

## **"Networking is Dead"** ***Making Connections That Matter***

Melissa G. Wilson and Larry Mohl  
(© Melissa Giovagnoli and Larry Mohl)

Summary by Bob Littell, Chief NetWeaver  
[chiefnetweaver@gmail.com](mailto:chiefnetweaver@gmail.com)

Elvis was recently spotted at Hartsfield-Jackson Airport so the rumors of his death must have been greatly exaggerated. But with 'networking', the rumor is true.

Some people refuse to accept the fact that ***networking' is dead!*** That is, at least 'networking' as millions have been practicing it in the past and many who still do so today.

Although the co-authors of "***Networking is Dead***" – Melissa G. Wilson and Larry Mohl, declared it as such in their new book, there will still be those who refuse to believe it and will keep on doing networking in the traditional mode – attending endless networking events and collecting as many business cards as possible, as if that's the ultimate measure of success.

What's most valuable about this book is not only the way the authors clarify why it's the '**quality**' of the connections made, rather than the '**quantity**' that is most important, but they also supply ten lessons which will help you build an effective process that:

- Deepens existing relationships and makes meaningful new ones;
- Connects across your own company to strengthen your business;
- Finds people with similar values to embark on mutually beneficial opportunities;
- Leverages your connections instead of being overwhelmed by them.

So when I picked up the book and started reading, I expected it to start out with a long expose as WHY the more traditional forms of networking are toast. Instead, I was treated to a totally 'positive' story which simply casts

the characters in a situation illustrating a better way to win friends; influence people, and drive your business upwards.

## **Lesson 1 – DEFINE YOUR WHY**

I'm a 'plodder' when it comes to reading stories and keeping all the names of the characters straight. That dates back to days of reading James Michener's "*Hawaii*" and trying to keep all the characters memorized. So if you are similarly afflicted, here's a cheat sheet for make things easier for you when you hopefully not only read this summary, but buy the book:

**Lance Hardy** – Head of Accounting at Hospitality Inc. Lance at age 42, served as the tutor for Meredith Mathers as she was majoring in business marketing at State. Lance is described as a 'professional hermit' (i.e. introverted – doesn't like crowds), but to his credit, he has recognized the weakness of this and is reaching out to find ways to overcome his inhibitions. We get the feeling Lance was more open to networking earlier in his career before turning into a hermit.

**Meredith Mathers** – A 36-year old CEO of Social Solutions. She and Lance were described as, "*Like an old married couple, they could be found finishing each other's sentences, coming up with the same ideas at the same time, partnering on a variety of side ventures despite their busy professional lives.*" As she was once tutored by Lance, she is now the one mentoring him in the Social arena. The authors call it "Coffee Shop 101".

**Jill – Yoga and workout instructor** - Friend of Meredith's and Lance's as well as their yoga –exercise instructor. Lance helped Jill start her own personal network and now she's the all-star at building a network. And Jill is the one who put this meeting together. **Jill:** "*I'm so glad you guys reached out to me after the holidays: I have just the guy to make your New Year's Resolution*" a reality (i.e. Both Meredith and Lance had resolved to DOUBLE their business connections). Jill met Dan (see below) at her gym. When Meredith, inquires about Dan's specialty, Jill responds, "*Putting people from diverse backgrounds together.*"

**Dan Paterno** – The person Jill has recruited as mentor and coach to Meredith and Lance. As Dan enters the café, as a first impression, he looks

much like Lance - a "small rather undistinguished character. . .He wore khaki slacks and generic powder blue dress shirt rolled up sleeves. He carried no bag, not tablet. From what Meredith could see, he didn't even have a phone on him." Jill leaves the meeting at this point to run one of her yoga classes at her studio leaving the other 3 there.

When Lance and Meredith start the conversation by referring to their New Year's resolution as, "**The Year of Networking**", Dan's surprising response appears "as if he'd just bitten into a lemon seed" which somewhat took them back. Dan adds, "First lesson, let's completely do away with the word '**networking**' while we work together."

