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How Are Your Protemoi Doing Today?

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I've been very lucky. I've been able to advise and work with hundreds of very successful individuals. I've been able to see the good and the bad, the effective and the not so effective. There's a theme I see that spans people that are very successful—let's call them the Fast Risers.

START WITH THE WHO

Here's the first thing I've noticed. Fast Risers have a natural intuition about others' talent. They see great talent from a mile away and are attracted to it.

I first realized this concept when working with a very successful salesperson. He was very good at spending time developing relationships with those he *should* know instead of those he *did* know.

There's a big difference between the two. Nearly all of us are creatures of habit. We tend to spend time with and invest in those who we already know. We do this instead of taking a risk and approaching those we should get to know—those who we have the most potential to help or those who have the most potential to help us.

This is where the word *Protemoi* comes in. It's a Greek word that means "first among equals." The salesperson in the previous example had a written list of his Protemoi People—the people that he thought *could* add the most value in his life. He knew some of these people well, but many of them he didn't. His focus wasn't on who he knew the best, but who he would like to *know the best* in a year or so.

Having this list of Protemoi People allowed him to better allocate his time. You can do the same thing—writing down your Protemoi People list is the first step to spending time with the right people.

If you like investments, there's an analogy here with asset allocation. You likely know that most of the success in investing doesn't correlate with picking stocks perfectly. That's a less important issue than asset allocation—deciding *how much* to invest in stocks in the first place.

This fits with our example. Defining your Protemoi People is like proper asset allocation. It helps you determine where you'd like to spend your time. And, like good asset allocation, you need to review your Protemoi People and "rebalance them" from time to time based on new information.

THEN FIGURE OUT THE HOW

The second thing I noticed is about Fast Risers' investment in their Protemoi People. Fast Risers tend to invest in their Protemoi People akin to another investment technique: Dollar Cost Averaging. An investor uses Dollar Cost Averaging when he invests the same amount, month over month, over his entire investment career. Dollar Cost Averaging is so successful because it doesn't try to 'time the market' or get fancy—it just keeps investing similar amounts through the ups and downs of the market. Over time, it's been proven to generate very successful investment results. The success isn't because of bursts of energy, but because of boring, never-ending consistency.

The analogy works for people. Good relationships develop over time and are largely helped when one person invests time and energy into another. Time and energy are the catalysts to deep relationships. True friends invest in each other whether they're at the top of their game or in a rut. Early friendships are struck when one person goes 'out on a limb' to help the other and makes an investment in them. The first person finds a way to help the second.

AND PULL IT TOGETHER

Here's where it comes together: Fast Risers are largely successful because they determine *who* to invest in (instead of simply investing in 'historical friends') and they proactively figure out *how* to help these people over and over (instead of waiting for 'chance' to bring them together).

It's really that simple, but hard to execute in the hectic nature of everyday life. From what I've seen, simply writing down your Protemoi People and putting a few simple reminders in your calendar are all it takes to get started. You can use the reminders to

ask yourself “how can I invest in my most important people this week?”

Of course, Fast Risers have to produce great work. Yes, they have to be good at what they do. But from what I’ve seen, it’s their proactive targeting of talented people and innovative investments in these relationships that drives them forward so quickly. This is their secret investing method that you can

use to generate meaningful returns for years to come. ●

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