

"This book makes networking easy and enjoyable. The authors understand that connecting with others who share your values and principles is more important than connecting with people who are simply in fields similar to yours. As business changes at an ever faster pace, it's important to build a strong network—not only so you can thrive, but also so that others can thrive through you."

—Ken Blanchard, coauthor of *The One Minute Manager*®



The One Minute Networker

Global Networking Made Simpler

Melissa Giovagnoli Wilson & Larry Mohl

The One Minute Networker

By

*Melissa Giovagnoli Wilson
and Larry Mohl*

Overview

According to a poll conducted by Execunet, a large online portal for executives, 86% of all executives consider networking very important. Yet only 19% think they do it well. *The One Minute Networker* is built around the notion that most people understand the need to excel at networking yet feel they lack the tools or resources to become an effective networker. In our experience, we find that most people have fundamental misconceptions about networking. They believe it is about numbers – that gathering piles of business cards at networking functions somehow adds up to a powerful network. They believe it is about making as many connections as possible with people in the same line or related lines of work. They believe one can only be an effective networker if one devotes a huge amount of time to the effort.

As this book will show, these misconceptions stand in the way of building a powerful, productive, and meaningful network. In *The One Minute Networker*, we dispatch with these notions quickly. Readers learn that “the power of 2 equals the

2 The One Minute Networker

power of 10” – that huge pile of business cards is worth nothing compared to the careful cultivation of the right connections. The Pareto Principle comes into play here and we show readers that, if they can learn to network with the 20% of their connections that have true value, they never have to connect with the other 80% in the first place. Readers learn that it is more important to connect with people who have the same goals than to connect with people who work in the same field. If people have the same values as you have, there’s a very good chance they’ll provide you with the opportunity to expand your career in unexpected ways. They’ll also learn the invaluable skill of the one-minute introduction. It’s possible within a minute, to learn about a person’s goals, to express your own goals, and to discern whether you would bring value to each other’s networks. In this book, we’ll show how.

Modeled after *The One Minute Manager* and the “One Minute” books that followed, *The One Minute Networker* presents its lessons in parable fashion. It tells the story of Meredith and Lance, two talented individuals who feel that they’ve had less success than their skills warrant. They know they need to reach out to more people, but they don’t know how. They know about networking and they’ve tried attending networking functions, but they feel that these functions have been a waste of their time. While lunching together, they run into a friend whose career is blossoming. He tells them of a man who helped him extend his potential for opportunity – a man known as The

One Minute Networker. Meredith and Lance meet The One Minute Networker and embark on a quest to learn his secrets to building sustainable, opportunity-enhancing networks.

On their journey, they learn the key tenets of networking:

- 🕒 The Power of 2 Equals the Power of 10 – the *quantity* of connections you have isn't nearly as important as the *quality* of those connections.
- 🕒 If You're going in the Same Direction, Why Not Go There Together? – Connecting with people with the same goals and values makes your network dramatically more powerful and can lead to surprising opportunity.
- 🕒 Network with Purpose – When you explore how people can fit into your network, the power of your network grows.
- 🕒 Master the Magic of Divergence – Networking in diverse ways creates magical connections.
- 🕒 Be a Visionary of Connection – When you keep your eyes open to the possibility of making a valuable connection anywhere, you greatly improve your chances of having a first-rate network.
- 🕒 Great Questions Lead to Great Connections – When you know what you're looking for and you know what to ask, you can identify valuable connections quickly.
- 🕒 Expand Your Horizons of Possibility – You need to

4 The One Minute Networker

take a proactive role in order to build a powerful network.

- 🕒 High-Tech can Equal High-Touch – E-mail, IM, and internet sites like LinkedIn can be extremely valuable networking tools as long as you use them actively rather than lazily.
- 🕒 Master the One Minute Introduction – You can learn a great deal about someone new and tell him a great deal about yourself in only a minute if you know how to do it.

Meredith and Lance come to understand that the preconceptions they had about networking were wrong and that it is possible to build a great network that helps them accomplish their goals and grow meaningful, valuable careers. The lessons they learn are clear, profound, and, most importantly, adoptable by anyone.

There is any number of books on the market about networking. This book shares the format, action plan and wealth. By presenting the keys to networking in parable fashion, *The One Minute Networker* allows readers to see the techniques in action and identify with Meredith and Lance so they can envision a clear path toward bringing these techniques into their own lives.