Dan goes on to agree that his specialty **is** networking, but he prefers to call it, "**Making connections that matter**". . .". . .rather than growing a huge network focused on sheer numbers, building a successful network is about establishing a relatively small number of deep, high-quality, business relationships based on common values." And Dan points out that to do that effectively, "you must first, clearly define your core values."

I particularly like Dan's observation about the disappointing evolution of '**networking**': "What started out as a great idea, forming relationships and **putting friends and allies together in the path of opportunity**, has devolved into a common act of collecting as many business cards as possible. Most people who talk about networking these days are really saying, '**I'm going to mine you for your contacts, use you until you're dry, and then move on.**' "

At this point, Dan gives a little of his personal history which has allowed him to recognize something which has shaped his future: "I was a teacher for many years. I was good at it, but I was better at helping people, one on one, improve their lives". . . "Frankly, I was much more successful at putting the kids' parents in touch with a great tutor or the right guidance counselor than I ever was teaching math or science!"

That led Dan to start a small company - "**Tutor Tech**" - matching up kids with local tutors. One of the parents of one student for whom he had lined up a tutor ran a top recruiting firm placing C-level players and he recognized that Dan's 'connecting' skills could be applied there just as easily.

Eventually that led Dan to start his own firm, "**Connections Count**", which he still runs.

Lance and Meredith can identify with how Dan got to be where he is today and see some similarities with their own journeys. Dan then has each of them tell a little about how they got to where they are today. After doing so, Lance and Meredith are still just a little confused when Dan says, "*The good news is you guys have all the tools to build GREAT connections that matter; the bad news is, I think you have your 'what' confused with your 'why'.*"

When I first read this quote, I was as puzzled as Lance and Meredith. But that quickly disappeared when Dan continued: "*If you ask most people **WHAT** they are trying to accomplish or **HOW** they intend to accomplish it, it's something they can usually easily tell you." . . ."But if you ask people **WHY** they are doing what they are doing, their answers become far less clear".*

Dan explains: "***When your 'Why' is bigger than your 'What' or your 'How', you become a attractor of possibility. What's more, you inspire connections and more opportunities.***"

Dan says that to get to your WHY and in order to "*be truly successful at growing your best business relationships, at making connections that matter.*", *you have to 'dig deeper'.*" . . . Exploring these questions [the WHY] provides clarity of purpose and sets you up to build your network with purpose and persistence because a more deeply held purpose is essential for sticking with things as you encounter the inevitable bumps in the road. The WHY of connecting is also focused on people first, opportunities second."

Dan suggests that, "*If you take this first big step, you will act in an authentic and credible way as you go about your community building or, as you call it 'networking'. Those who build successful networks start by spending at least 30 minutes weekly reflecting on their values and purpose, refining them and assessing them to see that their actions, values, and purpose are in alignment. It's about slowing down to speed up, actually.*"

I love the term “**community building**” the authors use as synonymous with ‘networking’ and am going to steal that one myself.

For further clarification of defining the ‘**WHY**’ behind your need for more connections, Dan adds that you also need to drill down to your ‘**vision**’ which he defines as “**a picture of your ideal future.**”

*“Over time and through this process you continue to clarify and specify a future vision that expresses your purpose and values in your work and life. You should spend time weekly reflecting on your vision, refining it, and assessing if your actions align with it. Again, those people who have inspiring visions pull others along on their journey.”*

I like to always identify a few points in every book I review which capture the essence of what it’s all about and I think the above paragraph together with the following one does just that:

*“The most important thing is to have a WHY that emanates from a deep passion. And that the passion must be focused and have a core around ‘making a difference’ for others – not just yourself. For example, look at Steve Jobs. He had a big passion in life – to make a beautifully engineered computer. He focused his passion and pushed to get his product out to as many people as possible. He wanted to make a difference in how people experienced technology. His WHY changed the world.”*

As they prepare to leave, Dan gives an assignment for their next meeting, “**I’d like you to define your WHY, core values, and vision in two paragraphs and/or pictures and bring them to the next meeting.**” And on his way out the door, Dan adds, “**And bring your list of contacts.**”

## **Lesson 2 – CREATE QUALITY OVER QUANTITY**

The authors do a great job by using both Lance and Meredith in their story because they demonstrate how opposite personalities and styles can benefit from choosing ‘**quality**’ over ‘**quantity**’ and how each should build ‘**connections that matter**’.

