



# BUSINESS BOOK REVIEW<sup>®</sup>

Stay on Top of Best in Business Knowledge<sup>SM</sup>

Volume 25, Number 14

## Click

### *Ten Truths for Building Extraordinary Relationships*

George C. Fraser

©2008 George C. Fraser

Adapted by permission of McGraw-Hill

ISBN: 978-07-148981-2



*Reviewed by Kendra Bentle*

## INTRODUCTION

In *Click*, author George C. Fraser offers anyone longing for meaningful connections in and out of the office Ten Truths regarding how to find their social voice, cultivate their beneficial offerings to others, and how to truly “click” with like-minded counterparts.

From the first Truth (“Be Authentic”) to the last (“It Takes Teamwork to Make the Dream Work”), Fraser reveals the techniques of traditional networking that are broken and backwards, then presents a new way to view meeting, greeting, and ultimately “clicking” with colleagues and friends. The key, according to Fraser, is to redefine the term itself.

Networking can be superficial, whereas connecting or clicking is about sharing common ground. Network-

ing is goal-based. Clicking is value-based. Networking is often selfish and one-sided. Clicking is mutually beneficial. But bridge the gap between the two, and real relationships form and real bonds are made. Learn the truths about talking and listening, giving and receiving, trusting and respecting, says Fraser, and anyone can hear the not-quite audible *click* of a meaningful relationship being formed. Hear enough clicks, and savvy businesspeople can recognize it as the sound of a professional career on the rise.

### PART ONE - CHEMISTRY

“We click when the following three variables align: chemistry, fit, and timing,” says Fraser. Within these three broad categories lie the Ten Truths necessary for building extraordinary relationships.

**Chemistry** is defined as “the interaction of one personality with another; sympathetic understanding; and rapport.” Despite the concrete definition, however, real chemistry is difficult to quantify. It involves emotion, aura, charisma, gut feelings, temperament and attraction. It is the ethereal energy that makes friendships sparkle, marriages sizzle, and professional partnerships prosper. It is also, according to Fraser, the most powerful component in any relationship. It cannot be fabricated or faked. It is absolute—either a person has chemistry with another, or they do not.

The first Truth directs that a person **Be Authentic** in order to foster chemistry and eventually click with others. The idea is that by following their passion, their purpose, and, importantly, by being themselves, ordinary people can make extraordinary human connections. Here, honesty is the best policy, and can lead to relationship riches. Unfortunately, the reality is that many people make a point of performing in their public lives, engaging in a continual song and dance designed to make others want to share business deals, friendships and romances. This behavior is forced and false, and acts as a barrier to meaningful partnership. Fortunately, there are several easy ways that a person can check their authenticity.

First, *being true to one's word* is integral to creating trust and clicking with others. People who click are people who do what they say they are going to do. They are also never afraid to express how they feel in a relationship—be it business or personal. The main point, says Fraser, is that if a person promises something, and then does not deliver on that promise, trust is eroded. Because all good relationships are built on trust, the partnership then weakens and eventually dissolves from a mutual lack of confidence.

Additionally, individuals seeking to click should *use their voice to add value and validate purpose and point of view*. A person—especially a professional person—is also a brand, and as such, should publicize themselves accordingly. Connectedly, one of the most powerful tools in what the author calls *the personal press kit* of life is voice, and individuals who carefully consider the substance of their words free their authentic selves and shine.

The reality is however, that many people need to first *find* their voices. Doing this requires some soul-

## KEY CONCEPTS

In today's high-tech, isolated world, individuals have a difficult time connecting with others. Networking offers a venue, but Fraser's Ten Truths can help individuals truly *click*:

1. **Be Authentic**—Be true to real self.
2. **Communicate With Your Heart**—Cultivate a new source of intelligence
3. **Love, Serve, Give and Add Value First**—Good deeds return to the giver tenfold
4. **Nurture Your Relationships**—They are the core of personal and professional success
5. **Bless Them and Release Them**—Cut damaging unions loose and move on
6. **Trust First; Distrust Must Be Earned**—Trust breeds more trust, and open communication
7. **Tailor Your Relationships**—Consciously create the “perfect fit”
8. **Make Peace, Not War, With Words**—Use the power of speech and writing for good
9. **Be Open to Everything**—And attached to nothing
10. **It Takes Teamwork to Make the Dream Work**—Seek caring, creative allies