Based on decades of cutting-edge work in the field of

networking, *The One Minute Networker* will break new ground at a time when sites like LinkedIn are gaining unprecedented popularity yet users still don't know how to create networks that enrich them and truly enhance their careers. Readers will come away from the story of Meredith and Lance with clear messages and a definite plan for leveraging their time into ever-increasing opportunity.

MELISSA GIOVAGNOLI is one of the world's leading experts on the development of individual and community leadership networks as a means of growing and accelerating brand loyalty, sales, productivity and performance improvement inside and outside of organizations. For more than a decade Melissa's organization, *Networkding*, has provided exceptional relationship marketing and management programs for organizations like AT&T, CNA, American Express and Disney.

Melissa is the author of seven books, her most recent of which, *Networkding*, co-authored with Jocelyn Carter Miller, held the #10 spot on Amazon (in Chicago) for a year. *The Oprah Winfrey Show* featured one of her books and Melissa has been a guest on both radio and television including *The Today Show*, *CNN*, *WGN*, *CNBC* and *FOX*. She is a frequent presenter at conferences looking for interactive sessions and she has won a Consummate Speaker of the Year Award. Yale University recently licensed her *Networkding* program through their graduate school of business as a leadership offering.

LARRY MOHL's long and distinguished career is a testament to The One Minute Networker in action. After a beginning in electrical engineering, Larry repeatedly reinvented himself by building diverse relationships that led to innovative roles in leadership development, organization effectiveness, and quality improvement. While serving as Director of Knowledge Management at Motorola, Inc., he pioneered principles of creating sustainable relationship networks through "Communities of Practice" designed to create, capture, and deploy knowledge capital.

Larry is currently the Chief Learning Officer (CLO) for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, one of the nation's top pediatric healthcare systems and a member of *Fortune Magazine's* 100 Best Companies. Before landing in Atlanta, he served as CLO for the American Express Company where he spearheaded new approaches to leadership development and talent management across the globe. He has been a regular speaker on the topics of leadership, performance improvement, and the creation of knowledge communities, and he currently serves on the advisory boards of the Atlanta Human Resources Leadership Forum and the Human Capital Institute.

Sample Chapters

Once there were two bright and promising young people who took their careers very seriously but found themselves frustrated that they weren't as successful as they thought they should be. Meredith and Lance worked together for a few years at a large corporation. She worked on the marketing side and he worked in operations. Last year, Meredith left the corporation to start her own small company while Lance stayed in a middle management position.

They got together regularly for lunch. "My business just isn't growing the way it should," Meredith said at the latest of these. "I know I have an excellent product and I know there's a big market for it, but I just can't seem to find the right way to get the word out."

Lance was sympathetic, but he had his own problems on his mind. "I feel like I'm stuck. I don't want to be in middle management the rest of my life, but unless I find a new way to add value to the company or I get my name out to more people who might be interested in hiring me, that's exactly what's

8 The One Minute Networlder

going to happen.”

“It’s tough,” Meredith said, “because I think we’re both great at what we do. That doesn’t mean anything, though, if there aren’t enough people who know it.”

“I’ve tried to make myself visible to all the right people in the company and I’ve joined professional groups to expand my contacts, but I never get anything out of these. I’m either doing something wrong or these functions really serve no purpose.”

Meredith shook her head. “I’ve tried all kinds of things to get the word out: advertising, flyers, press releases – you name it. It hardly seems to be worth all of the effort I put in.”

At this point, both of them stared glumly at their food. Lance barely felt like eating.

A moment later, a familiar voice broke the silence. “Lance! Meredith! Great to see you!” It was Kevin, a former colleague. “The two of you looked like you were meditating over your plates. Is this a new kind of power lunch I haven’t heard about yet?”

Meredith chuckled. “We were just ‘meditating’ on how our careers are going nowhere.”

“Really?” Kevin said. “But the two of you were always so great.”

“Would you mind going on national television and sharing that with the rest of the world?” Lance said.

Kevin shook his head. “Oh, I get it. Hey, I know just what you’re talking about. I was there myself a couple of years ago.”

Meredith seemed astonished. “You were? When you left the company, you had *multiple* job offers. Didn’t you have to choose between heading the American office of a multinational, being the COO of a mid-size company, and running a heavily-funded startup?”

“Well, sure, but less than a half-year before that, I was hanging my head the way the two of you were when I came in.”

