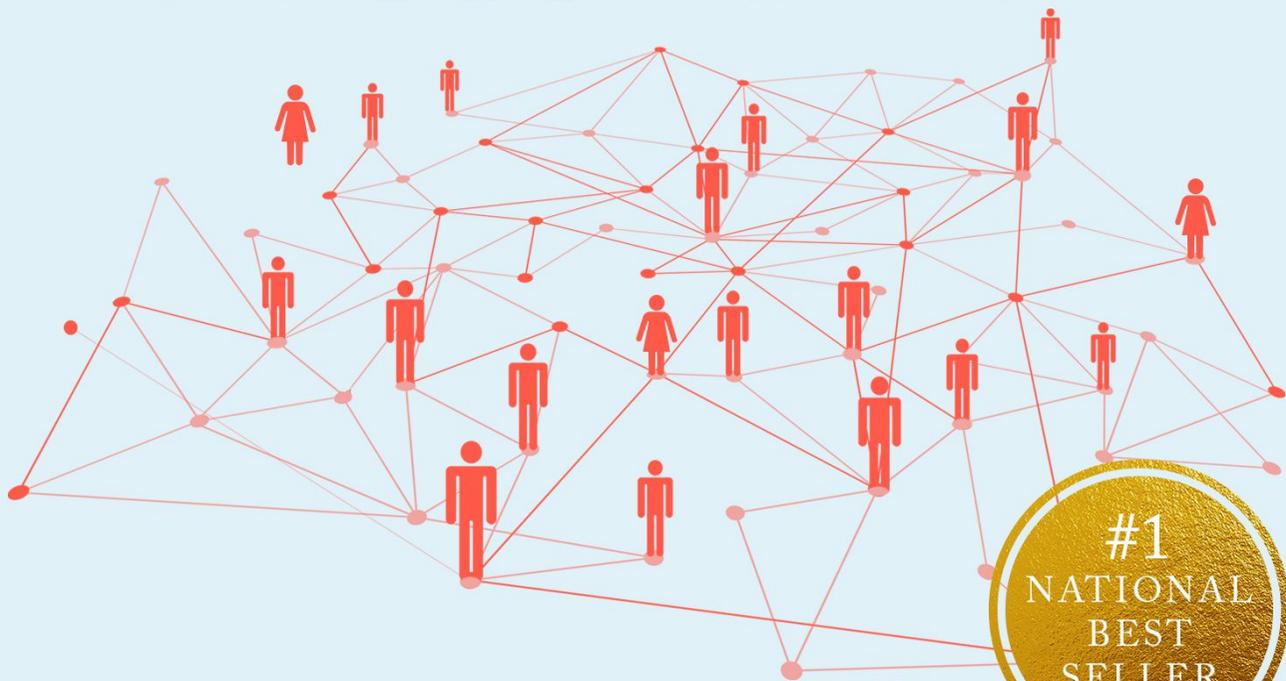


The Easiest Way to Become *Powerful*,
Regardless of Your Situation

THE CLEVER CONNECTOR



The Underdog's Guide to
Networking with Billionaires,
Celebrities, and Executives

ALI SCARLETT

Foreword by Lucio Buffalmano

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ISBN: 978-0-578-71414-1

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my high school teacher, Jeremy G. Johnson. More than the best school teacher I've ever had, but a good friend and a great man. For showing me the kindness I deeply needed when I was facing hardship, this book is dedicated to you.

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Foreword

Ali Scarlett and I have crossed paths online on numerous occasions, recently connected more formally, and I look forward to eventually meeting him in person.

Yes, we have not yet met in person. And yet... It feels like Ali is an old friend.

When I first encountered Ali, he reminded me of a scene from *The Dreamers*.

The Dreamers is a movie about movie buffs whose lives revolve around movies. The protagonist calls himself one of the “insatiabes.” These are the guys who can never have enough, the type of guys who sit as close as possible to the screen so they can receive the images first.

Ali seemed to have that same spirit. But instead of movies, it was personal development, growth, and strategies for success. He was one of the insatiabes, asking the most questions, reading the most books, and always working the hardest.

What a winner.

Incidentally, this is what I love about networking in the digital age we live in.

Your potential is not bound by the physical world anymore. The information, the teachers, and the people available to you today can truly give you wings and make you free, *no matter your past and regardless of your current station in life*. It doesn't matter if you're in what Trump would have called a shit-hole country, a God-forgotten village of farmers (like where I grew up), with an abusive parent (like Ali had), or if, at a certain point in your life, you were desperate and couldn't see a light at the end of the tunnel (like both Ali and I have been).

Somewhere out there, there is someone who can help you stand back up and show you the way to a level of success that you could have never dreamed of.

I don't know your current station in life. Maybe you are having difficulties seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

Or maybe you're well outside that tunnel, but you are one of the “insatiabes” driven to have more, be more, and do more in your life.

Or maybe you just want something better for yourself. In any case, this book will help you.

But before you plunge in, a quick heads up: the power of your network is potentially limitless. But, as Ali will explain, networking is an exchange. This means that the only limits to who you want to network with, learn from, and work with are your personal drive, your skills as a networker, and the value you bring to the table.

People skills are *crucial* in this world.

Right now, I am living a digital nomad lifestyle, doing exactly what I love doing and living exactly the life of freedom I dreamed of living. People and networking have been crucial to getting where I am right now.

Yet, there was a time not long ago when I was as clueless as the next guy when it comes to people, networking strategies, and psychology.

I still remember when I first learned the power of networking, relationships, and general soft skills (which I now refer to as “executive skills”). I was in my graduate talent program, interviewing to get into the big restructuring project that had just started.

McKinsey was launching the program for us. It was a colossal opportunity to network with the upper management and learn from the most driven consultants—always get into any restructuring projects if you can.

That day, Michael, an IT SVP, was interviewing in the teleconference room. He asked me why I wanted to join the program. Working with the little I knew, I said I wanted to join so I could “learn the lean methodology.”

His answer was a tectonic shift at how I looked at personal development and career growth. He said, “Are you here to learn the lean methodology, or to learn about people skills? The methodology is useful, but an even bigger opportunity is to learn soft skills. Things like leadership, persuasion, presentations...”

