URL: https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/emotional-connections-for-trust-based-networks

Author Ori Brafman discusses building trust-based networks to generate collaboration. He highlights intriguing information that indicates Americans traded away deeper emotional connections in the rising age of social networking, in favor of having a greater number of lighter, cross-silo connections. While some argue that consequences arise from a focus on creating connections primarily with those similar to yourself, Brafman believes richer, intimate connections are still critical to pursue.

Transcript

When you want to create collaboration in a large institution or an environment, theoretically just put a bunch of people on Facebook and they'll collaborate together.. The problem is that people don't actually do that.. The problem is that in order to build a real trust-based environment, you need to have some level of emotional connection.. So you're right.. If I'm outside of the circle, if I was outside, if these six people who sat here were having lunch together, would any of you walk up to them and say, "Hi.. My name is Ori.. I'd like to join you for lunch." No way, right? They were obviously a closed off system which can be problematic.. And at the same time what if you're trying to get that specific circle to be more intimate with each other or if you're trying to get them into a circle to be more trusting.. We look at it from a suicidal perspective, the government asks everyone.. I'm sorry, the government has a huge database that they collect that basically ask a zillion questions about people's relationships or friendships, things like that..

And one of the questions that they asked is how many confidants, very, very close friends people have.. The numbers over the years have been basically pretty much steady.. And on average, the most frequent answer given is three.. People on it have about three confidants.. And something very interesting happen in 2002-2003, right around when people started doing a lot more social networking.. Guess what is the model or the most frequent answer does given right now in terms of how many confidants people have.. One? One? Yes? Ten.. Ten.. Seven.. Zero..

The mode is zero.. That we've given up in the idea of building across silos and building a ton of connections, we've, I think to a degree, lost out on the intensity of the connections, the intimacy of the connections.. But I would agree with you that you need both.. The last thing you need is a completely solid organization where it's "us versus them".. However, when you're in an "us versus them" situations, it also builds intimacy...