



Gabi Steiner

From Person to Person

Earning a Stable Income from Referral Marketing

I would like to thank
all of my partners who gave me the
incentive that was so important in
writing this book, and have been
a great help in reading, correcting,
formulation, etc. You are simply mar-
vellous. Many thanks also to Wissi
who does not begrudge my success
and makes me feel I am doing the
right thing. I also hope this book will
take my partners a stage further in
their development.

*“What you are
is God’s gift to you,
and what you make of yourself
is your gift to God.”*

Danish proverb

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Contents

Foreword	7
What is Referral Marketing?	13
My detailed story	24
Dreams and goals	29
The WHY	38
How Network Marketing developed	48
Pre-information	54
The power of duplication	67
The chicken, or the egg?	71
The name list	75
The “Not-Yet-Box”	79
Inoculation and the snail technique	82
Successful listening	84
Contacts	85
Information flow	93
Typical questions	95
Stable income from the bottom up	102
Training meetings	104
Filtering and sorting	109
A sponsor’s duty	112
Networkers – Power Networkers	116
Closing remarks	117

Foreword

“My name is Gabi Steiner. I had been a single mother for eight years and was 41 years of age when I first met my partner Manfred. We were therefore extremely conscious of the value of time right from the word ‘go.’ Neither of us wanted to work until we were 65, just for the sake of possibly spending a few enjoyable years together. Our goal was to make working optional by the time we were 50 – in other words, being able to choose when we wanted to work, how much we wanted to work and above all, with whom we wanted to work!

In 1999 I discovered a way of achieving this goal without investing money or taking risks.”

This book is my way of telling you about this opportunity. I would like to show you that you can achieve a great deal that you don't even dare to think about at present. I would like to encourage you to do more dreaming.

A variety of people came up with the idea behind this book quite some time ago. “Leaders are readers” – particularly in our line of work, it is of great advantage to the rest of us when people who have been successful leave their “trail” behind them. Plenty of books and articles have been written by people who like to explain how they did it. Right from day one I have been enthusiastic about being able to study the formulas of extremely successful people for no more than a few Euros.

Unfortunately there was a slight problem: the majority of these books describe multi-level marketing, which means that they usually describe a mixture of direct selling and Network Marketing (team building), which have a considerable influence on working methods.

I still haven't been able to find a book solely about Referral Marketing that explains the type of marketing that our company practices. In other words, every book that has been published always requires additional commentary, such as: *"The information in this book is quite good, but you can forget pages so-and-so to so-and-so. We don't practice direct selling, so it doesn't apply to us..."*

The endless need for explanation – I now realize that one of the most important aspects of our work is to make people understand the important difference between these two selling methods.

I am convinced that many of our partners still fail to understand precisely this point, and for this reason they are unable to see the gold mine that is lying at their feet. To a certain extent this is also due to the preconception that most people have in their heads with regard to "this selling method."

My brother Andy had major problems with his company in the building industry and had watched me become increasingly successful over a period of four years. When he was finally ready to talk to me about Referral Marketing in July 2003, I first gave him a problem to solve. It was clear to me that he was extremely biased, and that I would need to motivate him with regard to this opportunity. I therefore asked him to solve the following problem first. I explained to him that he would need to open up a new "pigeon hole" for that which I had to say to him.

This task was such an important stimulus for Andy's decision that I have since used it on frequent occasions, and I would now like to show it to you.

Here are nine dots. Please try (before you turn the page, of course) to join together all nine dots using only four straight lines – without removing the pen from the paper:



Andy couldn't solve the problem, of course – can you?

This is how it works:



It was interesting, because he understood immediately what I was trying to say to him: “*You have to think beyond the boundaries!*” I gave him one of my favorite books and the following day he sent me an e-mail that deeply moved me.

“Have already read most of the green book. Sonja too! It’s quite odd to step back and look at yourself and discover that you only manage to join up the outer dots out of habit and laziness, and the most important dot in the middle remains out of reach. You do this until you grind to a halt and then wonder why. It is time to change this and I hope that we can achieve it with your help!”