Yep. I went in there focusing on technical skills, but Michael Schlitt (I still remember his name) showed me that the methodology—the technical skills—meant little to those who had real power. He even did it without making me feel like an idiot for my answer. He showed me, with a brimming smile, what being an SVP was all about—and it wasn't about technical skills. Michael didn't know shit about lean methodology.

Power is all about people skills, soft skills—what I now call “executive skills.” The executive skills—which Michael didn't mention, because those are part of the “unspoken skills”—also included knowledge and mastery of power dynamics. It included things like speaking with confidence, looking authoritative, and knowing who to ally with.

His answer had left me speechless. It was that day I realized: tech skills give you job security. People skills give you board seats.

It's all too common that we see younger folks focusing solely on developing their hard skills in an attempt to make more money and achieve their goals quicker, but life satisfaction rarely comes from money or getting a "good job." This book will teach you how to leverage an even more fundamental form of power that will make you not just more successful, but far happier and fulfilled. At the end of the day, only other people can give you happiness and fulfillment.

As Brene Brown said, "Connection [with other humans] is why we're here."

Oh, P.S.:

Ali insisted that I write something about me.

I hold a master's degree from La Sapienza, department of communication and sociological research, and I am a member of the American Psychology Association (APA).

My mission is to empower underdogs with knowledge of the unwritten rules of the world—things such as life strategies, psychology, persuasion, and anything related to people and social dynamics.

I believe that without that knowledge, good people and underdogs alike will always be screwed by the ones who are born rich, ruthless, or less conscientious (or all of them). Learning power dynamics and effective people strategies is the only way to level the playing field.

That's what I love about Ali's work: he was not blessed with a silver spoon in his life. He had to carve his way up, and he used people skills to do it.

This book will help you, too, carve your way up. It will empower you with the knowledge, tools, and resources you need to do your best with those who matter the most to your success: other people.

Are you thinking you don't need this? That's exactly what all the average folks think—and no offense to average folks, truly.

In my work and in my life, I see an endless stream of people who are killing their chances because of silly, people-related blunders.

They screw themselves up by breaking the basic, unwritten rules of social interactions.

They ruin a relationship with unneeded confrontational frames, they inadvertently offend superiors, or they simply fail to come across as people worth networking with (and that includes people who *are* worth networking with).

Most of the time, those mistakes were avoidable. If they had only known the very basics of people and success strategies...

While those painful experiences *can* serve as great teachers, not everyone learns from them. This book will help you understand those unwritten rules so you will not make those silly mistakes in the first place.

You will instead start doing what works.

Ali has screened each strategy and technique for its effectiveness, drawing from some of the best authors around. This book is well-referenced, practically-oriented, and real-world tested, which is exactly the approach I love and use in my own work.

What makes Ali's book so unique is the perfect combination of high-quality writing, top-notch strategies, and his own highly inspirational story.

Read it, internalize it, exercise it. I am confident that this book will be a big stepping stone in your road to success, personal empowerment, and life satisfaction.

To you, my friend, and to your continued success.

Lucio Buffalmano
Founder, ThePowerMoves.com

Introduction

When I was 16-years-old, I was isolated and left to die. I've spent my life since then trying to be for myself and others what no one was for me. To be a helping hand, in order to help myself and others, so we can achieve personal empowerment. By using helpful information as the pathway to achieving more. That's why I wrote this book.

When I was isolated, I believed that wealth and status were the answer to the problems within my social life. That initial belief led me to become deeply immersed in my research of money and power. I was constantly reading, scanning, studying, and taking notes on hundreds of articles, books, journal entries, essays, and reports on all things related to money, personal finance, self-development, and self-help.

Growing up, I always thought that money was, simply, power, and that was that. It was only the rich who had the power to get away with murder (both figuratively and literally), only the rich who could afford the luxurious lifestyle that people were jealous of, and only the rich who people really had an incentive to care about, since they had so much, well, power.

However, throughout my research, my own painful experiences, and the pain I had seen others experience, I found myself calling into question how I viewed power.

I began to feel that the world was relying too much on money as a form of power. And, as a result, they were suffering from the numerous opportunities that were slipping through their fingers. Opportunities they couldn't even see.

I soon realized that my lack of money was not the problem; it was only a *result* of the real problem. The popular literature on attaining wealth only addressed the symptoms, leaving the underlying chronic problems untouched.

In addition to my research on self-development and money, I began to delve into the art of networking. I even went so far as to take a Yale University course in negotiation and persuasion. I performed field testing to discover which persuasion strategies work in ethically persuading others to join my network and which don't. By working on my networking skills and learning power dynamics (which you'll learn more about a little later), I became better at communicating, developed a more wholesome personality than the cold one caused by my hardest experiences, and built healthy relationships with people who helped me advance to life's next levels (and I didn't need tons of money to do it).

Young professionals, college students, and many others who used to struggle to progress toward their goals without the aid of a robust network have already experienced great success by implementing the tips, tricks, and strategies found in this helpful how-to guide.

Given that this is a book on mastering the art of networking, this book lays out the entire step-by-step process using the acronym MASTER:

1. Master the Power Dynamics
2. Adopt the Helpful Mindsets
3. Specialize the Basic Guidelines
4. Test the Networking Strategies
5. Enlist the Good Mentors
6. Realize the Present Opportunities

As you progress through this book, you'll learn about more than only practical networking strategies, but also about the collaborative power of a network as a whole. A power that has already created strong business relationships, attracted millionaire investors, and launched brand-new, successful careers. By the end of this book, I promise that you will have the "aha moment" that will set you apart. If you apply the concepts correctly, you will be able to achieve any goal you set for yourself in your personal life and career. These strategies and networking secrets will give rise to exclusive opportunities for your career, regardless of what industry you're in.

Now, this book is not for people who think they already know everything they need to know about networking. People with that mindset will approach the strategies and information laid out inside this book with a closed mind and won't be able to see the maximum benefits. As an acquaintance of mine would often say, "Our mind is like an umbrella; it only works if it's open." This book is also not for people who have a fixed mindset and no desire to change that mindset.

"In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort." (Dweck, 2020)

In other words, if you don't believe you can develop the abilities that will take you to the next level, there's no sense in you reading this book. It would be a waste of your time. If you currently have a fixed mindset and aren't willing to change your perspective—if you aren't willing to decide that yes, you can improve your skills in the areas necessary to advance your career and get more out of life—then, once again, this book isn't for you.

