

**CAREER**

**REINVENTION**

**BOOTCAMP**

**Module 8:**  
Assembling Your  
Reinvention Team

**Audio + Transcript**

**Pamela:** Hello, everybody, and welcome. I am Pamela Mitchell, founder and CEO of The Reinvention Institute. This is our monthly free teleclass series based on the *10 Laws of Career Reinvention: Essential Survival Skills for Any Economy*. That's my book. It has been out. Thank you for reading it, if you've read it. If you haven't, check it out. It's definitely a good thing.

What we're going to be talking about tonight is "Law 6: Your Reinvention Board is Your Lifeline." This is a great chapter. I love this topic about reinvention boards because it's something that is really essential to having a successful reinvention.

Many times, we think about having people help us, but we don't really do it in an organized fashion. When it comes time for the reinvention, the more structured you are about having people help you and the more thought you give to how people can help you, who can help you, and all of those things, the more people can help you and the more payoff you'll get from it.

That's what we're going to talk about tonight. It's strategies for your boards. We're going to go deep into that.

The chapter on Law 6 actually covers a number of different topics. We talk about strategy planning in that topic. That's another key piece of the reinvention process. It's laying out your strategy plan.

When most people come in to us to have help with their reinvention, they kind of have been doing one or two things but wonder, "What do I do next?"

Strategy planning is really the process that helps them figure out what to do next and the areas they need to address in their reinvention in order to make sure that things run smoothly, they're taking care of everything, and they get the biggest payoff possible.

I love to use the analogy for a strategy plan of a business plan or even a life plan, really. I even like that better because your career is meant, as you know, to deliver the life that you want.

Thinking about this as a life or business plan, what you want to look at are certain key areas that comprise that whole plan. When you invest energy in those areas, that's where you get a payoff. In order for your life and business to be in balance, you need to pay attention to those key areas.

For example, in your life, you would look at your health, relationships, family and friendships. Career is part of that. You'd look at your relationship with yourself. On the business side, you'd be looking at PR, sales, marketing and operations. All of those areas are critical to having a successful life and business.

The analogy that I actually draw in the book is more closely aligned with the business plan because each of those areas, like operations, PR or marketing, actually lends itself very well to a construct to think about your reinvention.

For example, marketing is basically letting people know what message you have and putting it out there in the world so you can attract the people who are interested in you. That's what you do as a business. You get the message, market yourself, and the people who are your right customers or clients say, "That's for me," and come to you.

The same is true in reinvention. You want to think about marketing. Don't get scared and think, "Oh my god! I have to market myself." What you want to think about is what's the story that you're putting out in the world, and is that story shaped to attract the kinds of opportunities you want?

That's really what we're talking about. It's not a big, scary thing. I know there's a lot of literature about, "Oh my god! I have to market myself." We're really talking about the story that you're telling.

By that, I mean in every platform, not just what you say when people ask you, "What do you do?" It's also what story is showing up online. Google yourself. What comes up? What's the story that's being told about you by your work colleagues? All of these things are part of that.

The more you shape that and intentionally think about adapting your story so it's attractive to the people you're trying to target in your new industry or business, the more easily those people can find you and the easier it is for you to make connections with them.

That's really not the topic for tonight. I don't know how I got off so deeply on strategy plans because really, I wanted to go deep on people this evening. Just to wrap up the whole strategy plan topic for the evening, even though we're not going into this very deeply, I just want to let you know that I am going to be launching a strategy plan eKit.

Those of you who have already gotten our brainstorming eKit or maybe our "Reinvention Resume Plus!" eKit know that we've been slowly rolling out these in-depth eKits to take you step by step through each stage of the reinvention process. It answers the questions, "What do I do, and how do I do it?"

There is a lot of in-depth information and worksheets to take yourself through. I like to call it "the DIY reinvention" for those handymen or handywomen out there. It's really to get you thinking and working.

The latest eKit is the strategy planning eKit because that's a key piece. It's going to be out at the end of August.

At the end of this call, I will give a little bit of information about that and a special discount code that I'm actually going to be sending out to everybody. You will have a special discount code to use that will give you a little bit more of a discount than everybody else. That'll be good for a couple of days.

One other thing I wanted to mention about this chapter is funding your reinvention, before we get into people. That's the other topic of this chapter. It's a key part of your strategy as well. You want to know and have a plan laid out for that.

The strategy plan eKit also will talk about how you fund your reinvention. What are some ideas for finding different funding sources, whether it's your job or creative ways to have other cash flow come in? All of that is addressed because it's all critical.

Then of course, the third piece of your strategy plan, which is what we're going to be diving into deeply this evening, is the people piece. How do you have people help you?

