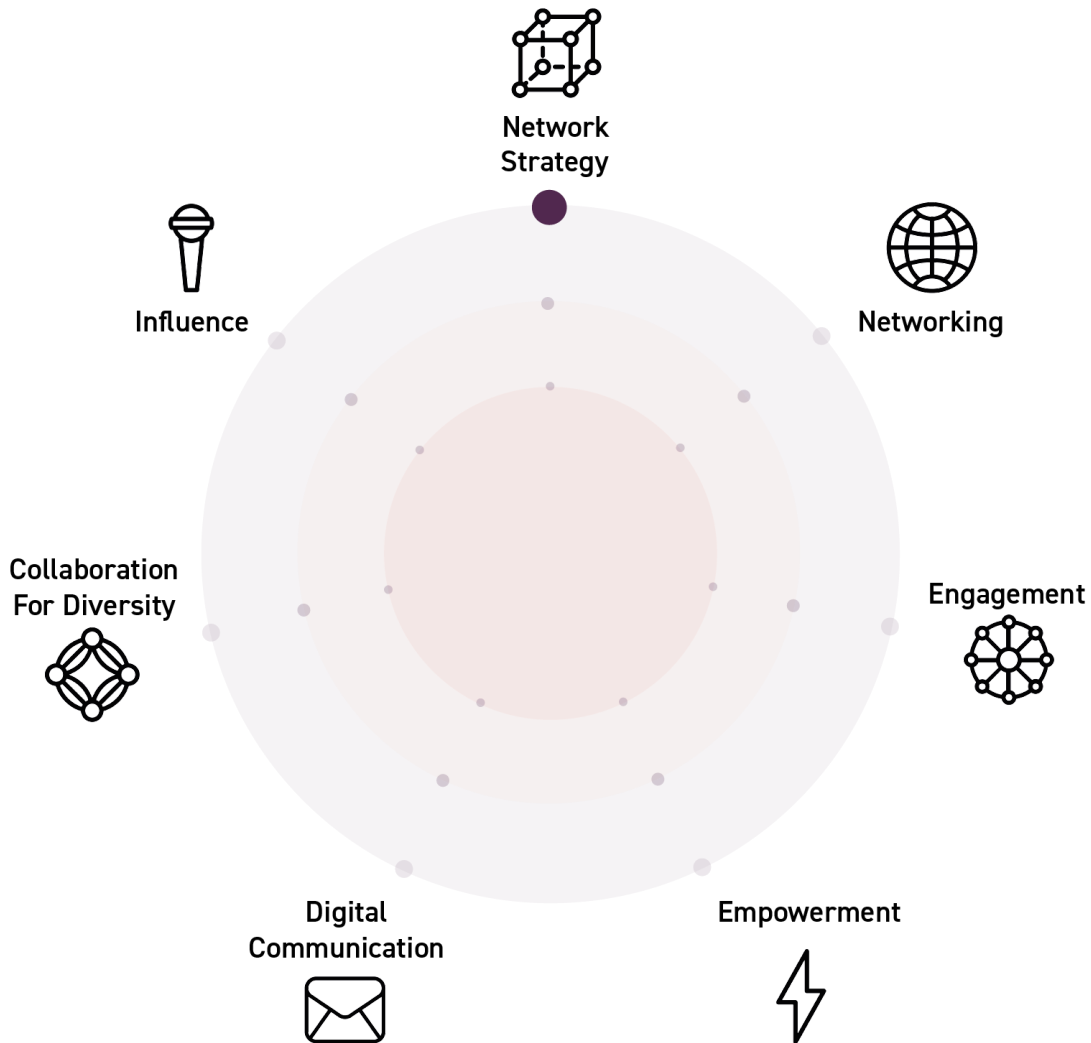


Network Thinking Skills Analysis

Skill 1 Network Strategy



Skill Level: Advanced

How to read your results

This is a description of Skill 1. Network Strategy. Read about this specific skill and reflect upon our recommendations. These recommendations are based on your Network IQ score. Use them to improve your capacity to design a more efficient network strategy.

Network Thinking Skill Description

Skill 1. Network Strategy

Designing a network strategy is the foundational skill comprised of understanding both the structure of social networks and dynamics of networking. It means you know which networks are needed, which networks to build or grow, and from which networks you can or should disconnect.

Network structure is the ability to map and analyze your current networks and position in these networks. You can judge the impact of the networks on your performance by becoming aware of the positive and negative ways in which networks impact your life, career, and or business.

Network dynamics is the “switching” ability in a network. Switching is a strategy of how members in a network trade knowledge, talent and access to business opportunities. By understanding the different switching processes you become more innovative and can innovate faster to drive impactful growth of your career, business, or social project.

The skill of how to design your Network Strategy is the foundational skill for the Network IQ competence model.