Anyone who has a growth mindset or is willing to switch to one to become better, please know that waiting to read this book will cost you in the long run. Avoid being the person who misses out on opportunities in life because you hesitated to apply the strategies that could make your life better. Be the kind of person other people marvel at. Be the kind of person other people see and say, "I don't know how they do it."

Relationships are essential to your success, as well as to the achievement of your goals. You must build the relationships you need before you need them. You must network now, or you'll be kicking yourself later! I hope you're excited to learn the most effective networking strategies to develop your personal power, advance your career, better connect with others, and become a better you. The networking tips and tricks you're about to read have been proven to create positive, long-lasting results. All you have to do to develop your dream network is keep reading. Each chapter will give you new insight as you strive to establish a robust web of powerful connections. Take control of your life right now, use the powerful strategies you're about to learn responsibly, and enjoy the new life you're creating.

Step One

Master the Power Dynamics

Growing up, I was something of a “nice guy.” I was always treating others how I would want to be treated to the maximum capacity. And, as a kid, there were days in school when I would catch someone sneaking a peek at my paper during a test. Torn between a rock and a hard place, I would ask myself, “If I needed to get the right answers on a test from someone else, would I want them to help me?” The answer was yes. Sometimes I would even secretly slide my paper closer to the student cheating off my paper, so they could get a better look. I was that guy. I was raised with values that encouraged my behavior to be like this all of the time.

There was a day when I was around seven years old that I had gotten forty dollars for Christmas. Later that day, while running some errands, I noticed a man from the Salvation Army ringing a bell. He had a red bucket beside a sign asking for donations. Without a second thought, I dropped all of my money into the bucket—and then watched in confusion as my mother shuffled through the man’s bucket to get some of the money back. I had done what I had been raised to do: to treat others the way I wanted to be treated. I knew that if I were that man, possibly freezing out in the cold, working to gather donations for a noble cause, I would have wanted that forty dollar donation. So, I gave it to him. I was raised with values that encouraged my behavior to be like this all of the time.

My mother never fully explained her reasoning behind taking some of the money back. It wasn’t often that I saw her contradicting the values she helped to raise me with, so I trusted her judgment and brushed it off as a “one time thing.” And, in brushing it off, I continued to treat others the way I wanted to be treated and carried out that value to the fullest extent.

These nice guy habits of mine almost always worked against me, but it wasn’t until I got older that I really started to notice. As I neared adulthood, I began to see that people were taking advantage of me. I maintained my kindness, because I was happy so long as I was doing what I believed was right—but as my friends started to act less like friends while still taking from me, I began to rethink the extent to which I should carry out the values I was raised with.

I could feel people distancing themselves from me and caring less about my well-being. In an effort to be more well-accepted in my social circles and feel less isolated, I started cracking more jokes and developing a funnier personality. When I was around, people liked me because I was a funny guy. However, when I wasn’t around, no one seemed to care. No one

checked on me to see if I was doing okay. And, when I did get the chance to talk to someone over the phone, the conversation was often focused on them.

The funny thing about that is that a large part of me actually preferred it that way. When I wasn't around and they didn't reach out to me, I rationalized that it was okay because that meant more time for me to focus on my schoolwork. When we did get the chance to talk over the phone and they were talking about themselves, it was usually about some sort of drama they were experiencing in school and I saw this as an opportunity to help them. I knew that if I were in their shoes experiencing that same drama and I was in need of advice, I would want that help.

Then, there came a day when I was hospitalized after having my first near-death experience. I had just been diagnosed with kidney failure and had no idea what was happening to me. As I woke up from the large doses of morphine and oxycontin, my eyes opening slowly, I quickly grabbed my phone, gripping it tightly as waves of pain surged through my body. I eagerly checked if anyone had texted me but found that there were no new messages. Disappointed, I found myself in a world of confusion. I had been out of school for weeks fighting this illness. When I collapsed and was rushed to the hospital—laying on what could have easily been my deathbed—I expected at least one of my friends to have reached out to me, since they had not seen me in so long. And yet, there wasn't a single text, no missed calls, and seemingly no care at all from their side.

As grim as this experience may sound, luckily, another one of my values is not to judge someone else's choices when you don't understand their reasons. So, stupidly, I rationalized to myself that perhaps something had happened to their phones. I remained hopeful as I scanned their social media to search for answers as to why they had forgotten to check on their dear friend. Immediately, I understood. Their social media accounts were filled with pictures of them having a good time at parties and on my soccer team. I saw them enjoying themselves at the school basketball games and playing video games at their friend's houses.

Naturally, I was angry. I had nearly died, and nobody cared.

That day, I went from being a “nice guy” to being a bully. At the time, my number one need was acceptance, and it seemed like no matter what I did, I couldn't get it. I was already being abused at home by my family, so my friends were all I had—and now it seemed like I didn't have them either.

In the following weeks, people began to distance themselves from me without caring if I noticed. Even good guys have bad days, but they could immediately tell something deep inside me had changed. I was willing to hurt anyone, because I didn't care about my own life anymore.

I was hoping someone would see the emotional pain I was in and care about me for once. I was hoping someone would see the anger inside of my heart and be able to empathize with me. I was hoping that the person who understood me wouldn't judge me for who I'd

become, because they'd understand how I felt inside. I was hoping that they wouldn't judge my choices because they would understand my reasons. I was hoping that others would treat me the way I wanted to be treated.

I couldn't understand how it could be that I was a good person before and was alone, and now I was a bad person and was still alone. I had drawn the conclusion that the people I had called my "friends" were always fake, and that my sickness was all they needed to take their masks off. I was depressed, suicidal, and couldn't have cared less about whether I lived or died.

Eventually though, I had to face the fact that I didn't have it in me to commit suicide. I wished I did because to me that would have been the equivalent of a shortcut to heaven. Back then, I felt like life was a prison. You're not given a choice to be born in the world, but it's illegal to try to suicide your way out. You don't have a choice but to wake up and deal with all the cruel experiences life throws at you on a regular basis. You're stuck here until your time comes.

