

NEVER EAT ALONE BY KEITH FERRAZZI | BOOK SUMMARY & PDF

Never Eat Alone by Keith Ferrazzi is a guide to establishing and managing some of the most important relationships in your business life. These relationships can be used to open up new doors and opportunities, achieve great success and reach your goals. Ferrazzi emphasises the importance of networking, meeting new people and reaching out to people beyond your usual social circle.

THE MIND SET

Becoming a member of the club

You can see proof that success breeds success and, indeed, the rich do get richer. It's all about the web of friends and associates. Poverty, you come to realise, isn't only a lack of financial resources; it is isolation from the kind of people that could help you make more of yourself.

Life, like golf, is a game, and that the people who know the rules, and know them well, play it best and succeed. And the rule in life that has unprecedented power is that the individual who knows the right people, for the right reasons, and utilizes the power of these relationships, can become a member of the "club," whether he started out as a caddie or not.

To achieve your goals in life, it matters less how smart you are, how much innate talent you're born with, or even, most eye-opening to me, where you came from and how much you started out with. Sure all these are important, but they mean little if you don't understand one thing: You can't get there alone. In fact, you can't get very far at all.

Business and networking

Success in any field, but especially in business, is about working with people, not against them. No tabulation of dollars and cents can account for one immutable fact: Business is a human enterprise, driven and determined by people.

People who instinctively establish a strong network of relationships have always created great businesses. If you strip business down to its basics, it's still about people selling things to other people.

Self-help: a misnomer

Real networking was about finding ways to make other people more successful. It was about working hard to give more than you get.

Of course, building a web of relationships isn't the only thing you need to be successful. But building a career, and a life, with the help and support of friends and family and associates has some incredible virtues.

1. It's never boring. Time-consuming, sometimes; demanding, perhaps. But dull, never. You're always learning about yourself, other people, business, and the world, and it feels great.
2. A relationship-driven career is good for the companies you work for because everyone benefits from your own growth— it's the value you bring that makes people want to connect with you.
3. Connecting—with the support, flexibility, and opportunities for self-development that come along with it—happens to make a great deal of sense in our new work world. The loyalty and security once offered by organizations can be provided by our own networks.

Don't keep score

Almost everyone has had to reach out for help to get a job interview, an internship, or some free advice. And most have been reluctant to ask. Until you become as willing to ask for help as you are to give it, however, you are only working half the equation.

That's connecting. It's a constant process of giving and receiving—of asking for and offering help. By putting people in contact with one another, by giving your time and expertise and sharing them freely, the pie gets bigger for everyone.

A network functions precisely because there's recognition of mutual need. There's an implicit understanding that investing time and energy in building personal relationships with the right people will pay dividends.

But to do so, first you have to stop keeping score. You can't amass a network of connections without introducing such connections to others with equal fervor. The more people you help, the more help you'll have and the more help you'll have helping others.

Relationships are solidified by trust. Institutions are built on it. You gain trust by asking not what people can do for you, to paraphrase an earlier Kennedy, but what you can do for others. In other words, the currency of real networking is not greed

but generosity.

What's your mission?

Do you want to become a CEO or a senator? Rise to the top of your profession or to the top of your child's school board? Make more money or more friends?

The more specific you are about what you want to do, the easier it becomes to develop a strategy to accomplish it. Part of that strategy, of course, is establishing relationships with the people in your universe who can help you get where you're going.

GOAL SETTING

"A goal is a dream with a deadline."

Coming up with goals, updating them, and monitoring our progress in achieving them is less important, than the process of emotionally deciding what it is you want to do.

Step One: find your passion

- Before you start writing down your goals, you'd better know what your dream is.
- Conduct an internal review. The important thing is to do so without the constraints. Set aside the obstacles of time, money, and obligation.
- Ask the people who know you best what they think your greatest strengths and weaknesses are. Ask them what they admire about you and what areas you may need help in.

Step Two: putting goals to paper

- Firstly, the development of the goals. List what you'd like to accomplish in the next 3 years, work backwards in yearly, monthly increments to develop short-term goals that will help reach your mission.
- Secondly, connect those goals to the people, places, and things that will help you get the job done. Name people that will help you get to the goals you have outlined.
- Thirdly, determine the best way to reach out to the people who will help you to accomplish your goals.

Your goals must be specific, believable, challenging and demanding.

