

EXCERPT FROM NETWORK BEYOND BIAS
BY AMY C. WANINGER

NETWORK BEYOND BIAS

MAKING DIVERSITY A COMPETITIVE
ADVANTAGE FOR YOUR CAREER

AMY C. WANINGER

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Printed in the United States of America

First Printing, 2018

ISBN: 9781718681514 (paperback only)

ISBN: 9781684547548 (hardcover only)

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018906105

Lead at Any Level
Fishers, Indiana
www.LeadAtAnyLevel.com



Ordering Information:

Quantity sales. Special discounts are available on quantity purchases by corporations, associations, and others who purchase directly from the publisher. Contact info@LeadAtAnyLevel.com for details.

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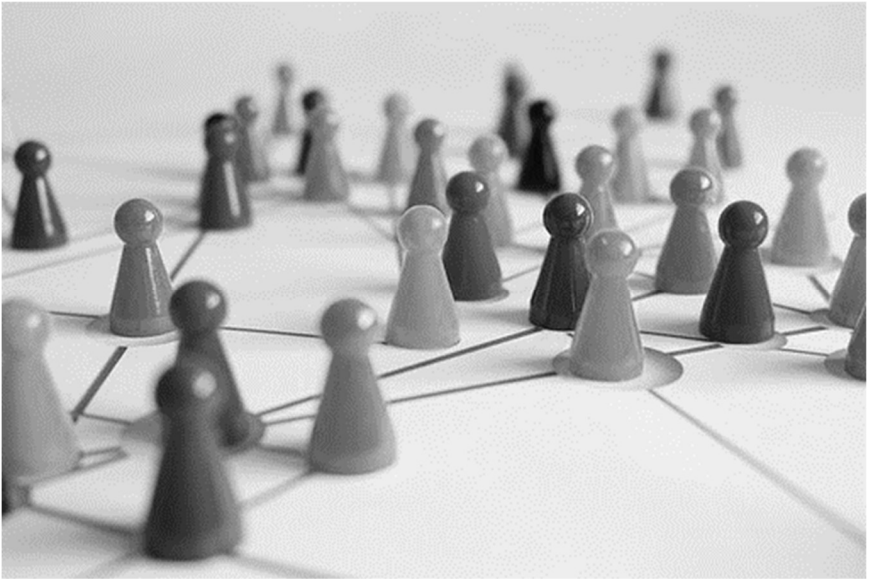
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PART TWO: PUTTING THE WORK INTO NETWORKING



CHAPTER 7. EFFECTIVE NETWORKING IS A SUPER POWER

The old question for success was “What do you know?” In the information age, though, we all have access to Google. Knowledge has become a commodity and is taken for granted. What you should be asking yourself instead is “What can you *do*, and *who* do you know?” In our global, social media-driven, freelancing economy, it has never been easier to get to know a wide variety of people.

network, *verb*, to cultivate professional relationships in a way that is mutually beneficial, creative, and expansive

WHAT NETWORKING IS...AND ISN'T

Networking, in many people's minds, involves some sort of smarmy, schmoozy, fast-talking fakery. Nothing could be farther from the truth! Real networking means understanding what people want or need, building trust broadly, and brokering relationships where everyone wins. For example, imagine you worked with Samir five years ago. He has since been promoted to management and is opening a new branch office in your hometown. You anticipate that Samir will need to hire a receptionist, a couple of sales agents, and an accountant. You introduce Samir to your childhood friend,

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Fatima, who just became a CPA. Now Samir is one step closer to reaching his goals, Fatima is on her way to full employment, and you are fondly regarded as the catalyst of their meeting.

MAKE YOURSELF VALUABLE, EVERYWHERE YOU GO

At one point in my career, I began describing my job as “Professional Networker.” My job title was much less descriptive and had to do with managing data. But my *real* job was to connect people who had very specific questions about the inner workings of a business to people who had the detailed, if incomplete, answers that they had forgotten years ago. Sometimes I could make that happen with one phone call or email. Most of the time, though, it involved tracking down numerous false leads, analyzing org charts, sifting through documentation, and getting creative with my questions. A colleague once told me that his team referred to me as a superhero because I was able to help them so consistently.

