

## Never Eat Alone

Keith Ferrazzi—2005.

### SECTION ONE: the mindset

#### CHAPTER 1: Becoming a Member of the Club

- During those long stretches on the links, as I carried their bags, I watched how the people who had reached professional heights p unknown to my father and mother helped each other. They found one another jobs, they invested time and money in one another's ideas, and they made sure their kids got help getting into the best schools, got the right internships, and ultimately got the best jobs.
- Before my eyes, I saw proof that success breeds success and. Indeed, the rich do get richer. Their web of friends and associates was the most potent club the people I caddied for had in their bags.
- When you help others, they often help you. Reciprocity is the gussied-up word people use later in life to describe this ageless principle. I just knew the word as "care." We cared for each other, so we went out of our way to do nice things. Because of those days, and specifically that lesson, I came to realize that first semester at business school that Harvard's hypercompetitive, individualistic students had it all wrong. 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.
- Once I saw my networking efforts in this light, I gave myself permission to practice it with abandon in every part of my professional and personal life. I didn't think of it as cold and impersonal, the way I thought of "networking." I was, instead, connected –sharing my knowledge and resources, time and energy. Friends and associates, and empathy and compassion in a continual effort to provide value to others, while coincidentally increasing my own.
- My thirst to reach out was almost unquenchable. But in business, I found nothing came close to the impact of mentors.
- I learned that real networking was about finding ways to make other people more successful. It was about working hard to give more than you get.
- Luckily, I had already applied some of the very rules of networking that I was still in the process of learning. In my spare time. When I wasn't painfully attempting to analyze some data-ridden worksheet, I reached out to ex-classmates, professors, old bosses, and anyone who might stand to benefit from a relationship with Deloitte. I spent my weekends giving speeches at small conferences around the country on a variety of subjects I had learned at Harvard mostly under the tutelage of Len Schlessinger (to whom I owe my speaking style today).
- All of this takes work. It involves a lot of sweat equity, just as it did for me back in the caddie yard. It means you have to think hard not only about yourself but about other people. Once you're committed to reaching out to others and asking for their help at being the best at whatever you do, you'll realize, as I have, what a powerful way of accomplishing your goals this can be.
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## **CHAPTER 2: Don't Keep Score**

- When I give talks to college and grad students, they always ask me. What are the secrets to success? What are the unspoken rules for making it big? Preferably, they'd like my response wrapped up in a tight package and tied with a neat little bow. Why not? I wanted the same thing at their age.
- Now I get that look of instant recognition. Almost everyone in the room 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 what I mean by connecting. It's a constant process of giving and receiving—of asking for and offering help.
- I come away with several fundamental insights and observations:
  - 1. Yesterday we had the new economy. Today we have the old economy (again!), and no one can predict what's going to be thrown at us next. Business cycles ebb and flow; your friends and trusted associates remain. A day might well come when you step into your boss's office some afternoon to hear, "I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but..." Tough day, guaranteed. The experience will be a whole lot easier to handle, however, if you can make a few calls and walk into someone's office soon after to hear, "I've been waiting for this day to come for a long time. Congratulations..."
  - Job security? Experience will not save you in hard times, nor will hard work or talent. If you need a job, money, advice, I help, hope, or a means to make a sale, there's only one surefire. Fail-safe place to find them—within your extended circle of friends and associates.
  - 2. There's no need to ponder whether it's their lunch or yours. There's no point in keeping track of favors done and owed. Who cares? Would it surprise you if I told you "Hollywood" David isn't doing that well any longer? David hoarded the relational equity he had until he eventually looked around and discovered there was nothing more to hoard.
  - Each of us is now a brand. Gone are the days where your value as an employee was linked to your loyalty and seniority. Companies use branding to develop strong, enduring relationships with customers. In today's fluid economy, you must do the same with your network.

## **CHAPTER 3: What's Your Mission?**

- As my dad used to say, no one becomes an astronaut by accident.

## **CHAPTER 4: Build It Before You Need It**

- Forget the images we all have in our heads of the desperate, out-of-work individuals scooping up every business card in sight while fervently mingling at business conventions and job hunting events. 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.

- My advice was to start finding future clients today. Had he thought about what kind of industry he wanted to specialize in? Had he thought about where the top people in that industry hang out? Once he could answer those questions, the next step was to go hang with this new circle of people.

## **CHAPTER 5: The Genius of Audacity**

- And it would never have happened if my father hadn't believed that it never hurts to ask.

## **SECTION TWO: The Skill Set**

### **Chapter 8: take names.**

- Relationship Action Plan.