Can you imagine how I felt? I was motivated to write this book by this particular feeling, the need to provide explanation because of the existing pre-conceptions, the burning desire to use my experience to encourage one or two people to take the route to freedom and independence and a multitude of other reasons. Of course, I am not trying to say that you should ignore all of the other books! I’ve always taken one sentence from each book that I have read that I thought could perhaps be crucial in convincing others in conversation.

As a newcomer, you will find many stories that may inform and inspire you when you start out. In accordance with the guiding networking principle of “*All power to the beginner*”, I have decided to put everything that is important for decision-making in this book. At the same time the book

is intended to be a reference manual (a so-called starting aid) for helping our beginners to cope with their first year in this new, exciting world.

All the examples are real stories from people who have made their decision and are either on their way to achieving their goal or have already achieved it. I would like to thank all of my partners who gave me their stories and have therefore contributed the content of this book.

Gabi Steiner

What is Referral Marketing?

A way of earning money? It always saddens me when I hear someone trivializing this opportunity as just “earning money.” Apart from prosperity, I see it more and more as an opportunity to acquire ideal values such as a considerable amount of freedom and independence. Real wealth means helping other people achieve success, making and maintaining friendships, making new acquaintances, learning about new traditions and customs, and above all having the luxury of “time” to devote to health, family, friends and hobbies.

The biggest challenge is making our conversation partner understand that while this may technically be selling, it feels **completely** unlike selling. Therefore, I would like to start by telling you a story explaining how I currently differentiate between traditional selling and Referral Marketing:

In July 2004, I wanted to spend a few days in Switzerland. Thanks to Lissy and Werner’s family, (you’ll hear more about them later) my group had expanded in Switzerland, and the Swiss team was excited about the fact that I was going to hold a couple of seminars there during my stay. The first seminar in Zurich was somewhat “terse,” which wasn’t helped by the fact that there was a woman sitting in the first row who had obviously made her mind up that she wasn’t going to enjoy it even before I arrived....

Now, I am a passionate speaker, and I love to have people sitting in the audience who are interested in listening to my experiences. On the other hand, I have to admit that I am extremely “gut-instinct oriented” and sensitive, and this “vibe” was therefore extremely off-putting. (Only someone who knows me would have noticed this – but I found it extremely difficult because I had to think about every sentence. When I am in full “flow,” on the other hand, the words just pour out).

After the break, the chair was empty and at the end of the event the sister of the lady in question came up to me and said, “*I don’t know what to do about my sister – she thought that the seminar was just going to be about selling.*” The nightmare had reared its ugly head yet again!

I have learned that situations that appear to be unpleasant turn out to be often challenging or contain growth potential. I racked my brain for the entire week in Switzerland and tried to come up with a better way of explaining

Referral Marketing so that everyone would clearly understand. And then something occurred to me....

On Friday evening, the seminar was in Lanquart, Switzerland and I changed my scheduled program to tell the story of how I felt about the woman in the first row.

What is Referral Marketing? It is quite simple, but before I explain it, you have to realize one thing: For each product that you buy in the shops, be it a book, the trousers that you are wearing or whatever, you pay the shop price. Let us call this 100%. The question is, what percentage of the money actually goes to the manufacturer? I usually ask people to guess, and most of them come up with a figure of 20 to 40%. Let's just split the difference and say that the manufacturer gets 30%. However, at the same time, this means that 70% has been lost in the distribution chain. This money is used for advertising and maintaining the distribution chain, for example. The rent for the shop has to be paid, irrespective of how much turnover has been made. This is why many self-employed people suffer from "fixed costs." Employees still have to be paid their salaries, even if sales have been somewhat down.

Most people are extremely aware of this. On this particular day in Switzerland, I gave them the following example:

"Just imagine that you are on a street with three filling stations. One of them is called 'Ruedi Rüssel' (don't laugh, there really is a filling station with this name in Switzerland), the second one is 'Shell' and the third filling station is a special one. This filling station doesn't have a building, just a lonely pump, and if it rains, you get wet. There are no employees to come and serve you – it is self-service only.