It was only after I realized that I wasn't ever actually going to commit suicide that I started to work on myself and see things a different way. I created goals for myself that forced me to improve, and I took steps outside of my unenthusiastic mindset.

I eventually started to feel like death would have been the real prison. Since I'm alive, I still have the choice to either kill myself or do something with my life. When I'm dead, there's no choice. There's no freedom. When you're alive, you have the option of death—but when you're dead, there is no option of life. That realization was the wake-up call I needed to start working harder on my goals. Luckily, my goals no longer involved death.

At the time, my ultimate goal was to make everyone feel bad for isolating me by getting rich. I knew that I needed a "socially impressive" achievement in order to gain their respect. In other words, I knew they'd care more about me if I pulled up to school in a sports car. It wasn't the most noble reason to go after my goals, but it kept me moving forward. And, with a little more spring in my step, I started to research money. I needed to get closer to my goals, and I needed money to do it.

I believed money was power. Later, I was taught that there are actually three forms of power in the world: resources, information, and weaponry. We all know how money works as a form of power, and we can all look back to the last world wars to know how weaponry works as power, but the idea that information could be a form of power was still cheesy to me. It felt like an attempt to sell me the idea that "knowledge is power." And, sure, it is. But, I also knew that knowledge alone doesn't put food on the table. (If it did, libraries would be treated like banks.)

Then, I saw the examples. The way that information was used as blackmail to gain power over other people. The way that information was used to make more money than the next guy in the stock market.

The “knowledge is power” concept was still cheesy to me at the time, so I didn’t take it too seriously back then. But, the examples were still interesting. So, out of curiosity, I started to dig more into the idea of power and what it really was. That’s when I discovered power dynamics. And, everything began to make sense.

Power dynamics, at its most simplistic, is the way in which power works in a given setting. Power is the measure to which an individual can get what they want. And, the word “dynamic” is synonymous with the word “process.” So, putting the two words together, “power dynamics” is the process by which an individual gets (or can get) what they want in a given setting.

My research of power dynamics taught me that power infuses all relationships. For example:

“In social psychology, the stereotype content model (SCM) is a model, first proposed in 2002, postulating that all group stereotypes and interpersonal impressions form along two dimensions: (1) warmth and (2) competence.” (“Stereotype Content Model,” 2011)¹

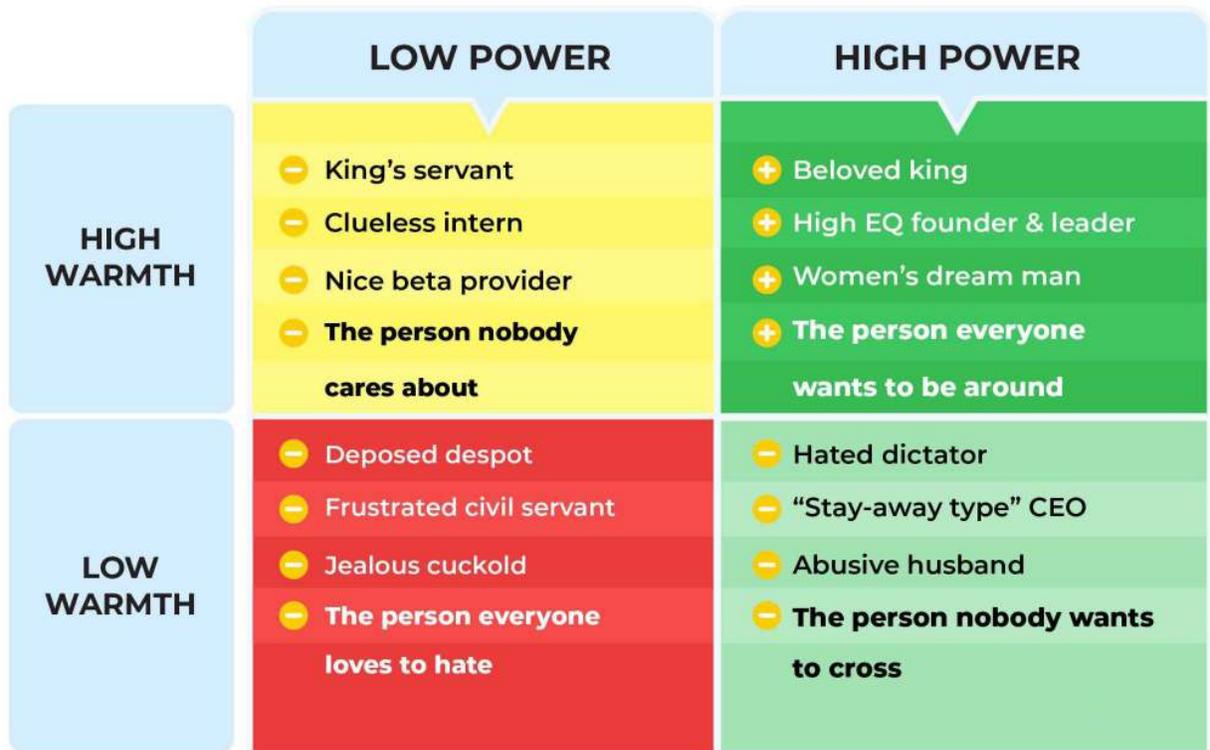
In other words, the stereotype content model suggests that groups and individuals assess each other along two dimensions:

1. **Warmth:** is he friend or foe?
2. **Power:** how powerful is he?

“The original research refers to ‘competence’ instead of power (Fiske et al., 2019). But, since ‘competence’ is defined as ‘the capacity to enact one’s intentions’, (Fiske et al., 2007) that’s basically also the definition of power.”

“The two axes form four quadrants. See it below with examples for each quadrant on the categories (1) politics, (2) work, and (3) relationships”(Buffalmano, 2021):

¹ Information and graph regarding the stereotype content model provided by sociologist Lucio Buffalmano. See References List section for more.



With this fascinating research, it all made sense why no one seemed to care about me. Even as a kid, I knew that if I were a multimillionaire or a celebrity people would immediately start caring about me, even though I would have been a human being before and after acquiring that wealth or status. It was almost as if being a fellow human being was not enough.

So, when I was a nice guy, I had high warmth but low power. I had high warmth because I was always willing to give. But, by being willing to give everything to anyone, everyone felt like they had power over me and therefore saw me as low-power (cracking so many jokes for group acceptance didn't help their image of my worth, either).