It took me a while to recognize my role as a Professional Networker. But once I came to the realization that I had this ability, I started to see how I could apply it in other contexts. By expanding my network, I began to synthesize information across disciplines and industries. I was better poised to connect more people to each other and to new ideas. By getting out of my cubicle, I found new answers

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to “What can you do, and who do you know?” As a result, I’ve created new opportunities for myself and others.

And you can, too.

EVEN IF YOU’RE NEW TO THE WORKFORCE...

Even with no professional experience, you can make great things happen for people in your network. Listen to them and ask open-ended questions. Once you understand what kinds of problems people are working on or what they’re interested in, send them occasional links to articles or blog posts on those topics.

...AND ESPECIALLY IN THE GIG ECONOMY

Networking in the freelancing space, or gig economy, saves time and money. Morgan, your blogger friend, might need an infographic for some cornerstone content. Your coworker Shae has a side hustle as a graphic designer and will do a great job. Your recommendation can help Morgan sift through the noise of a million freelance options to find Shae’s storefront. Their small transaction via Fiverr or 99Designs, for example, can lead to a long-term relationship and more lucrative contracts. When you connect gig workers, you are introducing people for low-risk interactions, because there is relatively little money involved. They will build trust with one another over time, meaning you need to lend very little credibility to the initial exchange.

EARLY PRAISE FOR NETWORK BEYOND BIAS

“With lots of personal stories and concrete tips, Amy sheds a new light on the crucial topic of professional networking. She empowers us to see our blind spots and behave differently as she explores networking from an inclusion and diversity perspective. A great read to expand our networks and increase our chances of success in today’s world.” – **Thais Compont, Top Global Inclusive Leadership Specialist, CEO of Déclic International**

“Innovative and compelling, Amy C. Waninger provides a hard-hitting and practical approach to diversity and inclusion. Leaders and managers in every industry who are serious about moving the dial on diversity at all levels need to understand how purposeful networking can change the view at the top. Networking behaviors impact relationship diversity and ultimately reveal the important role we can individually play to lead at any level in our organizations.” – **David G. Smith, PhD, Co-author of *Athena Rising: How and Why Men Should Mentor Women***

“Your work is unique. Beyond stating the theories regarding ‘isms,’ you’re doing something about the diversity problem in business. I’ve read your words. I’ve heard your public voice. I’m excited. Keep pushing. It’s what the world needs.” – **Joynicole Martinez, DHSc, Founder and CEO of the Alchemist Agency**

*“Amy offers the reader clear and concise guidance that has the potential to move the diversity conversation from simply a corporate concept to a transformative way of being.” – Tina Alexis Allen, Author of **Hiding Out** and Actor on **Outsiders***

“I have the privilege of knowing Amy both professionally and personally and know firsthand that she walks the walk, not just talks the talk in being an inclusive, culturally sensitive ally. Her book is not just academic theory, but is also based on lived experience. I believe it will make a great impact on the thought processes and hopefully the behavior of people who want to do the right thing in developing more diverse professional and personal networks, but don’t know how or where to start.” – Sabrina W. Bristo, MSW, Human Services and Cultural Diversity Specialist

*“In Network Beyond Bias, author Amy C. Waninger has written a book that sets the new standard for professional networking. As I completed my CHAMP matrix, I realized it’s one thing to be aware of our biases, it is quite another to be intentional about overcoming them. Whether you a ‘pro’ at networking, or you are looking for ways to improve your networking, this book will blow you away!” – Jeff Ton, Technology Executive and **Forbes** Contributing Author*

