

Book Review on
“Never Eat Alone”
by Keith Ferrazzi

(Review by Gary Tomlinson)
Business Leader Magazine – September 2006 Issue

Relationships are all there is. Everything in the universe only exists because it is in relationship to everything else. We come into the world as the result of others’ actions. We survive here in dependence on others. Whether we like it or not, there is hardly a moment of our lives when we do not benefit from others’ activities. Nothing exists in isolation. We have to stop pretending we are individuals that can go it alone. Today, we need each other more than ever. For these reasons, I’ve chosen Keith Ferrazzi’s *Never Eat Alone – And Other Secrets to Success, One Relationship at a Time* for this month’s book review.

Ferrazzi believes there has never been a better time to reach out and connect than right now. The dynamic of our society, and particularly our economy, is increasingly defined by interdependence and interconnectivity. In other words, the more everything becomes connected to everything else, the more we begin to depend on whom and what we’re connected to. Ferrazzi has come to realize that success is not contingent on cool technology or venture capital; it’s dependent on whom you know and how you work with them. He says the real key to profit is working well with other people.

He goes on to say that success in any field, especially in business, is about working *with* people, not against them. Business is a human enterprise, driven and determined by people. Ferrazzi says that over time, he has come to see reaching out to people as a way to make a difference in their lives as well as a way to explore and enrich his own. He thinks of real “networking” as “connecting.” He connects by routinely sharing his 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 his own. This is what he means by connecting. He says it’s a constant process of giving and receiving – of asking for and offering help. By putting people in contact with one another, by giving your time and expertise and sharing them freely, the pie gets bigger for everyone.

Ferrazzi’s form of connecting to the world around him is based on generosity, helping friends and associates connect with other friends and associates. He distinguishes genuine relationship-building from the crude, desperate glad-handing usually associated with “networking.” In the course of his book, Ferrazzi outlines the timeless strategies shared by the world’s most connected individuals, from Katherine Graham to Bill Clinton, Vernon Jordan to the Dalai Lama. His book answers such questions as; “How do you turn an acquaintance into a friend?” “How can you get other people to become emotionally invested in your advancement?” “Why are there some lucky people who

always leave business conferences with month's worth of lunch dates and a dozen potential new associates, while others leave with only indigestion?" "Where are the places you go to meet the kind of people who could most impact your life?"

This book outlines the secrets behind the success of so many accomplished people; they are secrets that are rarely recognized by business schools, career counselors, or therapists. By incorporating the ideas Ferrazzi discusses in his book, you too can become the center of a circle of relationships, one that will help you succeed throughout life. 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 what a powerful way of accomplishing your goals this can be. Just as important, it will lead to a much fuller, richer life, surrounded by an ever-growing, vibrant network of people you care for and who care for you.

Ferrazzi believes that by simply reaching out to others and recognizing that no one does it alone, you'll see astounding results in a short period of time. Everyone has the capacity to be a connector. Connecting is that rare thing that lets us have our cake and eat it, too. We end up serving the interests of both, our work and our life, ourselves and others.

Enjoy this month's selection, *Never Eat Alone - And Other Secrets to Success, One Relationship at a Time* and share it with others in your life because as Alvin Toffler says; "*The illiterate of the 21st Century will not be those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.*"