"For most non-powerful people, submission and high-warmness are signals to avoid confrontations. So we tend to associate very high levels of friendliness and submission with low-power." (Buffalmano, 2021) So, in my relationships, I was the person nobody cares about. The overly-friendly nice guy who finished last.

When I became frustrated and turned into a bully, I was high-power. I was capable of harming anyone with no regrets about the consequences, since I didn't care about my own life.

But, my aggression made me low-warmth. I became the person nobody wants to cross, and intimidated people into distancing themselves from me because of it.

So, with all of that said, I basically failed the social test created by the unwritten rules of social interactions. And, when I came to this realization, it was one of the biggest “Aha!” moments of my entire life.

I was able to clearly see the powerful impact of power dynamics in my social interactions (and social life as a whole). I saw, with total clarity, the conflicts between what I thought to be true based on the values I was taught as a child and the honest, true-to-life power dynamics that I was surrounded by, day in and day out.

I also learned that if your bracket changes, people will adjust their attitudes toward you accordingly. In other words, if you are high-power and high-warmth now, it’s unrealistic to think that if you suddenly become low-power everyone will still want to be around you. For example, if you were once a well-known celebrity and that’s now no longer the case, you can’t expect everyone to want a picture with you. You became low-power, so the attitudes of others changed.

Some of my high school classmates were high-warmth and considered high-power solely because they had a car, which was not common in these circles but highly desirable. One particular guy became low-power after his car broke down. People would still talk to him, but mainly to check if his car had been fixed yet. When his car was repaired, people began talking to him again normally as well as asking him for rides.

High school is a pretty judgemental environment and is different from college and the real world, so you may not run into situations as extreme as that, but the same dynamic occurs in life outside of school every day.

As you can see in the table, the highest bracket is clearly the high-warmth, high-power one in the top right. But, when you achieve that high-power and high-warmth bracket, just because everyone wants to be around you doesn't mean it's because everyone genuinely likes you. Your high-warmth personality and high-power success attract people like a magnet. Some of the people you attract will be haters, or even gold-diggers.

But, be that as it may, that doesn't change the "celebrity effect" high-power, high-warmth people have. That celebrity effect would open doors of opportunity that I wouldn't be able to open in any other bracket.

So, I continued my research. And, I started to notice opportunities to apply my newfound knowledge of power dynamics to the achievement of my goals. After all, if I could

become high-power and high-warmth, I could be the person everyone wants to be around. I could fix my social life.

I knew I could work on myself and become high-warmth again, but this time in a way that was more sensible, healthy, and self-respectful. I understood that I could create my own experience: if I looked and acted like an unapproachable bully, I would be treated like an unapproachable bully. So, all I had to do was to go back to liking people. Okay, cool. I can do that.

Becoming high-warmth again was easy compared to my next challenge. The real challenge was how to become high-power.

I concluded that I had to become high-value to become high-power. High-value means exactly what it sounds like: you have a high amount of value. You could have a high amount of value in terms of your looks, your status, your resources (such as lots of money and lots of powerful connections), and so on. So, if I gained a lot of value in certain areas, I could become high-power and mix it with high-warmth behavior to achieve the best bracket of the SCM mix. My plan was to start with acquiring value in the form of money, and then use that money to acquire status.

While that's certainly one way to go, I drew the conclusion that this was the right course of action for me far too soon. I learned one simple rule that changed everything for me.

I learned that perceptions are reality. To better illustrate this rule, let's take an example. Let's say that you're walking down the street and see a woman sitting down on a bench while waiting for her ride. You notice that she's wearing a wedding ring on the ring finger of her left hand. Most would assume she's married, but does that necessarily mean that's the reality? Does her wearing a wedding ring guarantee that she's married? There are plenty of attractive, unmarried women who wear wedding rings to keep from being approached by men throughout their day.

In another example, take the videos of millionaires "going undercover," posing as homeless people as part of a social experiment. They were perceived as homeless and were certainly treated like it because the perceptions became the reality, despite the truth being that they were well-off financially.

In other words, even if I only developed the *traits* of a high-value man—even if I only looked and acted the part—I would still be perceived as one. This would be true even if I wasn't actually high-value yet (in the sense that I wasn't a billionaire, for instance). I would be what is referred to as a "high-quality man" in power dynamics.

A high-quality man is a man with the traits that directly affect their personality (in a positive way) or, more or less indirectly, allow the individual to acquire important life assets

such as status, resources, mates, or friends. The following are the traits of a high-quality man (Buffalmano, 2018)²:

1. He is Emotionally Intelligent
 - **Self-awareness:** of one's own emotions, drives, personality, and passions
 - **Self-management:** deferring pleasure, staying power, and grit
 - **Social awareness:** of other people's emotions and social dynamics
 - **Relationship management:** building and managing positive relationships
2. He Has A Purpose
 - A man who has a purpose is a man who has a WHY (Buffalmano, 2017).
3. He Takes Care Of Himself
 - He eats well
 - He exercises
 - He keeps learning and investing in himself
4. He Has High Self-Esteem
 - Self-esteem is different from confidence (as you'll read more about later). Your level of confidence fluctuates depending on your results and skills in a given field (I could be confident in my cooking, for example, but not so much in drawing or painting). Self-esteem, however, stays regardless of those external circumstances.
5. He Generates His Own Self-Esteem
 - Some people depend on external forces in order to boost their egos and self-esteem. But, high-quality men have more personal control over their self-esteem.
6. He Has A Secure Attachment Style
 - When a man has a secure attachment style he is emotionally mature. He is also comfortable being vulnerable. Vulnerability ensures that
 - a. **He is genuine:** you get to know the real him; he's not wearing any masks
 - b. **He is more honest:** he has less need for lies because he has no need to cover his shortcomings
 - c. **He is not abusive:** he doesn't need to "prove" his masculinity
7. He Knows Power Dynamics
 - Power moves can be used for good but are, unfortunately, commonly used to sneakily sub-communicate who's top dog in the interaction and unfairly assert dominance over the other person or environment. High-quality men know power dynamics so they can understand the games being played, what's fair and what's not, what's friendly and

² Information regarding the traits of a high-quality man provided by sociologist Lucio Buffalmano. See References List section for more.

what's rude, and what they will and will not take. They will then enforce their boundaries accordingly.

