

Activity 17. You Expect me to do WHAT? TALK to People?

SCENARIO:

Pradeep had a friend (Bob) who had a friend (Ray) who started his own company when he was 20 years old. Pradeep is a young entrepreneur who also wants to start his own business one day and wanted to talk to Ray to learn all he could (what to do and what not to do). Pradeep was reluctant to reach out to Ray because he thought Ray was too busy or would think his questions were stupid. Plus, he was worried that Ray might tell Bob that his questions were dumb - and Pradeep didn't want his friend to laugh at him.

Eventually, Pradeep decided that the benefits of networking outweighed the potential harm. After all, he knew Ray had built a very successful business from scratch - and Pradeep figured he really had nothing to lose. Pradeep also figured that if he really wanted to start his own company, he would have to learn how to network in the traditional sense, e.g. with people (and overcome his fear of talking to people he didn't know well). He thought, "Better to do it now (and learn) than to try it later and possibly ruin opportunities for my business."

So Pradeep called Ray, who agreed to a meeting. Before the meeting, Pradeep did some basic research to get a better idea of what it takes to start a new business (he looked up average start up costs, how to secure a loan, etc.). He also wanted to know about marketing, web design, and product development, so he researched Ray's company to get a better idea of Ray's business strategy. He had his notes written down to be sure to stick to specific issues. Ray was really receptive - especially because Pradeep was prepared and didn't waste his time. In fact, Ray was flattered that Pradeep contacted him.

Part of overcoming his networking fear was just getting the courage to call Ray. The other part of overcoming his fear was doing his homework and being prepared.

The Three Ps

Part 1: What did Pradeep do?

Prepare: _____

Practice: _____

Pull Yourself Together!: _____

Part 2: What are some strategies you could use?

Prepare: _____

Practice: _____

Pull Yourself Together!: _____
