

**IT'S WHO  
KNOWS YOU**



# IT'S WHO KNOWS YOU

Networking Your Way to Success

Written by  
Chien J. Wang  
The Professional Networker

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## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my parents, Mr. Alex Wang and Mrs. Mei H. Wang. Thank you for all the love and support you have given me throughout my life.

I am extremely grateful for all the sacrifices you have made to allow me to pursue my dreams. I am so lucky to have you as my parents.



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## FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

I have been in business since 1976. Most of my business has been through networking. I value this art/skill tremendously! In 1996, I wrote my first book, *How to Network (& Prospect) Your Way to Prosperity*. It is still in demand. I also taught the subject at various colleges and corporations, as most people want to improve this skill.

Recently I read, *It's Who Knows You: Network Your Way to Success*. The author, Chien J. Wang, is the owner of his own awards and recognition business. He practices what he preaches.

Whether you are an experienced networker or new to the experience, you will enjoy and benefit from reading this book.

At your service,

Jacque Daniel  
Jacque Daniel Enterprises



## PREFACE

The purpose of this book is to help anyone who would like to enrich his or her life by learning to master the skill of networking. Throughout my adventures in networking, I have observed that many people have the desire to improve their networking skills but do not know how or where to look for help.

I have also noticed that most people view networking from a very narrow viewpoint. A majority of people see it only as a way to build sales and make more money. Yes, that may be the goal, but you need to have a multifaceted approach in order to achieve that goal. Networking is about relationship-building, making alliances, and learning from others as well as mentoring others. It takes a lot of effort to build and maintain all the relationships you have, but the rewards are well worth it! You will truly become happier because you have a support system both in good times, and especially in bad times.

I believe that the gift of knowledge is one of the greatest gifts you can give to someone. I believe that by sharing my knowledge of networking, I will be helping numerous people enrich their lives on many fronts. I know networking has already changed my life. I hope this book will also change your life in the most positive and profound way.

CHIEN J. WANG



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is like all success stories in life. No one person can succeed on his own without some kind of teamwork. I am very fortunate to have so many great people around me to help me turn this book into reality.

I want to thank my parents, Alex and Mei Wang for always believing in and supporting me, in every way possible.

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My writing coach, Ann McIndoo, guided me throughout this entire project.

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To my friend and mentor Leonard Mercado: Thank you for being my advocate and always thinking of different ways to help my career.

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Finally, I would like to thank all of the people in my networking circle. I have benefited greatly from knowing all of you.

## INTRODUCTION

Whenever I deliver my speech entitled, “Network Your Way to Success,” I always begin by asking the audience to help me define “networking.” I select three audience members to give it a try, and each time, I get three different definitions. The answers are usually: “referrals,” “making connections,” and “promoting yourself.” I then tell my audience that some people see networking as a way to meet their future spouse. If a person sees that as the end result of what networking can accomplish for him and he meets his dream mate, then he has been very successful at networking. What I am trying to get the audience to do is to start thinking about what networking means to them. Most people never really think about it. You cannot be successful at something if you can’t even define what it is. The good news is that all of my audience members are right every time. You see, networking means different things to different people. Only *you* know what it truly means to you and what you want to get out of it. For your information, my definition of networking is ***building and maintaining relationships*** with people you would like to know, people you can call on for a question, and people with whom you would like to do business. Networking is something you have to cultivate; it doesn’t just happen by itself. In

order to build and maintain a strong network, you really have to work hard at it.

A number of individuals I have come across have the wrong notion of what networking actually is. This could be the result of a bad experience with someone who contacted them through a mutual associate, or meeting someone at an event who tried to hard-sell them something, and wouldn't take no for an answer. Some people think networking is all about making money. They think of aggressive people trying to sell them something they don't need. They may think of the person doing the networking as greedy and "low class." Worse yet, some people consider "networking" a dirty word.

Some individuals think of networking as network marketing or multilevel marketing. Yes, many network marketing groups use similar marketing methods that I will discuss in this book. As a matter of fact, many people involved with network marketing have purchased my book and have their team members read it. But you don't have to be involved with network marketing to utilize the techniques that I am going to share with you in this book.