Step Three: create a personal "board of advisors"

It helps to have an enlightened counselor, or two or three, to act as both cheerleader and eagle-eyed supervisor, who will hold you accountable. They may be made up of family members; perhaps someone who's been a mentor to you; even an old friend or two.

Build it before you need it

The great myth of "networking" is that you start reaching out to others only when you need something like a job. In reality, people who have the largest circle of contacts, mentors, and friends know that you must reach out to others long before you need anything at all.

The genius of audacity

Audacity in networking has the same pitfalls and fears associated with dating—which I'm not nearly as good at as I am the business variety of meeting people.

Sticking to the people we already know is a tempting behavior. But unlike some forms of dating, a networker isn't looking to achieve only a single successful union. Creating an enriching circle of trusted relationships requires one to be out there, in the mix, all the time.

Most of us don't find networking the least bit instinctive or natural. Of course, there are individuals whose inherent self-confidence and social skills enable them to connect with ease. Then there are the rest of us.

Mustering the audacity to talk with people who don't know me often simply comes down to balancing the fear of embarrassment against the fear of failure and its repercussions.

Ultimately, everyone has to ask himself or herself how they're going to fail. We all do, you know, so let's get that out of the way. The choice isn't between success and failure; it's between choosing risk and striving for greatness, or risking nothing and being certain of mediocrity.

The networking jerk

When you look back upon a life and career of reaching out to others, you want to see a web of friendships to fall back on, not the ashes of bad encounters. Here are a few rules to ensure that you never become a Network- ing Jerk:

1. Don't schmooze.
2. Don't rely on the currency of gossip.
3. Have something to offer, don't show up empty handed.

4. Treat everyone equally, don't treat those under you poorly.
5. Be transparent. Be genuine.
6. Don't be too efficient. Nothing is worse than a mass email.

THE SKILL SET

Do your homework

Whom you meet, how you meet them, and what they think of you afterward should not be left to chance. Preparation is key.

Before you meet with any new people research who they are and what their business is. What's important to them: their hobbies, challenges, goals—inside their business and out. Before the meeting, prepare, a one-page synopsis. Aim to know what this person is like as a human being, what he or she feels strongly about, and what his or her proudest achievements are.

These days, research is easy, the internet is a one-stop shop.

Once again, your goal in such a setting is to transform what could be a forgettable encounter into a blossoming friendship. There are no shortcuts. You won't be able to reach out to these individuals, and truly connect, without doing your homework.

Take names

Once you've taken the time to figure out what your mission is and where you want to get to, the next step is to identify the people who can help you get there.

Tracking the people you know, the people you want to know, and doing all the homework that will help you develop intimate relationships with others can cause one heck of an information overload. How do you manage it? Keep a list. Create a database and categorise into groups. Close friends, family, associates, people you have worked with, your kids friends parents, former teachers etc.

Warming the cold call

So how do you manage a cold call?

First, it's all about attitude. Your attitude. You're never going to be completely ready to meet new people; there is no perfect moment. Your fears will never be completely quieted, because inviting rejection is never going to be appealing.

There are always a hundred reasons to procrastinate. The trick is to just plunge right in. Remember, if you don't believe you are going to get what you want from the call, you probably won't. You have to envision yourself winning to win.

And second, cold calls are for suckers. Don't call cold—ever. Ensure every call you make is a warm one.

Warm calls

- Establish credibility. No one will buy from you unless you establish trust. Having a mutual friend or even acquaintance will immediately make you stand out from the other anonymous individuals vying for a piece of someone's time.
- Once you have someone's commitment to hear you out for thirty seconds, you'll need to be prepared to deliver a high-value proposition. Remember, it's all about them. What can you do for them?
- Talk a little but say a lot. Make it quick, definitive and efficient.
- Offer a compromise. Try for a lot—it will help you settle for what it is you really need.

Managing the gatekeeper artfully

Half the difficulty in reaching out to others is actually reaching somebody at all.

First, make the gatekeeper an ally rather than an adversary. And never, ever get on his or her bad side. Many executive assistants are their bosses' minority partners. Don't think of them as "secretaries" or as "assistants." In fact, they are associates and lifelines.

Always respect the gatekeeper's power. Treat them with the dignity they deserve. If you do, doors will open for you to even the most powerful decision makers. What does it mean to treat them with dignity? Acknowledge their help. Thank them by phone, flowers, a note.

Never eat alone

Invisibility is a fate far worse than failure. It means that you should always be reaching out to others, over breakfast, lunch, whatever. It means that if one meeting happens to go sour, you have six other engagements lined up just like it the rest of the week.