At their next meeting, you can almost feel Lance’s angst as he is struggling to define his *WHY*, his *core values*, and his *vision*. Previously at the corporate level, he had done these kinds of exercises before,

*"But this was personal. His personal network, or whatever Dan wanted them to call it, was his Achilles heel. It was too small, Lance felt, too isolated, too internal, not dynamic, helpful, or generous enough. Not so much for Meredith, who was as outgoing, friendly, and popular as an adult could be."*

As he answered one of the key questions Dan had posed to both of them, *"Why do I want to increase my social network?"*, he actually found it much easier than he had thought:

*"Because it's too small. It doesn't offer me the right opportunities and if I'm ever going to go anywhere in my professional life, I need more opportunities, not less."*

Then he saw that,

*"This ties directly into my core values, which include solving complex problems for, and with, like-minded people. Nothing satisfies me more than coming to a problem cold, finding a solution, and making someone's day."*

And that led to his *"**vision** for building a values-based network' is to connect with like-valued people for our individual and mutual benefit."*

Although not completely satisfied with this, *"He smiled but only weakly"*.

As they convene their first meeting in a cozy conference room at the "Morecraft Hotel" – Dan's 'office away from his office', I picture the setting more like a small living room than a conference room (i.e. leather chairs and coffee table, with a buffet table with cookies, chips, soda lined up).

Dan asks Lance to go first to get over his obvious anxiousness and after reading what Lance had written, Dan's response was, *"**That's a Great Start.**"*

Now it was Meredith's turn and she surprised both Lance and Dan by pulling an 8 X 10 photo out of her leather laptop bag and handing it to Dan.

Dan studied the picture which,

*"...showed a small group of people, men and women, black and white, Asian and Hispanic, all in business suits gathered at a conference table. They were smiling*

*and joking but clearly working on a big project together. Outside the windows of the office building, the sky was dark; the three men pictured in the center had their sleeves rolled up, their ties loosened. It looked like the whole group was in for a long night of working together."*

Dan then asked Meredith to explain which she had done:

*"I thought this picture perfectly represented my WHY for identifying my connections that matter versus just unconsciously adding people – so called friends I don't know well or at all – in hopes that such a strategy will help me increase my success in my business."*

*"As you shared last week, I should collaborate with a few well-targeted people just like these who can help find more people just like themselves. In other words, these quality connections will lead to new and more quality connections. This picture also perfectly represents my core values, which are helping people help themselves. Finally this is my own personal vision of success: a group of like-minded people working together to solve a problem."*

At this point, I thought Dan would clap and say "You've really got it", but although he compliments their 'creativity' and 'enthusiasm', he still suggests that they both still have their "WHY" and their "What" mixed up.

With Meredith, Dan challenges her, "I am looking for the deeper why beyond the surface reasons you have shared. What lies in your core that drives you to want to accomplish your goals?"

**Lance** – "the specific reason WHY you need or want other people to help you solve problems?"

**Meredith** – "WHY being in a group is so appealing to you?"

Dan reminds Lance of the 'deeper WHY' they had flushed out at their first meeting: "I am working at this accounting firm because they focus on restaurants and I love helping restaurants become more successful". But then Dan encourages Lance to go even one step deeper by saying what he thinks 'deep-down Lance really feels and believes:

*"I want them to be successful because I believe restaurants are a place where people come together to share their lives and build relationships. Additionally, I like working with family-owned restaurants because they have so much more invested in their businesses. Many of these family-owned restaurants get passed*

down from one generation to the next. The passion these families have for their business is intoxicating. They make me feel part of their family." . . ."His underlying why for connecting with more people is to help build generations of family-owned businesses, and in doing this he is helping people build wonderful, prosperous, joyful lives. Now he has further defined **why** he wants to build a better network."

Dan chimes in and blurts out, "These families move from a position of **working to live, to living to work** in a great, innovative environment. I then become a maestro or facilitator, helping these families become the leaders in their markets!"

