

One thing that will make you stand out

Being personal. That's the one thing that will make you stand out.

We are living, increasingly, in an electronic world. People send email and texts instead of picking up the phone. People tweet out questions to strangers in the hopes of getting the wisdom of the crowd. But, as we talked about here, people want to connect personally, one to one. Although we *feel* more connected, we are more isolated from other people. It is now possible for you to know what your friend from elementary school had for breakfast (on Facebook) while not knowing who your neighbor is.

This morning, on CBS Sunday Morning, Steve Hartman investigated the handwritten thank you note. He has never been a fan, but his colleague Byron Pitts is. Pitts sends out thank you notes to the people he interviews, to others who have helped him. This makes Pitts stand out. Those people will remember the gesture.

I am not sure if it is generational, cultural or personality-driven, but some people just don't seem to get that people want to be treated like people. If someone is sick or has been sick, you ask about their health. If someone is facing a problem, you offer support. Yet many people don't do this even though it takes very little effort for a big reward. Some politicians have gotten far because they treat people like people. George Bush gained popularity in part because he was personal—asking people about their families, following up, sending thank you notes.

Don't underestimate the power of reaching out, of being personal. It could be a handwritten note, or it could be a

telephone call. Reach out to people, and you will stand out to them.