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**How Do You Use  
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Find Jobs?**

# How Do You Use Networking to Find Jobs?

Some job seekers send out hundreds of resumes or fill out dozens of online applications and never get one response. You may be one of these people. Spending all your time applying for jobs online is simply not the best way to find a new position.

Yes, you can increase the likelihood of hearing back from employers by following Job Search Toolkit advice to complete online job applications from Chapter 9 and use Chapter 5 to improve your resume or cover letter. But all this effort is skipping one of the best ways to find a job: networking. Surveys show that from 40% to 80% of successful job offers start with networking.

## Networking Does Not Require a Business Card

Networking is something we do every day. When you ask a friend to recommend the best place for pizza, you are networking. Ask someone else for the name of a reputable mechanic to fix your car and you are networking. Tell someone the best place to buy a chocolate cake and you are networking.



### Write It Down: Make a List

Your networking activity will be more efficient if you start by making a list of the people to tell you are looking for work. This includes friends, family members, former bosses, co-workers and people you come in contact with.

Use the [Networking Activity](#) worksheet (In the Worksheets section) to keep you organized and help you make connections. When you add Uncle Jay to the list, you may realize that he works for ABC Audio, a company you would like to work at, and Sarah, who cuts your hair, lives with a guy who manages a food service operation. Include notes on information you are looking for.



Here's an example of the start of your list:

Networking Activity			
Contact / Tel or email	Company/Title	Date	Action/Follow Up/Next Steps
Uncle Jay Peterson 914-333-2222	ABC Audio Purchasing Agent		
Sarah Henderson 914-222-3333	Hair Salon, Hairdresser		Get contact info for the guy she lives with who manages a food service
Leo Henry 914-111-2222	Best Buy Sales Manager		
Gina Washington ginaw@westside.com	West Side Apartments Leasing Agent		

If you already have a job, don't tell the entire world you are looking for new work. Keep in mind how this information could get back to your employer; they might not be happy and could make work hard for you because they don't think you're loyal.



### True Stories

An engineer who wanted to move to a different company in a different city reached out to former co-workers, teachers and even people who had interviewed her in the past. She was selective in networking, kept the search confidential, and it led to a job with a new company in a new location.

## Make the Calls

Plan before you make networking calls so you can make the best impression and get your questions answered. Every conversation should be professional even if you are speaking to a good friend or relative. If you haven't spoken to Uncle Jay in a few years, he may still think of you as a grouchy teenager. Remember to be professional; you are looking for information to help you get a job.



## Checklist for Success: Have a Plan for Your Call

### Make notes before your call and be prepared to write down information:

- Write the name, phone number and date of the call at the top of your page.
- Sit up and smile, you may be nervous but you always sound better when you smile.
- Be polite and professional with everyone you talk to.
- Start with a polite greeting, "How are you doing?" and listen to the response:
  - For a friend or relative follow with something like, "Since you saw me last I started working. I know you work for ABC Audio. I'm interested in working for a company like ABC."
  - If you are asking for contact information for someone else say, "I remember you telling me about Sal, who you live with, and how he manages a food service. I'm interested in learning more about jobs in food service. Can you give me his number or pass on my contact information?"
  - For someone you used to work with, you can say "I hope things are going well at Best Buy. Since we worked together at Target I started a job search and wanted to know who I should talk to at Best Buy about working there."
- Write down any names and contact information, confirm spelling, phone numbers and email addresses.
  - Add the names and contact information you gather from any calls to your Network Activity chart.
  - Prepare to contact these new names. For these calls, after the greeting say, for example, "My Uncle, Jay Smith, who works at ABC Audio told me you would be a good person to talk to about jobs at Fremont Supply Company."
- Follow up on any direct information about how to apply for a job.
- End every call by thanking the person for their time. For example, say, "Thank you for taking time to talk to me today. I enjoyed learning more about ABC Audio."

Most networking calls won't lead directly to information about an open job but will lead to other people to talk to, expanding your network. The more people you talk to the more likely you are going to get to someone who is hiring. When a job opening occurs hiring managers often ask themselves, "Who do I know?" and ask people around them before a job is posted.