I love the construct of having a board because it kind of makes you think about it in a more formal manner. When I teach this class or talk about this topic in New York, the board of advisors is a great analogy. When I deliver this on the West Coast, in California or Los Angeles, they think, "Does it need to really be a board of advisors? Can't it be a mastermind group?"

It's whatever you want to call it. It can be a "circle of advisors," "advisory board" or "mastermind group." Whatever it is, it's a group of people who come together to help one another or help you accomplish your goal. That's really what we're talking about here.

The first thing is that in order to have this happen, you actually have to be willing to ask for help. This is something I want to start talking about right up front because many times, we think, "I don't want to ask. I'm feeling a little nervous. I'm not sure that I want people to know what's going on with me."

I have to tell you right up front that you must be willing to ask. In fact, this is one of the hidden conflicts that can really stop you on this. If you're not willing to share with people, ask for advice or let them know what's going on for you, it's going to be very difficult for you to reinvent yourself. You need people and to have support and advice.

One thing that one of my clients said to me once was that her mother said, "You're not going to live long enough to make all the mistakes you need to make, so you want to learn

from OPM.” That’s not other people’s money, as in the popular vernacular, but really, it’s other people’s mistakes. You don’t want to have to make all the mistakes yourself.

Just from a very practical perspective, you want to begin asking people for help so that you can tap into that and actually have your reinvention run a lot more smoothly than it would otherwise. Just make sure that you are willing to ask for help.

We’ll talk about how you do that and what you do, but some other stuff that I want to say as a kind of framework for all of this is that when you’re out asking people for help, 100% will not help you. You’re not going to have a 10 for 10 average on this. I just want to set this out right up front because I’ve had people in my seminars mention this.

I’ll never forget one woman in my seminar who said to me, “I know a woman who went to my same school. I reached out to her as a fellow alumni. She’s doing exactly what I want to be doing. I reached out to her, called her and tried to have her network with me. She didn’t respond. I can’t believe it.”

This participant was really very upset about the fact that this contact she tried to reach out to hadn’t responded to her entreaties. Actually, she took it rather personally. She was offended.

I’m going to say to you right up front do not be offended if people don’t help you. You never know what’s going on in their lives. You might assume, “It’s something about me. They don’t want to help me.” Don’t take it personally. It’s not personal. Even if they just say, “This is not what I’m doing,” or “I don’t want to do it,” it’s really not about you. It’s about them.

As I said, you have no idea what’s going on in their life. Maybe that particular woman my student reached out to was having challenges in her life with her parents’ health or she was just completely swamped and wanted to get back to her but just somehow got buried and didn’t. My student was taking things very personally, and she had no idea whether or not it was about her.

I tell you right up front that if people don’t respond, don’t take it personally. Just move on. Don’t expect 100% of the people to help you, but enough of the people will help you so that you get to where you’re going. All you want is to have enough people to help you.

By the way, if you’re asking and nobody is willing to help you, there is a little bit of an issue there. You definitely want to deal with that and think about, “How am I asking?” Let’s talk about that for moment, actually, because that’s another key piece. How do you ask for help? It’s a scary thing.

You want to maximize the chance that somebody is going to help you, but if you don't know how to do that, you can cut yourself off right off the bat just by the way that you're asking. You can decrease or increase your likelihood of getting a positive response. We want to talk about how you get a positive response.

Let's talk about some ways. The first thing is, as I said, never take anything personally. Part of that means that when you approach someone, recognize right off the bat that they're busy and have a life. They have things other than helping you. That's the first piece.

You want your expectations to be in line. You're asking for their help and for them to devote some of their very precious time to helping you out. There's no obligation, so you don't want to create a feeling of obligation. Come at it with a perception of, "There's no obligation. I'm just here asking."

The second thing that you want to be mindful of is making it very easy for them to help you. By that, I mean that many people approach people in a way that is most convenient for themselves.

Maybe you're an email person. What you do is email people because that's your most comfortable way. You think, "Let me send them an email," and get silence.

You wonder because your friend told you to call them, but you sent them an email because that's easier for you. You didn't hear anything, so you tell your friend, "You put me in touch with that person for help, but they didn't get back to me." That's perhaps because you chose the method that was easier for you rather than thinking about what might be easier for the other person.

You want to approach people in a way that's easier for them. That means that you try different methods until you find out which method they prefer. Some people prefer email, and some prefer telephone.

I know it's hard to imagine, especially depending upon what generation you are, that in this day and age, there are people who actually prefer to have a conversation and don't want to have anything other than a very brief email to say, "Let's schedule the conversation," but there are those people. You have to find out which ones they are.

That means that when you approach someone, whatever way you initially choose to approach them, whether it's via telephone or email, you say that you're going to follow up in the alternate manner.

