

LINK



HOW TO TURN YOUR NETWORK INTO
A CHAIN OF **LASTING CONNECTIONS**



OUT



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Introduction

Most of us learn, during our early years in school, that, in order to succeed in this world, we need to memorize facts and soak information into our brains. The more we know, our teachers told us, the better we will do in this world. The more we learn, the higher our grades will be. We'll get more recommendations from teachers and professors, land better jobs, earn higher salaries, enjoy more success in our careers, and lead happier lives. This seems to be a simple formula, yet, as we all know, it is incredibly complicated, but it is a formula that people followed for many, many years.

However, there's always been a missing link—a substantial one—in our education system. No one teaches us how to *create relationships*, the very thing necessary to ensure that every step in the formula cited earlier works. We need to make connections to other people in order to lead fulfilling lives, personally and professionally.

Of course, most of us know we need each other for love and friendship, but we also need each other for support, advice, and connection. In order for our relationships to thrive, we need to learn how to speak and listen to each other. We must learn civility, generosity, and etiquette. We need to understand how to respect one another. Unfortunately, we are not all born with these attributes or

habits, and few children actually learn these things at home from their parents.

Many members of the business world believe we know everything about building relationships. After all, we've developed and used basic networking skills to get to where we are. We know how to exchange business cards, have a brief conversation, and move on quickly to the next person. Does this count as building relationships?

Absolutely not! Think about what typically results from this classic networking: a very tall tower of business cards from people we know little about and most likely will never see again. That's the old school way of making connections, but it simply doesn't work in today's professional world.

Today, people want to do business with people they *trust*. They want to recommend and have a relationship with people they trust. We don't build trust by exchanging business cards and having a three-minute conversation.

Whatever your professional goals are, whether you are looking for customers, a better job, advice, or to meet people who can help you achieve your dreams, you need to know how to build relationships. If you are launching, rebooting, or transitioning your career or business—or you simply want to take your life from point A to point B—strong relationships will get you there. If you analyze the lives of successful leaders, salespeople, entrepreneurs, CEOs, politicians, educators, artists, entertainers—you name it—you can see the ways in which their relationships with others propelled them toward success. Yes, many had raw talent or intelligence; however, without other people to nurture, direct, connect and advise them, talent and intelligence alone will stagnate.

As renowned innovator Steve Jobs said, “. . . great things in business are never done by one person, they’re done by a team of people.” Each of us needs more of the human element to progress on our journey.

Hundreds of thousands of people felt alone and powerlessness when they lost their jobs or their businesses failed during the recent recession. The ones who had a group of influential people to provide them with morale and business support were likely able to get them through this period with less difficulty. All of us, no matter what our jobs or industries, need this kind of support system. Therefore, my goal in writing this book is to ensure that people in all positions—employees, employers, consultants, business owners, students, or retirees—have the resources available when they need advice, encouragement, or a push in their work and careers. These resources can be at your fingertips when you have an entourage. That is what this book has set out to do: show you how to build your very own entourage of people who support you in the good times and the bad.

The Secret Strategy of Leaders

Have you ever felt stuck in a job you don’t like or that frustrates you? Are you in a business that doesn’t seem to be going anywhere; or in a career that no longer fulfills? Perhaps worst of all, are you stuck without a job or a source of income? Maybe you are just out of college or grad school and are launching your career, or you want to go back to work after staying home to dedicate yourself to raising your children. You may have been downsized or fired for no good reason

or you are in transition. Maybe you run your own small business or you are a consultant, coach, or sales rep and have the job of getting new clients and customers in order to generate revenue.

Like most of us, you need a dependable income. Or maybe the idea of being retired just bores you. I venture to guess that very few people on this planet *haven't* felt stuck at least once (and probably more) in their career. I have experienced this very same feeling myself. So you are not alone by any means.

What if I told you there was a solution to these frustrating and often downright depressing situations? Would you be interested?

Chances are that if you picked up this book in the first place, you answered yes. So welcome aboard! I'm going to teach you the route that successful people, including some of the greatest leaders in the world, have been using for centuries. It's an exciting journey, and if you follow the rules, it promises you a fulfilling life. That's why our greatest leaders—presidents; CEOs; entrepreneurs; millionaires and billionaires; politicians; the most successful people in business, the arts, education; and even those in the nonprofit sector—all follow this map, though they take different paths. Few actually talk about it, and nobody teaches it.

