

Top 10 Networking Tips

Top Ten Networking Tips By Kockem Dead Productive networking is about getting the names of relevant people within your profession and having focused, productive conversations that generate leads, referrals and introductions.

1. Define parameters of your search.

The networking aspect of your search will be more productive when you have a clear focus on industry, industry segment, type of company within the segment, and then a clearly definable target job that you can land and in which you can be successful.

2. Stronger networks can mean shorter searches.

The world of work is more volatile than ever before, so starting today, make a real effort to build networks at your current, prior and next jobs. Reach out to people as a colleague and a friend, collect cards, and stay in touch at least once a year with a greeting card or a call. Email lets you communicate effectively with growing networks.

3. Networking groups.

There are on-the-ground and online networking groups. Those in your local community are often ill organized, although well intentioned; if you attend you have to take the initiative to introduce yourself, ask questions and establish relationships. Best bets? On the ground try 40 Plus clubs, however, online meetings at either executive job sites or the proliferating professional networking sites are more productive because the medium allows you to cut to the chase.

4. Internetworking.

There are now over forty online sites expressly created for professional networking, and they do work. Members use them expressly to network, to gather information and seek advice. Headhunters and employers use them as recruitment channels, and an increasing number carry job postings.

5. College alumni associations.

All universities have an interest in their graduates staying successfully employed, and because people hire people like themselves, alumni associations can play a pivotal role in your professional life; remember, they aren't just for recent grads. Alumni association membership means access to the membership database and with it a wide network of professionals with whom you share a common bond.

6. Company alumni associations.

Companies increasingly see the value in maintaining contact with ex-employees through online alumni networks, both as a recruitment resource for referrals, and as potential re-hires.

7. Your references.

When someone agrees to act as a reference, give an update about what you have been doing and explain your job search goals, but don't get too specific or too grandiose or you will narrow their opportunities to help.

8. Professional Associations (Such as ALPFA)

The best step you can take for long-term career success is to become connected to your profession by joining one or more professional associations: one relevant to your profession, one relevant to your management status, and one if you belong to an identifiable minority. There are many benefits to membership including, job postings you might not see elsewhere and a common bond with thousands of likeminded professionals in the association database.

9. Finding companies and finding names to contact.

It's always easier if you have an introduction or a connection to a networking contact, but when this isn't the case, you can create networking contacts through smart direct research. There are superb online resources for identifying companies and the players within those companies, along with some astounding personal and contact information.

10. Leveraging contacts.

When you integrate the intelligent networking approaches outlined here into a similarly intelligent and comprehensive overall search plan (networking is NOT the only way to get an executive job), you will gain considerable additional benefits. An example might be that now when you see/hear about a job opening you have a wide array of options to find the name and contact information of someone within your profession, who works or has worked at that target company, someone with whom you share a common bond, and who can probably give you the right referral or introduction within the target company.

Source:

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