You might leave a message and say, “Thanks so much. I’m leaving this message. I’m wondering if you can help me. I’ll drop you an email as well,” or drop them an email and say, “I’ll give you a call in a couple of days to follow up.”

This is how you approach people in a way that maximizes your chances that you’re going to hit their preferred method, and then see which one they respond to. Then you’ll know, “This is what this person does.”

This is assuming that you don’t know the people. If you know the people, then approach them the way that you know they like to be approached. Don’t expect them to accommodate themselves to you. You accommodate yourself to them.

A third thing, in terms of how you ask people for help, is that you want to be very clear about what you’re asking for. This is one of the big pitfalls that people make when they approach people. They don’t really know how they want to be helped.

When they ask for help, they say, “What do you think?” Now what they’ve done is put all the work on the other people to figure it out for them. That lowers their chances of actually having a fruitful conversation where they’ll walk away with some useful tips or helpful information.

You want to be really clear about how that person can help you, and being clear means being specific. You need to know some specific ways.

I always say to come at it with two or three different options for how that person can help you because you don’t know. If you know them, that’s great. If you know this is the best way for them to help you, go in and ask for that specifically. If you don’t know the person, ask for two or three different things and see which one gains traction.

Don’t go in with a general, “I’m not really sure. I just am looking at making this change and wanted to see if you might help me with this.” No. Be specific.

Say, “I’m looking to meet people in this industry at this level because I’m interested in this particular position. Is there anybody you know that I might network with?” or “I did this type of work in my industry, and I’m wondering whether or not this exists in your industry. Could you talk to me about the different roles in that industry?”

You might say, “What personality types are successful in this industry?” It’s however you want help, whether it’s knowledge, contacts or asking, “Can you review these materials for me?” Whatever it is, be specific.

The final thing is to also have consideration. I said up front to have consideration for them, but really have consideration for their schedule.

If you're asking for them to meet with you or review something, be mindful of what else might be on their plate. Don't have any kind of deadlines that might interfere or make it pressured for them. Make yourself available and say "whenever you're available for it" or "whenever you can get to it."

If there's a deadline on it, then very nicely say, "Next week, I'm having a conversation. Is there a chance we could get together before then? If not, it's okay." Be very considerate and mindful of the demands on their schedule and knowing that you have to fit in with that.

I have one other aside I want to say in terms of asking people to help you and how they might help you. This is a little bit of a touchy subject. I know this has happened quite frequently to me and other people who have expertise in something.

Many times, people will come and ask for assistance in an area that is actually a person's job. You might go to somebody and say, "I have a really great friend who's a resume writer. Let me go ask her for advice on my resume." Be really careful about that.

Unless that person is one of your dearest friends, and even if they are, I believe firmly that you want to respect the fact that this is a person's livelihood. Don't go to people and ask or expect them to give to you for free what they are paid to do in their real world.

If there's somebody you know that you're really interested in having help you in that way, go have a conversation with them. Say, "I'm looking to do this and would love to be able to tap into your expertise. I know that you get paid to do this. Is there any way that we might be able to work together?" Offer to pay, and see what they say to you.

They may say, "No, don't worry about it," or "Maybe there's a way we can work out a trade." Respect the fact that this is their livelihood and they earn money from doing this. Don't ask for them to basically do a freebie for you and not take that into consideration.

That actually can be considered very rude. Whether or not they actually take you up on your offer of payment, it's rude not to offer payment.

That's just my own personal thing on that, for even the closest of people. That's unless, in the best of all worlds, you're an expert in something they can pay for that they happen to need. Therefore, you can trade.



Offer to barter. Say, “I have this expertise in graphic design. You have this expertise in IT. Maybe we can do a trade and help each other.” That might be a great way of doing it as well, but recognize the value that is assigned to the assistance that you’re asking for.

Another topic that we’re going to talk about in terms of asking people to help you deals with the selection process. I get emails about this all the time asking, “How do I choose people for my board?” or “How do I choose people to help me in my reinvention mastermind circle?”

There are some key questions that you need to listen to and ask yourself. These things determine whether or not this is a person who might be a good candidate for your reinvention board.

The first question that you want to ask yourself is, “Has this person accomplished what I want to accomplish?”

That’s right off the bat, but here’s the thing. It’s always great if a person has specifically accomplished what you want to accomplish. That means you’re targeting a particular industry and they’ve climbed the ladder in that industry.

That’s great, but it doesn’t have to be that. It can also be that they’ve risen to a level in their field of expertise and you’re looking to move and rise as well. Somehow the general accomplishment they’ve done mirrors what you want to do.

Here’s why people come to me. I’ve switched careers and now help other people switch careers. I did it myself first. Then people came to me for advice. Maybe they didn’t want to make the switch that I did and go from Wall Street to entertainment, but they wanted to make a switch and knew that the general principles were the same, whether or not the actual topic was the same.