I'm going to share this journey, as I have personally experienced it. It's been the reason that I always make a comeback when things get tough for me, and the reason that I am never alone. I have always had support from a group of incredibly important people—all of whom have my back, no matter what.

You might wonder why this journey seems to be the secret strategy of so few. Until now, people usually have considered the ability to attract influential people to their private circle an intuitive skill that great leaders and movers and shakers simply possess. Some learned it from mentors who showed them the path by example, but most are just not privy to this strategy—at least not until now.

My Story

The concept behind *Link Out* was unconsciously embedded in my mind at an early age. As a teen, I gravitated to organized groups. I always had a desire to connect with people, so linking out in this way seemed to come naturally to me. Additionally, as the oldest of three children, I was bossy. I liked being in charge. I also liked to help people, however, I also liked to help people and I felt my best when I was being collaborative. I learned this from my parents, who were both dedicated to social change and were active in community organizations.

My dad, Jack, was the owner of a local furniture store in Spry, PA, the president of the local Optimist Club, and a volunteer fireman. My mom gave her time to SCORE (Service Core of Retired Executives) by advising small businesses, was a member of the PTA, and hosted her own local radio show, *Chatter with Charlotte*. I wanted to follow their example and connect with people as soon as there were clubs to join. At 13, I was elected to the student council, and at 14, I joined a national youth organization and eventually became president. I ran for vice president of Dallastown High School. I tried my hand at politics by becoming a teen LBJ (Lyndon

Baines Johnson) girl during the 1964 presidential campaign, handing out leaflets, making phone calls, and taking a bus with the delegates to attend the Democratic convention in Atlantic City, NJ. This experience spurred me on to a dream of working in politics, so I applied to George Washington University (GW) in Washington, DC.

During my time at GW, I again was drawn to groups, joining Alpha Epsilon Phi sorority, later becoming vice president. Then, I became a volunteer at St. Elizabeth's Mental Hospital, serving in the geriatric ward and other wards. I learned along the way that when I helped other people, they would usually help me in return.

After graduating from college, I moved to New York City and got a position as an administrative assistant to the assistant director of advertising for a large corporation. I was shocked and disappointed, however, by the limited number of positions to which women in the company could aspire. During the 1970s, the business world was definitely a man's world. However, I decided to do my best to buck this trend and began attending NYU graduate school at night.

As I hovered between the two worlds of business and academia, my connections were limited to the few people I met at work and in school. Unlike high school and college, I had no time to join groups. I eventually got a position as assistant to the vice president of public relations and advertising at a big restaurant corporation. My boss took me under his wing, quickly showed me the ropes, and when he left the company for a higher position, I took on many of his responsibilities. When he was finally replaced, I asked for a promotion. I was promptly told that I should

be happy to be the new guy's assistant and that was all I could expect.

That's when, at only 23 years old, I decided that I already knew everything I needed to know to start my own small business. Although I knew I still had a lot to learn, the connections I had made and samples of my work managed to land me several small restaurants as clients. Then, one day I got a small fashion client and delivered great results, which opened the door to more business. My fashion client's business tripled and they decided they needed a bigger PR agency. I was upset for about 24 hours, but then the female CEO who ran that big PR agency asked me to bring my clients over and work for her. I took advantage of the opportunity and learned how to run a bigger agency by establishing procedures, managing people, learning by doing every day. I didn't realize it at the time, but I was getting an on-the-job MBA. I worked my way up to vice president, and somewhere in the middle of all this, I managed to get married and have two children. I supervised big clients like Gap and Swatch watches, and my confidence and experience grew.

After 10 years at the agency, it was time for me to go out and start my own business again. My husband (and the unofficial president of my fan club) encouraged me to launch an integrated marketing/public relations agency that I decided to call Communications/Marketing Action (CMA). It was only one year after the 1987 stock market crash, and thanks to referrals, I attracted some good clients, like Revlon cosmetics and the Platinum Guild. I even hired a few employees; but then, after a few years, the business seemed stuck. I didn't know

how to keep growing it, and I felt that I had no one I could turn to for advice or support. I wasn't connected to other business owners, and I couldn't talk to my clients about internal issues. I knew I had to do something, so I hired a business coach. The best advice she gave me was to get out of the office and network with other business owners.

