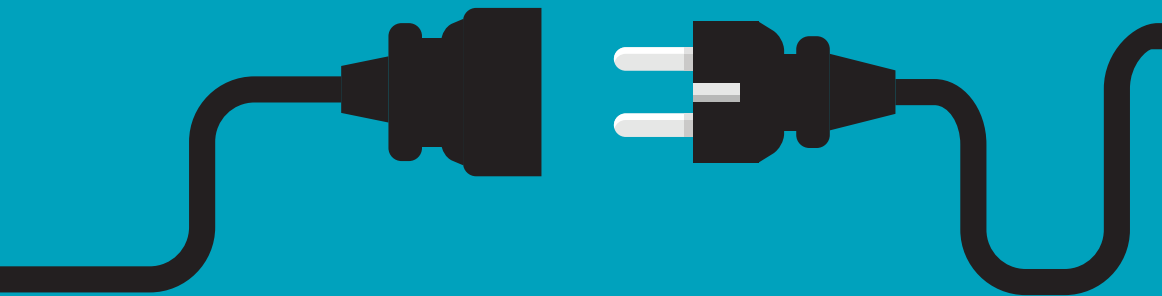




Ready CONNECT GROW

A large, white, stylized arrow pointing upwards and to the right, positioned behind the word "GROW".

Grow Your Business Through the
Power of Your Connections



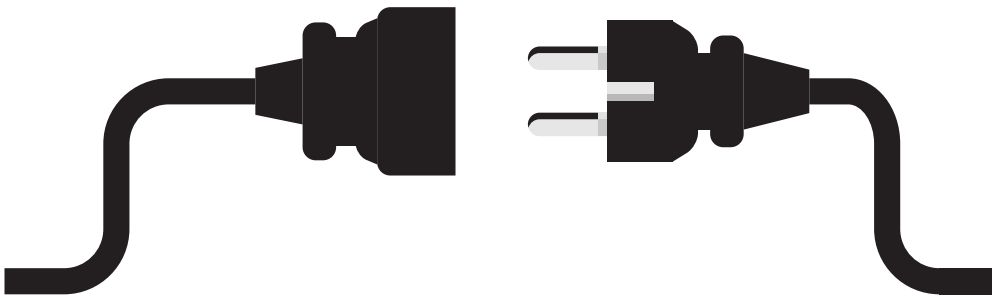
COMPILED BY

Connie Whitman

Ready CONNECT GROW



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Connie Whitman

End of Day Press

Published by End of Day Press, Middletown, New Jersey

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Editor: L. Carol Scott

Cover and Interior design: Davis Creative Publishing Partners,
CreativePublishingPartners.com

Names: Whitman, Connie, author.

Title: Ready connect grow : grow your business through the power of your connections /
compiled by Connie Whitman.

Description: Middletown, New Jersey : End of Day Press, [2023]

Identifiers: ISBN: 978-1-7352561-2-2 (paperback) | 978-1-7352561-3-9 (ebook) |
LCCN: 2023901267

Subjects: LCSH: Business networks--Anecdotes. | Strategic alliances (Business)--
Anecdotes. | Entrepreneurship--Anecdotes. | Businesspeople--Anecdotes. | Success
in business-- Anecdotes. | LCGFT: Anecdotes. | BISAC: BUSINESS & ECONOMICS /
Development / General. | BUSINESS & ECONOMICS / Entrepreneurship. | BUSINESS
& ECONOMICS / Leadership.

Classification: LCC: HD69.S8 R43 2023 | DDC: 650.13--dc23

I dedicate this book to my clients
who have taught me how important it is
to listen, understand, and love while
providing solutions to improve their lives.

— Connie —

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Foreword

Hope and Community

“Succeeding in business is all about making connections!”

— *Sir Richard Branson*

I first met Connie Whitman in 2019 when we helped her publish her book, *ESP – Easy Sales Process*. I saw how much of a positive influence and motivational magnet she is for her clients. I then watched as she more closely realigned her business and offered additional support to her clients as the world changed.

It was during this time of global change that a university study asked, “What do you feel you have lost or miss the most during the pandemic?” Two answers quickly rose to the top of the list—“Hope,” and “Community.” Hope is what gives us the energy to get out of bed in the morning. Hope becomes the fuel needed to keep moving forward. Our community grounds us and keeps us connected to our passion, our purpose, and our roots.

We live in a world full of amazing people and incredible opportunities. I consider Connie to be one of those amazing people, who creates those incredible opportunities for the people around her, by offering hope and community.