Practice your networking techniques. Rehearse your lines for your call in front of a mirror or with another person. You can practice with a friend or relative, and they may recommend other people to network with as they listen to what you are doing.





## Take the Extra Step: Meet In Person

If you know someone pretty well, try to meet in person. You could call Uncle Jay and ask, “Can we meet at the bagel place on Monday morning for coffee?” In person meetings are more likely to lead to a longer conversation about work and careers, and potentially more names to connect with and career ideas to think about.

### Get the Big Picture

Networking conversations with people in jobs or careers you are interested in are also called informational interviews because they give you a chance to learn more about a job or career.

Here’s a list of questions to choose from for informational interviews:

- What experience did you have to get your job?
- What is a typical workday like?
- How much training/supervision do you receive?
- What do you like/dislike most about your work?
- What are the toughest situations you handle?
- What do you wish you had known about your job before you started?
- What does it take to succeed at this type of work?
- What do you see as the major concerns or trends in the field today?
- What are the opportunities for advancement in this job?
- What recommendations do you have for my job search?
- Who else should I talk to? Can I tell them that you referred me to them?

Don’t forget to take notes to remember all the information you get.

## Send the Email

If you don't have a phone number or can't reach a person by phone for networking, sending an email is the next best thing. Use the email to set a time to talk or get answers to your questions.

Talking, by phone or in person, gives you time for a two way conversation, so it's your first choice.

You could write:

Gina-

Hope your day is going well. You were very helpful when I looked for apartments.

I am looking for a new job and interested in working as a leasing agent. Can we set a time to talk about what it's like to work at West Side Apartments? If yes, can I call you on Tuesday, February 16 at 10 am?

Thank you,

Bill Smith

(914) 555-0100 | billsmith914@gmail.com

If you are using the email to get information you could write:

Leo -

Hope your day is going well. It was great working with you at Target.

I am looking for a new job and would like to learn more about openings at Best Buy. How should I apply? Do you know who I should be calling where you work?

Sincerely,

Bill Smith

(914) 555-0100 | billsmith914@gmail.com

Networking conversations help you learn how your skills and experience can fill company needs. For example, if you find out that a company is adding a new location and you have worked on grand openings, share this information in person, in a cover letter, and make sure it's on your resume.





## Join a Group

You can add to the people you know and increase knowledge about a job or career by joining groups such as:

- Professional Associations such as the American Culinary Federation or Hispanic Business Professionals.
  - To find a professional association, search on the internet with the name of the profession and “professional association”
  - Look for virtual and in-person events
  - Check for local chapters and look for events in your area
- Alumni associations from your high school and college
- Community groups that involve your interests, such as an environmental committee, a park clean-up crew or food bank (See Chapter 3, Are You Volunteering?)



### Take the Extra Step: Volunteer at an Event

**When you volunteer at a professional association or alumni event you have a chance to work alongside other members and meet more people. This might be staffing the sign-in table or working on a set-up or clean-up crew. These interactions give you more opportunities to find out about other people’s career paths and get advice for your own.**

## Don’t Overlook the Neighborhood

Networking opportunities can be as close as right outside your front door or at the bus stop. Let’s say you’re at a neighborhood block party and you meet a neighbor. After chatting about the food the conversation might go, “Carl, it’s good to meet people in the neighborhood. It’s a nice place to live. You know, I’m looking for a new job right now. I have experience as a painter. Can I give you a call to see who you might know that could connect me to a job?” When Carl says yes, agree on a time and date and say, “Great, I’ll call you on Tuesday at 10 am at 914-111-2222.”

Don’t monopolize the conversation at a social event with work; schedule the networking for another time.



## Put Your Online Profile to Work

Chapter 2 focused on making certain that your online image is work-ready. You can build your online image from employable to active and engaged in your industry or career path. These activities connect you to your skills and experience and expand your network.