Information about the author and subject:

[www.10truths2click.com](http://www.10truths2click.com)

Information about this book and other business titles:

[www.mhprofessional.com](http://www.mhprofessional.com)

Related summaries in the BBR Library:

### **The Art of Connecting**

*How to Overcome Differences, Build Rapport, and Communicate Effectively with Anyone*

Claire Raines, Lara Ewing

### **Becoming a Person of Influence**

*How to Positively Impact the Lives of Others*

John C. Maxwell with Jim Dornan

searching. Individuals should ask themselves “Does my voice ring with enthusiasm as I talk about my calling in life? Does it perhaps echo with the hope and excitement of my immigrant parents? How can I live my own dreams?” The answers lead to a deeper understanding of true motivation, true self, and a louder, truer voice, says Fraser.

As passionate as a person can be about their calling, it is also important for them to *know their limitations and promise only what*

*can be delivered.* For professionals, this means being real in the office—with themselves and with others. When undertaking new and exciting tasks, individuals often overestimate their ability to do certain things, and despite good intentions, make plans that are simply unrealistic. The result: plans backfire, and unable to deliver, the doer ends up “looking like a fraud.” A better plan is to stop before speaking, consider both the situation and personal limitations, and then make a point to never make a commitment that cannot be fully upheld.

Similar to being authentic is *being yourself*. Authentic people do not need their egos stroked to feel validated. They live by their own rules. They are also uniquely at peace with themselves and have nothing to prove. As above, many people are not automatically endowed with the self-esteem needed to be so unquestionably themselves. Instead, when climbing the business ladder, for example, professionals often compensate by assuming a one-dimensional

personality related to what they *think* colleagues and superiors will accept. The opposite behavior is actually more successful, says Fraser. Masks are stiff, fake and boring. The individual who wishes to truly click must remove the façade that hides their unique, exciting personality.

*If you are the smartest person in your network, you're in the wrong network.*

Finally, the way that a person physically presents themselves is very important. From hairstyle to grooming to clothing, outward appearance is an immediate indication of the “brand called You, Inc.” and should be given significant attention. Fraser advises that professionals *create an air of distinction to build the brand*. With regard to clothing, overdressing is always preferable to under-dressing. Further, if a person is conventionally attractive, the author advises that they use it to their best advantage, and if they are not, to remember that even the most aesthetically gifted person can easily diminish what they have with sloppy styling or bad hygiene.

The second Truth that influences the chemistry of clicking is a directive to **Communicate Using the Heart**. Because the best connections are rooted in honest communication, when an individual listens and speaks from their heart, words are enhanced, meaning is greater, and the chance to click is heightened.

Speaking from the heart is as much a conscious decision as it is an emotional construct. Preparation is critical. Listening is, according to the author, a lost virtue, and thinking before speaking (or writing) is vital. To begin, professionals especially should learn to express their feelings and ideas both succinctly and well. Methods to becoming an efficient conveyor of ideas include tape recording conversations then analyzing them for clarity and substance; cautiously editing surplus words from conversational speaking; asking for help from a communication expert (or a well-spoken friend); and working hard to maintain focus in conversations, tuning out ringing cell phones and flashing computer screens.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**George C. Fraser** is Chairman and CEO of FraserNet, Inc., a company he founded some 20 years ago with the vision to lead a global networking movement that brings together diverse human resources to increase opportunities for people of African descent. He is considered by many to be a new voice for African Americans and one of the foremost authorities on economic development, networking and building effective relationships.

Further, individuals should remember that a first impression is always a lasting one. When two people meet, a split-second judgment is made—something the smart professional or click-seeking individual can turn into a split-second opportunity. People looking to click with others should study speakers who grab their attention, and then emulate that style to build a show-stopping first impression, for example. But the best way to form a successful first impression, says Fraser, is to create an engaging *sound bite*—a descriptive message that can be delivered in less than fifteen seconds. This snippet of introduction should be interesting, memorable, powerful, and should explain a range of information from who the person is, to what they do and how they make a difference in the world.