Keep your social and conference and event calendar full. As an up-and-comer, you must work hard to remain visible and active among your ever-budding network of friends and contacts.

Share your passions

The power of shared passion in bringing people together can be seen today in the rising trend of blogs, or Web logs. Blogs are online journals, usually dedicated to an individual's interests, containing commentary and links to relevant news and information. Popular blogs attract like-minded legions to their sites.

Your passions and the events you build around them will create deeper levels of intimacy. Pay attention to matching the event to the particular relationship you're trying to build.

Follow up, or fail

In such a fast-paced, digital world, it's incomprehensible that only a small percentage of us decide to follow up once we've met someone new. When you meet someone with whom you want to establish a relationship, take the extra little step to ensure you won't be lost in their mental attic.

FOLLOW-UP IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN ANY FIELD. Making sure a new acquaintance retains your name is a process you should set in motion right after you've met someone. Give yourself between twelve and twenty-four hours after you meet someone to follow up. For example, if you meet somebody on a plane, send them an e-mail later that day.

But remember—and this is critical—don't remind them of what they can do for you, but focus on what you might be able to do for them. It's about giving them a reason to want to follow up.

Be a conference commando

Conferences are good for mainly one thing. They provide a forum to meet the kind of like-minded people who can help you fulfil your mission and goals.

Tips on being a conference commando:

1. Help the organiser, heck, BE the organiser.
2. Listen. Better yet, speak.
3. Know your targets.
4. Breaks are not times to take a break. Network.
5. Follow up.
6. It's the people, not the speakers.

Connecting with connectors

It has become part of our accepted wisdom that six degrees is all that separates us from anyone else in the world. How can that be? Because some of those degrees (people) know many, many more people than the rest of us.

Call them super-connectors. We all know at least one person like this individual, who seems to know everybody and who everybody seems to know.

In one word: Connect. In four better words: Connect with the connectors.

Expanding your circle

The most efficient way to enlarge and tap the full potential of your circle of friends is, quite simply, to connect your circle with someone else's.

It's like the Internet, an interconnecting series of links in which each link works collaboratively to strengthen and expand the overall community.

Such collaboration means seeing each person in your network as a partner. Like a business in which cofounders take responsibility for different parts of the company, networking partners help each other, and by extension their respective networks, by taking responsibility for that part of the web that is theirs and providing access to it as needed. In other words, they exchange networks. The boundaries of any network are fluid and constantly open.

The art of small talk

The fact is that small talk—the kind that happens between two people who don't know each other—is the most important talk we do. Language is the most direct and effective method for communicating our objectives.

The goal is simple: Start a conversation, keep it going, create a bond, and leave with the other person thinking, "I dig that person."

- Be yourself. I believe that vulnerability—yes, vulnerability—is one of the most under-appreciated assets in business today.
- Power, today, comes from sharing information, not withholding it.
- Learn the power of non-verbal cues. Smiles, eye contact, crossed arms, leaning in etc.
- Develop conversational currency. Be prepared to say something, keep up with current events etc.
- In order to establish a lasting connection, small talk needs to end on an invitation to continue the relationship.

TURNING CONNECTIONS INTO COMPATRIOTS

Health, wealth & children

When you understand someone else's mission, you hold the key to opening the door to what matters most to them. Knowing that will help you create deep, long-lasting bonds.

Try to find out what motivations drives that person. It often comes down to one of three things: making money, finding love, or changing the world.

There are a lot of things we can do for other people: give good advice, help them wash their car, or help them move. But health, wealth, and children affect us in ways other acts of kindness do not.

Social Arbitrage

"Stop driving yourself—and everyone else—crazy thinking about how to make yourself successful. Start thinking about how you're going to make everyone around you successful."

Real power comes from being indispensable. Indispensability comes from being a switchboard, parceling out as much information, contacts, and goodwill to as many people—in as many different worlds—as possible. It's a sort of career-karma.

The best sort of connecting occurs when you can bring together two people from entirely different worlds. The strength of your network derives as much from the diversity of your relationships as it does from their quality or quantity.

Pinging - all the time

80 percent of building and maintaining relationships is just staying in touch. I call it "pinging." It's a quick, casual greeting, and it can be done in any number of creative ways. Once you develop your own style, you'll find it easier to stay in touch with more people than you ever dreamed of in less time than you ever imagined.

