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The Impact of Perceived Status on Your Social Network

Read:
"Status and the Social Network" by Kellogg Insight

What It's About:
While there have been significant strides made to reduce the spread of COVID-19, pandemic-related challenges have affected communities in different ways. As job seekers have turned to their social networks in large numbers, there are profound differences in how they're utilized. This summarized research from Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management describes the differences of high-status and low-status individuals approach their networks when faced with crises.

Why It's Important:
There's a correlation between perceived status and the ability to maximize your network. Research from college students shows that "individuals who regarded themselves as high-status reported having larger, more-varied networks of individuals with whom they discussed important matters. [Whereas] self-perceived lower-status people reported smaller, denser networks" when confronted by the threat of potential job loss. Yet, the difference wasn't in their total networks, but in the number of contacts that they would be willing to leverage in a job search.
The lesson here is that the perception of your own status can expand or limit your network's potential for growth. Whether you are seeking out internship experiences, just beginning your job search or facing potential job loss, now is the time to affirm yourself, consider your network, and potentially resurrect "dormant ties."

Reflect & Discuss:
• How do you define your own social status? What factors led you to this perception of yourself?
• Based on the definitions present in the article, who is in your potential, activated, and mobilized networks?
• How can you actively diversify and expand your network?
• Are there ways you can leverage your network to give access to others?

Wanna learn more?
• Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development on Social Capital
• Research: How Socioeconomic Status Impacts the Way We Network