Now it's Meredith's turn as Dan asks her to complete this sentence: "**I am eager to grow my list of meaningful connections because. . .**"

Meredith's first take:

"Because I already work so well with others in my firm. I know that there are many talented, young, social media sensations interning at my firm and I want to learn from them because I know they have so much to offer. In return, I get the chance to mentor the next generation of public relations stars and that is exciting – and rewarding!"

With only a slight nudge from Dan encouraging her to dig a little deeper and to keep it 'succinct' and 'simple' Meredith adds, "I provide custom media solutions to small business by building intimate relationships. . ." but looking for more, Dan urges her to clarify her 'because', and so she adds, "**I am eager to grow my list of meaningful connections because it is a great feeling to help others express their business in an authentic way.**"

Dan suggests this digging deeper process is to find the '**reasons within in a reason**'.

Now Meredith's on a roll:

"Because. . .I believe that much of social media is just spin, and when you help someone tell their authentic story, you are truly contributing to their success professionally and personally. And with the new young talent I have turned into a collaborative team, I combine my seasoned wisdom with their insatiable passion and ability to leverage the most cutting-edge technologies. It's a huge win-win!"

With both Lance and Meredith's 'deeper' WHY's now refined, Dan turns his attention to their 'vision'. He reminds both of their 'starting point'. Lance's was ". . . to connect with like-minded people with mutual interest for our mutual benefit." Meredith's was ". . . to join a group of like-minded people working to together to solve a problem".

After clarifying their WHY, both Lance and Meredith are not satisfied with the initial 'vision' they had come up with but Dan eases their concerns by saying that a 'vision' is something that they should consistently be **'refining'**. . .

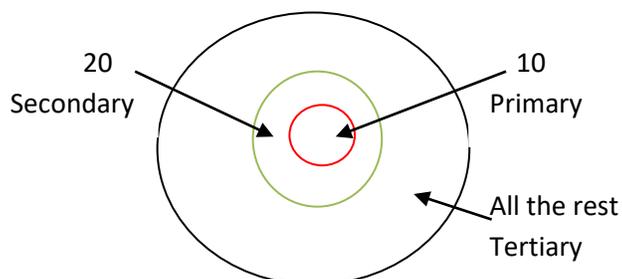
*"assessing if your actions and more importantly, your connections align with it. It's very important that you refine your visions throughout this process so that you build your network successfully, benefiting you, your connections and the ripples of connections that are forever impacted because of wiser choices."*

So more later on 'vision' but there's a great hint about it on Page 19 at the end of the First Lesson: Dan's First Lesson Tips. Just another reason to also buy the book.

If you remember from Lesson 1, as they were breaking up after their first meeting, Dan's parting words were "And bring your list of contacts".

So now they move to real purpose of this week's meeting: ". . .to choose **quality** partners for your network."

Dan approaches a whiteboard and draws these 3 circles:



Dan says, "Identifying these three sets of circles helps you organize your relationships and focus your energy on the right people at the right time. Your Primary Circle is critical. Within your Primary Circle should be those people who most closely align with your values and goals. These are those 'partners' with whom you have the most frequent contact and support exchanges. . . .Your outer circle represents weaker ties, but those people are still valuable. Those within your outer

*circle are usually great sources of information, referrals, and ideas. It's impossible to have strong bonds with too many people at one time – it becomes impossible to connect deeply with more than 15 people on a regular basis. I have found it is easiest to focus on just 10 people."*

You can probably imagine at this point what Lance and Meredith are thinking. So, we both wanted to EXPAND our networks of connections and now it looks like we're being told we need to SHRINK them. In Lance's words, "He hadn't signed up to get together every week simply to meet just 20 or 30 new people. He needed a **network**, not a **knitting group**."

Recognizing Lance's perplexion, Dan persists:

*"These thousands of connections [referring to those on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.] are not the ones we network with daily or even regularly because it would be physically impossible to do so. Instead by focusing on a few quality connections to exchange with regularly, you will actually achieve better results faster." . . . "These people would have influence. They would connect you to others. They, like you will be doing, have started with a small **quality** group of connections to build to a **quantity** of **quality** connections!"*

To begin listing names, Dan starts with Meredith and adds, "Don't Pick the biggest, most important names in your network, but those you can realistically interact with this coming week and who might benefit the most from your collaboration."