Lance found this very surprising. “What changed? Did you find a magic lamp?”

“Not exactly, but I guess you could say I found a genie.”

Lance and Meredith stared strangely at Kevin.

Kevin smiled. “My ‘genie’s’ name is Dan, but the people who are lucky enough to know him call him ‘The One Minute Networker.’ He taught me about the awesome power of networking.”

Lance shrugged. “I’ve tried networking. All I ever got out of it was a huge pile of business cards.”

“Then you’re not doing it right. If you put together the right network, your opportunities will increase more than you could possibly imagine.”

Lance looked at Meredith. Was it possible they had the wrong ideas about networking? Could this be the answer to their problems? “The One Minute Networker” certainly sounded easy enough. Could anything that easy be as helpful as Kevin suggested?

“Hey Kevin,” Meredith said, “why don’t you let us buy you

10 The One Minute Networlder

lunch so you can tell us all about The One Minute Networlder?”

“Sorry, I can’t. I’m meeting someone here – someone I met through a friend of Dan’s, actually. But I’ll do you one better. I wouldn’t do this for most people but I always thought the three of us were on the same wavelength. I’ll call Dan when I get back to my office and set up some time for the two of you to meet with him.”

“Wow, thanks,” Lance said.

With that, Kevin left to meet his lunch date. Lance looked down again at his meal. He was suddenly very hungry.



Two days later, Lance and Meredith sat in the office of Dan, The One Minute Networker. Dan was a pleasant-looking man with an expressive face who made firm eye contact with each of them regularly.

“So, do you like corporate life, Lance?” Dan said.

“I do. I feel that I’m cut out for it. I like working with a big organization and I think that strategic planning is a major strength of mine.”

The One Minute Networker looked at Meredith. “You started in corporate, but you moved out on your own.”

Meredith nodded. “That’s where Lance and I are different. He loves helping make a huge machine run. I prefer to have my hands on everything.”

“But both of you are the same when it comes to wanting to get ahead.”

Lance glanced over at Meredith and then spoke. “Yeah, I guess we are. We both take our careers seriously and want to have an impact.”

“Making an impact is important to you?”

“Making an impact and making a contribution,” Meredith said. “Lance and I have talked about this several times over the years. We love what we do and we feel we have a lot to offer

12 The One Minute Networker

anyone who works with us.”

Dan nodded. “Ah, yes. Passion.”

Lance leaned forward in his chair. “Yes, passion! If you can’t do something with passion, you shouldn’t do it at all. Right?”

Dan smiled now. “I believe you’re right. I’ve been working on a project for six months. I’ve run into dozens of roadblocks, but I just keep charging ahead. Why? Because I believe in it and I care about it.”

Dan’s secretary came in a moment later with the coffee Lance and Meredith requested. It dawned on Lance that they’d only been in Dan’s office a couple of minutes, but they were deep in the middle of an animated conversation. He seemed like an old friend already.

The conversation continued for a while with Dan telling them some more about himself and giving them details about his current project and some other things that were in the pipeline. That got Meredith started about a marketing plan she was creating for one of her clients, which in turn motivated Lance to talk about an off-site management seminar he was developing for his company. As he talked about it, he realized that Dan would be a perfect guest speaker for the program; maybe he’d mention it at a later date.

“Dan, I’m so happy Kevin introduced us and I feel that we could talk for hours,” Meredith said, “but I have a huge favor to ask. Would you be willing to share your secrets about networking with us the way you did with Kevin?”

Dan sat back in his chair and grinned. He seemed almost boyish as he did it. “The two of you seem to have your heads pointed in the right direction,” he said. “I’d be happy to help you.”

Meredith rummaged through her bag and pulled out a notepad.

“Oh, you won’t need that,” Dan said. “The best way for you to learn my ‘secret’ is not by having me tell it to you. The best way for you to learn is for me to do this.” Dan picked up his phone and made four calls. He chatted briefly with each of these people and when he was finished, he handed Meredith and Lance pieces of paper. He’d written two names and addresses on each.

“I’ve set up appointments for you. Do these separately; you’ll get more out of them that way.”

Lance looked at the names and addresses appreciatively. “Thanks. Will they know why we’re coming?” The only thing Lance had heard Dan say about this on the phone was, “I have someone I’d like you to meet.”

“Oh, they’ll know.”

“Great,” Meredith said, putting her notebook back in her bag. “I’m looking forward to this.”

