

THE ART OF NETWORKING:  
Meet, Introduce and Get Recognized™

Ertuğrul Belen

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Business Networking Academy™  
Speed Networking™ (Turkey)  
Meet, Introduce and Get Recognized™  
B Networking™  
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Certificate No. : 11970  
Phone : 0216 481 29 17-18  
E-mail : optimist@optimistkitap.com

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Cihangir Mah. Güvercin Cad. No. 3/1  
Baha İş Merkezi A Blok  
Haramidere - Avcılar/Istanbul  
Tel: 0212 412 17 77

# THE ART OF NETWORKING

*MEET, INTRODUCE AND GET RECOGNIZED™*

**ERTUĞRUL BELEN**





# Table of Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	7
<i>Ertuğrul Belen</i>	9
<i>Foreword</i>	11
<b>Introduction to Networking</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Part 1</b>	
<b>NETWORKING IN TEN STEPS</b>	<b>21</b>
Step 1: Design Your Goals With Networking	
Step 2: Create Your Networking Map	
Step 3: Help Your Network	
Step 4: Find Your Elevator Pitch	
Step 5: Get Ready to Meet	
Step 6: Meet Like a Networker	
Step 7: Introduce	
Step 8: Use Social Networks and The Internet	
Step 9: Be Recognized in Big Groups	
Step 10: Follow Up	
<b>Part 2</b>	
<b>NETWORKING EVERYWHERE</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>Part 3</b>	
<b>NETWORKING PRACTICES AND REFERENCES</b>	<b>177</b>
<i>Resources</i>	216
<i>Useful Links</i>	219



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This book is the result of thousands of hours of networking with various people. As they are pioneers in the field of networking, I have dedicated part three of the book to these individuals, with their expertise and references.

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Thank you!

**Ertuğrul Belen**



# Ertuğrul Belen

Ertuğrul Belen founded Business Networking Academy with the vision of establishing result-oriented, effective business relationships and designing networking strategies, mainly for the business world and individuals and institutions to achieve their goals. Defining The Art of Networking as “Meet, Introduce and Get Recognized™”, Belen has worked with more than 50,000 professionals and entrepreneurs. He introduced Speed Networking sessions, based on speed and trust, in Turkey and the region, and has provided applied corporate networking trainings internationally.

In addition to corporate networking trainings, the CEO Networking Program, networking mentoring and consultancy works, he also publishes national and international studies. Ertuğrul Belen is co-author of the bestselling “The Golden Rules of Entrepreneurship”.

He acted as a management consultant to General Motors and PricewaterhouseCoopers for many years, and was the Board Member in charge of various international projects for Natuzzi Group’s Turkey division.

Ertuğrul Belen is a Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) Master Practitioner and Certified NLP Coach and Professional Coach by Erickson International. Belen has also successfully completed the Trainers Training JA-YE Europe Program.

Providing networking consultancy to investors and entrepreneurs through angel investment channels, Belen is a Member of Startup Turkey Investment Club, and a Mentor for Galata Business Angels.

Belen has established and managed many leading businessmen and industry networks: Former Vice President of the Young Executives and Businessmen Association (GYIAD), Member of the Executive Board and Board of Directors of Endeavor Turkey Entrepreneurship Week, Pioneers Vienna Turkey Representative, and Mentor for the Entrepreneurship Association and yenibirlider.com.

He graduated from Galatasaray High School and University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, and has completed CTP-Certified Treasury Professional training.

Ertuğrul Belen is a former National Swimmer.

# Foreword

If we compare people to musical notes, **then networking is actually the music itself.**

A note is just a sound on its own: Fa, so, la, etc. A person on their own is just a sound. When a composer arranges notes according to his/her life energy, the music is born. I wrote this book as a guide to becoming a composer, not just a musical note. For you to design the melody of your life through networking, by establishing strong connections with the people in your network.

Why is it that today networking, and establishing a “network”, has become a prerequisite just like the water we drink? Whether we like to admit it or not, we are social beings and we prevail with our goals in life.

Even someone who says, “I don’t have a goal!” still sub-consciously desires to struggle for survival and life.

When we design our life around our goals, we usually think and measure them according to three concepts: time, volume and gain.

For example, we can say, “If I complete this task after this length of time, this will be what I gain from it.” Setting goals is like using a compass for success. But are these three criteria enough to succeed?

Absolutely not!

The road to your goal, in other words to success, is intertwined with individuals in our network, or those we decide to bring into our network.

Networking is not merely a concept created in the 1970s in the U.S. and adopted recently in Turkey. On the contrary, it is a life science and a behavioral pattern as old as humanity.

Networking is the art of designing your business and social life according to your goals by establishing relationships. You can reach your targets only through people and the strong relationships you build with

Networking is the art of designing your business life and social life according to your targets by establishing relationships.

them. This can only be achieved by acting like a farmer who invests in relationships, and first plants the seeds; not by acting like a hunter. This is because the **objective of networking is to give before you receive, get to know your network intimately, and offer them perks.**

In this book, I will use the terms “network” and “networking” to denote “creating a result-oriented, trustworthy and value-added network.”

Over the past 15 years I have personally adopted the concept of networking. I have seen the lives of many of those around me change for the better. In the initial years, I thought of networking as a magical behavior pattern. In time though, I came to realize that it is a philosophy of life and a pattern of existence.

