

## Fourth Generation Brokerage: Trust and History Come Center Stage

Long familiar is the image of people finding advantage from brokering contact between otherwise disconnected groups. Using data on the social network around an individual, research over the last few decades has made the image concrete: Network brokers are disproportionately the source of good ideas, new processes, and new products - for which they are celebrated with positive evaluations, faster promotions, and higher compensation.

My purpose here is to highlight four generations in the research on brokerage. I am less concerned with distinguishing generations (though that is an interesting point in its own right), than I am concerned with distinguishing between more and less significant questions for future research (high-payoff targets).

Transitions between the three previous generations in the research have accompanied advances in research technology. Conditions for those transitions have implications for candidates defining a fourth generation.

Of candidates advocated — language and neuroscience outstanding among them — I believe it will be trust and history that defines the fourth generation. I here explain why.

Working slide deck at <http://www.ronaldsburt.com/research/index-research.html>