“As am I,” Lance said. “Would it be possible for us to come back to see you after we meet with them to discuss networking further?”

Dan smiled again. “I’ve enjoyed our talk and I look forward

14 The One Minute Networker

to seeing you in the future, but I think there's a good chance you won't need anything more from me."

Lance looked down at the paper again. "Surely we aren't going to be able to learn everything we need to know about networking from four meetings."

"Don't be so sure," Dan said. He pointed to a corner of his desk, to a plaque that Lance hadn't noticed before. The plaque read:

THE POWER OF 2 EQUALS THE POWER OF 10

"It isn't about how many connections you make," Dan said. "It's about how good those connections are. If you meet the right people – people who find the same things important that you do – you'll have a powerful network. It's the difference between 'quantity = quantity' thinking and 'quality = quantity' thinking. Have you heard of the Pareto Principle?"

Meredith nodded. "The 80/20 rule."

"Exactly. It applies perfectly to networking – at least the way most people do it by simply meeting as many people as they possibly can. That's 'quantity = quantity' thinking. In those cases, 80% of your increasing opportunity comes from 20% of your connections. But if you use 'quality = quantity' thinking, you find opportunities with *most* of your connections. The power of two – that golden 20% – equals the power of ten."

"So collecting business cards at networking functions really was useless for me," Lance said.

Dan shrugged. “Not entirely. It was probably only useless eight times out of ten.”

A few minutes later, Lance and Meredith left Dan’s office. Meredith held up the sheet of paper Dan gave her. “I have Rama Patel and Randall Oppenheimer. Who do you have?”

Lance studied his sheet. “Gilda Brass and Dale Tucker.” He looked up at Meredith. “You really think these people hold the keys to the kingdom?”

“Dan certainly seemed to think so.”

Lance nodded thoughtfully. “Our quest begins.”



Before her meeting with Rama Patel, Meredith did a little background research on him. He'd emigrated from India less than a year ago and now worked as comptroller for a large non-profit organization. Meredith found this intriguing and more than a little baffling. For one thing, she knew virtually nothing about the Indian culture. For another, she'd concentrated most of her professional efforts on marketing and always found that she had little to say to the financial types she worked with. In addition, she'd always understood that non-profits were a completely different animal from for-profit companies. In fact, going into the meeting, she couldn't think of a single thing she had in common with Rama Patel. This was going to be interesting. She hoped it wouldn't also be a waste of time.

Rama's office was modestly appointed, the most notable feature being a wide-screen computer monitor. Meredith immediately imagined him sitting at his desk all day crunching numbers. In fact, he was doing something on the computer when Meredith entered.

He finished one last keystroke and stood, extending his hand. "Tell me something exciting," he said brightly.

This threw Meredith. *What an odd way to start a conversation*, she thought. "Um, I pitched a client today on a

community-based marketing plan and he loved it.”

“That is exciting. Is the client a local business?”

“Interestingly, no, but they’re just moving into the area and they want to announce their presence. I convinced them that setting out to be a fixture in the community was the best kind of promotion they could do.”

“Fascinating,” Rama said, sitting back in his seat. “What made you go in this direction?”

Meredith sat across from him. “It’s something of a specialty of mine. I feel that it’s important for businesses to be active locally even if their customer base is national. It gives them roots and projects positive energy.”

“Positive energy. I like that. So, you’re a student of Eastern philosophy.”

Once again, Meredith felt confused. “Eastern philosophy? No, I can’t say I know much about it at all.”

Rama looked at her thoughtfully. “Funny. It sounded that way from what you just said.”

This certainly wasn’t the kind of conversation Meredith expected to have with a stodgy bean counter. “I just feel you get out what you put in. I’ve believed that as long as I can remember.”

“I couldn’t agree more. Do you do this with all of your clients?”

“As many as will let me. Some clients still believe that marketing is all about focus groups and direct mail. I try to

dissuade them, but sometimes they won't budge."

"And for cash flow reasons you can't just let that business go elsewhere."

Meredith wasn't sure if she heard a mild rebuke in his voice. "Gotta pay the bills."

"Hey, don't I know it. We do all kinds of stuff around here just to keep the donations rolling in. Nothing we're ashamed of, of course, but plenty that leaves us wishing we could do better."

"I didn't realize a comptroller would be involved in that side of the business."