That’s the same thing you want to think about. Has this person accomplished what I’m looking to accomplish? Have they made a switch in their career and done one thing and then moved to something successful? Have they been successful in the industry I’m looking to target? Come at it from different angles because you’ll get different perspectives that way.

There’s one other little aside I want to say about whether or not somebody has accomplished what you want to accomplish and asking for advice on that.

One of the things that I teach is when we talk about natives, who’s in the industry that you’re looking to target, you always want to talk to a native of the industry. We’ll touch on that a little bit tonight. It’s a really critical piece.

When you're looking for people who've accomplished what you want to accomplish and natives, one caveat is that if you're looking for that person to speak to you about that particular industry, make sure that their experience is recent.

One of the definitions of a native is that they're deep into the industry. Maybe this person did the industry 10 or 15 years ago and now is on to something else. They're no longer really a native.

Once somebody has been out of an industry for a couple of years, they can't really speak to it with an insider's perspective, especially in this day and age. Things change so very quickly in industries. What might have been good a year or two ago has now completely shifted because business models have shifted or whatever it is.

This is something that I know because I've had people approach me many times saying, "You worked in entertainment. I want to talk to you about entertainment." I've been out of entertainment for seven years. Anything I might have to say is really no longer meaningful as far as I'm concerned. I'm no longer a native.

When those people approach me for help because they want to talk about the entertainment field, I'm much less likely to help them because that's not something that is recent experience for me.

When you are going to ask for help, make sure that you ask for people who were recently or are currently in that field that you want. Don't ask for something that was many years ago and that person has moved on. They may say, "That's the last thing I want to be talking about," and their experience is really not relevant so much anymore.

Question 2 is, "Do they have my best interests at heart?" This is a very important question to ask yourself. Many times, people have their own agendas, and we're going to talk about that in a little while as well.

When that happens, the information you get might be a little bit colored. This is not a good thing to do because they may steer you down the wrong path, whether deliberately or not. It's just from their own perspective. You have to ask the question of whether or not that person has your best interests at heart.

You may already be in front of the person. If you can tell right off the bat whether or not they would have your best interests at heart, that's great. If not, then you may already be in front of them having a conversation and need to evaluate, "Where is this person coming from? Do they really want me to succeed?"

I'll give you a quick example of this from the book. I had a friend come to me who was interested in buying a franchise in her city. There were two franchises available in the city. One was already purchased, and she was looking at purchasing the second one.

She decided that she was going to go for advice to the other franchisee in her town. That made a lot of sense on the surface because, of course, he knew the business in town and could give her the insider's and native's view on what it was like to run that kind of business in her town.

When she called me and said this was what she was going to do, I told her, "Please don't do that. Don't go to him first." My feeling on it was that he was not going to have her best interests at heart just because of the nature of the situation.

She was looking to purchase the second franchise in town. At the moment, that franchise was open and available. That meant nobody was doing that business and he was getting the overflow business from her section of town without having to pay for it. It was in his best interest to discourage anybody who would buy that because that source of free business for him was going to go away.

I said to her, "Don't go to him first. Go to him last. Talk to people who are outside your region and city. Get their take on the business first. Talk to at least two or three of those people, and then go to the guy in your town."

In fact, that's what she did, and she said that if she had gone to him first, she never would have bought the business. He painted such a negative picture of the business, but she had already talked to three people outside the region, so she knew it was a good business.

She could tell that he did not have her best interests at heart. He was interested in protecting his business. It was nothing personal. Like I said, none of this is personal. You may be thinking, "That sounds terrible." He was coming from his perspective. Don't take it personally. Just understand that that's what's going to be happening so you can adapt accordingly.

The fun thing about the end of this story is that she did buy that franchise, built it into a very successful business, and eventually bought the guy out. I love the end of that story.

That's what you do. You want to check to make sure the person has your best interests at heart.

The third thing is, "Do they need to be right?" That's another key question to ask. Sometimes people need to be right, so they're going to tell you, "This is how it has to be. If you don't do it this way, you're going to fall apart." You don't want people who are so

invested in being right that they're going to dissuade you from alternative paths or shoot down anything that you say.

Really, it's that they're speaking from their experience. You want somebody who is very clear that they're speaking from their experience and this is their analysis on it, but you can do what you want.

You don't want them to be so interested in being right that they're going to tell you it's the only way or you will absolutely fail. You want to know that they're just coming at it from a perspective of, "This is my wisdom, but you may have a different experience."

The fourth and final question that you want to ask is, "How is their situation different from mine?" This just means that you want to understand what kind of hurdles they've had to face, how they might be different from yours, and what different things they brought to the table.