However, it represents a unique opportunity: the money saved on employee salaries, service and rental or leasing costs (and this is quite a lot of money) is paid out to the people who recommend this filling station. In other words: if you spend 100 Francs on petrol here, you get back a certain amount at the end of the month for every person you recommended it to who subsequently refuels here. Let's assume in this case that you received 10 Francs for each recommendation. This means that when you refuel in the first month and tell your friend Anne about this special filling station and she refuels here as well, you will receive 10 Francs. In the following month, let's say that you mention the filling station to your father Alfred, and Anne tells her cousin Bernard. Now three

people (Anne, Alfred and Bernard) are refuelling as result of what you did. This means that you are now getting 30 Francs or Euros back."

The answer to my question of "How many of you would refuel at this filling station?" was almost 100% unanimous in favor of my "special" filling station. Now let's take it a step further. I asked my Swiss attendees (who weren't quite so terse at this point) whether they could imagine recommending this filling station to one person every month. They all said yes.

When I came up with the following calculation, they were flabbergasted. This probably occurred just as the preconception most people have regarding this matter fell apart.

"In the second month, four people refuel, including me. Like everyone else, I pay my 100 Francs for the petrol, but receive 30 Francs back (three people times 10 Francs). If everyone else recommends another 'refueller' per month, and this person refuels there, eight people are refuelling in the third month, and 16 in the fourth (at which point my own petrol is paid for and I still have something left over). In month five, 32 people are refuelling, in month six there are 64, in month seven there are 128, in month eight there are 256, then 512, 1024, 2048 and in the month twelve no less than 4096 people are refuelling.

Four thousand and ninety-six people are refuelling, even though I only recommended the filling station to how many people? Correct! Just 12 people! My friend Anne recommended the filling station to 11 people; her brother Bernard recommended it to 10 people in the example, etc. This is the power of multiplication. And this produces a total for which we really do have to open a new 'pigeon hole.'"

And now... the all-important question: "How many of you seriously think that we're **selling** petrol here?" I wish you had been there in Switzerland. It was unbelievable how you could hear pennies dropping by the dozen.

That's it!

Sometimes I hear the argument "**But something is actually being sold.**"

That's right! In this case, petrol is being sold. But no one feels like they are really "selling." The details of the sales transaction are handled directly between the filling station and its consumers.

The Swiss people spotted the opportunity of achieving a small or large income by recommending this filling station. And this is the reason why

Referral Marketing companies exist. Simply because there are now enough reasons to look for new possibilities. Our old methods no longer work. Just think about your jobs and your pensions, and what about your health?

Referral Marketing is the solution to many problems. I often ask myself why many people fail to see this. Perhaps it is because of the human trait of having to find something wrong before we can find it right.

It was nice to see them scratching their heads when I asked, *“How would you tell your friend about this matter? Would you emphasize the quality of the petrol and tell them how they can refuel with excellent petrol with a great octane number and a golden-yellow color? Above all – would it occur to you to say, ‘I haven’t got the time?’”* You are probably laughing now because you now know how amusing that would be.

Discerning readers will have found two catches in my little example: the first is that you cannot pay 12x 10%. This is clear. Most companies pay out a smaller percentage the “deeper” it goes. The total is usually about 60%.

The second catch is it doesn’t work with petrol. This is probably because of the sign that I recently saw at a filling station that said, *“We are not petrol distributors, but tax collectors.”* It doesn’t matter – what matters is that you understand the concept. And I hope that it is interesting enough for you to join me in considering a product with which it would work.

It should be clear to everyone that **turnover** has to be generated in order to pay out commission or bonuses. My Swiss people were now ready to start thinking about a product other than petrol that would be suitable for this marketing method.

I asked the question *“What characteristics does a product need in order to be suitable for this method?”* Let’s think about this together. It must be a **consumable** product, of course. A vacuum cleaner is not ideal, because it doesn’t disappear in a puff of smoke every month. It therefore has to be something that is “used up” every month. This is crystal clear, because otherwise you cannot have a **stable** income.