As I mentioned once before, one of the things I like best about the book is the way the authors picked the contrasting personalities of Lance and Meredith which also incidentally illustrates the contrasting sizes of their networks. To change her mindset and approach to 'networking', Meredith is faced with the challenge of having too many contacts; whereas Lance has too few.

And surprisingly Dan says to Lance, "Actually, Lance, you're in a slightly better position than Meredith on this one." . . . "I'm saying Lance can start from scratch. Meredith, where you'll have to kind of 'unlearn' the way you've been taught to network."

For those with Meredith's problem of too many contacts, Dan offers some additional tips on whittling it down which you can find on Page 37.

For Lance, Dan suggests this,

*"First, list two people in your company who you admire but don't know very well." . . .  
"Part of my process involves taking a fresh look at your existing contacts and selectively deepening them. If you are in a larger organization, most of the people in your Primary Circle will be people in your company – at least in the beginning."*

Dan then shifts the discussion to the next step by questioning, *"What percentage of your current network is made up of **Givers, Takers, and Exchangers.**"*

To distinguish between 'Givers' and 'Exchangers', Dan explains:

*"Exchangers are definitely Givers, but they are also good at making requests for support and then **exchanging opportunities** that create a more sustainable model for ongoing **mutual** success. Exchangers are also good at **discerning** who would be other great connections – other Exchangers to whom to introduce you, to help you grow your network."*

There are also some additional tips on Page 40 for identifying 'Givers' who are also potential 'Exchangers'.

Lesson 2 concludes with a great list of 'tips' on Page 43 for building or honing down a list as well as some additional insights on Givers, Takers, and Exchangers.

### **Lesson 3 – DIG BELOW THE SURFACE**

In Lesson 3, we get to see Meredith with her new pair of glasses which Dan has given her – figuratively-speaking that is. And we meet an example of a **Giver** – Ariel. . . a **Taker** – Chuck. . . and an **Exchanger** – Francisco. You'll want to read the chapter to get more 'hints' which the authors provide on how to categorize each on Pages 52 and 53, plus how to apply Dan's three categories in much more specific terms.

Lance, in his analysis, concludes that he has a current network made up almost totally of 'Takers' but that's a first step.

In wrapping up the week's assignment to categorize your connections, Dan points out, *"The names aren't really important to me. . . What's*

*important was the exercise of seeing the people you know through a fresh lens – an objective, fresh pair of eyes.”*

Also Dan points out,

*“Just because you put someone into a category that is not that of an Exchanger, they don’t have to be removed from your network altogether. You can move them to your Secondary Circle where you connect less frequently or even your Tertiary Circle where you check in maybe once a year. The important thing is that you have your Primary Circle in place so that you can leverage those exchanging relationships into great and ongoing opportunities.”*

The chapter concludes with a wonderful discussion of how do you get to recognize which people you should approach. . .with whom you will go deeper . . .to establish a more meaningful connection? Meredith asks, *“I’m thinking of a few people who I thought were great contacts but aren’t, but could be. . .how do I find out for sure?”*

Dan’s answer is very straightforward. You “research” them – their profile on LinkedIn; their website, their blog, their Twitter, Google+ or Facebook:

*“It’s all out there, and the more you know about the social side of someone, the better you can connect to that part of them – the part that is human and wants to connect back at a deeper, more sustainable level. That’s what building social capital is all about – not just for you – but for the people with whom you partner was well.”*

Dan adds this,

*“Given that making connections that matter is about finding people with shared values, interactions must be substantive and values-connecting, not superficial. Part of this means being a bit more open and authentic than you may be used to being. Part of this is asking great questions that take your conversations to a deeper level. It’s also about having more conscious conversations.”*

Dan concludes this lesson with one final observation:

*“Oh I almost forgot something. Your network is **dynamic**. What I mean by that is your circles will expand and contract. It’s all about being ready, willing, and able to exchange. You see some people will be too busy transitioning in a job or moving, to name a few examples.” . . .“**Just remain flexible**”.*

As usual, the chapter concludes with a list of tips from Lesson 3. You'll want to own this book just to have all the tips all printed out for you to review regularly. That's what I'm going to do.