If you are not active online and an online business presence is not expected for the type of work you do, skip these steps and stick to networking in person, by phone and using email. For example, if you are a cook, a LinkedIn profile, Twitter account and Instagram postings are unlikely to add to your job search success. But if you are a pastry cook, photos of your creations on Facebook or Instagram will boost your image and give potential employers a look at your beautiful creations.

For work that would not be featured in a photo shoot, check social media for people in similar roles, or jobs you are targeting. If you find LinkedIn profiles for people with the kind of job you want, you need a profile too. Use the recommendations in Chapter 2 to build your profile.



### Checklist for Success: Share Across Platforms

#### Manage your social media image by sharing information and participating in conversations on multiple platforms.

- Share industry-related articles and blogs on platforms you use including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest and Google+
- Recommend a business book, share a book review or personalize your recommendation. For example, a post could say "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by David Allen has helped me focus and tame my to-do list."
- Add relevant comments about articles and posts. These should be positive, and expand on content or examples. You might write, "Great article Glenn," or "I've seen this work in many customer service situations."
- Retweet content that highlights developments in your industry
- Write relevant posts and content. These must not be negative and should link to sources for facts such as, "Excited to see construction of new hospital wing at Southchester General Hospital."

When you share information and comment, you demonstrate knowledge and your name will show up in more searches. This can draw the attention of employers and people you have lost touch with who can then be added to your networking list.





## Like and Follow

Open the social media sites you use and Like or Follow employers that you might want to work for. These can include industries that you are focusing on. For example, if you want to work with older adults in a company like Atria Senior Living, follow the company on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Company and organization pages keep you up to date with useful information:

**Products** New products, promotions, special events and locations help build your knowledge about the employer.

**People** Companies highlight employees for recognition and accomplishments; you may find someone to connect with to learn more, and will gain knowledge about the work culture and what the employer values.

**Jobs** Employers may post individual jobs and hiring events.

On Twitter and Instagram, follow people in your industry who are leaders, influencers and executives, or the authors of business books that impact you. These will all give you good ideas, insights, information to share and a picture for others of your interests.

## What are Facebook Friends For?

When your Facebook profile is workplace-friendly, you can use the site for networking for your job search.

Look at your list of Facebook friends to see if anyone is working for a company or in a job you are interested in, or might know someone who is. Add these people to the contacts in your [Networking Activity](#) worksheet to call or send a private note.

In addition to following companies on Facebook by Liking them, you can check and sign into job sites like Simply Hired from the platform. Once you have joined professional associations, check for their Facebook page and Like these too. This helps keep up to date on information and events that you can post and comment on.

You can also join alumni groups on Facebook. They provide great opportunities to connect with people you went to high school or college with and learn about events. You can connect, share information and join discussions. Note that membership can show your age if the graduation year is in the group title. If you are sensitive about your age don't Follow the group after you join, just check the Facebook group page regularly for networking and to keep up to date.





## Take the Extra Step: Share a Good Business Book on Facebook

Commenting on a business book that you find valuable is a good way to change the conversation away from the usual cute cat pictures. If you read *How to Have a Good Day* by Caroline Webb, recommending it on Facebook could be a starting point that leads from one of your connections to an employer who values positive motivation.

### What's the Best Way to Add Connections on LinkedIn?

Once you join and complete your profile on LinkedIn, you will be prompted to add connections. Do not automatically link to your email address book. This will send LinkedIn connection requests to everyone with a generic message.

Send personalized requests for connections to:

- Co-workers and former co-workers
- People you went to school with
- Friends
- Family members
- Bosses and former bosses
- People who work for you or worked for you in the past
- People you meet through networking
- Members of groups you are in
- Customers and clients

A personalized request can be as simple as, "Brad- I enjoyed working with you at ABC Audio and would like to connect on LinkedIn." Don't send a request for information, an interview or a job in the connection request. The first request is just a personalized request to connect.

Accept invitations you receive to grow your network. These don't have to be from people you know. Don't accept requests to connect that are not business related. If someone asks to connect on LinkedIn because they liked your photo and would like to "get to know you better," stay away. LinkedIn offers you the option to Ignore or Accept requests to connect.