Rama grinned. "I'm not – officially. I happen to have a very good head for finance and a non-profit company needs that. But the great thing about working for this organization is that they'll listen to good ideas from anyone. I spend a lot of time with the fundraising people and they let me bounce things around with them. I'm planning to suggest a new project to them in a couple of days. Do you want to see what it is?"

Meredith said yes and Rama immediately swiveled his computer monitor around so both of them could see it. Instead of the Excel spreadsheet she expected to find, she saw pictures of dozens of Indian schoolchildren. Rama explained that he had figured out how to use the techniques involved in teaching kids in Bangalore about technology to create an outreach program here. Meredith found this fascinating and she peppered Rama with questions. She realized quickly that, while they came

from different worlds and had extremely different jobs, they looked at life in a very similar way and had surprisingly similar goals. Within minutes, Meredith suggested a slightly different angle for Rama's idea and he fell in love with it.

"Maybe you should come with me when I present this," he said. "I couldn't pay you, but we use outside consultants all the time and if the company likes this idea, they might want to commission you to help implement it."

By this point, Meredith found the idea so intriguing that it hardly mattered to her if there was any money in it – though she had a feeling she'd generate several high quality connections from such a meeting. "I'd be delighted to help you," she said. "In fact, while we're at it, there's someone I'd like you to meet as well. One of my clients is looking to start a charitable organization and he could use a few tips."

"Absolutely. Give him my number."

Rama chuckled softly.

"What was that for?" Meredith asked.

"Dan just never ceases to amaze me with the people he sends my way. From the little he told me about you, I couldn't imagine how we could help each other. I should have known better. After all, my screensaver reminds me all the time."

Rama pointed to the monitor and Meredith looked in that direction. She saw that the pictures had been replaced by a phrase scrolling across the huge screen that read:

IF YOU'RE GOING IN THE SAME DIRECTION,
WHY NOT GO THERE TOGETHER?

“Something a wise man said to me several times when I first met him,” Rama said.

“Dan?”

“The One Minute Networker himself. He’s a very big believer in shared goals and he’s completely convinced me. I mean, look at you and me. We aren’t in the same business and we don’t have any obvious reason to be associated professionally. But it became obvious to me within a minute that we look at the world the same way. Because of that, we can help each other out, and I can make important contacts for you and you can make important contacts for me. That’s the very best kind of networking, isn’t it?”

Meredith smiled. “I suppose it is. I don’t think I ever looked at it that way before, but it makes all the sense in the world. I’ve been thinking too narrowly about the kinds of connections that would be valuable to me. I definitely won’t make that mistake again.”

Rama hit a command on his keyboard and his calendar program came up. “My meeting with the fundraising people is 11:00 on Thursday. Can you make it?”

Meredith didn’t need to check her calendar. Even if she had a conflict, she knew she’d switch things around to attend Rama’s meeting. “Absolutely,” she said.



I'm sitting in the back of a hairdressing salon, Lance thought. *How in the world does sitting in the back of a hairdressing salon help me advance my career?* Lance was certain that Dan had written the wrong address on the piece of paper. Surely, he couldn't have scheduled a networking appointment for him at a beauty parlor called Fabulous!!! (And, really, did the sign on the shop need *three* exclamation points? Wasn't one *fabulous* enough?) But when he walked into the store and asked for Gilda Brass, the receptionist pointed him toward the office in the back.

Was this some kind of elaborate joke? Maybe Dan didn't want to help Meredith and him at all and just decided to send them on a series of wild goose chases. After all, what could a beautician with orange hair tell him about networking that would help him climb the corporate ladder? Lance did notice that the shop was packed with customers, but even if Gilda were a great businessperson, at best she'd be more help to someone entrepreneurial like Meredith than someone corporate like him. Maybe Dan made a mistake after all. Maybe he meant for Meredith to get this appointment.

Gilda shuffled a bunch of papers on her desk, pulled a purple Post-It from the collection, said, "Right; gotta do this," and

22 The One Minute Networker

tacked the note to her phone. Then she looked up at Lance and said, “I have a deal with myself – I need to do one thing every day that’s better than what I’ve done before.” She looked at her watch. “It’s late morning and I haven’t accomplished this yet today. Got any ideas?”

Lance’s eyes narrowed. “You do something to improve yourself *every day*?”

Gilda tipped her orange head to the right. “You don’t?”

This gave Lance pause. He believed he was always trying to get better at what he did, but he’d never formalized it into an actual plan. “Well, I guess I do in some way.”