My goal is for you to bring networking to the forefront of your consciousness. Most of us are networking in the subconscious. We all network in one form or another, but don't really do it systematically or follow through. We often ask someone we know with questions like, "Do you know of a reliable contractor?" or "Do you know of anyone who's looking to hire an experienced sales person?" In effect, we are networking but we are doing it without really realizing it. Oftentimes, we make certain connections such as with our classmates or with our coworkers, but we fail to keep building and maintaining those relationships and eventually, we lose touch after we move away or make a career change. This is like running a one-hundred-yard dash and stopping at the fifty-yard line. I want you to determine *where* the finish line is first (define what networking means to you). Then I am going to train your mind to take you to this finish line.

Whenever I see successful people on television, I notice that many of them refer to the people who were instrumental in the success of their lives and careers. It seems that the people they mention have all been friends and supporters for a long time. This illustrates how important it is for us to keep developing long-term relationships. After you finish reading this book, you will quite possibly realize that you have missed many opportunities in the past to network, to make more friends, to form new alliances, to learn something new, to save some money, to work more efficiently, and to become the person you are capable of becoming. Once this book helps you bring networking to the forefront of your consciousness, you will feel like you are always meeting the right people at the right time, and the right opportunities are always in front of you. This is how powerful networking is. It can change your whole perspective on life!

Many people who have heard me speak or read the first version of this book have already put some of my techniques into practice. Some of them are shocked at how quickly they are seeing real results. I don't want to mislead you; some of these people already have some basics in place and have already laid the groundwork. I just taught them to discover the assets necessary to help them reach their true potential. By the same token, I have witnessed people who were so shy as to be unable to properly introduce themselves improve in a short time after they heard me speak or read my book. I've watched them gain confidence and begin networking like they have been doing it for years

This book is perfect for sales professionals. Most organizations don't teach you how to sell any longer, let alone teach you the art of networking. This book is great for real-estate agents, insurance agents, financial planners, multilevel marketers, auto brokers, consumer-products salespeople, lawyers, bankers, and other people involved in the sales profession. This book can also be extremely helpful to entrepreneurs and business owners, as most entrepreneurs will agree with me that their most important job is to build

relationships and bring in sales. Even dentists and chiropractors are picking up on the art of networking. This book is not a book about selling. That will be another one of my books down the road. This book is all about networking and how networking can improve many aspects of your business, and *one* of those areas is sales. I am a true believer in relationship-selling, which is essentially what networking is. Many sales organizations are buying this book in quantity to distribute to all of their associates. They see the value of investing in knowledge. I hope you will recommend this book to someone who can really benefit from the knowledge and inspiration in this book. Isn't that what networking is all about?

## CHAPTER 1

# What Networking Is All About

In this chapter, I am going to expand on the definition of networking. We need to define who's in our network, why we should be networking, and who should be networking. Once we have a better understanding, we will be able to keep building on the concept of networking and get more out of it.

### **Who Is in Our Network?**

Almost every one of us already has existing networks. These are generally the first people who come to mind: parents, siblings, extended family, neighbors, and coworkers. People in the organizations to which you belong, be it a hobby club, a service organization, or your church. Even your favorite server at the restaurant you frequent is part of your network. If you are in business for yourself, it could be your business associates, vendors, existing customers, and employees. The list goes on and on. Whoever comes to mind first is the nucleus of your network, because these are the people you see most frequently and with whom you have the most interaction. This is your “natural” network because you build this network simply by living your daily life, and most people do not put much effort into building it or

maintaining it; it just developed by itself. Recognizing that this is a very helpful group of people with whom you already have an existing relationship, and further examining how each person in your natural network can be of help to you, are powerful first steps. Perhaps you can start by writing down a list of these people and their areas of expertise. This exercise is very helpful if you are looking to raise money for your business, looking for prospects, or if you need some questions answered. These are the people who will pick up the phone and answer your call because they know who you are.