### *When your heart speaks, take good notes.*

Another way to access the inner-reaches of the heart (and speak from it) is to gather trusted second-opinions. To do this, a person should either ask friends to have a conversation about them that reveals those trusted advisors' meaningful impressions, or, interview three successful people, asking probing questions about their rise to the top.

Once an individual is comfortable with speaking and confident enough to be themselves in nearly any situation, the next milestone is learning to write with the same honesty and confidence. Fraser offers five steps to becoming a better writer:

1. **Make an honest skills assessment** – Professionals should analyze the strengths and weaknesses of their writing by asking a person with excellent writing skills to critique their compositions.
2. **Take a class** – Attend a writing conference, a community college course or an on-the-job writing workshop.
3. **Practice** – Writing is just like exercising: the more a person does it, the stronger they become.
4. **Read** – Nothing builds better writing than the absorption of others' good work.
5. **Write with authority** – At every opportunity, an individual should position themselves as an

expert within their profession. Creating powerful, low-cost newsletters, websites, or blogs to herald their expertise can serve as efficient, cheap advertising.

Finally, perhaps the most important (and least practiced) component of superior communication is *listening*. In today's turbocharged, impatient world, life bombards the ordinary person with an excess of extraneous information: sounds, smells, sights, and technology all begging for their attention. As such, many people too often go through the motions of listening, but never hear a word. Good listeners are sincerely interested in what they are being told, which makes the person speaking feel important and more willing to share themselves—components that lead to a click. Some ways the ordinary listener can engage in meaningful two-way communication are:

1. **Be curious and be real** – Successful people ask better, more honest, less self-serving questions than the ordinary person. As a result, they get better, more honest answers.
2. **Make sure the listener is truly listening** – Call out "fake listeners" as they nod and blankly say "that's interesting" while listening. Ask, "What specifically do you think is interesting?"
3. **Focus** – Reign in rambling conversations before they veer too far off track.
4. **Get on the same level as listeners** – Connect with listeners on their level. If in a position of power, professionals should open the conversation with a humanizing, leveling comment or question.
5. **Avoid yes or no questions** – Instead, ask questions that begin with who, what, when, where, why, and how.
6. **Heed the gut reaction** – If the chemistry in a conversation is flat, politely move on.

The third Truth—**Love, Serve, Give and Add Value First**—follows the age-old, Biblical mantra, "to get, we must first give." According to Fraser, grasping this Truth begins with understanding the constructs of empathy and love. In our isolated, automated world, people are so desperate for love, kindness, and human connection that a small amount goes a very long way. Offer a little service, a little sympathy, a little action



above and beyond the call of duty—and do it before gaining anything in return—and the click of connection is imminently attainable. There are three things an ordinary person can do to achieve this state of click-readiness.

First, individuals should always ask *“How can I help you help me help you?”* instead of asking “what’s in it for me?” To create the most meaningful relationships, giving should be the default position. The reality is that generosity nearly always returns to the giver tenfold.

*Success in life has everything to do with what we do for others.*

Next, every person should *know the value of what they bring to the table*. Inherent in this is an individual’s ability to know their own worth. Taking inventory of skills and talents gives a person a tool chest from which they can serve others. Professionals should make a list of the things they do well, consider how those skills might add value to someone else’s life or business, and then give freely of that expertise with no expectation of reciprocation.

Third, integral to clicking with people on a meaningful level is the ability to *find something positive in every person and situation*. Regardless of the work or situation, an individual should always do their best. The only caveat to this advice, says Fraser, is to know when it is no longer in a person’s best interest to continue doing the work. “If you can leave your job today and be happy about it, you’re in the wrong job,” he says.

Each of the important relationships in a person’s life, whether business or personal, require commitment. Knowing this, the fourth Truth—**Nurture Your Relationships—and Yourself**—becomes important. This Truth demands that people seeking to click must tend to, sustain, and most importantly, *pamper* all relationships, with the intention of clicking up to higher levels of trust and friendship in each. The first relationship that should get attention is the most personal of all. Without being self-centered or egotistical, click-seeking individuals should make taking care of themselves a task to be considered before all else.