8. He Is Honest To His Own Value System

- High-quality men listen to the advice, feedback, and information of others, but ultimately they build their own value system and have their own moral compass.

9. He Has A Growth Mindset

- As explained in the introduction, people with a **fixed mindset** believe that their qualities are set at birth and carved in stone. You are who you are, and there isn't much you can do about it. People with a **growth mindset**, however, believe they can learn and grow. They *seek out* learning and growth opportunities because failing does not define them. On the contrary, they understand that failing is the best way they can improve.

10. He Takes Responsibility

- To put this another way, he has an internal locus of control. The locus of control is the degree to which people believe that they have—or don't have—control over their life. If you have an **internal locus of control**, that means you believe you are in control of your life. Men with an **external locus of control** believe life events determine the course of their life and that they don't have control over them.

All of these traits are conducive to a man's ability to acquire resources in life and become (and remain) high-value. These traits also impact your personality, so when you have these traits it shows. Other people see these high-quality traits and perceive you as being high-value. When people perceive you as high-value, they perceive you as high-power. If you're high-warmth when people perceive you as high-power, you'll be "the person everyone wants to be around" and have a much higher success rate in reaching your goals, because everyone will want to have you in their social life. "Everyone" includes powerful people. People will want to network with you, and some of those people will already be high-power themselves.

I hope I'm stating the obvious here, but a higher success rate in networking means you get higher-value connections, which increases *your* value since they are now one of your resources. (To put this another way, your value goes up in the eyes of others when you can name-drop millionaire, billionaire, and celebrity friends.) But, it all starts with becoming a high-quality individual.

This is what I didn't understand at first. Even when I came to the realization that there were more forms of power than only money, I was still missing a large part of the point. The three forms of power in the world are not information, weaponry, and money, but information, weaponry, and resources. "Resources" include money and connections.

To dive a little deeper on this point, there's no telling what you could do with a billionaire for a dad. That's a connection that boosts your value and your power even if you're only

connected because you're family. That's still a connection, and you're therefore high-power because of it. If you're not building your connections to grow your power and you are only focusing on money, you're only doing a third of what you could be doing to empower yourself to achieve your goals faster and more effectively. You're using the power of money, but forgetting the power of connections and information.

Most of us don't have billionaires for parents, so boosting our personal power and value through gaining connections starts with boosting the way we are perceived by the people that we want to connect with. Let's go a little deeper on how this works and how you can leverage the fact that perceptions are reality.

"You choose the statement you make to the world with your attitude and appearance. When you choose that statement, you choose how the world will respond to you. If you don't like the way people treat you, you can change that by changing the statement you make to them." (McGraw, 2001)

What statement are you making to the world right now, with how you carry yourself? If you act like a bully, people will treat you like a bully. If you don't want to be treated like a bully, stop acting like one.

The same logic applies to acting like a high-value individual. The first time I glanced at the list of traits that I would have to develop to be considered a high-quality man, I saw that I had my work cut out for me. It was at that point that I truly had to accept that life is not cured: it's managed. I questioned why I was treated the way I was for so long, hoping the answer would bring me peace. But, eventually, I had to accept that regardless of what that answer was, I wasn't going to be able to cure my pain with only one answer, anyway. There is no cure. There is only growth.

To better illustrate this resolution, think of passion. Many people go through life hoping to find their passion by trying different things. Hoping to eventually stumble upon that one thing that will make them happy forever. Some even hold the belief that once you find something you are truly passionate about, you have found something that you can do everyday without *ever* encountering feelings of boredom or tiredness.

While I'd like that to be true, the reality is that your lack of passion and happiness is not "cured" by finding that one thing you've been missing. Passions and happiness are not found; they're developed over time.

In that same respect, I could not be cured—I could only be developed over time. You are the manager of your own life, and none of us are born good managers because good management is an acquired skill. So, high-quality traits will help you acquire the management skills that you need to manage your life in a way that brings you a major step closer to "the good life" of health, wealth, love, and happiness.

This information on power dynamics is not common knowledge, so to avoid confusion, keep in mind that high-quality men and high-value men are not exactly the same. While they're similar, the two terms are not interchangeable.

A high-quality man is, in many ways, a high-value man. But, a high-value man is not always a high-quality man. This is because if a high-value man—a man with actual money, connections, and status—does not have any of the traits of a high-quality man, people will have a hard time perceiving him as high-value in the first place.

Imagine a scenario where, at a networking event, you notice a high-value man and a high-quality man speaking with each other. The high-quality man has good posture, his head held high, he smiles warmly, and has a very charming energy about him. He commands respect and elicits positive feelings from everyone with his very presence.

As you glance over to the high-value man, you assume he's high-value because he's wearing an expensive watch, but as he speaks to the high-quality man you notice that he can't maintain eye contact. He insecurely glances down with his back hunched and arms crossed defensively. He seems unapproachable, somewhat cold blooded, and seems to be an all-around rude and disrespectful person. (You can't imagine why this high-quality man would want to talk to someone so clearly ill-mannered and impolite.)

The nonverbal expressions (body language) of the high-quality man are ones of leadership and power. He's clearly a dominant man as you notice his more expansive body language. The high-value man, on the other hand, submissively makes himself smaller and smaller throughout the conversation.

Now, keep in mind that perceptions are reality. If these two men are complete strangers to you, you may assume that the high-quality man is actually more successful. From the outside looking in, there is no obvious indication that the high-value man contains any of the traits or qualities needed to acquire impressive resources. So, it wouldn't make sense to assume he has any.

People aren't walking around with their net worth written on their foreheads, so the ones who are perceived as high-power are the ones who carry themselves as if they are. Regardless of what your status or income is, if you dress, walk, talk, and act like a millionaire, people will perceive you as one. And, conversely, if you dress, walk, talk, and act like a homeless person, people will perceive you as one. How you present yourself to others is all they will have to go by as an indicator of your success—unless you share your net worth with everyone you meet.

Now, on the other hand, even if you somehow knew that the high-value man was a multimillionaire, his unlikable, unattractive, and displeasing personality gives you the knee-jerk reaction to talk with the high-quality man instead.