Of course, “stable” does not mean that it starts to rain money without having to do something for it. Like any other business, you can only have a steady, stable income if you have done something to earn it beforehand. In Referral Marketing, this means helping your partners to understand the business until they are in a position to continue on their own. Essentially

it is a case of providing people with support and helping them to build up their own business. The more successful you are in doing this, the more independent your income will become from your efforts. After all, this is the reason why most people start to do Referral Marketing in the first place.

It is also important for the product to be suitable for **everyone**. Horse fodder may well be consumed, but how many people own a horse?

And now, the most important point; it must be something that is **important**, something that we really need, that is in vogue and in an area with growth potential and a future. What are the options? This resulted in an interesting discussion with a unanimous conclusion: Only one area comes into question, and that is wellness, fitness, health and anti-aging.

And since my company operates in precisely this so-called “trend market” or “growth market” with natural products, I would like to put forward the thesis that **everyone** is interested in our products. You should have heard the protests... (Which I intentionally provoked).

In spite of this, I stand by my opinion. I still maintain that everyone is interested in “Living Healthier for Longer,” like the title of a book written by Anne Simons that describes OPC, which is one of our main products.

The problem lies elsewhere. The problem is that only a few people already know or believe that there is a definite connection between the diseases of modern society, our aging process and certain foodstuffs. Why is this the case? Scientist Max Planck explained the situation in a nutshell:

“Scientific truth does not assert itself by convincing its opponents, but by the fact that its opponents gradually die out and the next generation grows up with the new ideas right from the start.”

It is a pity about the large number of people who grow up, live in the “interim period,” and are unfortunately unable to experience this.

But what if it really works? What if the countless nutrient and antioxidant studies are correct, and you do not react to this stimulus or even check it out, or do not even bother to obtain additional information? If you are honest with yourself, wouldn’t it make sense to follow up on such an important tip? Can we afford not to?

I told the Swiss people a simple story that almost everybody knows, *“What happens to an apple when I cut it open?”* Correct. The surface turns brown.

“Why?” Many people knew the answer – it is because of oxygen, free radicals and the oxidation process. The same process causes iron to rust. “*What can we do to stop this ‘browning.’*” I continued. Most homemakers know the answer: put lemon juice on it. “*And why lemon juice? What’s in it?*” Of course – vitamin C. And this vitamin C prevents the oxidation, “aging” or “rusting” of the apple for about a further four hours, because it is an important antioxidant.

Imagine that the latest research on this subject was correct and antioxidants (also known as free radical neutralizers) could have the same effect on our bodies.

At this point, I always give my conversation partners a piece of advice: Just fill up with ‘Premium’ instead of ‘Regular’ for a month and see what your body makes of it.

What if your own body turns out to be the proof of what the literature is saying – could you keep it to yourself and **not** pass the information on to your friends and relatives?

I often think about the history books that will be written in the year 2050. I imagine that they will say:

“At the beginning of the 21st century, people had already looked into the effect of antioxidants and therefore found a solution to the serious problems caused by the diseases of modern society. Inexplicably, a mixture of ignorance, complacency and inflexibility meant that it was decades before this knowledge became generally known and utilized....”

Sounds logical, doesn’t it? I assume that you’ve realized that it is worth digging deeper into this topic and would perhaps want to try it out for yourself if it didn’t sound like a pyramid or snowball system....

Snowball or pyramid system?

Another nightmare in our industry that causes every new starter’s blood to freeze in their veins is the question “*Is it something like a snowball system?*”

This question is extremely important, and the uncertainty surrounding it costs many potential Networkers their livelihoods. For this reason, I would like to deal with it in detail right at the beginning of this chapter. Professor Zacharias, who lectures on the subject of Network Marketing at the University of Worms, gave an important stimulus for this in his pamphlet

“Die Wachstumsbranche der Zukunft” (“The growth industry of the future”). This is anything but a chance remark, since there have already been several cases of companies that were not entirely trustworthy. Those companies have been eradicated by governing bodies who have been watching things like a hawk ever since. According to Professor Zacharias, the typical features of a snowball system are:

1. Commission is earned by recruiting new contract partners, making the actual selling a secondary issue.

Payment in Network Marketing, on the other hand, is dependent on turnover.