“Why?”

“What?”

“Why do you try to improve yourself?”

Huh? Why would Gilda ask him that question when she just said that *she* does this? “So I can be as good as possible.”

“So you can get ahead?”

“Yes, that. And so I can feel like I’m doing something of value.”

“To you.”

“To everyone I know.”

Gilda seemed to take a moment to digest this. Then she said, “Cool,” and started rummaging through her desk again.

“Why do *you* do it?” Lance said.

Gilda looked up at him as though he’d just walked into the room. “Do what?”

“Why do you try to improve yourself every day?”

Gilda wore the same expression she might have worn if he’d asked why she breathed. “What’s the point of living if you aren’t always getting better at it?”

Lance smiled at the words. “That’s a great point. I’m completely with you on that.”

“Excellent. That means we’re not wasting each other’s time.”

She grinned and Lance found himself laughing out loud. He wasn’t sure he’d ever met someone like Gilda before, but he was enjoying this. “How do you know Dan?”

“His wife is a customer of mine. I saved her from making a horrible mistake about frosting her hair once and he’s been indebted to me ever since. Well, that and I sent a multimillion-dollar client his way.”

“Wow. How did that happen?”

Gilda leaned forward in her chair. Lance noticed that she’d dyed her eyelashes blue. Amazingly, the look worked. “You talk about a lot of things when you’re doing someone’s hair. I can usually tell within a minute if a customer is a ‘how’s the grandkids’ type or a ‘what’s your latest project’ type. Getting to know both of these types is important for my business, but in different ways.”

“What do you mean?”

“I run a word-of-mouth shop here. If people like the way I style them, they refer me to other people. That’s critical stuff. But the referrals run both ways. If Customer X tells me she’s

working on something that might be of interest to Customer Y, I'll try to hook them up.”

“That’s a nice little service.”

“I get a lot out of it. In more ways than one. I mean, I like to help people out, but when I make a good connection for someone, that person tends to send even more business in my direction. It keeps the shop humming.”

Lance glanced toward the front of the store. “You certainly seem busy enough.”

“Would you believe it if I told you it was a slow day? Jenny the receptionist usually has the espresso maker running non-stop to keep customers in cappuccino while they’re waiting.”

“I guess you’ve put together a heck of a network, huh? It must be huge.”

“Huge? Not really. Dense, though. Like molasses. Or a thick-et. Or, I don’t know, high-viscosity motor oil.”

“High-viscosity motor oil?”

“Maybe that’s stretching the metaphor too thin. The point is that I’ve made it my business to fill my network with as much *possibility* as I can.” She pointed to the edge of her desk. “It’s like the plaque says.”

Lance was confused. He looked where Gilda pointed, but there was no plaque in sight. “Plaque?”

Gilda threw up her hands and then moved a huge pile of papers...and then another stack that fell over. When she finished clearing, she’d unearthed a plaque that read:

NETWORK WITH PURPOSE

“Nice, isn’t it? Dan gave it to me a while ago in case I ever forgot – as though that was likely to happen.”

“Does that mean you should always have a plan when you set out to network?”

“Not necessarily. What it really means is that you should network with an expectation of creating deeper relationships. You should include people in your network if you feel you can create possibilities together. That’s the difference between the ‘how’s the grandkids’ people and the ‘what’s your latest project’ people. The first set is comprised of nice people you can have a pleasant conversation with but who you can’t really work with in any way. The second set includes people whose goals are similar to yours or whose goals might intersect with yours at some point. When I add someone to my network, I don’t necessarily see the immediate business value in doing so, but I immediately see the *potential* value – business, personal, cultural, whatever. Obviously you understand this already or you wouldn’t be sitting in a hair salon now.”

Lance felt his face redden. “To tell you the truth, when I first came here I thought Dan was out of his mind for introducing us.”

Gilda’s eyes flashed devilishly. “Yes, I know. I was playing with you.”

“Was I that obvious? Sorry.”

“No need to apologize. There was a time when I would have

thought he was crazy, too.”

“Well, consider me a convert.” Lance stood up. “Listen, even if this is a slow day for you, I’m sure you have lots to do. I’ll let you get back to it. Thanks for everything.”

Gilda stood with him. “My pleasure. Let’s talk again soon.” She held up a yellow-fingernailed hand. “Actually, would you mind if I gave someone your number?”

“No, not at all. Why?”