Not surprisingly, it worked. I had forgotten my connection habits from high school and college: how joining organizations, establishing myself as a leader, and supporting other people always led to good things for everyone involved. At my coach's suggestion, I joined the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO). I decided to triple my efforts, so I also joined Fashion Group International (FGI) and the Ad Club of New York. I joined committees at all three organizations, connected with extraordinary people, and shared my expertise and connections. Over the next 12 years, I became chair of the special-events committee for the Ad Club, program chair and then secretary of the board of FGI, and finally, president of the NAWBO New York City chapter, and international chair for the national NAWBO organization. For the first time since college, I was linking out.

Since then, I have never been alone. I have been surrounded by major influencers, CEOs, and advisors to impressive companies, simply because I was willing to share my time. Both my past and present companies have benefited greatly from the relationships I made and maintained for 20 years, and I have continuously given my support and help to the people who helped me, as well as many other people I have met. Actively participating on boards, non-profits, and the like are a critical part of the linking out

strategy. As a bonus, I'm constantly surrounded by extraordinary leaders doing extraordinary things who also become friends and supporters for life.

I was able to build my personal reputation, my company's brand, triple my business, and launch new fulfilling enterprises that reflected my visions for success—all things I never could have done without linking out. This process impacted my entire life in positive ways that I could never have imagined at the time, and it will do the same for you, if you let it.

Link Out

It is difficult to share this strategy using only a few words. Something hit me one day, however, while I was listening to someone complain about spending long hours on social media yet still not connecting with anyone in a way that could help her career. It occurred to me that social media got it *partially* right. We do need to link to each other, and social media makes that possible. However, to truly build relationships, we need to link *out*; that is, we need to get out, go out, be out, and connect face-to-face with other people. We need to get up from in front of our computers, put down our smartphones, and meet up with people in the real world, not the virtual world. We need to talk over breakfast, lunch, coffee, or cocktails, in the restaurant, park, or gym, not just over e-mail and webinars.

Link out is a master plan for building long-lasting connections with people who will support your success. When you link out, you physically get out of your home,

office, business, career, and build face-to-face relationships. When you link out you will never have to feel alone again. You will always have people around you to give you advice, make introductions, and help propel you toward your goal. Sound good?

Link out is a process of getting out of your comfort zone, physically and mentally. It will help you build trusted collaborative relationships with people who are connected or linked to people who can make a difference in your life, and for whom you can do the same. Link out has no direct connection or affiliation to the phenomenally successful social networking site, LinkedIn. If you are a member of LinkedIn, however, it can be a helpful tool in linking out. (We'll discuss this in more detail in Chapter 6 of this book.) Linking out is a two-way street. You support people in becoming successful, and they do the same for you. Your initial reaction might be to wonder why anyone would want to support your success. It's all about the approach you take when establishing and building relationships. People want to help you when you help them. When you link out, your goal is to develop long lasting relationships that exist throughout your career.

This is neither about throwaway connections that are here one day, and gone the next, nor is it about use-'em and lose-'em relationships. That's the kind of old-school networking some people practice, and, as we discussed at the beginning of the Introduction, this simply doesn't work anymore. In the link out model it's not acceptable to meet people at an event, have quick conversations to size them up as a prospective customer, and exchange as many business cards as possible. By the time you leave, you can't

remember one person that you met. Salespeople often look at everyone they meet at a networking event as a prospect. If the person is not interested in the product or service, it's bye-bye forever. That's no way to build a relationship.

In the link out model, you go to a networking event seeking out a few people with whom you have a strong connection or common ground. You then follow up after the event with the intention that the relationship will grow based on trust and mutual support.

Link out is a step-by-step process that can support you in achieving your wildest dreams. It is based on the premise that people will support you because they will succeed when you succeed, and vice versa. That is the way the world works. I'm sure you've heard the phrase, "what goes around comes around." My personal goal is to spread the link out master plan around the world so that, together, we ignite global economic growth and create a world with a thriving economy and fulfilled ambitions for future generations.

This book will teach you the benefits of linking out and creating your own entourage or support system. It will describe how it can change your life and help you realize your goals, dreams, and progress on your personal journey. Throughout the book, I will share the strategies that both past and present leaders have used to leave their mark and legacy.