Yes, there's grunt work involved. Pinging takes effort. That's the tough part. You have to keep pinging and pinging and pinging and never stop. You have to feed the fire of your network or it will wither or die.

The invaluable concept? Repetition.

TRADING UP AND GIVING BACK

Be interesting

1. Have a unique point of view. It's not just about being able to talk intelligently about politics, sports, travel, science, or whatever you'll need as a ticket of admission to any conversation. It's about having opinions on these topics. That's your point of difference.
2. You are the brand, develop the brand. You need to figure out what your content is. Forget your job title and forget your job description (for the moment, at least). Starting today, you've got to figure out what exceptional expertise you're going to master that will provide real value to your network and your company.
3. When you've figured out what your content is, tell an inspiring story that will propel your friends and associates into action with spirit and fearlessness, motivated and mobilized by your simple but profound storytelling.

Build your brand

Good personal brands do three highly significant things for your network of contacts: They provide a credible, distinctive, and trustworthy identity. They project a compelling message. They attract more and more people to you and your cause, as you'll stand out in an increasingly cluttered world.

So how do you create an identity for a brilliant career? How do you become the swoosh of your company? Of your network? Here are three steps to get you on the road to becoming the next Oprah Winfrey:

1. Develop a Personal Branding Message (PBM) A brand is nothing less than everything everyone thinks of when they see or hear your name. The best brands, like the most interesting people, have a distinct message. What do you want people to think when they hear or read your name?
2. Package the Brand Most people's judgments and impressions are based on visuals— everything other than the words you speak that communicates to others what you're about. For everyone in every field—let's be real—looks count, so you'd better look polished and professional.
3. Broadcast your brand The world is your stage. Your message is your "play." The character you portray is your brand. Look the part; live the part.

Broadcast your brand

1. You are your own best PR representative You must manage your own media. Who better than you to tell your story with credibility and passion? Start making calls to the reporters who cover your industry.
2. Know the media landscape Nothing infuriates reporters and editors more, than to get a pitch from someone who clearly has no idea what their publication is about or who their audience is. Spend time reading their articles, figuring out

- what they cover, and what kinds of stories their publications like to run.
3. Work the angles There are no new stories, it has been said, only old stories told in new ways. To make your pitch sound fresh and original, find an innovative slant.
 4. Don't be annoying It is okay to be aggressive, but mind the signals, and back off when it's time.
 5. It's all on record Be cautious: What you say can hurt you, and even if you're not quoted or you say something off the record, a reporter will use your words to color the slant of the article.
 6. Treat journalists as you would any other member of your network, society or friends group.

Getting close to power

Are you only connecting with field mice? If you are, start turning your attention to reaching out to the sort of important people that can make a difference in your life and the lives of others. The kind of people who can make you, and your network, sparkle.

Social scientists call it "power by association": It's the power that arises from being identified with influential people.

There's nothing wrong with looking for ways to spend time with people who have accomplished more and have more wisdom than you. Once you put yourself in position to connect with the famous and powerful, the key is not to feel as if you're undeserving or an impostor. You're a star in your own right, with your own accomplishments, and you have a whole lot to give to the world.

Never give in to hubris

Arrogance is a disease that can betray you into forgetting your real friends and why they're so important. So remember, in your hike up the mountain, be humble. Help others up the mountain along with and before you. Never let the prospect of a more powerful or famous acquaintance make you lose sight of the fact that the most valuable connections you have are those you've already made at all levels.

Find mentors, find mentees. Repeat.

In a fast-paced, fluid, and dynamic environment, where flattened organizations made up of cross-functional teams must respond rapidly to change, mentoring is one of the most effective strategies to get the best out of each and every individual.

I can't stress enough how powerful the process is and how important it is that you give your respect and time to it. In return, you'll be more than compensated with spirit, enthusiasm, trust, and empathy—all things that will ultimately far exceed the value of any advice you gave.

If you take mentoring seriously, and give it the time and energy it deserves, you'll soon find yourself involved in a brilliant learning network. You'll be the recipient of more information and more goodwill than you ever imagined, as you play the role of both master and apprentice in a powerful constellation of people all simultaneously teaching and being taught.

Welcome to the connected age

There has never been a better time to reach out and connect than right now. The dynamic of our society, and particularly our economy, will increasingly be defined by interdependence and interconnectivity. In other words, the more everything becomes connected to everything and everyone else, the more we begin to depend on whom and what we're connected with.