Since power is merely the extent to which you can attain what you want, if someone approaches that high-quality man and presents him with an opportunity, then he will have

gained an opportunity due to his skilled presentation of his traits as a high-quality man. That means that he has a form of power that hard skills can't give you: social power.

This is where “in order to ‘have’ you must ‘do’ and in order to ‘do’ you must be” comes into play. The high-value man skipped the “be” (becoming a high-quality man) and went straight into doing (making money) so he could have (the expensive watch). It's only by deciding to first “be” that you can gain success that lasts and power that doesn't rely on your financial situation or status. In this way, you can achieve social power and create opportunities where others can't.

When people think of power, they only think about high-value men using their money or status to attain what they want, but high-quality men know power dynamics. They know the rules to the game of life. They understand that the world works as a system, and they leverage that system into an ethical advantage that boosts their power over everyone who doesn't know the rules to the game.

As an analogy, we could say that you are the product. You are selling yourself every time you network and look to build a relationship with someone new. The way you present yourself to the world is the marketing. The clothes you wear, the way you talk, walk, move, act, and carry yourself all determine whether or not people will want to buy—whether or not others will want to build a relationship with you. High-quality men market themselves as what is arguably the most valuable product in the networking world: high-value (high-power) men.

And, unfortunately, the high-value men who don't bother to work on their marketing at all and, as a result, look low-value (low-power) lose out on those opportunities. The very same opportunities that go straight to the high-quality men who were prepared because no one knows how good a product is until they actually experience using it. And, no one wants to buy a product that, because of bad marketing, looks like it could be a bad experience. So, naturally, they go for the people with the best marketing. (We'll talk more about how you can improve your marketing—regardless of where you are in life—a little later.)

Now, with all of that said, if people are disappointed when they buy a product, they will return it. In other words, if you lie about being a high-value man through unethical means—such as buying jewelry that is fake gold—when people realize you are not nearly as successful as you claim to be they'll either stop wanting to connect with you or they will continue conversations with you to be polite but treat you less like an equal and more like a fan. You'll have signaled to them that, in reality, you're low-power. You will have also communicated to them that you are dishonest—which we could say is low-warmth, since it's not a very kind or friendly thing to do.

Acquiring the traits of a high-quality individual will increase your value and power in real ways, no different from the real effect that removing filler words from your speech pattern has on increasing your verbal influence. (People who avoid using filler words sound more like they know and believe in what they're talking about.)

So, you'll appear higher-power in your social interactions, increasing your ability to attain what you want in life. When you are high-power, you're much harder to ignore. When you're high-power, people feel like they can gain more from a relationship with you and they become more willing to join your network.

As you become a higher-quality person and better at networking, the principle of authority will also come into play. "The principle of authority says we are (much) more likely to listen to someone when we perceive them as having authority." (Buffalmano, 2017) When you are a high-quality individual who automatically carries themselves as a high-value individual, people perceive you as having authority. For comparison, in a most extreme situation, a person is more likely to listen to a high-quality man for tips on how to make money than a homeless man with low self-esteem, no purpose, and no personality who doesn't take care of himself.

This was initially a philosophical misunderstanding for me, but it suddenly seemed more like common sense after learning about the power dynamics of my everyday interactions.

Another value I was raised with was to judge people not based on their looks, but based on the content of their character. Maybe that sounds familiar to you as well. As a kid, it didn't make much sense to me to base someone's (possible) knowledge on their worth, looks, age, or success. Wisdom is wisdom. It's not as if the wisdom of saving money is only reserved for people with a net worth of ten million dollars. There are plenty of individuals with an average income who understand how to put away ten percent of their salary each month and can share that knowledge with other people.

Wisdom can also be found in books. It's not like books on personal finance analyze your net worth and then shut automatically with a sign popping out of the cover that says, "You're not worthy of this wisdom." Anyone can receive wisdom, so anyone can share it. So why judge people's wisdom based on how they dress or how they talk? Growing up, I always thought that looks shouldn't matter, because how good you look doesn't affect how much you know.

However, upon learning the principle of authority, it made sense to me why people would ignore the advice of some while acknowledging the advice of others.

I watched an interview with an eight-figure millionaire interviewing a billionaire. The interview was about making money and was intended to give value to its viewers by teaching some rules and basic principles of wealth building. As I scrolled through the comments section of that video, I saw a flood of comments claiming that the millionaire was talking too much.

I didn't understand how they could be so ungrateful when I could safely assume that very few of them even had one million and yet, here they were complaining that an eight figure millionaire was talking too much (giving too much advice). The comment that was repeated over and over again was that they wanted to hear more of what the billionaire had to say. The billionaire had a higher net worth, he was higher value, and so he had more authority in the field

of building wealth. Therefore, they wanted to listen to him more, because people want to listen to the people that they believe have more authority.

As a high-quality person, people perceive you as being high-value. When they perceive you as high-value, you gain a little authority and they are more open to listening to what you have to say. This helps you with your networking, but only if you're willing to leverage the added power that comes with being (and becoming) a high-quality individual.

In summary, there is power in information and, therefore, power in this book. In society, the form of power that is most respected and appreciated is resources. You can acquire resources faster by becoming a higher-quality individual because you'll be perceived as a higher-power person with more value to share and get access to the opportunities reserved for those who leverage social connection (as long as you mix that high-power with high-warmth). With the acquisition of those resources comes success, which will continue to naturally grow your value and power over time—as long as you follow the rules to the game.

This strategy of becoming a high-quality individual for better networking success works for women as well since the main high-quality traits for networking success are emotional intelligence, social intelligence, and knowing power dynamics.

Still, for those women out there reading this who want to go even further, here are the twelve traits of a high-quality woman (Buffalmano, 2018)³:

1. She Is Feminine
 - “A high-value woman doesn't necessarily need to be attractive. It's a big advantage, but it's not a necessary precondition. The great news for women who are willing to work on themselves is that more and more women are losing touch with their femininity which presents a great opportunity for high-quality women. They will stand out more and reap more rewards.”
2. She Takes Care of Her Appearance
 - “...there certainly is a strong relationship between how much you care about yourself and how much you care about...pretty much everything else. And, caring is a sign of quality, with caring about yourself being one of the first and major indicators of overall caring. Women who care about themselves are more likely to care about their career, their family, their goals, and, eventually, their children. Remember the rule of thumb: the more you care about yourself, the more valuable you appear, and the more people will value you and care about you.”
3. She Takes Care of Her Health
 - “Similar to the above, but addressing her body. She takes care of the food she eats (no fast food, no adding kilos of sauce and salt), drinks (avoids pops and colas), and exercising. Overall, she keeps her body running smoothly.