These very same strategies work for those of us who have big goals or more modest goals and are content to live a happy life with simple desires. No matter what you have on your personal agenda, you will gain valuable insights on how you can achieve goals from the simple to the complex

with an army of supportive warriors on your behalf. You will discover how to build solid relationships with people you never thought would be in your corner, determine where and how to find and engage your entourage of supporters, and what steps you must take to get there.

If you follow the advice of this book,

- Your network will share information and advice.
- You will be involved in associations on the leading edge of your industry.
- Your network will connect you with people that you need to know for whatever your situation.
- You will learn about the most important resources for staying ahead of the curve.
- You will have access to the knowledge, opinions, and mindset of leaders of a changing business, economy, and world.
- Social media will be at your fingertips for trends, articles, and connections.
- You will have people to support you in knowing what you need to know to continue your career in your current company or be prepared to move on to a new one.
- You will be ready to start a new business or consulting firm, or grow your current one, to meet the challenges of today.

If you are doing well in your career and want to ensure that this continues; if business development, marketing, and

sales are a key part of your responsibility; and if you'd like a constant flow of customers with less pain and stress, then this approach is for you. This book can also be a life-saving tool for those struggling with business or career—people who are almost at their wits' ends or concerned about what next year or the next decade might be like. Once you put the link out strategy into gear, your concerns will lessen and confidence will reign, even in challenging times.

As you read this book, you will easily be able to apply its theories to your life via step-by-step processes, and track with an accountability form that I provide. I am committed to your success; but in order for link out to work for you, you need to be committed to your success, too. So let's get started figuring out how link out will make that happen.

Everyone Needs an Entourage

It is literally true that you can succeed best and quickest by helping others to succeed.

—Napoleon Hill, *Think and Grow Rich*

You may be wondering exactly what I meant when I told you in the book's introduction that you need an entourage. I'm not referring to the old-style entourage that surrounds royalty and A-list celebrities or the kind that follows the Queen to serve her every need: opening doors, fetching her lunch, having her hanky ready when she sniffles, and bowing and curtsying to acknowledge her wonderfulness. That traditional kind of entourage is useless; it merely serves as an appendage to superstar celebrities, who gallivant throughout the world with their make-up artists, hairdressers, nannies, assistant nannies, teachers, and parents-in-law all in tow. This entourage serves one person and gets nothing in return, except a paycheck or maybe, an occasional smile.

What you need is the new kind of entourage, the one that functions more like a team. Think of the Seinfeld gang, the Beatles in their heyday, or a World Series Championship team. This is a mutual fan club in which everyone is cheering

Table 1.1 Network versus Entourage

Network	Entourage
One- or two-time connection	Life-long relationship
A stack of business cards	People you talk to regularly
Forgets your name	Returns your calls and e-mails
One-way support	Mutual support—people help each other
Quick surface communication	In-depth, sincere communication
Inconsistent follow-up	Reliable follow-up
Call/e-mail only when they need something	Call/e-mail to make introductions and referrals
Self-win attitude	Win-win attitude
No interest in your personal life	Interested in your professional <i>and</i> personal life
Lack of trust in the relationship	Trusted relationship

one another on to victory and success. The new entourage helps its members achieve their goals, get the jobs and clients they want, move up the ranks in the corporate world, and start and build businesses, all by providing constant mutual support.

An entourage is different from a network insofar as it is built on trusted relationships among people who can count on one another to lend advice, support, and introductions on a long-term basis (see Table 1.1). A network is made up of people we meet, but not necessarily people we can rely on to help us. People in our network might help us if it suits their own goals; however, they are not necessarily consistently trustworthy for the long term.

The new entourage is like the solar system with the sun at the center and the planets rotating around it. Each planet is different, and brings its own unique qualities to the solar system.

The planets are the sun's entourage. They are always there; the sun can depend on them, and the planets depend on the sun as well to provide warmth and light. There's a mutually beneficial relationship between the sun and the planets, just as there is between you and your entourage.

In addition, each planet has its own moons revolving around it. Because they, too, are part of this solar system, this creates even more mutually supportive relationships. That's exactly how the new entourage works. Each of us is the sun in our own solar system.

The new entourage gives you great advice, ensures that you receive valuable introductions and referrals, and surrounds you with a group of influential people who offer

their support throughout your career. In order to create these trusted relationships and establish a long-lasting entourage, your role is to do the same for them. Each member helps each other and then pays it forward.

