

Social Networks
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Lecture – 28
Strong and Weak Relationships
Granovetter's Strength of weak ties

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Let us do this thought experiment. Assume I went to some 100 people randomly and ask them. So, you are working in this place, how did you get to know of this job? Who told you? You will be surprised to note that more than 90 percent of them will say; this person who was my friend's friend or this person I was not close to told me about this job so on and so forth. You will never here a person saying oh my dad told me of this job opportunity very rarely you might encounter such an answer, but the most frequently heard answer will be this answer that a very far away relative or a very not. So, close friend told me of this job opportunity more than 90 percent.

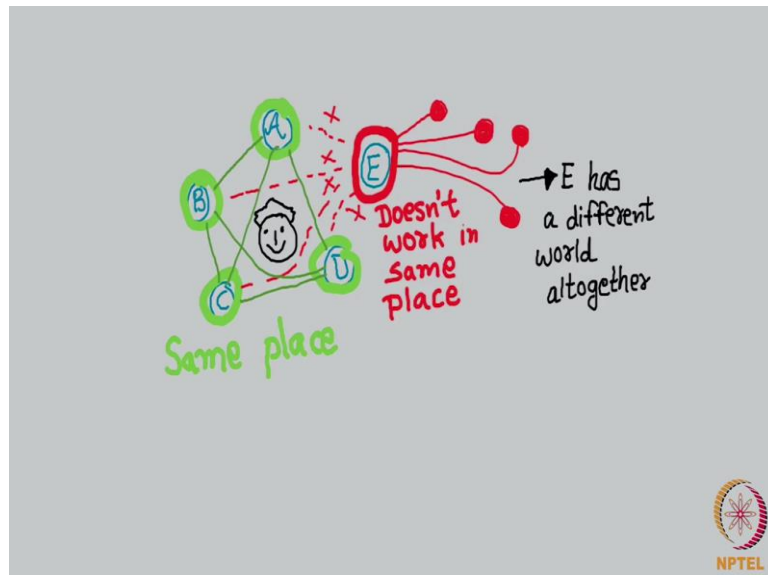
Now, I am sure most of you are finding this against your common sense your finding it very counter intuitive because an intuition says close people of the ones we will help us with job opportunities.

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Just what is happening here is it because or close friends do not want to tell us the of the job opportunities, not real the reason is something else, let see what exactly is the reason the answer is actually convincing if you know the right reasoning I am going to give you an example.

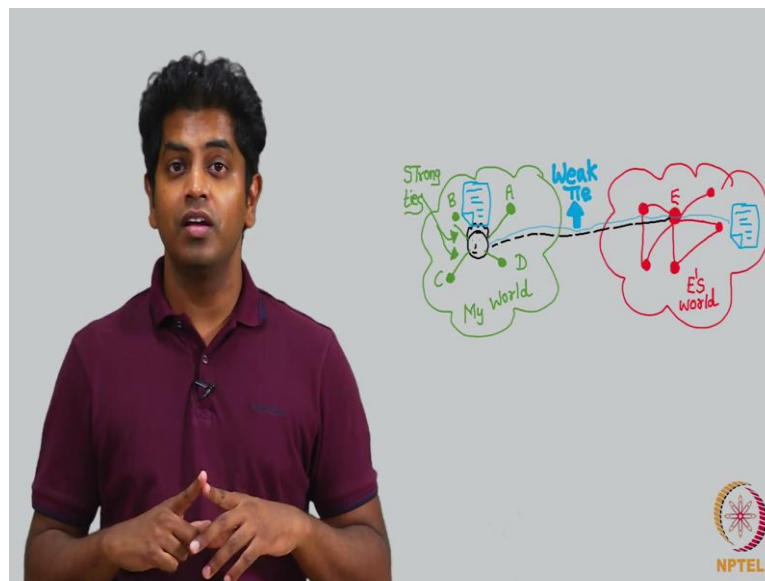
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Assume I have 5 friends A, B, C, D and E, A, B, C, D work in the same place where I work, while E is someone who does not work in the same place as me and E does not know A, B, C, D, while A, B, C, D, they all know each other assume such a scenario.

Now, whatever A, B, C, D knows mostly even I know because I am from the same place there are may be many other people who would have told me the same information which A, B, C, D, might tell me well occasionally A, B, C, D my tell me something new, but mostly whatever they say even I would, but look at E is roll here E is actually as you can see here E is from a different world all together and hence this new information that E has is that of this new world that I am slightly away from.

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So, E is the one who helps me get to know of things from his world which increases my sample space of information which A, B, C, D, cannot give me given that E is a distant friend of mine because he stays in a different world he probably is a weaker of my friends.

I call that a weak tie while A, B, C, D, they are strong ties strong ties are weak when it comes to getting job related information new job related information while weak tie such as E is strong with the sense that any new information that I get which is worth knowing let say in terms of new job is from E and hence this weak tie is actually strong while strong ties are actually weak Granovetter in the late 1960s he conducted this experiment by going and asking people how did you find this new job and most of them said it was through acquaintance. And that is when he got this idea that there is something hap counter intuitive stuff happening here and let me experiment it properly he conducted is

experiments concluded that it is a strength of weak ties that is in play here as and always it sounds a little controversial and the scientific community did not accept his claims.

In fact, he first published tried publishing it in 1969, but this paper got rejected it was only 1973 is at people shall I accepting is used and it got published and after it got published it became really famous, simply because it is such an important piece of information at very counterintuitive you see the fact that you are acquaintances are very very important is something that is to be learnt in the sense that the moral of the story is that keep your acquaintances happy, you should not just read your good friends you should reach your acquaintance is very happy. Now there is some kind of a fallacy in this statement if you keep your acquaintance is very happy they will become your good friends and when they become your good friends probably will not get job new information from them new job related information from them.

So, the point is you should have a big friend circle your opportunities increase when you know a lot of people, but then new information actually comes from someone who is not. So, close to you for the reasons that I explain just now. So now, let us go ahead and see some slightly mathematically abstract principles that surround this concept.