1.  How much time do you spend with people that you already know well?  How much time do you spend meeting new people and being in novel situations—in other words, making “weak” rather than strong ties?  What might you do to expand your number of weak ties and diversify your social network?

I spend about 7 hours a week with people I know from friends to close colleagues. Unfortunately, I don’t spend more time meeting new people because of my job and family responsibilities along with my part time MBA.

I think I need to get out of my comfort zone and go to meetups for events outside my work interests. I have identified a few opportunities that I can take advantage of, such as my office quarterly event where I can go and network with people outside my immediate work circle and expand my network. I am also taking up gardening so I’m thinking of going to local meetups for gardening and taking some classes at Home Depot to meet people who I wouldn’t normally meet.

2. Given your career objectives, list some (at least 5 preferably more) specific people and/or companies and roles within them that you would benefit from knowing that are:

            1) in the company you are going to work for (if you know that)

            2) in the industry in which you plan to begin your career

            3) in the geography (country, state, and city/area) where you contemplate living

For each individual, and the list should include at least 5-10 individuals, by when, and how, are you going to actually meet them?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Company | People | Notes |
| Salesforce | Chi Ejim (Director, Solution Engineering at Salesforce) | Chi used to work in my company ‘Slalom’ and has now moved on to Salesforce and is at a pretty good position. I am connected to him through Linkedin but I haven’t talked to him in a while. I’m hoping to connect with him over the phone and ask him to help with my career progression.  I will send him an email early March since I have my end of year conversations (bonus, pay raise) at my company going on till February end. |
| Amazon | Laurel Jones (Senior Technical Product Manager) | Laurel used to work at Slalom and then moved to Amazon a while back. I am connected to her through LinkedIn. I want to ask Laurel to be my mentor in my career progression. I am trying to see if I can pivot to Amazon and ask her to refer me for one of the jobs. I will send her an email early March since I have my end of year conversations (bonus, pay raise) at my company going on till February end. |
| Google | Nitish Murthy (Product lead at Google – ML) | Nitish is a UTD alumni and currently working at Google. Like Laurel I am connected to him through LinkedIn. I want to ask Nitish to be my mentor in my career progression. I am trying to see if I can pivot to Google and ask him to refer me for one of the jobs. I will send him an email early March since I have my end of year conversations (bonus, pay raise) at my company going on till February end. |
| Southwest | Sidd Ruchandani (Solutions Architect) | Sidd and I have worked on many projects together and I have reached out to him many times for a career related discussion. Sidd is aware of the many frustrations, and I feel comfortable sharing my concerns with him openly. I intend to touch base with him again mid-March to talk through my career progression. |
| PWC | Abhi Ambadkar (Director) | Abhi and I worked together at Slalom and I had good connection with him. Our thought process matched and I felt comfortable working with him. He has since moved on to PWC and is a director there. I want to reach out to him to be my mentor and ask him to guide me in my career decision. Again, I hope to reach out to him mid-March. |
| Thanawalla Digital | Moyez Thanawalla | Worked with Moyez on a non-profit project and had good rapport with him. But its been a while and I need to reconnect with him.   1. Need to talk to him to be my mentor since he has been successful in opening his own salesforce firm. 2. I like his posts that he puts in Linkedin since we have common interests. I could offer to proofread or add to those articles given my expertise in Salesforce. |

3. If effective networking is based on the principle of generosity (what you are providing the other), in each instance, for each individual that you want to meet, what can you provide the individual you want to connect with?  Do not underestimate the importance of being able to provide information, the ability to feel useful and helpful, the ability to give back, the importance of social similarity, and the idea that by helping you the person might enhance their own feelings of self-worth.

Provide them with my expertise in my domain. Work with them to organize events of their choice. Understand their requirements and help them get a better understanding of the market. Offer them my service to help them with writing articles and / or proof reading their work to give them feedback if they are open.

4. What can you do to make yourself more central in networks that are professionally important to you?

 Be part of the organizing committee of meetups and conventions/events so that I must be part of the conversation always. I wanted to be part of a Salesforce meetup and I know people organizing it ; I’m going to ask them how I can be involved in those meetings and that way I can increase my network.

5. What can you do to put yourself in more of brokerage roles where you can connect groups or individuals that might benefit from being connected?

As mentioned in the previous question, I want to be part of the committee which organizes Salesforce meetups. I want to host those meetings and that way I will put myself in the middle of the conversation and get to know more people in the process. Knowing more people from different walks of life will help me understand their strengths and also their needs, giving me the opportunity help them.