You can also think of your entourage as your informal board of directors. There is a good reason that the members of most public companies' boards of directors are employed elsewhere: They don't have a direct stake in the company by working there. They take an outsider's view of the company's activities when they're appointed to guide, counsel, and advise a company's CEO.

If you think of yourself as the CEO of you—your career, your path, and your decisions—then it makes perfect sense for you to have a board of directors. You may not always know what's best for you, and it's probably difficult for you to take a step back and analyze your own situation, but your board can see things about you more objectively. You don't also know all the people that your board knows. As such, these advisors of yours can introduce you to people who can help you, as CEO, run you, your career, and your business much more effectively.

If it sounds to you as if there's some work involved here, you're right. There is. You may even wonder if it's worth the effort to link out. I can only say what millions of people have discovered since the beginning of time: life is better together.

If you like people, linking out will be easy and fun. Of course, it might be a bit more difficult if you're more introverted. If you are a loner, it might make you a little uncomfortable at first, and you may have to push yourself. You may be inclined to work at your desk all day, and then

go home and plop in front of the TV and the computer instead of linking out. That's exactly what I felt like doing plenty of times myself—especially, after I had prepared dinner, cleaned up, and helped my kids with their homework. I'm sure many people have felt this way, but believe it or not, in the end it's not the easy way I once thought it was. I had to learn to stand up for myself and my own goals to get the help I needed from family, friends, neighbors, or babysitters so I could go out and link out.

If you have ambition, the so-called easy way out is a road that never ends. It's like a maze that constantly keeps you from finding the route to your next accomplishment. But once you start to link out, you find partners to help you on the road. They take you by the hand to show you the way to the golden door at the end of the maze. And the effort you make to find and connect with these people is worth it because *you* are worth it.

Who Do You Want in Your Entourage?

The ideal entourage is composed of influencers and people who are connected to other influencers and achievers. You want to surround yourself with self-sufficient, self-confident, and self-fulfilled individuals. You do not want people who are interested in themselves and their own success exclusively in your entourage.

Your entourage could consist of professionals from all walks of life: teachers, lawyers, accountants, artists, small business owners, executives, and more. Although you might assume that you should limit it to people from your industry

or walk of life, a true entourage has members with a range of expertise from various fields. They are involved in businesses, corporations, communities, nonprofits, government, or other outside activities. They are doers. They may be movers and shakers. They are active, busy people who are making a difference in their own jobs, businesses, industries, and even in the world. These are the ideal candidates for your entourage. They may be friends, members of your family, or people you don't even know yet, but you will get to know them after you put the link out strategy into action.

For now, consider the notion that anyone that you like, find interesting or engaging, or anyone who shares a common interest or goal could be a candidate for your entourage. As you progress in building your entourage, you may discover that people in particular related industries can be the most valuable to have in your entourage. If that's true for you, then seek out more of them. However, consider that people with diverse experiences will help you in diverse ways.

It Takes an Entourage

The most successful people in the world have many things in common, and one of them is that they all have entourages.

It is widely acknowledged in the business world that success depends on the efforts of a team, not just one individual.

When famed inventor Thomas Edison was asked why he had a team of 21 assistants, he said, "If I could solve all the problems myself, I would." Management guru Ken Blanchard accurately pointed out, "None of us is as smart as all of us." Similarly, Stephen Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly*

Effective People, said, “Interdependent people combine their own efforts with the efforts of others to achieve their greatest success.”

Think about it. “None of us is as smart as all of us”; well, that’s a no-brainer. As brilliant as someone may be, we are all limited by our own knowledge, experience, and the people with whom we have had relationships. When we have an entourage, we have access to people who think differently than we do. They look at challenges and opportunities in an entirely different way. They know people that we don’t know.

So if all these leading business experts and authors espouse the value of teamwork to help us produce winning results, why do individuals go it alone in launching and growing their careers? Why do so many small business owners think they have to do it all by themselves? Why do many marketing and salespeople believe the only way to find new customers is by cold calling or snooping them out without a little help from their friends? Why do so many believe that if they can’t succeed on their own it must mean they’re failures?

These beliefs are false. We unfairly burden ourselves with an extremely heavy responsibility, and that load could be significantly lightened if we asked for and accepted the help of others.