“The son of one of my customers is looking to switch careers. I have a feeling you might be able to give him some pointers.”

“You really do network with purpose. Send him my way.”

Synopsis

of the remainder of The One Minute Networker

That night, Lance IM's Meredith to discuss their meetings. They share the highlights with each other and acknowledge that, while at first they questioned Dan's thinking in setting them up with Rama and Gilda, The One Minute Networker seems to know his stuff. Lance mentions that he still can't get over how valuable Gilda will be as a connection even though he never would have thought to include her in his network. Meredith says the same about Rama. Then Lance writes, "I think I just came up with another plaque for Dan: MASTER THE MAGIC OF DIVERGENCE."

They talk about what this means in the context of the day's meetings. One of the keys to networking is to increase the diversity of the people and ideas you surround yourself with. By doing so, you tap a wellspring of creativity and innovation and prevent yourself from getting into patterns that limit your potential. Meredith and Lance not only accessed new sources of connection through Rama and Gilda – they also attained new ways of looking at the world. Incorporating people into

your network with diverse views (though with similar goals) expands your perspective, making you a broader and more flexible thinker.

They chat for a few more minutes and then sign off, enthusiastic about the surprises in store tomorrow.

At this point, we'll step back to summarize the first set of chapters with bullet points a la The One Minute Manager.

The next day, Lance finds himself in the anteroom of an executive's corporate suite. The executive's secretary tells Lance that Dale has been tied up longer than expected and asks for his patience. While they wait, the secretary engages Lance in conversation. Lance finds the woman clever, perceptive, and with surprising understanding about how large companies work. He realizes that, while he isn't sure how much he'll learn from Dale, the man's secretary would be a welcome addition to his network. He suggests that maybe they share contact information and perhaps make a lunch date and the secretary says, "Sure. Let's go into my office to look at my calendar." The "secretary" was in fact Dale. Lance had mistakenly assumed Dale was a man. Dale congratulates Lance on his ability to perceive a great networking opportunity and to act on it. She moves behind her desk and points to a plaque Dan gave her that reads:

BE A VISIONARY OF CONNECTION

Dale pretended to be her own secretary to test Lance on this ability. She's delighted to say he passed. The key to this concept is to become adept at identifying connection opportunities and making them happen for yourself and others. The best networkers have a burning desire never to leave a valuable connection unfulfilled. Because Lance is focused on networking and has already learned important lessons, he was tuned to pick up this point. He understood that "Dale's secretary" was someone who shared his goals and who he could help and be helped by. The fact that she turned out to be a powerful person was gravy.

They make that lunch date.

Meredith's meeting that day is with Randall, a tremendously successful entrepreneur who has started and sold several businesses. The man's record of accomplishment is impressive and Meredith believes he'll be a great connection, but Randall's gruff manner immediately puts her off. She feels like she's in school again defending her thesis. Randall pelts her with questions so quickly that it's difficult for her to imagine he hears the answers to one before asking the next.

Still, Meredith retains her composure and answers Randall's questions thoughtfully. In fact, Randall must be listening to the answers, because each question he asks seems to build upon the last with the effect of drilling down to identify Meredith's most passionate goals. By the time he finishes his barrage – no

more than a couple of minutes after she walked into his office – Meredith has declared her most pressing immediate objective and her most ambitious long-term one.

Randall smiles and his demeanor relaxes. He reaches out his hand, and says, “Pleased to meet you,” as though Meredith just arrived. He tells her that he knows the precise person she should meet to help her with her short-term goal. He has a couple of people in mind for the long-term objective, but he wants to give that a little more thought.

Meredith’s head is spinning from Randall’s abrupt turn-around, but she manages to say, “Wow, thanks.”

“Sorry about the drill sergeant thing when you first walked in,” Randall says jovially. “I’ve found that it helps to drive home the point.”

He holds up a notepad on his desk. Each page of the pad carries the message:

GREAT QUESTIONS LEAD TO GREAT CONNECTIONS

“Let me guess,” Meredith says, “you got that from The One Minute Networker?”

Randall chuckles. “You should have seen what *our* first conversation was like.”

He goes on to explain that you make your best connections when you’re very clear about your goals. That’s best achieved through a process of asking questions. First, you ask yourself what’s important to you. Then you ask yourself who you know

or who you *could* know who can help you achieve your goals. And then you ask questions of that person to see if the connection really works or if it can lead to another, more valuable connection.