2. The products are purchased from the next level up, and sold from level to level with a surcharge (this means that Anne pays 10 Euros, for example, and sells it to Bernard for 12 Euros, who sells it to Christine for 13 Euros etc.).

The difference between our method and Network Marketing is that the products are purchased directly from the manufacturer – and at the same price at every level of the hierarchy!

There is only one thing to say about pyramid selling: Every company and institution has a pyramid shape. In spite of this, no one came up with the idea of describing the Catholic church as illegal, although it is designed as a pyramid. The Pope sits at the top, then the cardinals, then the bishops, then the priests, and the base consists of the members of the congregation. The same applies to the German government, which has the Chancellor at the top, then the ministers, the members of parliament below them, and then the broad mass of the population at the bottom. So let’s get away from the idea that a pyramid is something that is inherently disreputable.

So, how can you tell whether this way of earning income is a legal business or an illegal pyramid system? Certainly **not** from the structure of the sales organization of the company that has been described, since this has a pyramid shape.

The WFDSA (World Federation of Direct Selling Associations), which was established in 1978, currently represents 50 national Direct Selling Associations (DSAs) at global level. This global association and all the national DSAs have always recognized the need for ethically proper business behavior, and have therefore developed a global code of conduct for the industry.

The prerequisite for a global DSA is that the company complies with this code. We can assume that companies who are members of a national DSA and sell their products via Network Marketing are not illegal pyramid systems. My company is a member of the DSA and was awarded the “Best New Business 1998” award in England when it was established.

What are the criteria for a legally operating company?

Products must flow!

If a license has to be obtained to allow the available products to be sold, things become dubious at the point when this license fee is factored into the organization and the acquisition of new partners/licensees is more lucrative than the actual selling.

The company should always supply all of its partners directly and at the same purchase price. If the product is fed into the pyramid structure from above and sold on with a surcharge at each level, it is a snowball system. In this case, your entry level becomes decisive as to whether you will be able to sell your products to others or not. The more levels there are between new entrants and the initiator, the more over-expensive the products are to the new starter and the saying, “the early bird catches the worm” applies.

Basically, it is extremely simple to make a distinction between illegal pyramid systems and Network Marketing. If the product flow to the customer is horizontal throughout the company’s pyramidal structure and the company also supplies all of its representatives with the same conditions, it is classical Network Marketing. The money also flows horizontally from the end consumer to the company. In this case, a newcomer’s entry level and the number of levels between him and the company are no longer important.

I hope that I have dispelled any fears that you may have had and that you can now follow me carefully as I tell you more about my story.

The importance of the story

“Network Marketing is the business of telling stories and relating personal highs and lows...”

“The power that the stories possess is a golden key that opens the door to people’s hearts.”

And:

“The right story at the right time awakens people from the narcosis of the mind, frees them from the slavery of old ideas and overcomes logical thinking. For one moment, all sensibility is forgotten; emotions get the upper hand and previous convictions are occasionally questioned. We find ourselves on a plane at which we can think beyond that which is rational.”

These quotations, the latter pair of which are from the book “Dream Teams,” describe a truth that I have long since been aware of in a theoretical sense.

I must confess that I have only known for a few years **how** important this point is, and the **extent** to which this knowledge can be transferred to our business. Nowadays I consider my own personal story to be the main issue.

The primary and most burning question that is asked by every newcomer is “How do I talk to people in my environment?” To be honest, it doesn’t matter. We only know one thing for certain from experience: Someone with passion and enthusiasm but no knowledge will have a better start than someone who can mechanically recite all the facts and figures to perfection. We have homemakers with six children and no previous knowledge who can uproot trees with their enthusiasm. On the other hand, we have qualified engineers and sales professionals who “already know it all,” making them less prepared to learn, which leaves them unsuccessful. On several occasions, I have found that people who are extremely successful in their normal professional lives have been unsuccessful in Referral Marketing. The only reason for this is that their pride does not allow them to accept such simple and straightforward things from a homemaker...

The prime directive in Referral Marketing is therefore:

Never judge anyone based on his or her previous success or knowledge. Never decide whether someone is suitable for the business.

We have a saying that goes:

“The person who you think is a ‘doer’ will be a non-starter, and the person who you wouldn’t have believed capable of doing it will astound you.”

