A FREE COMPANION TO NETWORKING WITHOUT THE BS

The Relationship Ledger

A networking workbook for turning contacts into relationships: who to keep in touch with, how to help, what to say, and how to tell what's working.



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How to Use This Ledger

A notebook you write in daily beats software you never update.

Networking Without the BS argues that networking is people helping people they know, like, and trust. This ledger is the paper system behind that idea. Fill in Part 1 once, use Parts 2 and 3 every week, and come back to Parts 4 and 5 every quarter.

The book's advice on where to start is simple: pick one principle and practice it for a month. Following up with every new contact within 24 hours is a good first choice.

> *People do business with people they know, like, and trust. Everything else is tactics and tools that support it.*

Part 1: Map Your Relationships

A contact is a card you collected. A relationship is someone who would go out of their way to help you, and you them.

Sort the people you know into the book's three tiers. You can't keep close relationships with hundreds of people, so be honest about who goes where.

TIER	NAMES	CONTACT
Core Regular referral sources, partners on projects, influencers in your field, trusted advisors		Quarterly
Important Former colleagues now in influential roles, adjacent professionals, people who could become core		Twice a year
Broader Conference contacts, former clients, people who share market news		Once a year

Put every name on a calendar reminder at its tier's interval. For contacts in other countries, the book's limit is three months without real contact.

Part 2: The “How Can I Help?” Log

Nobody cares about your problems as much as you do. Lead with theirs.

Questions to bring to every conversation

- [ ] How's business been for you this year?
- [ ] What challenges are you facing right now?
- [ ] What goals are you trying to reach?
- [ ] What's getting in the way?
- [ ] What were you hoping to get out of this event?

When someone mentions cash flow, a hiring problem or a new marketing channel, they're telling you how you might help. Write it down. The help doesn't have to be big: an article, an introduction, a five-minute conversation, a sympathetic ear.

Help given

DATE	PERSON	WHAT THEY NEEDED	WHAT I DID

Keep this log to see what you contribute, and to notice the few people who only ever take.

This week's three

Three people to contact with the sole purpose of offering help. Ask nothing in return.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Part 3: Meetings and Events

A forty-minute coffee teaches you more about someone than a dozen brief encounters at a mixer.

The one-on-one meeting

1. **Ask for it around their interest.** "I'd love to hear more about the challenges you mentioned. Would you have time for a brief coffee next week?" Video counts: more than 90 percent of Richard Lowe's networking meetings are virtual.
2. **Prepare.** Read their LinkedIn profile, recent company news and your notes from last time. Write three questions about their business.
3. **Run it ten, twenty, ten.** Ten minutes catching up, twenty on their challenges and opportunities, ten on how you might help each other.
4. **Close with a next step.** Summarize what you learned, thank them, and name something specific: a resource, an introduction, another call.
5. **Follow up within 24 hours** and deliver everything you promised. Small commitments show how you'll handle large ones.

Before the next conference

- [ ] Read the speaker list and attendee roster; pick the people I most want to meet
- [ ] Choose sessions by who will be there, mid-sized rooms first
- [ ] Arrive a day early or stay a day late, or host a small dinner
- [ ] Ask speakers a specific question about their talk
- [ ] Write notes on each contact while it's fresh
- [ ] Email every worthwhile contact within 48 hours of getting home

Before joining a referral group

- [ ] I visited as a guest first
- [ ] The members serve markets like mine and could realistically refer business to me
- [ ] I can commit to the weekly attendance

Introverts: the book suggests one networking event a month with recovery time after, and leaning on one-on-one meetings, email and warm introductions.

Part 4: The Strategic Map

Identify your targets, map their networks, build relationships with the people around them, and wait for a natural introduction.

List the people who would most affect your business or career. For each, name two people who might introduce you. Then build real relationships with those two, because they're worth knowing in their own right.

#	PERSON I'D LIKE TO KNOW	POSSIBLE INTRODUCER	POSSIBLE INTRODUCER	STARTED?
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

When the moment comes, ask your contact for advice before you ask for an introduction. It lets them offer instead of spending their credibility on your request.

Cold message check

Cold outreach is a way to start relationships, never a substitute for them. Before you send one, check all three.

- ☐ **Research:** I referenced something specific and recent: a post, an article, a new role
- ☐ **Value:** I offered an insight, a resource or a connection
- ☐ **Reasonable request:** a brief conversation or a specific piece of advice, nothing bigger

Follow up once, with something new. Count a 1 or 2 percent response rate as doing well.

Part 5: Referrals and the Quarterly Review

Your reputation is attached to every referral you make.

Giving a referral

- [ ] I asked about their situation, budget, timeline and requirements before naming anyone
- [ ] I'm referring someone whose work I've seen myself
- [ ] I checked privately with each person before introducing them
- [ ] My introduction says what each person brings and why I'm connecting them
- [ ] Any referral fee is disclosed to everyone, and allowed in this profession
- [ ] I checked back with both people afterward

Receiving one: respond within 24 hours and keep the person who referred you informed, even if it goes nowhere.

Every quarter

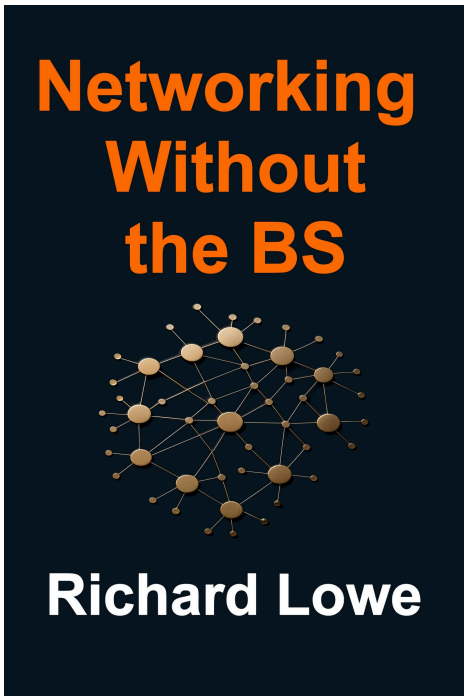
QUESTION	THIS QUARTER
How many people would feel comfortable referring a client to me?	
How many understand my business well enough to spot an opportunity for me?	
Where did each new inquiry, referral and opportunity come from?	
Which events produced contacts who answered my follow-up?	
Hours spent networking, and on what?	
Which relationships need more attention, and which take without giving?	

Most of your best opportunities will come from a small share of your contacts. Spend more time on them, and drop the activities that produce nothing.

> *Start now. Start simple. Start with one person, one conversation, one follow-up message.*

The Whole Story

This workbook gives you the forms. Networking Without the BS gives you the reasons, the stories behind them, and the chapters this ledger only hints at: digital and hybrid networking, networking for introverts, AI tools and their limits, and the honest arguments against networking.



Networking Without the BS:
Building Relationships That Actually Hold
Working for Yourself

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