

## > TIP SHEET

### BOUNDARY CROSSING

- Cultivate a contact book or database of heterophilous types — people who are not like you but who are useful to you because they can flood your thought processes with innovative and unusual ideas.
- Join online and offline groups, networks, threads, and organizations that are affiliated to the areas in which you need to develop a more specialized knowledge.
- Attend conferences, forums, bars, clubs or seminars where ideas and viewpoints are being shared and exchanged. When you do this, ensure you have a card or contact details ready. Always ask for a card or details in return and make sure you contact the person you are keen to develop a relationship with (or add to your network) as soon as possible afterwards. Tell the person who you are, what you do, and why you are keen to add them to your database, network, etc. This ensures that people see value in their relationship with you.
- Create your own social media page (via MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn, Second Life, etc.) and use it to promote who you are, what you do and, more importantly, to develop new relationships or contacts with others. To do this, your page (and the people, places, and sites it is linked to) needs to be exciting, useful and updated regularly.
- Consider writing and managing your own 'blog'. Use it to update your contacts on the work you are doing and any upcoming work you are keen to speak to new people about.
- Keep your blog informative, insightful, and useful to other people who may be keen to know more about you, your thoughts or the trends you have identified. Do not, however, make it too personal, opinionated or difficult to read by overburdening it with jargon. If you are using the blog to build contacts and forge alliances, it needs to be as accessible and welcoming as possible.
- Ensure your blog also contains links to other blogs, sites or fellow 'bloggers' you respect for their work or the trends they cover. In return ask these bloggers to link their sites to yours — this will increase visitor numbers and potentially add to your overall contact list.
- Make your blog as visual as you can. Where possible, use an image, sound, podcast or video clip to replace a word or a descriptive paragraph — when it comes to trends, showing is always better than telling.
- To maintain relationships and increase your pool of contacts, always communicate with people regularly and thank them when they have been of help. Meet people face-to-face whenever you can.
- Assemble your ideas in a more formal and tangible way via a fanzine, book or magazine. Online publishing networks such as blurb.com allow you to create your own magazine or journal online, and have it printed or distributed to any or all members of your network.
- Make sure you are out doing and being seen with others — not just online. Having a physical presence is more beneficial than having a virtual one, because it invokes and involves all of the senses.