There are many ways of talking to people. At the end of the day, it is the quota that is important. I can now give you the following advice:

- The closer your friendship/acquaintance with someone (the “warmer” the contact), the greater the credibility and therefore the quota will be.
- The more I know about their **“WHY,”** the more likely it is that the business will be a solution for them and therefore the higher the quota.
- The better I am at “active listening” the higher the quota will be.

In this book I have decided to tell you about the things that have the best prospects of success. In my opinion, Referral Marketing is a person-to-person business, and I particularly like it because it gives **everyone** the chance to be successful, regardless of age, sex, profession, or origin. I therefore prefer to recommend and teach methods that can be **achieved by anyone** and therefore be duplicated. However, this certainly doesn’t mean that other methods do not work. Only one thing is certain: Even if you are one of the few people who does not have a problem giving presentations in front of large numbers of people, you should consider one thing: 80% of your group will consist of people who cannot do it.

Another thing of which I am certain is the less we know about the people to whom we are speaking, the more often we will have to speak to them. That is the reason why I like to talk to people who I know. That is called the “warm” market. Of course, I can get to know any person – I always like to say *“any ‘cold’ relationship can be turned into a ‘warm’ one.”*

Partners who are new to the business are often so enthusiastic that they talk too much or say things that their conversation partner is not interested in. When this happens, there is a risk that our conversation partner feels steamrolled by the flood of information and switches to defensive mode.

The most effective and harmless way of awakening interest is to tell person-

al stories. If you tell your story in an authentic and interesting way, your conversation partner will seldom be able to resist becoming curious and asking you questions.

We tell people why we are in the business, what persuaded us, how we started and about the opportunities that we envisage of putting our destiny in our own hands. Bridges between people can only be built using personal emotions. Jörg Löhr, a well-known professional trainer, said something that I have never forgotten: *“Our era is dominated by communication and emotions. Machines have already replaced our muscles, and computers have replaced our brains. The only thing that is exclusive to human beings and makes us unique are our emotions.”*

I am a shy sort of person and therefore have to tell my story and use it as a bridge. (You will already have read my short story at the beginning of this book). With my story, I am making you an indirect offer and am therefore planting a seed. My business partner therefore has the opportunity to be responsive to it or not – and believe me, someone who is on the lookout for change will ask me questions.

That is another advantage, by the way – **THEY** are then asking me questions, and **I** am not offering them anything. See the difference?

The story of the chief surgeon in a city hospital who has a lot of money but no time to enjoy his life would go like this: *“You know my situation – money isn’t my problem, but I have been thinking about whether I really want to carry on working in the hospital for the rest of my life. My marriage is on the rocks and my children hardly know me. I have now discovered a way of making myself financially independent without having to give up my profession, and without having to forego my security.”* His conversation partner may now have become curious and says to the chief surgeon *“That sounds interesting, tell me more about it.”*

If we have understood that we can make Referral Marketing work better by telling our story, it becomes easy to talk to people. And if my conversation partner is interested, he or she will ask me questions. This method (if telling stories can even be called a method) is absolutely stress-free and unrestricted. We can talk to someone in a relaxed and unforced manner. Products are not part of the story at this point.

Richard Poe explains the reason for this in his book “Wave 4 : Network Marketing in the 21st Century”:

“Every salesman is a storyteller. In most cases, salesmen tell nuts-and-bolts stories about the uses and benefits of the products or services they sell. Network marketers tell a different type of tale. They talk about themselves, their lives, and their goals, dreams, and aspirations.”

Do you know the difference between an inexperienced and an experienced Networker?

“The experienced Networker knows more stories!”

This is true. This person can tell a suitable story from his or her repertoire at the drop of a hat. This book is the same – it contains many stories, which possess the power of being able to linger in the memory long after pure theory has been forgotten.