.....  
For the rest of the Summary, I will include fewer key points from each Lesson along with some page references for you to read and dig deeper.

## **Lesson 4 – HAVE YOUR AUTHENTIC STORY READY TO GO**

Dan meets them both but surprises them by actually giving each of them a possible connection – a business card, but to their surprise – leaves without much additional direction.

With the mere reference of Dan's name, Meredith's phone call to her contact – Carol Livingston – VP of social medial marketing for "**Running Start**" - went smoothly with an immediate appointment agreed to through Carol's appointment secretary. Lance, with many reservations, made his phone call encountering something less than the warm & fuzzy response Meredith had received, even after mentioning Dan's name. His call went directly to the target contact - Peter James, with the marketing division of Principle Group - "**Papa's Pasta Parlor**". In a gruff voice, it was Peter who answered the phone. Nevertheless, with just a mention that Dan thought we should get together and talk over some possibilities, Peter readily agreed to a meeting later that very afternoon.

I suggest that you read the stories of Lance's and Meredith's first encounters with Peter and Carol but let's just say it wasn't what either of them expected.

Page 71 helps re-connect us with the importance of 'having **your** story ready', and also "*to be more prepared to draw out the stories of others because you know what to ask.*" And to prepare your stories, "*They start with your vision and passion.*" . . . "*That illustrates more **who** you are over **what you do** for a living.*"

Page 74 contains the usual list of Lesson 4 tips. My favorite is "*Be bold and confident. Share your story and then ask your connections to share theirs. Sharing your stories also builds rapport and trust.*"

## **Lesson 4 – GIVE FIRST**

This chapter begins with Dan ducking out of the customary person-to-person meeting with Lance and Meredith, due to a family emergency. But the assignment is to set up a meeting with someone in their Primary Circle and 'give first' by offering to help them in some way.

After some 'soul-searching' on both their parts, Meredith and Lance recognize they have both been '**takers**' in a number of instances. Meredith sets up a meeting with a former colleague – Anne - who was now actually a competitor after opening her own boutique advertising agency. Anne had sent Meredith an email asking for some help in a 'recruiting' situation in which she was engaged and Meredith actually offers some resumes of persons which she had recently interviewed. She said she chose one but the other ones she gave to Anne could easily work for her as well, either as an administrative assistant or creative assistant – the two openings she was looking to fill. She just as easily could have kept them all for herself for the future, but surprised herself as much as Anne.

Lance had performed a similar 'give first' to Jack who had been running the 'salad bar' when he left Peter James' office under less than glorious terms, but found conversation and commonalities with young Jack. His 'give first' was to help Jack get an internship at Barry's Bistro without affecting his work toward his MBA nor his job at the Pasta Parlor.

Another great list of tips on "**Giving First**" can be found at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> Lesson on Page 85.

## **Lesson 6 – UPGRADE YOUR NETWORK – FIVE LEVELS OF EXCHANGE**

Dan explains the "**Five Levels of Exchange**" as an **evolutionary process** which involves moving relationships from Level 1 to Level 5 where the most effective and successful exchanges will take place among a circle of partners offering help back and forth to one another. (I think I'll sell this one-liner to Larry and Melissa 😊). And as the authors add: "*Going through this process moves building your network from a haphazard and often unconscious activity into a much more conscious and proactive process.*"

**Level 1 – Social Exchange** – the foundation of building a strong relationship and involves ‘**empathetic listening**’ and ‘**emotional support**’ for the other person. (see page 90 and the summary Lesson tips on page 99 for more)

**Level 2 – Information Exchange** – with the emotional relationship foundation established, both parties are more open and willing to volunteer information. The type of help which both Anne and Jack gave their respective ‘**Give Help First**’ recipients are good examples of this. (For more, same as above)

