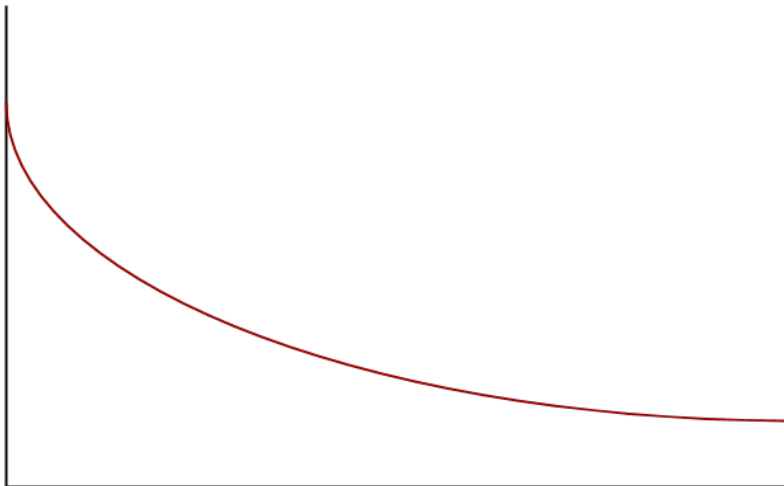
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Source: [http:](http://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelsimmons/2015/01/15/this-is-the-1-predictor-of-career-success-according-to-network-science/)

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Relative Performance

(compensations, evaluation, promotion)



large, open network where you are the link between people from different clusters.



small, closed network where you are connected to people who already know each other.



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Do Open Networks Boost Your Odds of Success?

Posted January 23rd, 2015 @ 8:46am in [#success](#)

Every time I hear of a study suggesting that doing (whatever) is important for success, I ask myself if the authors interpreted the correlations correctly.

And I rarely think they did.

Take for example this [recent article](#) describing how people with "open networks" are far more successful than those with "closed networks." In this context, it means that the more new ideas you are exposed to, the more likely you are a success.

That interpretation makes perfect sense to me. Seeing lots of new ideas is probably a good thing in most situations.

But another interpretation is that the folks with the personalities and resources to succeed are more likely to also have open networks. It doesn't necessarily mean one causes the other.

The good people manufacturing mature products, such as concrete,

STRUCTURAL HOLES

The Social Structure of Competition

RONALD S. BURT

How does Lois Weisberg's story—and the readings more generally—change how we should think about networks?

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Combines:

- ▶ network structure
- ▶ social structure