When I am carrying out starter training* with a new partner, the partner already has at least two stories to tell: Mine, which he must use until he has his own income, and his own story. As a sponsor, one of my first duties is for us to “put together their story.” Of course, this does not mean inventing one. It is more a question of finding out the “**WHY**” of my partner, or their “Primary Motivating Factor,” as it is referred to by Allan Pease, the author of the best seller “Why men don’t listen and women can’t read maps.” This is the “burning issue” as far as we Swabians are concerned. At the end of the day, it is a question of discovering what it is that is so important to my conversation partner that it spurs them into action.

*Starter training is the initial training that I carry out with a new partner who has made the decision. It is a case of explaining and completing the order form, if this has not already been done, explaining the initial steps and simply answering all the questions that currently exist. An up-to-date starter training specification can also be found at: www.mitgliederbereich.com.

My detailed story

When I first encountered MLM (Multi-Level Marketing) in August 1993, I immediately spotted the opportunity that it presented. There was no doubt in my mind whatsoever that I would be successful using this system.

I detected immediately that it was dependent upon my input and **nothing else**, and I was prepared to do it. In other words, I was prepared to pay the price upfront.

I realized that I would have to work hard for a few years in order to enjoy a stable income, which is every Networker’s goal. At the time, I was a single mother to my eight-year-old son Tim and was working part-time for a wholesaler of technical equipment. Because of the time that I needed to look after my son, it was almost impossible to build up a career. Nor did my financial situation give much hope for any kind of highlight in my life.

After just six months of working with my partner company as a sideline, I was able to give up my main job, which was a major relief, even though I had worked for the company for sixteen years with considerable commitment. It sounds crazy, but I enjoyed doing my job for all those years. Working Sundays or overtime was no problem for me when it was necessary.

In spite of this, the final days of my three-month notice period that I had to work in the office were torture. I had heard this from many people who have been in the same situation. As soon as you “taste” freedom, as we say in Swabia, and discover how much fun you can have in Referral Marketing, “regulated” work becomes difficult to perform.

The diet/food supplement products made by my former company suited me. I have had a corn mill since 1972, (the owners of corn mills usually wore Jesus sandals in those days) and the connection between nutrition and health has been an important topic to me for years. The connection between nutrients and the aging process has since become my main hobby (responding to the need...).

I enjoyed my work, and because of my knowledge I quickly became a product speaker and spent many weekends at seminars. I now think that a great deal of valuable time for educating my son was irretrievably lost because of this. This is one of the few things in my life that I would like to have changed, because I now put a great deal of value on making business integrate harmoniously into family life.

In 1996, something happened that changed my life completely. I met my partner Manfred (who I call “Wissi”). To be precise, I pretty well threw all of the resolutions and opinions that I had about relationships and men out of the window and simply loved him.

Then the problems started. The first problem arose because his main working hours were during the week, whereas my main working hours were at the weekend because of my regular two-day seminars. The next challenge cropped up because Manfred had booked a three-week holiday in South Africa before we met. For me this was **much** too long, because I had invested a considerable amount of money in my company buying inventory for three levels. And how was I supposed to turn over volumes like this if we were in South Africa for three weeks? On the other hand, the thought of celebrating our first Christmas 8,000 kilometers apart was unbearable. This was the first time that I had any doubts about what I was doing.

At this time, I realized that it may have been a Networking company, but due to their compensation plan the main focus was on direct selling. And suddenly it was there – the realization that I didn't have any stable income.

**I asked myself “What happens if I become ill?
Or simply don't want to work any more?”**

In spite of this, I continued with it for two long years until I met Don Failla, by chance, at a seminar.

I was at this seminar because all of our “tools” such as inserts, flyers etc. were no longer working effectively and many of my advisers were having problems selling their qualification volumes (= quantity of products that you have to sell to receive supplies for building up the group). No volume – no check. I wanted to give my group a new tool that would give them new impetus. My team mainly consisted of young mothers with children, and I think with regret about the early mornings that they spent posting flyers through letter boxes before their children were even awake. Summer is not too bad, but can you imagine how it must have been in the winter?

Don and Nancy Failla are extremely well-known Network trainers, and what they said at the seminar made a considerable impression upon me.

“Real Referral Marketing has nothing to do with selling. All that you are doing is making a considerable number of people use their own product. You have a good product and look for five friends with whom you wish to be successful and help them to talk to their friends. This means that you will never have to speak to strangers again.”