**Level 3 – Knowledge – Wisdom Exchange** – Dan describes the difference between Information and Knowledge this way: *“Information is typically pure data and facts; knowledge involves a personal experience, lessons learned, experiences, insights, and ideas.”* Dan adds, *“Best practice-sharing is an example of wisdom support.”*

**Level 4 – Connection Exchange** – *“Connecting two people you know who do not know one another is leveraging your network, creating a ripple effect for those you connect as well as yourself. If you have made a strong connection through a great introduction, the people you connect will remember you for this and you will grow your social capital.”*

**Level 5 – Opportunity Exchange** – This involves introducing or being introduced into a new business opportunity: *“Getting [or giving] leads, referrals, and introductions that evolve through this hierarchy of ongoing exchanges of support throughout your circles is your ultimate goal.”* (See the Tips on page 99 for further direction and clarification).

Pages 94 – 98 offer a great example of the process in action in a conversation between Meredith and Lance, as Meredith really opens up in a much deeper, transparent, and genuine way.

## **Lesson 7 – LEARN TO MAKE GREAT CONNECTIONS**

I’ll let you read this short chapter (pages 101 – 109) yourself which shows how you can decide who in your network would benefit meeting whom – sometimes, but not always – benefiting yourself as well. Dan also explains

how he uses LinkedIn to evaluate a connection he could make. Then Dan demonstrates this by email and LinkedIn – with Meredith as the person he is introducing and referring - to Lee Seymour – the CEO of “**Lee’s Trees & More**”. Study this carefully (page 105-107) if you want to learn the best way I’ve ever seen to connect two people – which incidentally will reflect positively back on you.

Once again the Seventh Lesson Tips List on pages 108-109, is worth the price of the book all by itself.

## **Lesson 8 – EXPAND YOUR CIRCLES OF CONNECTIONS**

The first part of the chapter is a great read and a way to once again follow the Five Levels of Exchange in a more ‘story tale’ fashion for both Meredith and Lance.

But then there’s a great list of suggestions at the end of the chapters with some “**Pearls of Wisdom**” for ways to expand your circle of connections (i.e. high level ones) and you can either read these when you buy the book, or we will share and discuss these at our book club meeting. (Pages 118 – 121)

## **Lesson 9 – MAKE YOUR PROGRESS AND COMMITMENT VISIBLE TO OTHERS**

This chapter, once again in story tale fashion with Lance demonstrating his new-found communication skills which after stating to high level NEW connection he had made: “*I believe the best way to get valuable information, knowledge, and especially wisdom is to **exchange it**, Erin, don’t you?”. . .”He [Lance] could hardly believe his ears. He was sounding just like Dan.”*

Make sure to read the tips on Page 136 stressing the importance of, as well as, finding ways to stay in touch and not neglect your Primary Circle as you get engaged in your daily activities.

## **Lesson 10 – INSPIRE OTHERS**

The chapter begins as Lance and Meredith hoist a 3-month celebratory toast to Dan for having changed not only the way they approached 'networking', but the way he has changed both their lives.

Lance began:

*"I think the first thing you taught me was to trust the process." . . . "By that I mean, before the trusting the process, I first asked, '**what can I get?**' You taught us that we have as much to give and that in giving, we actually are receiving. But even further, you showed me how to move from giving and receiving to setting up ongoing exchanges that make the difference between creating a good opportunity to creating an ongoing series of good opportunities. That was a breakthrough moment for me and, I think, the reason I've had so much success."*

But there's a '**pay it forward**' surprise in this chapter. This process was not Dan's but passed to him from **Jim Wilkins**, for whom Dan once worked. The condition on Jim's sharing it was as follows: ". . .the price of admission to this little mini-course I now teach was this – you have to now go out and find two people to mentor in the process of making connections that matter."

And were Lance and Meredith Dan's first two mentees? No. Dan: "**After Jim passed away, I made a promise to myself that I would carry on the good work he had begun.**"

As they are finally parting and after Dan assures them that they are both now in his Primary Circle as he hopes he is now in both of theirs, Lance turns to Meredith and says, "I guess now we've got to go out and find two people like us who know nothing about networking and. . ." Meredith interrupts him, "Two people like us **who think they know everything** about so-call networking."