## Join LinkedIn Groups

LinkedIn Groups provide information, connections and potential job openings by sharing content and creating conversations.



### Checklist for Success: Joining LinkedIn Groups

#### Get started and keep up with LinkedIn Groups:

- Make a list of potential groups that can include:
  - Industries or professions; for example, “food service”
  - School alumni
  - Regional affinity; for example, “Hudson Valley Professionals”
  - Company alumni groups for people who had been employed by the same employer; for example, Target Alumni Network
  - Interests related to work or personal passions; for example, “sustainable energy”
- On your profile page use the search box to type in the group type and pick “groups.”
- Pick a group from the list that you are interested in
  - It should not be too small. If you search “Home Depot Alumni” and one of the groups on the list has 20 people, you have not found the real Home Depot Alumni Group
  - Read About This Group to see if joining makes sense
  - Click on Request to Join

The Group Administrator will respond to your request

Once you join a group it will be listed under Interests on your profile page. You will receive updates and can join a conversation, learn about events and reach out to members to connect.

## Show Off Your Skills, Get Endorsements for Them

When you complete your LinkedIn profile you will be able to include up to 50 skills. Click on “Add a New Skill” from your profile page. LinkedIn will suggest skills based on your profile and you can type skills into a search box.

After you list your skills, look for ways to endorse your connections. Endorsing someone for skills is easy, it only takes a few clicks. Go to the profile of one of your connections, scroll down to Skills & Endorsements and click on the skills that you have seen them demonstrate.



Endorsing other people usually prompts them to endorse you. You can also ask for endorsements by sending a message via LinkedIn to a connection, email or call them. It's a short request, "Gina, hope all is well with you, since we worked together at a call center can you endorse skills on my LinkedIn profile for customer service and telephone skills? Thank you, Glen."



## Take the Extra Step: Get a Badge for Your Skill

If you have specific software skills show off your knowledge by earning a Badge on LinkedIn. Under Skills & Endorsements on your profile page, click on Take skill quiz to find a list that ranges from Adobe PhotoShop to QuickBooks and Microsoft Office Suite programs. Take the quiz and if you earn the badge it can be displayed on your LinkedIn page to show your expertise.

## Get Recommendations

LinkedIn Recommendations are strong statements about your work from coworkers, customers and bosses. They are an important part of a complete profile. Call connections who can describe the quality of your work or send them an email to ask for a recommendation.

This request should be specific and personal. You can help them with a detailed ask, "Can you write a LinkedIn recommendation for me describing the work we did to get the XYZ project done?" In the Recommendations section of your LinkedIn profile page you will be able to click on "Ask for a recommendation" to send a request for a recommendation by LinkedIn message. LinkedIn will prompt you with questions to write the request.

## Add LinkedIn Connections to Your Networking Activity

You can ask your LinkedIn connections questions related to your job search. You can send a direct message, "Hi Jenny—I'm looking for a job in customer service. Are there any jobs at ABC Audio where you work or do you know anyone else hiring?" Use the same content you would for an email request.

For people you don't know well, or worked with long ago, LinkedIn is a good place to start a networking conversation. Start by sending a message, "Joe—Thank you for connecting with me on LinkedIn. I enjoyed working with you at Prime Security. I see you are at ABC Audio now. I'm looking for a new job with a good company and would love to find out about your work. Can we talk next week? If so does Tuesday at 10 am work for you?"



## Six Degrees of Separation

Another way to use LinkedIn for networking is to check out the connections of the people you are connected with. When you find someone in the kind of job or company you are interested in, you can ask the person you know to make the introduction. This sounds like, “Joe- I see that Sal at Epic Home Construction is one of your LinkedIn connections. Can you introduce me to Sal? Epic Home is a company I would really like to learn more about and could be a great place to work.”

It’s also valuable to search LinkedIn for people who work at companies you are targeting. Type the name of the employer into the search box and choose People. When you see the names you may find people you know and will also see if some of your connections are connected to people you will want to meet.