In other words, coincidences only exist in networking when you run across someone you haven't seen for a long time. However, **everyone who believes in networking, and who combines the details provided in this book with their own life philosophy, will most certainly become successful.**

All research to date points to this fact. Did you know that 70% of new companies starting out for the first time survive on their own networking power?<sup>1</sup> In addition, such business collaborations take hold after the fifth meeting or encounter. In other words, this process requires time, effort, and most importantly **a network.**

But there is more to it! Every individual knows about 200 people<sup>2</sup> in their lives, and it has been scientifically proven that, through the concept known as “six degrees of separation”<sup>3</sup>, you can reach almost anyone you require. People you know and their own networks can offer you

completely new dimensions. The chance of you succeeding at a meeting with a reference from someone in your network is enhanced by 63%.<sup>4</sup> If you get to know the right people, it is then possible for you to reach anyone you like, and even to do business with them.

The most important thing is to determine how you will establish these bonds of trust, and to start applying networking techniques without losing any more time!

In line with networking criteria, which I have comprehensively detailed in this book, from thousands of people whose lives were examined across 30 years, almost all of those who are successful at networking have become top executives of various holdings, and have major achievements to their names. Let's not go too far. The Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) indicates that 60% of jobseekers pursue jobs through their close network (family, friends, etc.).<sup>5</sup>

All these findings highlight the importance of consciously networking without differentiating between age, status or position, and designing goals through your relationships.

Over the last few years, I have had the opportunity to reach out to over 50,000 professionals and entrepreneurs through conferences and BNA Speed Networking™ sessions. Incredible feedback motivated me to write this book and helped me access information that I wanted to share with a greater circle.

I clearly remember the years I spent in the United States, where I won a scholarship as a national swimmer after graduating from Galatasaray High School, researching about “How I can do my undergraduate and graduate degree on networking.” I was fortunate to appreciate the importance of networking at an early age.

I've transformed my curiosity about networking into research, and from research to studies, studies to trainings I custom-designed for each meeting, meetings to seminars, and seminars to applied networking meetings and events over the years. I combined all of these under the umbrella of Business Networking Academy, which I established in 2007, and have expanded daily ever since.

Thousands of people have read my articles in the People in Business daily news column, and their views became enlightened at Business Networking Academy training seminars.<sup>6</sup> They got to know each other at my BNA Speed Networking™ seminars, conducted for the first time in Turkey. They formed teams, developed business and found jobs.

My endeavors, including two successful exits, and my professional experience at international consulting leader PriceWaterhouseCoopers and General Motors, helped integrate my networking strategies into daily life as much as academic.

I believe most of you will find a part of yourselves in this book and say, “Well, I’ve been doing this perfectly”, or, “This can be done another way.” This is because networking touches upon many things you’ve already seen or heard about: **communication, body language, eloquence, business development, career planning, sales techniques, motivation, human resources, leadership...**

What renders networking different, and what is in fact essential, is putting to use what you already know, or what you read for the first time in this book, at the right time, in the right place, and more importantly through the right network.

So, let’s get to work! Now, it’s time to network!

For your valuable contributions:

 @ertugrubelen

 /ertugrubelen

 ertugrul@networkingakademi.com

# Introduction to Networking

As a result of my efforts on networking throughout the past fifteen years, and my research at the Business Networking Academy, I can distill this concept into three words:

- ❑ The art of networking is to Meet, Introduce and Get Recognized™.<sup>7</sup> Networking is essentially the skill of establishing new connections and maintaining existing ones. One needs to know how it is done and one has to spend time on it. It would be severely limiting to define networking simply as “relationship management”, because relationships are inherently bilateral and mutual. The networking concept encompasses relationship management. It is not adequate for relationships to be mutual. On the contrary, **continuously expanding your network without waiting for anything in return is the crux of networking.** Relationships that expire over time can't be counted as successful networking.
- ❑ Networking is an **activity**. It necessitates lots of planned actions to be carried out in a certain order. It involves change for both you and your network. Networking is a **process**. You need short and long-term strategies.
- ❑ Your network is **alive**. You need to devote the right amount of care and attention to nourish it. More importantly, you need to learn to love people.

- ❑ Networking is **timeless**. It should not be established only for a specific need, and should not be abandoned once the need is met. First, you offer help to your intimate network. Then your network leads you to new places.
- ❑ **Stability and continuity** are the basics of networking.
- ❑ Networking is **multi-dimensional**. Your network expands as you build new relationships and your number of friends grows. Your network will gain new insights and depth as the bonds of trust get stronger.

## What isn't networking?

- ❑ It is not the number of people you know. Recognition is the core of networking.
- ❑ It is not attending every event. You could end up wasting your time and not being able to catch up with anything. You can lose your focus. Doing business is not about collecting business cards. You can't do any business without establishing some sort of bond of trust.
- ❑ It is not about trying to meet everyone whenever you enter a new network. Maintaining connections is just as vital as initially making them!
- ❑ Networking is not network marketing. Network marketing is a sales system. Sales is not the objective of networking. It is the outcome of good relationships.
- ❑ It is not something that only social people and businessmen do. Everyone, even timid and shy individuals can transform their lives by using networking techniques.
- ❑ **It is not about just calling someone whenever you need something.**
- ❑ Networking does not mean continuing relationships with people you don't actually like just because "they may be of help one day." Don't hold onto people you don't like, can't get along with, or can't come to terms with unless you really have to.