Connie has been espousing the “**Ready, Connect, Grow**” mantra for as long as I’ve known her!

READY?

One thing about entrepreneurs and small business owners: the great ones learn to adapt as needed. As we learned to navigate the past few years, each step we took was new. We saw Connie spread her wings and start a podcast offering interviews with people who could help you grow your business — not just one but TWO podcasts!

CONNECT!

Connie's community of connections has been a lifeline for SO many. Those who know her know that she often fills your inbox with introductions to people you MUST meet, which means she is also introducing YOU to her vast community, giving you instant credibility!

Studies show that we each know at least 2500 people through family, colleagues, and social media. The trick is to reach out, ask for a digital coffee break, and get to know each other as new referral partners. Random connections are great, but it's up to us to create INTENTIONAL connections!

GROW!

Lately, I've been hearing the big "R" word start to creep into conversations and news feeds—you know—RECESSION. But I've also noticed that the root word of this rather long dictionary entry is "RECESS!"

We're only in RECESS, folks! NOW is not the time to be hiding.

Now IS the time to play with some new ideas about growing your business!

"... many of the world's greatest companies were built during recessionary times. Some experts say that economic downturns can present the best opportunities for growing a business while others are retreating."

—Forbes Magazine (7/7/2022)

If you're not quite sure how to take advantage of this recess ... Reach out to Connie at <https://linktr.ee/conniewhitman>.

She knows her stuff, can definitely offer hope and community, and can get you moving in the right direction.

Hope to see you on the playground!

Cathy L. Davis
CEO, Publishing Consultant
Creative Publishing Partners
<https://linktr.ee/cathyldavis>



Mary Nunaley

Find Your Keys to Business Success

Have you ever felt the urge to do something extreme, something that made your friends and family shake their heads in wonder? Perhaps it was hiking the Appalachian Trail, or cruising around the world ... or maybe starting your own business? That urge to start my own business nagged at me for years, until I finally decided the time was right to go out on a limb, walk away from corporate life, and see what I could do on my own. Little did I know how this decision would change my life and the life of my family.

The backstory is I've always colored outside the lines, but I also like structure and stability. As a single mom working full time, homeschooling, and raising two athletes, structure was key for the family to succeed. Yet I was also willing to be a bit different—clearly, because working full time and homeschooling is definitely not the norm! Fast-forward several years and I had raised two capable humans, one of whom is my business partner. To succeed in this endeavor took creativity, tenacity, and a willingness to accept help from others.

Can you recall a time in your life when it looked like everything was going to pieces, and yet you came through stronger than you believed possible? What characteristics helped you get through that time? To manage my stressful situation, I grounded myself by developing five key practices. These practices served me so well that I continue to apply them.

As my life changes, I revisit these keys in order to adjust them. I've also discovered that I need to *intentionally* recall them, especially when life gets stressful. They affirm my capabilities and reassure me my goals are possible.

To clarify, your “keys” do not need to be the same as mine, nor is five a “magic number.” I share mine here as an illustration, not a set-in-stone universal method.

1. Be Flexible. Yes, have a plan, expectations, and a clear target, but be prepared to change how you get there or adjust where *there* is. I have found that determination is not well served by unwillingness to alter the original game plan.
2. Find Support. Challenging situations are always less daunting when you don't have to face them alone. Also, colleagues and friends offer a fresh perspective on specific problems. This key is so helpful that I proactively seek out organizations and individuals with the skills and personalities that can support a specific project.
3. Take Downtime. It seems counterintuitive, when time is so precious, to literally stop working and do something “nonproductive.” Yet there is wisdom in R & R. My mind works on the problem in the “background” while I'm giving myself a break. I crochet, read, play a game, or watch a reality show, returning refreshed and with a better attitude.
4. Use Routines. I developed a morning routine to start each day—a personal ritual. It's simple and easy: I rise, shower, and make myself a cup of tea, all before emails, phone calls, or meetings. I start the day in a comfortable, accomplishable way, with a little self-care.
5. Lighten Up. I don't take things too seriously. I appreciate the gravity of the situation without making it apocalyptic. I poke a little fun at myself, instead of beating myself up. Not being afraid to be the clown does wonders, and when I'm stressed I go for the laugh.

I offer my keys as something that worked for me. Hopefully they inspire you to tailor your own set of keys to unlock and open productivity doors for yourself too.