This is kind of a touchy question. In fact, I even debated whether or not I was going to include this question because people can take this to say, "They had this, and I didn't have it. They had savings, and I have to work. I don't have as much savings as they had." People can turn this question into an excuse for why it was easier for that particular person than it would be for them.

I'm here to tell you don't do that. Do not turn this into an excuse for that. It just means how is it different than what you've done? Everybody has things that are stronger than you and then there are things where they started from a deficit from you. When you ask this question, be mindful of the balance.

Maybe they had more savings, but maybe they had less education, they were starting from a lower position, or whatever it is. Know that you want to understand where they've come from. That's why you're asking how their situation is different from yours, but don't use it as an excuse to say, "It was easier for them."

Frankly, once you dig below the surface, chances are you're going to find out it wasn't easier for them. In fact, it might have been harder for them, and you can take inspiration from that.

Let's dive into advisory boards. Time goes so quickly, and I want to give so much information.

What is the purpose of this advisory board, mastermind group or reinvention board? It is really your circle of support. It's there to help you brainstorm and facilitate your development as you move toward your reinvention. It's also to connect you with key people

and act as an impartial sounding board. That is very critical. Impartiality will come up in a little while as well.

Here's a key thing. You don't go to your board to tell you what to do. Write down, "I don't ask my board what to do." You lay out the situation and ask them to weigh in, but you don't say, "What should I do?" That's not a question that they're going to answer.

You ask them, "Here are the things that are going on. In your analysis, what kinds of things do you think I should be thinking about?" Don't say, "What should I do?" because a good board member isn't going to answer that question. It's up to you what you do. You make the decisions, but they act as a sounding board to help you go through all of this.

You can say, "What do you think the pros and cons are? Help me look at this from a different perspective. I'm trying to look at the benefits." They can remind you of certain things, but don't let anybody tell you what you should do. If somebody tells you what you should do, then you really need to rethink whether they should be a part of your advisory board.

There are a couple of things about advisory boards. They can be virtual. Just because we call it an "advisory board" doesn't mean that they all need to be present and you need to get them all together. They don't even have to know each other.

Really, this is constructed for you to use in terms of managing how people help you. It doesn't mean they actually have to be assembled as a board. If you want to, that's great.

I gave an example in the book about Dina, who had a circle of advisors she got together. It was a group of friends who all acted as advisors to one another. If you want to do that and make it social, that's fabulous, but it doesn't have to be that way.

Another thing around this board is that they must be experienced and successful. Ideally, they've been through some hard knocks and rebuilt.

Really, what you want out of your board is wisdom. We're back to OPM, other people's mistakes. You want somebody who has accomplished what you're looking to accomplish, is experienced and successful, but has gone through some hard knocks they can talk to you about.

You're going to face some too on your path. Nobody goes along in reinvention without having a couple of bumps in the road. You want to talk to those people who have hit similar bumps so that you don't have to make the same mistakes or have it take as long to get over that bump as it might have taken someone else or you if you didn't know what to do around it.

Another critical quality, and one of the most important qualities, is that they must be willing to be honest with you. You don't want somebody on your board who is not going to tell you the straight truth. This is so critical because so many times, people want to protect our feelings, but in protecting our feelings, they actually hamper our progress.

It's essential that whoever is on your board and however they're helping you, and we're going to talk in a minute about the types of people that you want on your board, they're willing to be honest with you and are going to tell you, "With the path you're going down, the odds of having that work are very slim."

They'll just tell it to you straight and not sugar-coat it or let you go long and figure it out yourself.

They're just going to tell you, "That business model is hard to make work. Here's the business model I think you should do," or "That way of trying to approach it is not going to work. I think you should do it this way. Do what you want, but here's my experience. I've done it this way, and here's what I've found to be successful."

That's what you want. You want somebody who's going to be really honest with you and tell you the truth, even when it's hard for you to hear. There will be those moments when you think, "Oh my god! I don't want to hear this," but listen. It's that kind of truth that really gets you over those humps quickly. It's what makes you avoid making those mistakes.

Let's talk about profiles. Who's on this board? This is straight out of the book. Who are these people?

You want a master connector on your board. These are the people who have the golden rolodex and can put you in contact with others. This is a critical function because part of having a successful reinvention is expanding your network.

The second one is the clued-in colleague. This is a person who knows you in a work environment and can talk to you about your skills and talents in work. This person is critical because as you're evaluating opportunities for your reinvention, you want somebody who knows you in a work environment and can guide you about whether or not something might be a good fit.

I love to give the example of somebody who once worked for me when I ran business development and sales in one of my companies. This person was a great administrative person, but they didn't really have strong sales skills, to be perfectly honest.

I did most of the sales, and then once it was sold, I would hand it off to this person. This person would handle all the administrative, back-and-forth conversational stuff, the agreements that I would give, and all that. They never really negotiated stuff directly.