“‘Who is missing from my professional network?’ It’s a question I had never considered until reading Amy C. Waninger’s groundbreaking and eye-opening book. But it’s a question that gets to the heart of who I am — professionally and personally — and how my own biases might be standing in my way of helping others, growing my company, and even catapulting my own career beyond my current aspirations and (self-inflicted) limitations. Network Beyond Bias is a book whose time has come — a book that will improve teams, open doors, broaden careers, and bring a healthy dose of strategy, humanity, and perspective to the way readers think about the work they do, the hands they shake, and the success they achieve. Bravo to Amy C. Waninger for writing a book that’s not just ‘beyond bias’ but also beyond our greatest expectations for how a book on diversity and inclusion can be as inspiring as it is practical.” — **Kate Colbert, Founder & President, Silver Tree Communications and Silver Tree Publishing; Author of *Think Like a Marketer: How a Shift in Mindset Can Change Everything for Your Business***

“A pragmatic insight into unconscious bias and the power of networks. A must-read for any executive who genuinely wants to capitalise on the benefits of inclusivity.” – **Gamiel Yafai, Author of *Demystifying Diversity***

“Navigating your truth has never been more important and more challenging. In Network Beyond Bias, Amy C. Waninger shows you that there are spaces beyond personal prejudices that shine with shimmering solidarity, and she brings the diversity of these dimensions to new light with graceful determination and uncompromising devotion. The book is a pleasure to read and a must-have resource for business and academic professionals who are facilitating mindful communication with others in troubled times!” – **José I. Rodríguez, Ph.D., Professor of Communication Studies, Long Beach State, and author of *Interpersonal Communication for Contemporary Living***

“With her new book Networking Beyond Bias, Amy C. Waninger offers a new perspective on expanding our networks that’s useful and practical for the most junior employee right up the ladder to the executive suite. Her advice and examples are real and actionable, and will make you wonder how you didn’t recognize your network blind spots before. Even those of us for whom diversity and inclusion is top of mind can benefit from Amy’s approach which is generous and forgiving while still reinforcing the urgent need to diversify our viewpoints, connections and partnerships.” – **Janet Whalen, Co-Active Career Coach for women at BeAmbitiousForHer.com, and host of the *She Breaks The Mold* podcast**

"I don't think we can ever talk enough about uncovering unconscious bias, effective networking, and working toward greater inclusion. In this book, Amy uses personal examples and simple language to continue the dialogue and get us into action. If you do nothing else, be sure to complete the networking exercise in Chapter 32. This unique approach will uncover gaps in your network that you never knew existed." – **Natalie Siston, Founder, Small Town Leadership**

"I would highly recommend Amy C. Waninger's book, Network Beyond Bias: Making Diversity a Competitive Advantage in Your Career. The book does a super job of integrating the importance of diversity and inclusion with the "who's and how's" of networking. The premise is by having a diverse group of connections it expands possibilities and offers more innovative ideas. Amy drives home the power of a diverse network and offers suggestions to overcome perceived barriers when getting to know individuals who may be different from oneself. The book is an easy read and is filled with useful information including a tool to assess and measure the diversity of an individual's network. Real scenarios of diverse challenges provide the reader the opportunity to explore a variety of perspectives. The content included in the chapter, Seek Diverse Perspectives on Purpose, covers important facts about some of the most challenging and timely dimensions of diversity and inclusion. Because Amy shares some personal information and challenges she has experienced, after reading her book, I was left with the feeling of having a good sense of who she is and the value of what she brings to the field of diversity and inclusion." – **Jonamay Lambert, Founder and President, Jonamay Lambert & Associates, Diversity & Inclusion Expert**

MY INVITATION TO YOU

I started Lead at Any Level, LLC to help busy professionals build skills in leadership, diversity and inclusion, and career management. My presentations, training sessions, and coaching programs include original insights and content you won't find anywhere else. I want to help companies find and develop their "hidden" leaders, transform their workforce demographics, and accelerate organic growth through well-connected, emotionally intelligent employees. Together, we can set the stage for tomorrow's leaders to be more inclusive, and we can start right now!

Are you on a mission? Do our interests and goals overlap? Let's get acquainted and learn how we can help each other!

- <http://www.LeadAtAnyLevel.com>
- <http://LinkedIn.com/in/AmyCWaninger>

We have so much work to do. Use your gifts to their fullest. Help others do the same. All hands on deck!