But your natural network is very limited. How many people do you personally know? In the real-estate business, they tell you to send out letters as soon as you get your real-estate salesperson's license to people you know in order to inform them that you are now selling real estate. Most people are lucky to come up with fifty names and addresses! Your natural network is not going to expand much over time because you tend to see the same people over time.

That is why most rookie salespeople fail. They do not know enough people or prospects when they first start. Most people don't maintain a huge network of people. They only wish they have a sizable network after they get into sales or start their own business. They run out of money before they can build up enough prospects and sales. Many people new to sales simply underestimate the time it takes to build up a network and a sizable prospect base. By the same token, it seems that the top salespeople are always getting lucky. They are always getting referrals while the rookies are not getting any breaks. You see, the successful salespeople know that it is not who you know, **It's Who Knows You!** They usually have been in the same line of business for a long time. They have built up their name recognition in their field, and they are very involved in their trade organizations as well as in the community they do business. I know of a mortgage broker who took out a huge billboard ad alongside a major freeway in Southern California. He's the only one I know who hopes for traffic jams on that freeway so people can get

a good look at his face and his contact information. This is his strategy of expanding on the concept of “It’s Who Knows You.” If he had to rely on his family and friends for business, he would be out of the mortgage business already. Instead, he is a top-producing mortgage broker.

Most people start out by wanting to meet the right people. For salespeople, they want to meet the decision-makers, who are usually top management or owners of the companies. People seeking employment are usually looking for Human Resources managers or businesses owners. People seeking future spouses want to meet people with the right looks, cultural background, and similar interests. But wouldn’t it be a lot easier if the right people know who you are and what you do and how your products and services will benefit them? What if the company you want to work for knows who you are and contacts you first? What if your dream future spouse already knows that you are the right match and asks someone to help set up a date? Wouldn’t all this be wonderful? Most of the techniques that I am about to share with you in this book are geared toward **It’s Who Knows You!** I would much rather have the right people know who I am.

The people in your network can change during your career and lifetime. For example, if you are a student (who also need to network), it’s probably your classmates, your professors, teacher’s aid, and career counselor, etc. As you start out in the business world, that can change. But, I highly recommend that you stay in touch with people whom you met back in school.

As you move on into the business world and as your career and life progresses, your network of people who are the closest to you (the nucleus) can change. It depends on what industry you are in and what kind of life you are leading. It is always good to have someone in your network who has known you for a long time and knows your personal history. Work hard to stay connected with the important people in every stage of your life.

We are all related to somebody. It is very hard to exist in our world living in isolation. A relationship must be consequential. If you know you are only going to meet a person once, then I doubt that the conversation is going to be too meaningful. You will not feel the need to invest anything into this encounter because you will never see this person again.

People will invest time in building a relationship if they can visualize a positive outcome. It can be a romantic relationship or it can be a business relationship. The unfortunate thing is that many of us take these relationships for granted over time. This will cause some relationships to fade and end. This is why it is very important for us to keep developing the relationships we have in our network; otherwise, some of the people in the network will inevitably drop off.

### **Why Should I Be Networking?**

Most people I meet do not see the importance of networking. Many people are perfectly content performing the same repetitive tasks that they were doing ten years ago. They simply want to remain in a comfort zone. Instead of trying to grow personally and professionally, some people just want to preserve what they have. I guess one can get by in life without really making an effort at networking; but if you are a high achiever and you want to get the most out of your life, then I can give you many reasons why you should put some effort into networking. You should be networking because you want to enrich your life. You want to further your career. You want to gain more knowledge and build more meaningful relationships. If you are a businessperson, you definitely want to enhance your network to increase your business. Knowing many people allows you to gain different knowledge, and have access to different points of view. You should be networking so you don't put all of your social and emotional eggs in one basket. It's always good to have someone to call on in a time of need. You should be networking so you can be introduced to new things in life such as new

genres of art, a new type of food, a new hobby, or a new way of thinking. You should be networking to gain more social sophistication. You should be networking to enhance your life in every way. You should build a set of resources so that whatever issue may arise in your life (personal or business), you have a go-to person to contact.