Afterwards, they went off to a different company, and I got a call from them, networking, about a year and a half after we'd both left our firm. She said to me, "I'm looking at sales jobs, and I want to be in sales."

This is back to being honest with people and people who know you in a work environment. I said, "Why are you looking at being in sales?" because I knew this was not really her thing. She said, "I'm looking for it to be safe. Sales is a safe space because it's a revenue-generating department." My comment was, "Sales is only safe if you're good at it. That's not your natural talent."

That's the level of honesty that you want. You want somebody who is clued in to your skills and talents and can say, "Here's where you'd be great. You'd be great in a marketing or partner management role, but I don't think you want to be in the sales role because of X, Y and Z.

"Here are the examples from our own experience that show it would be difficult for you to succeed in a sales role."

That's the kind of clued-in colleague you want so that when you're looking at that sales job that sounds good, they can say to you, "Sales isn't for you. Look at marketing or partner support."

The third kind of person you want on your board is warm and fuzzy. You want those people who are going to support you because there are a lot of bumps in the road. Sometimes it's hard to keep the faith. You're making progress, but you've been in the marathon and it's the 17th mile. You need somebody there just cheering you on.

That's what the warm and fuzzies do. When it's a tough day and somebody hasn't called you back or an interview didn't go the way you wanted, you reach out to them, and they build up your spirit. It's an essential person to have on the board.

Then the opposite of that is the drill sergeant. That's the person who gives you the kick in the pants when you need it. Maybe you're whining about, "I don't have this," and they say, "Get over it already," or "Get it done." They hold you accountable.

Maybe they say to you, "You've been talking about getting your resume rewritten for the past three weeks, and I've seen nothing. When are you going to get it done already?"

You want that drill sergeant, the one who's going to hold you accountable and be honest and straight. They'll say, "Get it done." You need that person to move forward and make progress.

The last person that you want on the board is the native. That's the one who has the inside scoop. They're in the trenches and inner circle and know what the culture is like there. They know the language.

They can help you translate yourself and give you that ethnographic information so that when you make that switch, you're coming at it with the information you need and are not standing out. You know how to approach the different tribe, so to speak, and fit in. You need a native as well.

These qualities can overlap. You can have people who provide a couple of different functions for you. Maybe someone who's a native is also a master connector. Your warm and fuzzy and drill sergeant person can actually be the same person. That's kind of surprising, but there are those friends who can support you when you need it but also kick you in the pants when you need it.

Also, you can actually hire out some of these functions. A coach or even a therapist is a great example. They can be your warm and fuzzy and drill sergeant. That's really convenient for keeping yourself accountable.

The last thing you want to know about these profiles of people, so to speak, is that you want to ask people to give in a way that is natural for them.

This is another one of the pitfalls that people tend to make. They go to the people who they think are most likely to help them and ask them for everything or the wrong thing. Then it makes that person uncomfortable and you just lowers your odds of having somebody help you.

Maybe your master connector just does not have patience to listen to people who are having a hard day. Don't call them when you're feeling down and expect them to support you. They might be two minutes on the phone, saying who you should speak to and, "Okay, great! Bye!"

Go to people and ask them to help you in a way that's natural for them. What you want is for them to say, "That's easy. Of course I can help you." Some people will say, "That's easy for me to listen and make you feel better, be a drill sergeant or put you in touch." Whatever is easiest for them, that's the way you ask them for help. Don't ask them for help in a way that's not natural.



I promised that I would say who not to have on the board. This is just as important of a topic. This first category of who not to have on your board always causes a lot of controversy.

The first people you don't want to have in your mastermind or board is your spouse or partner. In every talk that I give, somebody objects to this and says, "My spouse or partner is so supportive of me. They really have been one of my biggest cheerleaders in all of this." That's fabulous. Keep them as your cheerleader and supporter, but don't ask them to be a formal part of your board.

The reason for that is that you want people on your board who have no personal investment in any particular outcome. Remember I said that one of the functions of the board is to be an impartial sounding board? "Impartial" is the operative phrase. All the people on your board need to be impartial and not be invested.

Your spouse or partner is naturally invested. By the very fact of their relationship with you, they have an investment in a particular outcome. They might be the most objective people in the world, but personally, I believe it's unfair to ask them to put aside their own personal interests because you, as you reinvent yourself, need to take their interests into account.

You're in relationship with them. Their interests and needs in all of this must be taken into account in your reinvention plan. There's a natural conflict because anybody on your board has to take themselves and their needs out of it and give you impartial advice, but your spouse's needs need to be taken into account.

That's why they can't be a part of your reinvention board. Your board must be impartial.