Looking back on 2018, the year I started my business, I planned to freelance and pick up jobs that excited me. Then came a plot twist—my son quit his job and said, “Mom, I want to join the family business.” My first thought was, “What family business?” Quickly followed by, “OK, let’s figure out how we are going to do this.” Both of us had a lot to learn in a very short period of time, and there were days when I wondered if we were going to make it. Thank goodness for contract positions and getting hired to write slogans for T-shirts in bulk! Certainly, this line of business was not quite what I had trained to do, but my Be Flexible key led to learning new skills.

2019 arrived, and our work had paid off. We’d added several new clients and had projects that excited us. We were able to take chances and work with some folks to help teach them marketable skills while completing projects. We had an amazing year and were on track to break some records in 2020. Of course, we’d only been in business for two years, but still we had high hopes of succeeding.

We entered 2020 with enthusiasm, new projects, clients who were pleased by our work, and plans for expanding the business, attending conferences, and more networking. March 2020 arrived, and the bottom dropped out. Clients begin to call, apologizing and saying *you have done great work, but we’re cutting budgets and ...* Every project we had in the works stopped due to the global pandemic. We weren’t alone, but we sure *felt* alone. We had two choices: sink into despair or take action. We chose the latter.

As many friends and colleagues shared how they were cleaning their houses, binge-watching a plethora of shows, or just wondering what to do

with their time, we used this as a chance to reflect and reset—we did Take Downtime, but for the purpose of planning. It was time to Be Flexible and look at the business and see how we could not only weather this storm but also “future-proof” for whatever might lie ahead. My trusted keys opened the doors for new opportunities and future success.

We Built Support by attending networking meetings, which became virtual. I joined a few Facebook challenges that expanded my network and also taught me new skills. I also joined a virtual mastermind group of like-minded folks from India, Switzerland, and Vietnam, providing new points of view and new opportunities.

We Used Routines to build a weekly practice of professional development. This may seem an odd use of routine, but dedicating one day per week to mastering and learning new skills, software, or reading industry-related books has now become part of our culture. In order to stay fresh, it’s important to always be learning.

Using my keys to adjust how we thought and performed during a crisis turns out to have been one of the bright spots of my career. And my five keys really are all about networking, as different forms of building relationships. In turn, those relationships propagated opportunities for a business in crisis. Some entrepreneurs seem to have an inherent ability to connect with others and put them at ease. I am more of an introvert, so I used my keys to build relationships during this time of struggle.

Being Flexible and Lightening Up help me to listen better as I build relationships. No matter the relationship’s purpose, these keys communicate my presence, allow me to understand the other person, and lead me to our commonalities. When building new relationships, I Find Support when I truly engage and connect with a few contacts, sharing my similar ideas and concerns. While I convey my expertise, I also Lighten Up to be more personable. Showing myself as both relatable and professional also

eases my comfort level as an introvert. Using Routines helps me maintain good follow-ups and cultivate courteous communication. For example, I like the routine of taking good notes or recording meetings.

My five keys not only helped bring us through a business crisis but also continued expanding our networking right through that crisis. When you think about what your keys might be, I invite you to think about them as opening doors to relationships but also as opening doors to solutions to your biggest problems. What are your keys for success?



Mary Nunaley is certified by ATD (Association for Talent Development) as a Master Instructional Designer and award-winning course developer. She is also an ATD-certified eLearning developer. With her son, Amadeus, she started the Lavender Dragon Team to help small and medium businesses create engaging and interactive

online courses that put the fun back into learning. Mary brings a sense of playfulness and passion to everything she does, and is always asking, “Why is this happening and how can we improve it?” This attitude comes through in the work she does with her clients and the impact they are able to make with their audiences. Mary graduated with her Master’s in Education from Cal State East Bay and a Bachelor’s in History from DePaul University in Chicago.

Connect with Mary here.



Ready to grow your business?

Many successful business owners and professionals got where they are today because they have a remarkable network of connections and trusted referral partners.

Whether you are just now starting a new business, looking to uplevel your career, or simply feeling “stuck” in a sluggish economy, now is the time to get back to basics:

- Nurture your existing referral relationships
- Expand your network by reaching out to others
- Make plans for business and personal growth

The stories shared in this collection are of real-life experiences meant to ignite your entrepreneurial spirit, remind you to reconnect with your network, and inspire you believe in your dreams!

“Thank you Connie for a wonderful experience!! I already find myself thinking of your teachings during my workday. I know that your tips will help me in the future.”

– Kim Mecteau

“Thank you for all of your efforts with my team. The sessions were dynamic, energized, fun for all, and informative. The participants took away a lot of valuable skills and resources. Many thanks!”

– Al Giobbie
Senior Retail Experience Manager