Think about how many of your friends' marriages were set up by a mutual friend or acquaintance. Recall the last time you or someone who was in need of a good doctor found that doctor through a referral. Remember that someone you know who was laid off and searching for a job; he subsequently found a great job through someone who knew the company was looking for a specific kind of candidate. Consider your best clients—did they come to you because someone referred them to you?

Some of these great things are already happening in our daily lives. It is just that we are not really paying attention. *The challenge is that we don't have a systematic way for it to happen on a consistent basis.*

### **Not Having a Systematic Way for Networking**

The problem with networking, for most people, is that they don't have a systematic way of networking on a regular and consistent basis. Sometimes, they just go out and meet people. Then, they get tired or become busy with other things and they don't feel like networking. They don't bring business cards to social and business events. They don't have any kind of follow-up. How can we make it systematic?

Let me tell you something. You know why it's called "net-**working**?" Because *networking is working*. You need to have a "work" mindset. Your mind has to be prepared for it and you have to have the right tools and attitude. People don't magically become great networkers. *Networking is a skill; you get better at it with practice.*

## **Building Resources**

Networking is not just for making sales. For many people, that's the first thing that comes to mind: They want to meet new people and turn them into customers so they can make more money. I understand that making money is perhaps the number-one motivator for people to network. But networking is multifaceted. Working on the different facets of networking will actually contribute to the goal of making more money. Let me explain. A big part of networking is about building your resources. What are your resources? If you're in business, you need lawyers, accountants, staffing agencies, payroll service companies, bankers, etc.

For example, in 2006 my company saved over \$10,000 just by switching bankers, payroll-service companies, and packaging companies. We are constantly building a stronger resource base to improve our position in business.

If you are saving money or getting more value for the same money, isn't that the same as making more money? Isn't a dollar saved as good as a dollar earned? By having a strong supplier and support network, you can concentrate on your core revenue-generating activity. Building and constantly upgrading your resource base should be one of your goals for networking.

Resources can also be personal. For example, do you have a family doctor? If you get ill, whom can you call right away? Do you have a great dentist, handyman, etc? For those who have young children, do you have a reliable babysitter? I have a personal tailor. I buy all my suits from Mr. Eddie Garcia, because he's a master tailor. I found him through networking. I get great service from Mr. Garcia, and the suits are done right at very good prices. I save a lot of time and potential aggravation by having a strong network of personal resources. Your personal life and professional life are interrelated. If your personal life is in great shape, then you are able to concentrate and focus on your professional dealings. I know a number of people who were late for meetings or had to cancel business meetings

because their babysitter did not show up. This illustrates how important it is to have the right people in your personal network.

And networking can be even more beneficial. Have you ever discovered a great restaurant because someone told you about it? Has anyone in your social circle ever recommended that you check out a Web site that provided the information you've been seeking? Have you ever suffered from a certain illness and found support through a group who shared their stories and those of others they know? "Resources" are a key component of what networking is all about.

### **Who Should Be Networking?**

I say *everybody* should be networking, not just sales professionals and business people. For example, if you are a student (especially a college student), shouldn't you already be networking? Do you know of any college graduates who have a degree and can't get a job because they don't know where to look? They have nobody to call. With whom should you network? You should be networking with your professors, your career counselor, corporate recruiters, other students, and their parents. You should be involved in the community. Volunteer with different organizations. The more people you know and the **more people who know you** can only improve your chances of finding the right career and opportunities.

Many people think only people in business and sales should be networking. That is a complete fallacy. I believe that even stay-at-home moms should be networking. Why? Don't they have health issues with babies and children's behavioral problems? If you network with other stay-at-home moms who are in similar situations, you will find that you are going through the same issues, not just with babies, but in life. This is a great way to gain support and learn from each other.