Sort of a corollary to that is you don't want your parents on your board. They can be very supportive. By the way, when I say they're not on your board, it's not that you don't turn to them for advice and support. It's just that they're not on your board and the formal people that help you. They're informal people that help you. You understand their limitations.

Remember I said you want to check to see who's giving you assistance and help and where they're coming from? These people that I'm mentioning, in terms of who not to have on your board, have inherent limitations by nature of their own personality or their relationship with you. You have to take those limitations into account when you're evaluating what they're telling you.

Your parents are a great example of this. You don't want anybody on your board who remembers every mistake that you've ever made in your life and feels no compunction about bringing it up whenever they think of it. This is something that's really critical.

For example, I said that I wanted to move to Florida, and my mother immediately started to freak out. She remembers the times when I was in college and went overseas. I ran out of money, and she had to bail me out. Now she has all these images in her mind that if I leave my job, move to Florida and start a company, she's going to have to bail me out.

That's what parents do. My mother is a very supportive woman. In fact, she's the topic of Law 6. She's very supportive, but when you say you're going to make a change, it triggers your parents' fears and concerns for your safety.

That's natural because they're your parents. They brought you into the world. They want you to be safe. They're going to come at it from that perspective. That may be their first default.

My mother, once she got over that, has been my biggest supporter and advisor, but her first thing was "Oh my god!" You don't want them on your board because you don't want any of that leaking in to your board. You want to deal with that, work it through with them, and then move on.

Another kind not to have on the board is frenemies. These are those competitive types who are your friends but are really competitive with you. You have to sniff them out because they can be kind of insidious. They're the ones that say, "I love you. You're so great."

Here's how you sniff them out. When you tell them your ideas, somehow you just feel bad afterwards or that they're just not likely to happen. You were feeling so excited and then you tell this friend something. Somehow it doesn't seem like such a good idea, and this happens every single time.

These people, by the way, can be highly placed. You can think they would be great for you. My clients have had people like this. They're just in the perfect position, so you think, "This is the perfect person to help me."

Then you realize that, really, whether it's because of their own insecurities or their competitive nature, they're not interested in helping you, even though on the surface, they're your "friend." Watch out for these people.

Another corollary for this is unhappy people. You don't want people who are frustrated, burned out or in a downward spiral. Their energy is negative. You don't want anybody who is negative or feels life is just too hard and things aren't going to be successful.

It's interesting. One of the studies that I quoted in the book shows that happiness is transmitted through social connection. A happy friend who lives within a one-mile radius gives a 25% boost in your happiness.

You want to surround yourself with happy people because that's going to boost your happiness, positive people because that's going to boost your positivity, and successful people because that will boost your likelihood of success. Surround yourself with those kinds of people, not unhappy people.

There are a couple of final points, and then I'm going to open up the line for questions. You want to make sure that when you manage your board, you remember that this is from the circle of giving, and it's about giving back. You want to think about giving back to your board members and others.

Put your thinking cap on. One of my pet peeves is that a lot of times I'll get networking requests. People will say, "Can you help me with this? By the way, if there's any way that I can help you, just let me know."

What have they just done? They've put all the work in my lap to figure out how they might be helpful to me. Now I'm much less likely to want to help them.

That's versus those people who say, "I'm interested in networking with you. I'd love to talk to you. By the way, I'm a social media expert. I can check out your social media and give you a couple of tips. I'd love to be able to speak with you." This was somebody who just reached out to me to network a couple of days ago. She got helped.

When you are approaching your board, and this is just a general networking tool, which we'll talk about in two months, you want to figure out how you can help and then offer specific assistance. Do that for your board members.

Help them, but also help other people. Be generous with your contacts, experience and advice because you need others to be generous in that way.

I believe in paying it forward. In that circle of giving, when you want people to give to you, you don't really know where people helping you is going to come from. Often, it's the ones that seemed the least likely. The ones that seem the most likely somehow never pan out. You want to be that least likely person for someone else.

Be what you want to have happen to you. Be that generous person who just helps for the sake of being able to share their expertise, knowledge and gifts, knowing that when everybody is in their right place career-wise, it works for everyone.

I am now going to open the floor to questions. Your question might be about the reinvention board, how you manage it, how you get people to help you, or whatever.

**Jane:** Thank you for answering my question request. My question is, I hope, not so unique that it's specialized. I think it might be somewhat universal.

When you are moving into a new area like this it seems to me that the most difficult person to find for your board is someone who is wildly successful in the new industry. Most of your contacts probably wouldn't be within that industry.

For me in particular, I've been homeschooling my children for 12 years. I am so far removed from any industry that I am wondering how you go about identifying a person.

**Pamela:** That's a great question. I like that. The goal is to target someone who is successful. Really what we're talking about is a successful native in that industry. We will get into natives a little bit more deeply next month, but I want to answer your question.

