



BUILD YOUR NETWORKING DISCIPLINE

Successful professionals advance as a result of the powerful combination of what and who they know. Here’s how to make the right contacts and extend your circle of influence.

#1: COMMIT TO NETWORKING.

- Schedule time every week to work on networking-related activities.
- State your networking goals.

Ex: In the short term, I'm networking as part of my career research. In the long term, I'm networking to stay informed about future career opportunities and land a new job...

- Create a reward system to help you meet your micro-goals or smaller networking action items.

How will you reward yourself?

- Remove obstacles.

What is keeping you from networking?



- Commit to engaging in 3-5 of the following types of activities over the course of this week and in the future.
 - Informational meetings
 - Online/social networking
 - Professional association events
 - Meetups, specialty group meetings
 - Industry conferences
 - Workshops, classes
 - Alumni networking events
 - Volunteering
 - Employer presentations on campus or virtual events

#2: REFLECT ON THE VALUE YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR NETWORK.

What topics can you knowledgeably address and add value to your social network or at in-person or online networking events?

What skills and qualifications do you have to offer that you can showcase to your social network or at in-person or online networking events?

#3: BUILD YOUR ONLINE NETWORK.

Search for and add the following types of contacts. If you successfully connect with 5-10 people per category, you could grow your network by up to 140+ contacts, keeping in mind to focus on quality over quantity—qualified people who you know or want to know.*

- Thought leaders in your industry
- Recruiters and hiring managers in your field
- Classmates, professors, alumni
- Potential colleagues or leaders from your target companies
- People who have the title or profession you aspire to have



- Mentors
- People you've worked with
- Friends, family, neighbors
- Former bosses
- New people as you meet them
- Clients, vendors
- Researching by [title/profession] on [social network]
- Authors who write for industry publications
- Speakers who present at industry conferences

*LinkedIn may also limit the number of invitations you can send if you sent too many invitations within a short amount of time or if your invitations are ignored or left pending by your message recipients.¹

#4: BUILD VISIBILITY AND ATTRACT ATTENTION.

Like, comment, and share the following types of content that support the topics and skills you brainstormed, including items that...

- Encourage responses
- Are timely and topical
- Include engaging images and hashtags

Use this formula to ensure what you contribute on LinkedIn is varied and engaging:

- ¼ industry/occupation news**
 - Industry news, events
 - Insights, statistics, reports
- ¼ company-specific news**
 - Updates about what the company is doing
 - Job openings
 - Company insights
 - Kudos to colleagues

¹ <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/topics/6096/6097/4800>



- ¼ **promoting people in your network**
 - Providing referrals, connecting people to each other
 - Surveying people, asking for feedback
 - Praising a given company/organization or individual
- ¼ **promoting your work/expertise**
 - What you're working on
 - Offering feedback and advice
 - Educational or career accomplishments

#5: BUILD YOUR NETWORK...

On a daily basis:

- Commit to engaging with or commenting on at least one post.
- Review LinkedIn notifications and send personalized LinkedIn messages or emails when appropriate about:
 - Work anniversaries
 - New jobs
 - Promotions
 - Birthdays
- Scan your LinkedIn feed for news from your network or companies you follow, and like or leave a comment.
- Like or share one article related to your career goals on LinkedIn.
- Look for articles to share that mention target companies.
- Review group discussions and add to the conversation on:
 - LinkedIn
 - Facebook Groups
 - Slack communities
 - Other professional communities



- Read industry publications to stay on top of current events.
- Monitor job boards
 - Indeed.com
 - LinkedIn
 - Niche industry sites
 - Your school's job postings

On a weekly basis:

- Send outreach to 3-5 people you would like to meet with from your list of networking contacts.
- Follow up with existing contacts.
- Conduct at least one informational meeting.

On a monthly basis:

- Attend at least one virtual or in-person networking event.
- Plan your outreach for the month—who do you need to contact and when?
- Assess your progress and evaluate what's working.

#6: PUBLICIZE YOUR GOALS.

- On social media
- Among colleagues and friends
- With a job search group

#7: GET A PARTNER, SOMEONE YOU TRUST TO HOLD YOU ACCOUNTABLE.

- Regularly check in with each other.
- Share your successes, challenges, and goals.