Who else should be networking? Retirees! I often meet people in organizations that I belong to who are retirees. When I ask them for their business card, they often respond, "I don't have any business

cards; I'm retired". They almost sound apologetic and usually lack energy. Retired from what? You retire from your job, but it doesn't mean your life is over. When you're retired, life goes on. How about health issues? Hobbies? How about empty-nest syndrome, which perhaps you need to discuss with other people? I mentioned earlier about resources for doctors. Retirees can exchange their experience with doctors and give each other referrals. You can also network with people and converse about dietary needs, how to eat, and stay healthy. There are many retirees who are bored and who are trying to find something meaningful to do. Through networking, they may find something that they are passionate about that will ignite their desire to do something, to live, not just sit and remain inactive.

I mentioned earlier that most people think business owners and salespeople are the ones doing most of the networking. Yes, that is the first group of people that comes to mind. But, did you know that if you are a salaried employee or have a regular nine-to-five job, you should be networking also?

I have met so many people at networking events. I ask them, "What is your motivation? What is your goal in attending this event?" You know what they tell me? Even though they're salaried employees, (they are not trying to make a commission or increase sales), they say, "I'm here to look for a backup." People don't have job security. They are actually looking for a position in case they get laid off or their company shuts down. They are already trying to pave the road for their next job.

There is another group of people who want to advance their career. They have a job. They are in no danger of getting laid off (at least they believe that). But they are seeking something that's *better*. It is so hard to advance within an organization. The way most people get paid more is by jumping to another company. What they are doing is getting out there and letting people know that they are available for the right opportunity. I have observed that most coveted jobs go to people who have some kind of direct or indirect connection to the person making the hiring decision. Many of these job openings are

heard about through the grapevine, and the people who are always keeping their contacts up to date with business people, recruiters, and industry players are the ones who are going to land the job. I remember back in 1991 when I graduated from college, the U.S. economy was in a deep recession. Many companies were simply not hiring. Most of my classmates were sending out hundreds of résumés and were not landing interviews, let alone getting job offers. But my friend C.K. who already knew the importance of networking at the time was getting multiple job offers. Was he more qualified than my other classmates? I doubt it. He was simply better at networking and marketing himself to potential employers.

What I am saying is that whether you have a job, you don't have a job, you are retired, or you are a student, you all need to be networking. Networking is for everybody.

### **How Large Should Your Network Be?**

Obviously, a bigger network has its advantages. You have more people to call on and you have a bigger target audience to hear your story. For example, my company sells awards and recognition products. My target audiences are awards retailers and specialty advertising companies. These are people whom I have identified as needing my products and services. I meticulously file all the business cards that I have collected, and I enter the e-mail addresses into my e-mail-campaign program. Over time, my list of target audiences that receive my newsletter and daily specials is getting bigger and bigger. My goals are twofold. First, I want to meet and know as many people as I can to build up my resource base as well as acquire knowledge from the people I have met. Second, and even more important, is that *I want as many people as possible to know me*, my business, and the products my company offers. In short, I want a great deal of people to know my story and build my name recognition within my target audience. In networking, *who knows you is much more important than who you know*.

The problem is, once your network grows to a certain size, you can not realistically manage a close inner circle of quality networking partners who you know at a personal level. I would say twenty to twenty-five people are manageable. Hopefully, they all can contribute to your success in different ways. Diversity is the key here in every way, not just the type of business they have. They can be liberal or conservative. They can be from different religious or ethnic backgrounds. They should have their special expertise such as finance, marketing, human resources, law, creative design, and so on. Your inner circle of networking partners should also be diverse in their interests and be in different phases of their lives. For example, you need people in your circle who are single, single parents, married, divorced, people who don't want any children, and so on. Some of them should be in their twenties, thirties, forties, fifties, and beyond. They should have diverse interests outside of their work such as sailing, hiking, history, art, music, traveling, cooking, and so on. This way, you will gain a broader perspective and can identify issues that matter to people who are different from you. This will not only help you in your business, it will also help you get more out of your life. This diversity strategy has already benefited my business immensely, as well as provided me with personal growth.

My goal is that by the time you finish reading this book, you will be so inspired that you decide to take the actions that I recommend to become a successful networker. Ever since I started taking networking seriously, my life has blossomed beyond my wildest imagination. My only regret is that I didn't do it earlier.