Here's the thing. Sometimes you can go directly to a native. The way you can do that is by writing them what I like to call a "fan letter." If they're very highly placed and you read something that they've done or you've attended a class of theirs, write them a note. If you've read their book, write a note.

Say, "I read your book," or "I saw this talk that you did, and it was great." Be specific. "I liked these philosophies, and I really think that this is very important. I'm really interested in this industry and am wondering if you would take the time to have a quick 10 or 15-minute conversation with me."

I had one client that was a master at this. She actually just would write cold to people. She was targeting the food industry. She would write to them, and they would actually speak to her because she wrote a great letter that showed that she really had done some in-depth research and thought about it, and that she was thoughtful. That's one way to approach them.

Another way is to use that six degrees of separation, which thankfully is a lot easier these days with LinkedIn. You can go in and find out who you know that knows people. Somebody you know might not know that person but they might know somebody in the industry.

Then you just daisy chain it. You meet that person and say, "Are there other people that you suggest I speak to?" You get names from them and daisy chain in as close as possible to the person that you might be trying to reach.

Eventually you can get somebody that knows them who can say, "I spoke to her. Take a moment and speak to Jane because I think she'd be a good person for you to have a quick chat with."

Does that help?

**Jane:** It does help. I think I have one more piggyback question off that. Assuming that you are successful and are able to meet with this person, what is a good way to close and thank them? Is it appropriate, if it seems like they're amenable to helping you, to ask them for a follow-on? "I am taking away these actions and I'll look into this and this. Could I possibly run past you any ideas I get further on?" Is that presumptuous?

**Pamela:** You can say, "Would it be okay for me to reach out to you again if I need additional advice?" Just keep it very simple. Try not to make it sound like any work.

**Jane:** Ask if it's okay to contact them and just leave it general, without a specific contact time.

**Pamela:** Not even, "Can I contact you?" "Is it okay if I reach out to you again for advice?" Rather than, "Can I run stuff by you?" which makes it sound like a little bit of work and you're going to send them something to review, just say, "Is it okay if I reach out to you again for advice as I'm going along this process?"

They'll let you know, "Sure," and then here's the thing. This is where most people fall down. Follow up, first of all with a thank you note, which people do, but then keep them posted on your progress.

Drop them occasional notes letting them know how you are and how their advice has helped you. "I just wanted to drop you a quick note and let you know that I spoke to so-and-so. You were so on point with this and this. Thank you."

Before you have to ask them again, show them that you're using their advice and how it's really paying off. Make them feel good.

**Jane:** Great. I actually did that, and it was really successful. At first it was not successful because I didn't get a response for several months. I found out later this person had gone out of the country. When they finally emailed me back I was pleasantly surprised that they really still did care. I didn't want to keep pursuing it if I wasn't hearing back.

That did work well for me. Thank you.

**Pamela:** There is one other tip that I want to give you, Jane. Somebody did this for me, and I loved it. A lot of times, especially in this day and age, people get asked for assistance virtually. Often you're going to be talking over the phone. You may not ever have met the person.

I just thought this was so inspired. After I did a phone conversation to help somebody, they sent me a thank you note with a Starbucks gift card. It said, “Thank you so much for your help. Have your next cup of coffee on me.”

It was inspired because of course, what do you normally do to ask people for advice? You take people for coffee. “Since I couldn’t take you for a cup of coffee in person, have your next cup on me.” It was a \$5 gift card, but let me tell you, when she wants advice again, I’ll pick up the phone.

Do these very simple things that are very memorable. Most people don’t do them, so when you do, it really helps you stand out. There’s another person who sent me these little travel candles. I travel a lot, so it was very sweet and thoughtful. It was very small. It doesn’t have to be big. It’s just enough to say, “I thought about you. I appreciate the time that you took. Here’s a little something.”

**Jane:** That’s wonderful.

**Pamela:** That’s my other tip. I like the coffee thing because it plays off what would normally be happening if you were meeting in person. I just thought it was so witty. I actually have used it. When I do, people are my big fans. It’s very effective.

**Jane:** Great. Thank you for your help.

**Pamela:** Thanks so much, Jane.

Thank you so much for an awesome call this evening. This has been a fabulous event. Please join us next month.

I promised to give you the discount code for the strategy kit if you are interested in learning more and working through how to lay out a reinvention strategy so that you can launch your reinvention effectively. Use the code SAVE25.

Go to our website, [www.Reinvention-Institute.com](http://www.Reinvention-Institute.com). Go to the self-help tools. At “Pre-order now,” enter “SAVE25.” You’ll get 25% off the \$79 price. It’s a big savings and that will be good through Sunday.

Have a great evening, everybody. I will see you next month.