

TALES FROM THE NETWORKING COMMUNITY



Networking,
Like Life,
is a Process
not an Event™

DAN WILLIAMS

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“Tales From The Networking Community” Book Excerpt

Networking, *Like Life*, is a Process
not an Event™

By Dan Williams

foreword by Kelly Perdew,
Winner, *Apprentice 2*

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Foreword by Kelly Perdew

Foreword by Kelly Perdew, Winner *Apprentice 2* and Author, “*Take Command: 10 Leadership Principles I Learned in the Military and Put to Work for Donald Trump.*”

Dan is a person after my own heart—someone with the kind of skills and perseverance that have served me well on *The Apprentice*, in business, and in life.

Seeing Dan’s top endorsement on *LinkedIn* and being interviewed on *The Networking Community Show* on the USA Radio Network really got my attention. Now that he’s captured so much of his vision and thinking in a single book, I’m excited about what you, the reader, will be able to learn from these pages.

Dan represents a new breed of thought leadership, applying his sales drive and discipline to the art of networking. Just as he does in his monthly column, *Tales From The Networking Community*, Dan’s book makes the case that networking has become a way of life for some, and will become the same for many more.

Through the book’s substance, as well as its inspired lighter moments, Dan shares not only his knowledge, but his passion for networking and his heartfelt desire to help others succeed. It’s the kind of balanced, humanistic business sense that is so rare in the boardroom but so vital for each of us day-to-day.

Dan Williams of The Networking Community, you're hired! Thanks for your continuing work and for this book.

Kelly Perdew

Winner, *Apprentice 2*

Author, *"Take Command: 10 Leadership Principles I Learned in the Military and Put to Work for Donald Trump"*

Introduction

My story started with the need to build a new livelihood at the ripe age of 50. In addition to the fast demise of my career within the data telecommunications industry, the economy's free-fall was intensified with the tragic events on September 11, 2001. There were profound changes about to take place within our economy, not just a stroke of bad luck on the job front. I also discovered that I was not in this hot soup alone. I had a whole bunch of company.

So, the story behind founding The Networking Community is really a tale of necessity being the mother of invention. Once my denial phase of bringing back the "good old days" began to fade, I made the decision that I needed to network. Boy, was I in for a surprise.

First, networking seemed like an underground world. Nowhere could I find one source that provided an objective and total view of which networking organizations existed and where the networking events took place. It seemed it was not in anyone's best interest to provide information on anyone other than themselves.

Secondly, as I would ask around for networking groups and who did what and for whom, there were more opinions than laid-off dot.com employees. Maybe so in the clothing business, but in the networking biz, one size does not fit all. My gas money was scarce and the clock for

finding a new career and a means to survive in these new economic times was ticking. Out of necessity, I built my own resource center for networking organizations and events.

As I ventured into The Networking Community, I met a new breed of micro-enterprises that were also networking as a survival strategy. They all shared the similar need for a resource center to simplify their lives and objectively share which group cultures and events best fit their individual needs. Seems like The Networking Community was ready for the times.

“Tales From The Networking Community” reflects the emerging 21st century era of doing business through networking brought about by the economic trends of outsourcing and downsizing. The joy of sharing these chapters with you is that the tales you are about to read are real stories of real life networking experiences.

The first thing I learned was that no matter what happens in our journeys, it is neither good news nor bad news. It is just news. Only looking back can we more clearly see how apparent bad news really takes us to places we never could have imagined. With my personal tale, I started looking for a job through networking, and ended up creating a company that addressed networking as an industry.

The first chapter lays the foundation for the networking tales and is the overarching value of The Networking Community. It is titled; “Networking, *Like Life*, is a Process not an Event.” This is my personal mantra, and the whole point of this book.

And, as with anything that is worthwhile in life, the personal and business rewards gained within the tales of your networking community are a *process* and not an *event*.

My hope with this book endeavor is for you to take away just one thought, one nugget, or one tale and turn it into your advantage to improve the quality and job security of your life.

Now, off we go beginning in chapter one with the theme that ripples throughout ‘*Tales From The Networking Community*,’ “Networking, *Like Life*, is a Process not an Event.”

Field of Dreams

Have you ever seen the film “Field of Dreams?” It’s a story inside a story. I get totally absorbed relating movies to the art and science of building a business. I love to do this while watching sports games as well, so I was in hog heaven watching “Field of Dreams,” a sports movie about the return of Shoeless Joe Jackson of the 1919 Chicago Black Sox’s baseball team.

The Networking Community happens to be my field of dreams. It didn’t begin with a formal business plan. I was driving in my car thinking about the need for a networking resource center when the vision of starting The Networking Community actually struck me. Have you ever had this happen to you? It’s a voice that talks to you from nowhere that you can feel. Then, for the next two hours, you’re driving around in circles totally oblivious. One true sign of suddenly being struck with your life’s business passion is losing your car in a multilevel parking garage. It’s very embarrassing driving around for hours with the shopping center police looking for your car. Like Kevin Costner, they will think you are a couple fries short of a happy meal, but stay the course. Go for it! What is your field of dreams?