Connectedly, paying attention to what the author calls “the number one brand for You, Inc” can be an advantage. A brand, when it pertains to a person, is

akin to reputation. By doing things such as being nice to strangers, lavishing praise and gratitude toward anyone performing a service, cultivating a great sense of humor, and remembering to always keep in touch with distant contacts is a sure way to nurture a brand or reputation for spreading happiness, good cheer, and optimism. People who click do all of these things.

Finally, champion relationship-builders do something that many politicians, leaders, and other influential personalities do with regularity. They stay in the moment—capturing the undivided attention of the people they speak to by *giving* undivided attention to them. Fraser advises that when engaging another person, individuals should never look around the room to see who else is there, and always look a person directly in the eyes.

## PART TWO - FIT

“Fit” is defined as being “adapted to or suitable for a purpose, object or occasion.” But when dealing with meaningful relationships, fit often refers to the feeling of a “perfect fit,” an intangible but nonetheless integral notion of “rightness” between two people. Fraser offers that while people sometimes find a perfect fit, they often have difficulty maintaining that relationship. Keeping these important unions alive involves applying Truths 5 through 7: **Bless Them and Release Them; Trust First: Distrust Must Be Earned;** and **Tailor Your Relationships for the Perfect Fit.**

The fifth Truth demands that in order to click with the right people at the right time, professionals must learn to edit their existing relationships. If, after exploration, any are deemed toxic, unsuccessful, or damaging, they should **Bless Them and Release Them.**

Humans have a natural tendency to surround themselves with others who reflect who they are. Some of those relationships can be helpful, and some may be detrimental. The difference can be determined through careful scrutiny of a person’s own inner circle. The author suggests that professionals make

a chart of their twelve closest contacts, then explore whether any or all of those people are still contributing to their relationship as they did when the union began. If not, and a partnership is deemed to have run its useful course, they should be blessed and released to make room for more beneficial connections. Fostering relationships that cause nothing but misery is counterproductive to clicking.

When a relationship must be ended, it should be done with tact. Bridges should rarely be burned, and professionals should always exit partnerships on a high note, or, simply “park” the union for a time. Parked relationships are those that are not needed at all times, and that both parties can mutually put on hold until the connection is again beneficial. This frees a person from having to waste energy actively cultivating a connection that might only be relevant several times a year. If a relationship must be terminated, however, Fraser suggests having a frank conversation with the other party with the goal of concluding the interaction civilly and in a *final* manner.

### *Strangers are just friends waiting to happen.*

Finally, the most important part of blessing and releasing damaging relationships is to remember to forgive the offenders and move on, letting go pain, anger, and frustration so current and future connections are not poisoned.

The sixth Truth begins with a seemingly paradoxical point of view: **Trust First; Distrust Must Be Earned.** **Trust** is the cornerstone of all good personal and professional relationships, yet from childhood, most people are programmed for distrust, and told “don’t talk to strangers.” As a result, their first instinct is to distrust until someone proves otherwise. In a business setting, opening up to trust automatically may even seem naive or reckless. But the opposite is actually true, and leads more readily to extraordinary connections.

By trusting first, people release negative energy that holds them back from clicking. The reason: without trust, there is no relationship, so offering trust freely opens the lines of communication, and helps unions thrive from the start. Unfortunately, trusting easily is

a difficult proposition for many people. To help them build trust, Fraser offers the following tips:

- **Know thyself** – Honest self-assessment that invites a understanding of who a person is, why they are who they are, and why they are here leads to a clear sense of direction and an ability to get to work making beneficial connections and doing good work.
- **Listen to intuition** – Professionals should trust their inner voice to assess people they meet, both evaluating how the person makes them feel, and how the person’s actions make them seem to others.
- **Let someone *earn* distrust** – Give strangers the benefit of trust as long as their actions prove worthy. Believe what they say, and do not worry about their motives. Expect good, and good usually follows.