Randall describes himself as a “connector.” His work puts him in contact with a huge number of people. When someone comes to him for help, he uses questions to hone in on that person’s needs. Then he can make a meaningful connection. He tells Meredith that she can locate the potential connectors in her life by asking great questions both of herself and of the connector.

Lance, meanwhile, is back in his office, still buzzing from his meeting with Dale. He realizes that, through Gilda and Dale, he’s made a couple of very powerful connections, adding valuable resources in areas that he’s been deficient. This leads him to think about other places where there might be holes in his network. For some reason, in all of his hand wringing about his slow climb up the ladder, he hasn’t considered that the circle around him might have gaps in it. He makes a list of the important areas in his profession and where he has great contacts. He realizes that his contacts are especially weak in two areas directly associated with his ascendancy to upper management.

He decides to close these gaps pro-actively. Of course, since his connections are weak in these areas, he isn’t sure how to make the first move. How can he put himself in front of

someone who will form a critical part of his circle?

He thinks about this for a while and he remembers a piece he read in the recent company newsletter about a man in the Warehousing and Fulfillment Department celebrating his 20th anniversary with the corporation. Lance realizes that he knows next to nothing about getting products into the marketplace and that this has probably made him seem like something less than a “five-tool player” to the top executives. Is it possible that he’d been working under the same roof for the past five years with someone who could fill this gap for him?

Lance picks up the phone and calls the man. “You don’t know me,” he says, “but I was wondering if we could meet for a few minutes.”

When Lance hangs up with the man, he pulls out a Sharpie and writes a note on his coffee cup. It reads:

EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS OF POSSIBILITY

To Lance, this means that it’s essential to see where there are holes in your network and to take a pro-active role in filling those holes.

That night, Lance and Meredith again hook up on IM to discuss the day. While they’re chatting, Meredith dashes off an e-mail message to Rama and receives another one from a good connection she made the week before. Meanwhile, Lance has a separate chat running with Gilda’s friend. Lance and Meredith joke about being able to juggle multiple connections from the

comfort of their home offices and then discuss how computers can be tremendously valuable networking tools as long as one uses them with purpose rather than throwing out half-baked messages to a huge mailing list. Meredith writes that she has another plaque for Dan. This one reads:

HIGH TECH CAN EQUAL HIGH TOUCH

The point here is that e-mail, IM, and networking sites like LinkedIn all make networking easier and more sustainable – as long as you don't use them in a lazy way. These tools save time over older technologies like phone calling and letter writing, therefore allowing you to stay in touch with your connections regularly. However, if you use these tools in an impersonal way, your connections weaken.

Lance thinks this concept has potency and suggests that they actually memorialize the phrase and the earlier phrase they coined on plaques and present them to Dan. They've already made another appointment to see him. Though they've learned a great deal from the connections Dan made for them, they still have a key question to ask him.

Again, we'll step back from the parable to summarize.

A few days later, they're back in Dan's office. Dan appreciates both plaques Lance and Meredith made for him and they briefly discuss everything they've learned. Then Lance asks

the burning question:

“Why do they call you The One Minute Networker?”

Dan laughs and notes that they perceived a great deal about networking in the past few days, but they missed one critical point – everyone they met (including him) utilizes the magic of the One-Minute Introduction. Dan points out how he did it when he met the two of them and then Lance and Meredith reflect on other One-Minute Introductions they encountered on this quest (i.e., Rama’s “tell me something exciting” conversation and Gilda’s seemingly scatterbrained discussion about doing something better every day). This allows for a reader review of the concept.

Taking this further, Dan explains that all of the key lessons they experienced involve actions that take only about a minute. Again, this allows for reflection on the lessons for the sake of reader review with the reinforcing message that these techniques “only take a minute.” Lance notes that this is even true of the concepts they devised themselves.

Dan tells them that this was the last lesson they needed to learn. They are now full-fledged One Minute Networkers. They will now be able to build sustainable networks that leverage their time into ever-increasing opportunity. Lance talks about how this new networking skill can help him find the ideal corporate position and grow at the pace he desires. Meredith says that she knows her business will evolve in unimagined ways

because of the power of One-Minute Networking.

Dan congratulates them and his intercom rings. He tells Lance and Meredith that he needs to excuse himself because he has someone new to meet.

“In fact,” he says, “I might want to introduce her to both of you later.”

Lance and Meredith say they’d be delighted to help.