Look at most of our greatest leaders; they did not do it alone. When members of the world male power circles refer to the “old boys’ network,” they are really talking about their entourage: a group in which they invest time and energy to build strong, trusted relationships. Many of those relationships began early in their careers, and they continue to add new connections to their entourage as they climbed the ladder of success.

A Look Back at History

Henry Ford is well regarded as one of America's greatest industrialists, yet he would never have achieved his towering success without his entourage. Napoleon Hill's book *Think and Grow Rich*—first published in 1937—tells Ford's story in detail. After working as an engineer for Thomas Edison at the Edison Illuminating Company early in his career, Ford started his own business and ultimately invented the first automobile after countless failures. Some of Ford's greatest achievements came as a result of the support of his entourage, which included his former employer Thomas Edison; Firestone Rubber Company founder Harvey Firestone; literary naturalist and Henry David Thoreau follower, John Burroughs; and agricultural scientist Luther Burbank.

Even President Warren G. Harding became part of Ford's entourage. The Ford/Edison entourage consistently supported each other's businesses and professional aspirations. They even participated in a series of camping trips together, traveling with what could be considered the first recreational vehicle (RV). Much of the back story of Ford's success involved the role that Thomas Edison played in encouraging this promising employee to continue to develop the self-propelled vehicle—later known as an automobile—while he was working at Edison's company. When Ford gained enough funding to leave and work on his project full time, Edison continued to support his success with advice and introductions to his entourage.

Gloria Steinem is famous for leading the women's rights movement of the late 1960s and 1970s and for founding

several organizations that promoted gender equality. Steinem's success in gaining equal economic opportunities for women was a result of her leadership. However, change would have been impossible without the support of her entourage, which included attorney Flo Kennedy, US Congresswomen Bella Abzug and Shirley Chisolm, writer and feminist Betty Friedan, voting rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer, and civil rights activist and journalist Myrlie Evers, to name a few. It took a team effort to change the world for women.

Martin Luther King is the acknowledged leader of the Civil Rights Movement, but he couldn't have ended segregation without his entourage. It included civil rights luminaries like Whitney Young, Dorothy Height, Roy Wilkins, A. Philip Randolph, and John Lewis, all of whom were just as dedicated to achieving equality for African Americans as Reverend King was. All these individuals worked together, supporting one another's organizational goals to lead the way to civil rights for all, despite the fact that they each had his or her own, sometimes competitive, goals.

Back to the Future

It's amazing how powerful we can become when we are willing to reach out and ask others to help us, and it is equally amazing how powerful we are when we help others reach their goals. The historical examples cited throughout the chapter illustrate how we can each become agents for social change, groundbreaking innovation, or whatever our goals happen to be. History shows us how imperative it is

to engage others in our cause, whether it is social, political, business, or even personal. The power of engaging an entourage makes *all* the difference.

The stories presented throughout the chapter can help us all learn from the past and move forward into the future by using what works in the present. I'm a big believer in crowd-sourcing wisdom from others. When I think about relationships, teamwork, and building your entourage, I'm drawn to what others who have "been there, done that" have said on the topic. That's why their experience is our insight to be followed for our future success.

Teamwork is so important that it is virtually impossible for you to reach the heights of your capabilities or make the money that you want without becoming very good at it.

—*Brian Tracy, management expert and author of
Earn What You're Really Worth*

Relationships are like muscles—the more you work them, the stronger they become.

—*Keith Ferrazzi, author of Never Eat Alone*

Lots of people want to ride with you in the limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down.

—*Oprah Winfrey*

All these experts—people who have enjoyed such success in their own lives—cannot be wrong.

They tell us, quite explicitly, that in order to achieve what you want in your life, you absolutely must surround yourself with people who are willing to help you realize your goals. They also tell us that we need to help our helpers as well, and be there when the going gets rough for them as much as they are for us.

The way these leaders created their entourage was to link out. They knew that the most important work they did was not getting done at their desk. Making personal connections in face-to-face situations was a vital part of their efforts. They got up from their desks, left their daily routine, and linked out to build new relationships. They joined associations, attended gatherings and conferences, scheduled breakfast or lunch meetings, volunteered their time to causes that mattered. Some entourages, like Henry Ford's, even went on trips together. Today, business and political leaders alike build their business and personal relationships at conferences like the World Economic Forum in Davos and the Allen & Company Sun Valley Conference, as well as at golf and spa retreats. These incredibly successful people all know one thing: concentrated face time forges strong relationships and builds entourages that last a lifetime.