## Check Your LinkedIn Messages

LinkedIn will send you an email when you have a message. Respond promptly to messages and requests to connect. Keep up with these conversations and use the prompts in the message to organize them so you don’t get buried. Just like your email inbox, you don’t want something important lost in hundreds of messages.

Messages will come from connections and also potential employers interested in learning more about you.



### Take the Extra Step: Find Alumni

**Alumni are generally very happy to help someone who went to the same school. You already have a common connection whether you graduated in the same year or twenty years apart. Search for alumni by putting the name of the school in the search box and choosing People. Use LinkedIn to send a networking note including, “As an alumnus (for male, alumna for female) of XYZ college...” in your customized content.**

## Check Out LinkedIn Job Postings

You may have created your LinkedIn profile because you found posted jobs you are interested in on LinkedIn. To search for jobs on LinkedIn, type the job or industry in the Search box and click on the option for jobs. For example, type “Customer Service” and you will find many pages of listings. The LinkedIn algorithm connects these with the content of your profile. On the top of the page of listings you will find buttons to click on that offer options to narrow the search.



When you read job postings on LinkedIn look at the entire page. If you have a connection to someone at the company, or one of your connections does, it will be included for you on the page. Look on the right side of the page for a sentence like, "See how you're connected" or "You are connected with someone at ABC Audio." If it's a 2nd or 3rd connection you can send a note to your connection that says, "Joe- I just applied for a job at Epic Home Construction and I see you are connected to Sal Smith who works there. Can you introduce me to Sal so I make sure my resume gets to the right person?"

Once you have decided to apply to a job posted on LinkedIn, read the instructions carefully and follow all of them.



## True Stories: Stop Burying Your Head in a Screen

A sales person arrived at each job search coaching session with an update on the applications he had submitted online. Each week the job search coach asked, "Who have you talked to, who have you been networking with for your job search?" The coaching sessions become rich with information about the people he was meeting by using networking. Within a few weeks of the change in job search focus, from online applications to networking, he was offered and accepted a new job.

### Stay Up to Date

Update your profile to keep current and included in the community. Updates increase the potential for your name to catch the attention of an employer.

### Keep Track of Networking

It's exciting to make all of these connections and with each one you are broadening the circle of people who know you are looking for a job. As this list grows it can be tough to keep track of people. You don't want to contact someone twice with the same request and you don't want to answer a phone call or email message from someone responding to your request by asking, "Who are you?"

Use the [Networking Activity](#) worksheet (in the Worksheets section) to keep track of networking.





Here is an example of these notes:

Networking Activity			
Contact / Tel or email	Company/Title	Date	Action/Follow Up/Next Steps
Gina Washington ginaw@westside.com	West Side Apartments Leasing Agent	4/20/21	Got phone number and name, Harry Lawrence, to call about service jobs, call by 4/23/21

## Scheduling

When networking, always have your calendar handy so you can write down the date and time of interviews and networking appointments. Keep notes that include correct names and contact information.

When you schedule an interview write down all of the following information:

- The date and time of the appointment
- The exact address including any floor or department
- The name, including correct spelling, and title of the person you will meet
- The name and correct spelling of the company

## Share the Good News

When you get a new job, whether or not it was through networking, send a note to everyone you networked with along the way to share the good news. Thank them for their time and advice. Keep up the connection; strong networks help with work information, not just job search. If you have a LinkedIn profile, update it with the new job information.

**Return the networking favor.** If you know someone is looking and you hear about an opening that is right for them, you tell them.

Good luck with your networking. It's a very important skill.





## Chapter 6 To Do List

- \_\_\_\_\_ Make a list of people for networking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set networking meetings using phone or email
- \_\_\_\_\_ Keep track of networking on your calendar and [Networking Activity Form](#)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Network by phone, email and by meeting people
- \_\_\_\_\_ Decide if you need to be on LinkedIn, if so, create or update profile
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you are active on social media, use it for networking to expand your online presence



## Need Help?

The Westchester Library System offers workshops, resources, and one-to-one counseling to guide your job search and improve your interviewing skills. Find out more at [FirstFind.org](http://FirstFind.org).

