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How To Identify And Make The Most Out Of Your Everyday Champions

Because we all need a little nudge...

By Poorna Bell, commercial lifestyle writer

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Tapping into the right social network can take your career and life goals from average to stratospheric. Put simply: it's a great way of making the most of your ideas and keep you

going if doubts start creeping in.

However, according to new research from American Express in the UK, this isn't necessarily a network built on social media. Most of those surveyed (80%)* say that although they have a social media network of about 180 people they rely on the support of just five people has the most impact on their life and work – and not all of those have to be part of an online network.

The research discovered that for many Brits, this support network is primarily made up of a “backer” (64%), a “comforter” (62%), a “cheerleader” (62%) a “constructive critic” (45%) and a “big picture thinker” (40%).

Clearly, having the right kind of support counts. But crucially, the research reveals that you can get that support from the people right in front of you.

Around 61% of people said that they turn to their partners, 39% ask their parents and 26% call on their siblings for advice.

Founder of SBTv, Jamal Edwards MBE says: “I've relied on my parents more than anyone else. They've helped back me on many occasions and given me the encouragement to get to where I am today. For example, they bought me my first camera for Christmas when I was 15 which is when I really got into making videos and I became inseparable from the camera.” And even this digital entrepreneur acknowledges that, “despite the number of online connections we make on a daily basis we also have to rely on the people around us.”

And once you've started to tap into your networks, it's all about learning how to get the most out of them.

NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) Life and Business coach Puja McClymont from Frankly Coaching says that it's great for accountability. “It's imperative to have someone in your corner. Even though you're accountable to yourself, there's something in us that makes achieving a lot more successful if we know we have to check in with someone on our progress.

“Accountability does start with you, however, but having someone to 'report to' will help you to be more solutions focussed rather than throwing in the towel at the first sign of

difficulty. If things go awry, you have someone to help you get back on track.”

So, once you've identified who your everyday champions are, there are some measures of caution. For instance, if the person you are asking to support you doesn't work directly in your field then you may want to steer clear of asking for technical advice.

If you do want specific advice, it's best to ask the person who works in a similar field to you, but may be a work friend but not a family member. “Having an experienced, but relatively neutral point of view can help you to fully appreciate your potential,” says Siobhan Kangataran, life coach and founder of women's networking group ToGetHer Further, “as well as help put your challenges into perspective; empowering you to truly value yourself and your worth.”

It might also be useful to note down who in your circle of trusted people actually fulfills the role you need. Then, it's good to note what they will be able to help you out with.

For instance, the big picture thinker is great for mapping out your dream. Then, your cheerleader could help you summon the confidence to get started and keep going. Whoever you've chosen as your constructive critic or backer would be an ideal person to help hold you accountable and if you hit a bumpy spot, your comforter can step in to help smooth the path.

** Source: Research by OnePoll for American Express from 03.05.18 to 04.05.18 of a survey size of 1,500 UK adults*

American Express understands the importance of powerful backing. That's why the company has joined forces with music legend Nile Rodgers and culinary innovator Gizzi Erskine, to launch [Backed By](#), to give one budding musician and one food entrepreneur the chance to take their ideas to the next level. Keep an eye on [Backed By](#) for more on Nile and Gizzi's backing experiences.

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