

Career Article:



Why In-Person Networking Still Counts:

The More People You Know, The More Opportunities You Have

How important is networking? Enormously. The most successful individuals maintain networks inside and outside their companies or fields of expertise.

They know that networks are an essential source of information, support and opportunity.

Networks produce the references and referrals that can make the difference in your career development and employment opportunities.

To begin building your network consider creating and practicing presentation statements—brief summaries of who you are, your strengths and your career direction.

If you feel you lack the skills to connect to people, take heart. Anyone can learn to network effectively. Here are some tips to help build your network of professional support.

Find Opportunities to Build Your Network

Lacking opportunities to meet interesting people? It's time to take action: Join professional organizations & attend business events.

Take up a new activity, volunteer, attend a class or join a club. All of these activities offer ways to meet new contacts while doing something that interests you.

Grow Your Network Strategically

Concentrate on building a small network of people with whom you can build mutually beneficial relationships. Quantity is not as important as the quality of the people in your network. Consider the following:

Are they in a position to help or teach you?

Do you have shared interests and values?

Do you have something to give back?

Build a Diverse Network

As you build your professional network, look for variety. While your network should include peers and leaders within your profession and industry, a diverse group of contacts introduces you to new ideas and opportunities. Besides, you never know how and when the right contact can help you grow or learn.

Always Give Back

Reciprocity is the key to successful networking. Remember that when someone becomes a part of your network, you become a part of theirs. Be ready and willing to help friends and colleagues. The support you provide today will help you secure the support you need tomorrow.