Your key takeaways

- Re-examine your current network strategy to assess if you invest time and money into building the right type of networks and what is your return on this investment so far.
- Redesign your network strategy to strengthen your status in networks and get access to even more high-level networking opportunities in the near future. The redesign will help you to monitor market changes and get access to valuable opportunities.
- Your attitude towards diversity conditions your creativity which is the basis of innovation. If you have not done it yet, orient your strategy more to build your status in diverse local and global networks.
- Always remember the power of purpose. ‘A small group of committed citizens can change the world.’ Continue to talk with passion more often about your ‘why’.
- If you want to disrupt the market, first disrupt yourself and become more aggressive in your network strategy. Managing your complex ecosystem is the way forward.

Personal Recommendations

Skill 1. Network Strategy Level Advanced

How you can succeed

A networking strategy creates the framework for you to choose the right people, the right communities and the right ecosystems for networking.

Why you succeed

Strategic networking saves you time while getting access to the right people, at the right time and in the right way.

How you can be more successful

These insights and recommendations are based on your results from the Network Intelligence test.

1.1 Strategic disposition

1.1.1. Your natural talent

Your Network IQ score indicates that you usually think in a strategic way about other people by analyzing how they relate to you and how they relate to others. You are able to detect a friendly soul or identify a potential enemy with ease. You have a strategic way of choosing your friends and your fights. It may not be outspoken but you probably could explain your strategy in a clear way if needed. You are quite special with a mix of natural and developed talents for defining your network strategy. Continue to expose yourself to the right networking activities and communities. Review your strategy to become an even more powerful influencer to mobilize people in your networking and help you achieve your goal, mission and purpose.

1.1.2. Your networking habits

The way you answered the questions in the Network Intelligence test indicates that you are probably one of the people who is a natural connector. Such persons spontaneously introduce people to each other. Your Network IQ results indicate you probably take pleasure in being such a spontaneous network facilitator. What is special about you is that you think in an analytical way when you connect these people. Behind each of your actions of connecting a person with an opportunity is some sort of well-intended masterplan. You usually instinctively have a long-term vision of how your ecosystem may benefit if you establish a connection. If you don't already, it may help you to draw a one-page network strategy. There is more clarity when you write things down instead of relying solely on your instinct. It allows you to prioritize your networks to align with your goals and purpose. This will help you find your purpose - network fit. You will find more inspiration on how to do it below.

1.1.3. Your biases

Your Network IQ score shows you are also special in the way you learn how to interact with others. You gather information in two ways by socializing, and by a systematic search for data. Most likely you are not free from stereotyping but you are most likely able to recognize and detect when your assessment becomes biased. Occasionally, your subtle biases may sometimes prevent you from seeing clearly the right connections for mutual development of status and reach. As many people often do, you may sometimes tend to limit yourself by reaching out to people you know as it is safe and comfortable. Remind yourself to build your network strategy for innovation rather than as part of the defensive strategy to protect the status quo.

1.1.4. Your choices

You probably can explain your networking activities and how they fit to your network strategy. This is likely heavily influenced by your natural talents, predisposition and experience which condition you to make the right choices. As you know the series of decisions and actions that follow these decisions are your strategy. If you are in need of a tool to systematize and enhance your network strategy, take a look at our Network Thinking Power Map which will help you understand your strategy. Download the [Map](#).

1.2. Learn to be even more strategic

1.2.1. Your critical thinking skills

Your Network IQ score demonstrates that you are good at observing the environment around you. You have a mental map of who is who, and what is important to each person or group of people. You see a structure how these people are interconnected and opportunities to create further connections. Check your assumptions. We are all conditioned by our culture and personal experiences which can cause flaws in our thinking. Stereotypes and subtle biases are enemies of a rational strategic approach. You may be surprised to discover what you assumed is actually not true. Here you can read a HRB article by Helen Lee Bouygues about [3 Simple Habits to Improve Your Critical Thinking](#) and use these habits for strategic networking.

1.2.2. Your trust

The way you answered the Network Intelligence test shows that most probably when beginning a new relationship you always give the other person a lot of trust. You have enough experience to know that some people are trustworthy and others are not. And you feel confident that you will be able to manage a situation if, instead of putting the person in a position where they have to earn your trust, you bet that they are trustworthy and well-intended. The truth is that some people are trustworthy and others are not. Continue to stay open minded however be careful not to give away for free your knowledge, connections or reputation. [Here is a great inspirational talk by Rachel Botsman about the paradox of digital trust](#). It will help you reflect on why new economy companies grow faster and what traditional firms should do to build trust with customers and employees.

1.2.3. Your complex problem solving skills

Your Network IQ score indicates also that you frequently take a systemic look when solving problems. You see how different elements of a system interconnect and interact. You are able to see the weak points and missing links within the system with ease. You notice patterns that tend to repeat in similar situations that others miss. When you detect these patterns record these patterns in a notebook to further train your strong analytical skills. You may choose some

common social networks patterns and search for them in the real world to further develop your skill.

1.3. Your people strategy

1.3.1. Your attitude to diversity

Chances are that you surround yourself with people similar to yourself who share your value system. It is normal. Like most of us you feel comfortable networking with people who share our beliefs and convictions. Values are what consolidate your social networks by creating stronger bonds and building a sense of belonging. In short, you have a strong sense of identity and this is what attracts certain people to you giving you a capacity to influence others. While it feels comfortable, such behavior limits the diversity of your ecosystem. You probably agree that the less diverse the ecosystem is, the more difficult it is to be creative and innovative. There are many organizations which have put inclusion and diversity at the core of their strategy in search of a new culture of innovation. Get inspired by the [Diversity and Inclusion Index](#) and build your network strategy towards innovation through diversity and inclusion.