Don's words “*Anyone can meet a stranger if he is introduced to him by a friend*” are still music to my ears. Each of these five people had at least 200 other acquaintances, of whom at least five were certain to be people who seriously wanted to change their lives.

Earning money together **with** my friends, not **from** them. That is a big difference.

I was still enthusiastic about the simple Networking idea and immediately ordered 1000 copies of Don's book entitled “*Ihre Zukunft*” (“The 45 Second Presentation That Will Change Your Life”). This would mean never having to use inserts again, talk to strangers or push flyers through letter-boxes. I immediately called my team together and explained to them the simple way in which we could now become successful. No more “pushing” products; each one of us would have to sponsor just five friends and speak to their friends. We all set to work in high spirits, but within a few weeks we discovered that nothing whatsoever was working. Why was this?

Because of the qualification volumes, we had to sell to earn our commission. And this was the first time that I really understood the difference between direct selling and Referral Marketing. And I didn't want to “push” any more. I wanted to be a teacher and show other people how they could really achieve their goal.

At this time, I read all the literature that I could lay my hands on. The following was written in a book by Edward Ludbrook:

(You have to ask) “yourself the following question: When I stop working do I keep earning money? If the answer is ‘No’, then you are one of the 99% of the world who are trapped.”

And I was in the trap too. I couldn't see a solution. At this time, I did not know of any companies whose qualification volume could be covered by my own needs. I now know that opportunities always come when you are open to them and ready for them.

My opportunity came in April 1999. It appeared in an advertisement that contained a photograph of Don and Nancy Failla. Of course, it immediately clicked that if Don Failla was advertising for a company, it must be a company that fits in with his book. This made me extremely curious, and I did some more research into it.

I was impressed by the fact that it was a company with roots going back to 1936. I was 44 years of age at the time and the fact that it was an established family company gave me a great deal of confidence when I was making my decision. The product range, which did not use any chemicals, was another plus, and the bonus plan fitted in with my goal of really becoming financially independent. After six years in this field, I realized that this marketing plan could be achieved without start-up costs and minimum purchase volumes by anyone, and could therefore be **duplicated**. I also realized that it was the kind of real **Referral Marketing** of which I had dreamt.

My sights were set fairly low back then. As Don Failla put it at the time *“Imagine that the installments on your house and your car are paid and that you would earn 5000 Marks per month, regardless of whether you got out of bed or not.”*

In the beginning this was my goal, and I would have settled for an enjoyable life with Wissi. And after all of my previous experience, this opportunity was ideally suited to achieving my goal. It is a gift from the Gods, six numbers in the lottery being handed to me on a golden plate.

I now realize that everything that happens to us depends on our attitude. **What does it mean to me?** Do I see it as a small sideline that will help me to fulfil a few minor wishes? Or is it an opportunity to achieve a real goal?

For me it was something major. And with this attitude, I told my friends and my family about the “filling station.”

The talking bird

Bill Evans, one of the company founders, once told a wonderful story: *“A man saw a bird that could speak 400 words and could sing arias in two languages. He was so fascinated by the bird and because his mother had a major birthday coming up, he decided to give her the bird as a present. He asked about the price, which was 50,000 dollars. This was a lot of money, but was worth it for a bird that could speak 400 words and sing arias in two languages. He had the bird carefully packed and sent to his mother. After several days, he called his mother and asked her what she thought of the bird, and she said, ‘It tasted lovely.’”*

How often do our new partners forget to say that they have a bird that can speak 400 words, and sings arias in two languages?

Dreams and goals

In one of my favorite books “Owning Yourself” by Paula Pritchard, it is written:

“Your career in Network Marketing should start with discovering your dreams and end with the fulfilment of these dreams.”

There is a lot of truth in this. Awakening dreams and formulating a goal from them is one of a Networker's most rewarding characteristics.

After ten years in the industry, I now know that careers are often nipped in the bud because many people have forgotten how to dream. Our dreams often end up in the smallest pigeonholes, are being forgotten and turning to dust – perhaps as a result of frustrating experiences or just the daily drudge.