When inspiration aligns with your business skills, magic happens, but following the story line, our dreams need support from those who believe in you. Let it be said that Annie supports her husband's vision when he finds it necessary to travel east to Boston so he can enlist the support of a famous writer (James Earl Jones) who has disappeared from sight to Minnesota to talk to what remains of a doctor (Burt Lancaster) who never got the chance to play with the pros. It takes a support team beyond the players on the diamond, to realize your dreams.

It requires our unwavering commitment from those around us to keep the faith. Soon they will begin to believe that maybe, just maybe, this is not a dream. Each has a key position to play moving us towards our ultimate goal. We all win! Just like the doc who finally got to play pro baseball, we can all help our support team realize their dreams.

Build it, and they will come! And don't we wish it were that simple? No matter how grand the plan, after you build your baseball field to reap business, no one is coming until you get out there and make it happen. It's called creating awareness through networking: 10% inspiration, 90% perspiration. It's hard work. That's why we call it networking. It requires you to leave your cornfield and bring 'em back, over and over again. Create the awareness, interest will come next, then trust and confidence, and finally, your prospects will be motivated to buy tickets for your products and services.

Follow your field of dreams and swing for the fences. Networking is the game—the game that will allow your vision to be realized.

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Can You Hear Me Now? Good!

Enough already! This guy who is a cross between Mr. Wizard and Bill Gates with a cell phone is driving me nuts. Hey! Whoever you are, knock it off! Can you hear me now? Did you ever get the feeling that just to keep 'em quiet, you would buy their product? Me too. Is this what they mean when they say it takes money to make money? They beat us to a pulp until we just can't stand it anymore.

My all time favorite athlete, Mohammad Ali, had the same technique. Ali did not become heavyweight champion of the world by punching 20 people 1 time each. No. He became the champ by punching 1 guy 20 times.

By applying frequency to the poor opponent's head, Ali was able to bring his message home. The same principle applies to our networking efforts. The winners in the networking ring are the ones who understand that networking is hard work. It requires patience. *They understand the concept that building trust is not an event, but rather, trust comes from frequency. Networking is a step-by-step process that requires time and commitment.* Success in networking does not

come with one fell swoop, and rarely does a networker deliver a knockout punch (to read: “close a deal”) at their first networking event.

The biggest pitfall I observe in the networking world is sacrificing reach for frequency. If you talk to 20 networkers 1 time each, don’t expect much. Take your time and pick the networking events and organizations that best fit your style and business objectives. Then stay focused. None of us has a magic catch phrase. There are no networking silver bullets. It is plain old consistent hard work and frequency that will make you a networking champion. Sure these commercials drive me wild, but they work, and also demonstrate the marketing principles of consistency.

Here is your ultimate frequency test. After you hear an info-commercial from an AFLAC rep at your next networking event just wait for all to chime in with... “AF...LAC.” I can still see the commercial of that waddling duck repeating his quack with; “AFLAC, AFLAC.”

Frequency is the champ, even if you’re a duck. Can you hear me now?
Good!

About the Author



Dan Williams is the founder of The Networking Community, LLC, a resource center and membership organization helping individuals and groups maximize the value of their business networks and networking.

He is recognized as the visionary and leader for advancing networking with the purpose of enabling companies and individuals to more effectively meet the marketing challenges of the 21st century. As one of the acknowledged thought-leaders for networking—Dan Williams is ranked #1 in testimonials on LinkedIn in North America amongst millions of business professionals.

Williams's success as a technology and telecommunications sales executive began in the late-1970s and grew dramatically until the

bust of early 2000. Williams developed business for such companies as, Tymnet, British Telecom, Primus Telecom, and more. When the tech bubble burst, like many, he went from being worth millions on paper to being unemployed and without a viable network overnight.

During a three-year stint as founder of a micro-enterprise in the mid-1980s, Williams had developed a powerfully simple system for tracking sales and marketing initiatives. While he successfully used this system in business during the 1990s, Williams discovered its true worth when he applied it to his own networking efforts after the economic downturn began. He soon realized a need for a solid networking methodology in the marketplace, one that would enable virtually anyone to network more effectively.

In founding The Networking Community (TNC), Williams has made his networking know-how available to all; through his audio CD and published books, The Networking Community Radio Show, his regular networking column, white papers, seminars and speaking engagements.

To learn more, visit The Networking Community, www.TheNetworkingCommunity.com, and while there, sign up to Dan Williams' monthly column by clicking on the Subscribe link located on TNC's front page. If you are interested in launching a TNC networking group in your community, simply go to the 'Contact Us' link on TNC's home page or send your request to: tnc@thenetworkingcommunity.com.

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