1.3.2. Your attitude to power

Your Network IQ score shows that driven by your strategic thinking capacity, you can easily draw a roadmap from point A to B by navigating your network. This roadmap is not only short-term. You have a competitive advantage because you tend to look far beyond the daily hustle, the 'low hanging fruits', the immediate gain. Seeing the long-term purpose of building your network you can almost project the future-in-the-making. This long-term planning allows you to take shortcuts - if and when needed - to gain access to valuable information faster than others.

As you likely know, taking a shortcut brings risk. It may actually disconnect you from a network or alienate from part of your network. Sometimes, it is simply better to follow a known road and traditional communication channels especially if you work in complex cross-cultural and diverse environments. Taking a shortcut may ruin what you have built over a long time so it's important to keep that in mind while taking steps.

We are working on the Network Thinking Etiquette to improve cross-cultural literacy on social media and communicate more effectively in the international networks. [Send us your suggestions](#) and co-create the Etiquette guidelines with us and other Network Thinkers.

1.3.3. Your social networks

Most probably your social networks have been built over time and are now highly diverse. In most cases your networks are more extended than the networks of your peers. In rare cases they may be smaller. In both cases, they are highly strategic in the sense that you are loosely connected through your diverse networks to the right ecosystems, types of communities and people who are connectors and influencers. Do you know who are the most powerful influencers in your network? Check this analytics tool and [assess your social media networks](#).

1.3.4. Your team

Your score from the Network IQ test suggests your strategic value within your networks comes from your connection with the right people. This often gives you an advantage to share relevant information or access to opportunities for development. Networking can be dangerous as you could lose more than you gain. As you are in an open network market, you are surrounded by people with similar objectives. Look to build win-win opportunities rarely you may be surprised to lose to a competitor when you thought they were a collaborator. For example, you are sharing ideas with a fellow company in the industry when you realize they have hired your best

employees.

Contact us if you would like us to build an [assessment of the Network IQ](#) for your team, community members or partners.

1.4. The power of purpose

1.4.1. Your ‘why’

Always start with “why”. The key to success is a purpose - network fit. If there is no purpose - network fit, your network however big or diverse may not be useful in the long-term. Only networks that fit your purpose have value now. Use [Simon Sinek framework of “Why? How? What?”](#) to define your purpose. Here is an example: *I believe every person should have access to opportunities and grow personally or professionally. I empower entrepreneurial minded people to grow through collaboration. I share my insights and knowledge through networking tools.* Here you can see [Dr. Daria’s impact from her purpose driven life and business](#).

1.4.2. Your networking strategy

Your Network IQ score also indicates that you frequently assess your current network and identify the right networks and connect the right people (even if this is not conscious). Spontaneous networking may make you feel good for a moment. Most likely though it just takes your time and the bunch of business cards on your desk after each event do not help reach your goal faster. Next time when you go for a conference take a more strategic approach, for example you can try the slow networking approach with just a handful of people. The slow networking approach means that you:

1. Have contact details in your smartphone.
2. Connected on social media.
3. Discovered whom you know in common.
4. Identified at least one opportunity how you could help each other within the next 2 weeks.
5. Know about the other person something that is not commonly known. ;)

1.5. More to think about

1.5.1. Your switching capacity

Your Network IQ score indicates that you have a rare skill of switching. It means that a person can not only connect two networks but also facilitate “trades” between them. Connecting two networks together happens when you introduce two people to each other. By connecting them you connect their networks. This gives you the opportunity to become a ‘switch’. A ‘switch’ is a broker that facilitates trades between buyers and sellers.

We have data on the Network IQ profiles of persons who are ‘switchers’ and we are happy to share our research if you [contact us](#).

1.5.2. Your brand image

Many people probably say you are a great networker. What they likely mean is that you have a natural ease for entering into conversations. You are able to do this with people you just met. An ease for starting a conversation is one piece of having a high network strategy skill. Indeed, being able to overcome an initial stress is a skill to ease and create a more enjoyable networking process. It is likely you enjoy networking, the more you pursue networking opportunities the more opportunities you have to practice networking in diverse environments, communities.

1.5.3. Your Network Thinking Power Map

It is common knowledge in business that if you want to advance your career or project you never eat lunch alone. If you are not already, plan a realistic number of lunches or coffees you can have per week and keep a record. Reflect if you are meeting with the right people to make your network building the most effective.

Download [the Network Thinking Power Map](#) to help you build an action plan and prioritise the strategic, high-potential members of your networks.

Self-Reflection

Date

Add the date for your 3 month accountability

My strengths

Make a list of your strengths related to this specific skill (at least 3)

My opportunities for improvement

Make a list of the behaviors you would like to improve. (No more than 3)

Then star the behavior that is easiest to change.

My next steps

Write down 3 commitments on how you will develop your skills over the next 3 months

Smile :-)

The future is good!