The following chapters will teach you precisely what steps you need to take to successfully link out to build your system of friends, contacts, and colleagues into a supportive network of people—your entourage—who will help propel your success. Your responsibility is to do the same for them, because, as I've emphasized already, linking out works in two directions. People help one another to achieve their goals.

Linking out is *not* a competition. It's a mystery to me why so many feel that building supportive relationships is akin to conspiring with the enemy, and such people see anyone who does something similar to what they do as competition. Wake up world! We can *all* be victorious when we work together. Yes, it may appear on the surface that we are competing. When we dig down, we discover that most of us have different goals and different definitions of success. By forming partnerships we realize that the person or business we initially perceived as competition can become a valued partner. This is true for individuals as well as companies. Several books espouse the belief that cooperating with companies that one may consider competition leads to positive results for both parties. James F. Moore's *The Death of Competition* is one such book; *Co-Opetition* by Adam Brandenburger and Barry Nalebuff is another. As President Franklin D. Roosevelt said,

Competition has been shown to be useful up to a certain point and no further, but cooperation, which is the thing we must strive for today, begins where competition leaves off.

In other words, the sooner you stop looking at your colleagues as competitors and start seeing them as collaborators and potential partners, the quicker you will be on your way to achieving your definition of success. When people take time to truly get to know one another nowadays, and explore how they can support one another's goals, then everyone wins!

The Power of a Link

Think of a silver, gold, or platinum chain around your own neck or that of someone you love. One link is connected to the next link, and each leads to another link. That's the power of linking out. When you establish a strong relationship with one person and you share your vision or goals, they have the opportunity to link you with another person and another person. Each link has its own chain of connections and relationships, and when you link out, these connections and possibilities can go in absolutely *any* direction.

Think how much more we glow and inspire others when the shine from those links surrounding us reflects on everything we do. It's almost magical. Sometimes my life does seem like magic—as though I found the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. My life has been exciting and fulfilling because of linking out. I never would have accomplished all that I have without the magical power of the link. Now the power of the link can be yours, too.

PRAISE FOR LINK OUT

"We're living in a time of fundamental change. It's not our learned skills that will come to the rescue, but who we know and how they can help. The most brilliant will not fare as well as the most deeply connected. Leslie is generous enough to share that wisdom. Everyone should take notice, because she's dead-on right!"

— **EDIE WEINER**, *President, Weiner, Edrich, Brown,*
one of the world's leading futurist consulting firms

"Leslie is the new Dale Carnegie. Her book teaches when you help others to succeed, you will succeed right along with them in business and in life. It's not only about influencing people, it's about helping people be the best they can be."

— **CARY JEHL BROUSSARD**, *author, From Cinderella to CEO;*
international communications/brand management expert; founder of
Wyndham Worldwide's "Women on Their Way" program

"Over several years, I watched in amazement as Leslie Grossman cast her magical spell on audiences. Now she has delivered the perfect book for anyone interested in succeeding: linking out is the right model for the times and I'm so glad she's in my entourage!"

— **CAROL JENKINS**, *Founding President, Women's Media Center,*
former longtime WNBC-TV anchor

"Once I started reading *Link Out*, I couldn't put it down. The book is a combination of personal experiences, insights, compelling stories, and sound advice—mixed with a large dose of passion. Anyone can 'link out'; after you read this book, just imagine what it would be like if everyone did."

— **JUDI BROWNELL**, *Professor and Dean of Students,*
School of Hotel Administration, Cornell University

"Leadership is relationships. In her beautifully written book, Grossman reminds us that email, texts, and social media are not enough. Through face-to-face interactions, *Link Out* provides a strategy to develop your network into meaningful connections. A perfect resource for each of us no matter the stage in life or career."

— **BETSY MYERS**, *author, Take the Lead; Founding Director, Center for Women and*
Business, Bentley University; former senior advisor on women, Clinton White House

"Leslie Grossman's book *Link Out* is a vivid demonstration of her prowess in building communities, empowering leaders, and facilitating key relationships. Her notion of 'entourage,' the circle of people committed to your commitments, makes *Link Out* a must-read and is critical to fulfilling career and life success."


— **ANTHONY M. SMITH**, *Founding Partner, VSA Consulting Group,*
master of breakthrough transformational coaching

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