³ Information regarding the traits of a high-quality woman provided by sociologist Lucio Buffalmano. See References List section for more.

4. She Cares About People
 - “Simon Sinek says that high-quality leaders care about the people they lead. That much is true. And, women certainly do the same. Albeit in a different fashion than men...[women] let people know they’re happy to see them. Maybe a slight touch on their arm, a warm smile, a comforting word. Or, a simple ‘well done, I’m so happy for you’.”
5. She Is Emotionally Stable
 - A high-value woman is expected to:
 - a. Be relatively secure of herself and of her own worth
 - b. Not make public drama
 - c. Not be excessively anxious
 - d. Not behave in wild mood swings (a sign of borderline personality)
 - e. Be generally positive and uplifting
 - “Emotionally stable doesn’t mean she doesn’t cry or that she never gets angry. It doesn’t even mean she can’t have a nervous breakdown or have bouts of slight depression and self-doubt. Those are normal parts of life and dealing with them openly is actually another sign of high value.” Emotionally stable simply means avoiding extreme overreactions to the emotions one feels.
6. She Has A Good Command of the English Language
 - “Language highly correlates with intelligence. But, it goes beyond communication skills and intelligence. It shows that she has read and taken care of her education. And, with English being the current lingua franca of the world, a great command of the language shows an openness to communicate with the world, and a drive to make herself heard in it.”
7. She Radiates Positivity and Lifts People Up
 - “‘Radiating positivity’ doesn’t mean ‘always happy’. That would be just silly. It simply means her baseline mood is slightly towards the positive side of the spectrum, and that she interfaces with the world with a smile instead of a growl. That conveys lots of positive quality.”
8. She Is Socially Skilled
 - “Great social skills are important for everyone. And, they are even more important for women. Women, on average, are more skilled than men at building social networks and we could argue that social skills for women have been a matter of survival strategy. It’s been observed among primates instead that females tend to further their interests—and that of their families and tribes—by building networks of alliances. And it’s not that different for humans. In a way indeed, we can say that the ability to effortlessly form friendships is a sign of femininity.”
 - These social skills include the basics:
 - a. Conversation
 - b. Making friends
 - c. Small talk
 - d. Getting to know others

- e. Bonding
 - This also includes advanced social skills:
 - a. Turning down a guy's advances without hurting his ego (keeping a friend)
 - b. Releasing tense social situations
 - c. Deflecting inappropriate comments without making enemies
9. She Plays Little Games
- "The issue of nasty games is that they are win-lose. And, dating with win-lose games starts win-lose relationships. This is not to say that high-quality women don't play any games at all. Quite the opposite. Games are part of the marketing package. What I'm truly referring to here are the *nasty* games. Instead, the high-quality woman deploys games that build people up and make others feel good. And, once in a relationship, she decreases the number of games because she knows that a relationship based on honesty and mutual support is superior to a relationship where she's constantly gaming her partner."
10. Knows When to Set Boundaries
- "The high-value woman is pleasant and welcoming, but she's not a pushover and knows when it's time to take a stand and defend her boundaries. If you're not holding your end of the relationship, she'll let you know that. When a boss is disrespectful to her, she knows how to demand the respect she deserves. Her rule of life is that she is not disrespectful to anyone, and people have no right to be disrespectful to her."
11. She Is Emotionally Intelligent
- Emotional intelligence is a vast topic, but it can be boiled down to:
 - a. Understanding and acting on other's emotions and needs
 - b. Understanding and acting on one's own emotions and needs
12. She Has A Growth Mindset (and Doesn't Take Things Personally)
- "I won't go into detail here, but a growth mindset as explained by Carol Dweck means that people believe they can get better instead of their traits being cast in stone forever. It might seem like a small detail, but it changes everything. People with a growth mindset are:
 - a. Resilient to criticism
 - b. Look for ways to improve
 - c. Enjoy challenges
 - d. Approach problems with a 'we can do it' attitude"

Some of you may feel like I am overestimating the power that acquiring the traits of a high-quality individual has on the way that others perceive and treat you. This is understandable, since the concept of power dynamics is not very well-known and is hardly ever taught in schools. As you progress through this book, you'll find further explanations and teachings as to how this process of becoming a high-quality person to achieve your goals works.

If you are already a high-quality person and currently have the power that comes with being high-warmth and high-power, but are still having trouble reaching your goals or getting to that next level, this book is also for you.

Just because everyone wants to be around you, doesn't mean that everyone is willing to do the heavy lifting for you. Not everyone you meet will do all of the relationship building for you, nor will they happily create your opportunities with no effort required on your end. The aim of this book is to fill that gap. The aim of this book is to empower you with the best information—the most effective tried-and-true networking strategies—coupled with a plan of action that will give you the ability to go out and get the opportunities you want. Follow the program I've laid out in this book and by the end, you'll wonder why you didn't start networking sooner.

Action Steps:

1. Remember when we talked about improving your marketing? It's time to start getting treated like a high-value individual! On one piece of paper, write down all of the traits and subset traits of a high-quality individual for your gender.
 - Ex: Emotional intelligence is a trait. Self-awareness is a subset trait.
2. Highlight all of the traits and subset traits you currently have.
 - Ex: In the high-quality man list, do you workout daily? If yes, highlight the "Exercise" subset trait underneath the "He Takes Care of Himself" trait.
 - Ex: In the high-quality woman list, do you take care of your appearance? Do you care for your personal hygiene, posture, and clothing? If yes, highlight the "She Takes Care of Her Appearance" trait.
3. On the second piece of paper, create a plan to develop each trait and subset trait that you're missing.
 - Replace your short-term willpower with a long-term program.
 - Ex: When I started out on my journey to becoming a high-quality man, I was lacking in social-awareness. So, a part of my plan to develop that subset trait was to invest in myself with a course that teaches how to read body language and social cues.