# 3 "Dont's" to Build a Utopian Social Universe

Imagine a world where you can expand your knowledge of culture, science, art, finance, marketing, and any subject yo



u can think of exponentially at virtually no cost. You would have enough information to make the best decisions possible about everything and you would contribute your knowledge and opinions to improve the world for hundreds, thousands, millions of others.

Wait... doesn't that exist today? Isn't that what all this "social media" we hear about is supposed to do?

Well, yes. *Supposed to* is the operative phrase. So why might it not be creating and nourishing that information utopia?

It's because you're polite. Cut it out. Your politeness is killing your potential to gain from one of the most exciting developments in social connectivity in recent history.

Consider this. You and I are friends IRL (in real life). We know many of the same people. We've worked together and/or gone to school together and maybe live in the same city.

What is our potential for learning new things from one another?

Sure, it exists, but it's infinitesimally smaller than the tremendous opportunity to learn from those whom we've never met, with different backgrounds and different experiences.

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But it's polite to accept friendship requests from your IRL friends and intrusive to have strangers 'friend' you, so you stick to your comfort zone, learn nothing, and your social media universe increases so slow that it's almost stopped.

So, here's the thing. I think social networks are fantastic. I think that the opportunity to gain information, have fun, build relationships and share what you know and what you like are all wonderful and accessible in this online world. But if we're not bold and break these conventions and expectations of reciprocation, we're shooting ourselves in the collective feet.

## 1. Don't follow me

Don't follow me because I follow you. Follow me if I truly provide content that you find interesting and valuable. Do your research on me before you click follow or add me to your circles. Go follow someone who is contributing to the conversation, like I do.

## 2. Don't recommend people follow others

If you don't feel that someone is genuinely providing valuable content in the given network, don't suggest others follow them - EVEN IF THEY SUGGESTED PEOPLE FOLLOW YOU! Yes, they're very nice to suggest that others follow you, but that doesn't necessarily make them follow-worthy.

Exception: there are some people out there that may not provide much original or interesting content themselves, but they are experts at recommending good people to follow. Those folks might be worth sharing if you feel that their value as a maven is good for others. So, if after you've looked at many people who the maven has suggested and find a lot of value in them, go ahead and throw them a recommendation.

## 3. Don't use all networks the same way

The rules and observations above are primarily around content-sharing networks like [Twitter](), [Google+](), [Pinterest]() and [Tumblr](). These same rules probably don't apply to Facebook or LinkedIn. For me, Facebook is about friends and family. I've had a few valuable expansions, but beyond friends and family I still apply the principles of "liking" or "subscribing" only to those people/businesses/entities that add to the conversation. I don't fall for the "Like my page!" requests without serious research.

LinkedIn is a professional network for me and I generally don't link to anyone for whom I can't honestly provide a recommendation. If I can't at least say "Oh, yeah! Jenny is nice, I worked with her on this project." or something along those lines, Jenny won't be part of my network (sorry, Jenny, it is what it is).

I hope that you find this useful! Please share your comments and, well, if you do find it useful,

follow this blog because more is coming soon! Thanks for stopping by!


- Chris