Finally, in the search for “fit” in relationships, a concerted effort toward personalizing every relationship—business or pleasure—is needed. Fraser describes this idea in the seventh Truth, **Tailor Your Relationships for the Perfect Fit.** The best way to personalize and tailor your relationships is by following “The Platinum Rule”: treat others as *they* would like to be treated. Ways to achieve this are to:

- **Never assume anything**– Making a guess about a partner’s likes and dislikes can backfire easily, and make anyone look disinterested or arrogant. Instead, asking questions and staying up-to-date on likes and loves can make a person feel valued and appreciated.
- **Always ask, never stereotype** – Never, ever pre-judge anyone, no matter their age, gender, culture, race, or sexual orientation. Period.
- **Observe people’s behavior, expressions, and body language** – Simply paying attention to a person can offer clues to ways an individual can connect beyond the surface level.
- **Keep notes about a person’s preferences** – Simply jotting down birthdays, alma maters, health restrictions, food preferences, children and spouse’s names enables an endearing, unforgettable connection.

## PART THREE - TIMING

Third in the list of attributes of all relationships that click is **Timing**. The dictionary defines timing as “a synchronizing of various parts of something.” The author describes timing and clicking as counterparts: “If excellent chemistry and a great fit enable you to click with someone new, a thrilling new relationship awaits—if the timing is right.” With regard to the Ten Truths, Timing encompasses a final three lessons in relationship-building: **Make Peace, Not War with Words; Be Open to Everything and Attached to Nothing;** and **It Takes Teamwork to Make the Dream Work.**

The eighth Truth, **Make Peace, Not War with Words**, reminds the click-seeking individual that the human mouth is one of the most violent weapons in the world. Words have power—to create *and* destroy. For this reason, the very first rule of communication (and of building lasting, meaningful relationships) is to think before talking. To keep first-flush outbursts in check, the author suggests professionals and other click-seeking individuals “bite down” on the first words that pop into their heads when someone makes them angry. Next, using the “mirror technique” to repeat the exact words said back to the speaker forces a pause, and an opportunity to assess the real ramifications of what has been said in a non-emotional way. After this, individuals should be encouraged to turn the situation around on the offender, asking how they would personally handle the situation. This forces the angry speaker to consider a different point of view—and come up with a workable solution.

A few more tips for using good words to build relationships are:

- **Plan for confrontation** – Sketch out a response plan in advance for when things go badly and harsh words begin to fly.
- **Step away from the situation** – Offer breathing room to a tense interaction, and come back later after the dust has settled.
- **Cool down** – Punch a punching bag, go somewhere private and scream—anything to release tension, lest it carry over into subsequent conver-

sations.

- **Consider the big picture** – Think about the consequences a tongue-lashing might have on the relationship.
- **Pinpoint an ulterior problem** – Often people’s reasons for being angry at others are internal. Figure out the interior problem, and other confrontations might be avoided.
- **Write it out** – Vent anger by typing or writing it on paper. Just remember to not hit send if using an email program.
- **Communicate face-to-face** – Conveying important information via fax, telephone or email seems indifferent and cold.
- **Remember that less is more** – The most memorable messages are short, sweet, and use carefully chosen, powerful words to get their point across.

*Remember, when you throw dirt, you lose ground.*

The ninth Truth demands that the person seeking to click **Be Open to Everything and Attached to Nothing**. Attracting and cultivating extraordinary relationships is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Stay open to new experiences, explore new horizons, and always look to attract like-minded colleagues, and those things will come. But according to Fraser, there is one more distinct benefit as well: maintain an open mind, and the smart individual can all but triumph over change.

One way to better handle change and at the same time cultivate meaningful connections is to replace judgment with patience and curiosity. There is always more to a situation than what its surface implies. And the best way to break through, is to ask questions, then back up the answers with a careful gut-check and detailed research—before passing judgment on the idea, the person, or the situation. This requires slowing down, staying in the moment, and making an educated decision on whether the person and their offering is a beneficial fit. Be open to the possibilities, and possibilities will open.

Finally, the culmination of all Truths about good relationship-building is embodied in the tenth Truth:

**It Takes Teamwork to Make the Dream Work.** The strongest teams triumph on the battlefield of life and work. Follow all other Truths, communicate a clear set of goals, and make an effort to be where the important people *are*, and anyone can click with a powerful team. This is the ultimate goal of networking, clicking, and connecting—the creation of a group of people who, through beneficial alliances, catapult *each other* toward success.

