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These Days, a Common Connection Just Isn't Enough

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Although most of us will not soon forget the challenges that this recession has brought, I still have vivid memories of the recession of the early nineties, at which point I was still fresh from college and green in job skills. It was also during this time that I began searching for a new job...and quickly learned the ups and downs of networking—lessons that so many people are discovering for the first time today.

One of the fundamentals of networking and meeting new people is the notion of a common connection: you know one person, who in turn introduces you to another whom they know, either through work or some other association. But what if that connection isn't enough?

I recall one meeting long ago, when a friend in my church, Cyndi, suggested I call her boss, Bill, for a meeting. She had passed him my resume, and he told her it would be okay for me to call. So I did and we set up a visit.

When I met Bill, he was polite but not that outgoing. I visited him in his office where he had stacks of files all over the floor and his attention seemed to be elsewhere. He asked me a little about my work and I asked him about his, but I could see that this meeting was a dead end. Bill was not that keen to networking, and did not know me well enough to feel comfortable introducing me to his colleagues.

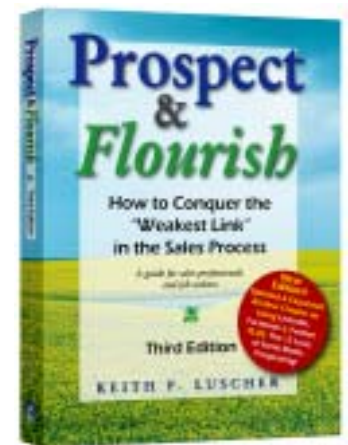
Nor did he seem to want to get to know me.

In fact, the cold truth was clear: Bill was meeting me for one reason: Cyndi asked him to. Our common connection was not enough to give that meeting any real purpose. Nor was I experienced enough to take it upon myself to *give Bill a reason to want to meet with me*, outside of forwarding him my resume.

But suppose I had such a reason. Perhaps on my resume was an accomplishment, such as streamlining a project management process that saved both time and money, and increased effectiveness—a suite of previous “employer benefits” in which Bill may have actually taken an interest? How might that meeting have gone then?

The truth is, when it comes to meeting new people, especially in these times, you don't always need a connection. What you need is a wedge. A wedge is a metaphor for creating influence through value. This approach begins with giving someone else a reason to want to meet with you. That is your task, especially in today's challenging economic climate.

Many of you have heard me talk about “wedging” your foot in the door...and today I am giving the eight step strategy a new name: **WedgePower**. For a 10-minute video crash course on the entire eight-step process, visit <http://www.WedgePower.com>.



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You don't need a connection. You need a Wedge.

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Keith F. Luscher, is author of the book **Prospect & Flourish**, and four other books. He is an insurance advisor with Principal Financial Group®. Prior to joining Principal®, he served professionals in the insurance and financial services industries as a management consultant. In that role, he advised producers on issues related to marketing and prospecting, and developed groundbreaking educational curriculum. In addition, Luscher is also a nationally known author, speaker, and expert in media, interpersonal communication and marketing.