## CONCLUSION

Author George Fraser describes networking—usually a cold, stilted, and often unsuccessful route to human connection—as similar to gardening. Individuals with selfish, short-term goals for one-sided relationships are doomed to plant seeds for fast-blooming foliage that dies quickly. Long-term connectors, however, those who seek truly meaningful, lifelong alliances, plant seeds for deep-rooted plants that, when nurtured, bloom year after year. His advice: *be a connector*.

Based as much on the principles of self-fulfilling prophecy, the idea of serendipity, and the humanistic teachings of the Bible as much as on business theory or sociological principles, the Ten Truths presented in Fraser's work offer anyone dissatisfied with the typical business networking opportunity or the fruitless search for meaningful personal connection an alternative to going through the motions in search of someone with whom they "click." The answer is introspection—changing one's *own* behavior to elicit change in others'. From simply knowing oneself and having a positive attitude, to learning about the people in their offices and their communities, to taking the time to actually listen to the wants, needs, and ideas of those around them, any person seeking the long-lost joy of a truly meaningful connection can find that friends and partners are all around them every day. At first, says Fraser, these unknown individuals are strangers. Then, after some time, some patience, and some effort, those who work at communication and connection will often hear a strange, nearly inaudible sound when shaking hands with someone new. It is called the *click*.



## FEATURES OF THE BOOK

**Reading Time:** 4 hours, 256 pages

George Fraser describes his Ten Truths to building extraordinary relationships primarily in direct narrative designed to pull the reader into the lessons taught in the book. He also augments these pieces of communication and partnership-building advice with a wealth of personal stories of networking triumph and failure from around the business world. From the first person accounts of love and loss from accomplished businesswoman Nina Brown (told partially in her own words, through detailed interview quotes), to his own personal tales of triumph over adversity, the author reinforces the tenets of his own seventh Truth in nearly every chapter, personalizing the discussion to the reader, and making them feel a part of the narrative.

In addition to these sometimes emotional, sometimes humorous accounts of connectivity, clicks, and near-misses, the book also presents exercises for each Truth at the end of each chapter. Consisting of quizzes, checklists, and self-help exercises, these activities complete the almost academic feeling that **Click** offers the reader.



**CONTENTS**

Acknowledgements

Introduction

**PART 1 - CHEMISTRY**

TRUTH #1 **Be Authentic**

TRUTH #2 **Communicate with Your Heart**

TRUTH #3 **Love, Serve, Give, and Add Value—  
First!**

TRUTH #4 **Nurture Your Relationships—and Your-  
self**

**PART 2 - FIT**

TRUTH #5 **Bless Them and Release Them**

TRUTH #6 **Trust First; Distrust Must Be Earned**

TRUTH #7 **Tailor Your Relationships for the Perfect  
Fit**

**PART 3 - TIMING**

TRUTH #8 **Make Peace, Not War, with Words**

TRUTH #9 **Be Open to Everything and Attached to  
Nothing; the Best Idea Wins**

TRUTH #10 **It Takes Teamwork to Make the Dream  
Work**

Resources

Index

\* \* \*

*References by chapter and a  
subject index are provided.*

### A NOTE TO OUR READERS

We at BBR encourage our readers to purchase the business books we review.

BBR Reviews are intended as a service to busy professionals, as we recommend only those books that are worth your time to read in their entirety. We apply stringent criteria in selecting only the best business books, and in that selection process, strive to help you make informed book-purchasing decisions.

[Click to Buy This Book](#)

This book is available at bookstores and online booksellers.

Business Book Review® is a service of EBSCO Publishing, Inc.

For more information about BBR, to subscribe to BBR,  
or to provide us feedback, visit our Web site.

[www.businessbookreview.com](http://www.businessbookreview.com)

EBSCO Publishing Inc.

10 Estes Street

Ipswich, MA 01938 USA

Copyright of Business Book Review Library is property of EBSCO Publishing Inc. and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download or email articles for individual use.