

CAREER SEARCH AMERICA

CAREER TRANSITION TOOLBOX WHITEPAPER

EFFECTIVE NETWORKING:

MAKE NETWORKING AN ESSENTIAL PART OF
YOUR CAREER TRANSITION



WWW.CAREERSEARCHAMERICA.COM

INTRODUCTION

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY IN PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

Looking for a job takes on new meaning with social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Establishing an online profile in a career networking site such as LinkedIn is crucial as part of your networking campaign; it's a way to make new contacts and to reconnect with people you may have known in the past. Use LinkedIn to conduct research on companies to find out if you know anyone inside. However, just posting a profile is not enough – you need to invest some time and energy into building an online persona.

Update your online profile, respond to request from your network, use the networking sites to showcase your skills, put up a video or write a blog on a topic that displays your experience. Be creative.

At the same time, don't neglect the face-to-face networking. Use your online contacts as a doorway to offline meetings. In the end, it is the face-to-face encounter that gets you the job.

HOW TO GET STARTED IN PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

By joining online professional associations in the field of your interest, you can develop a network very quickly. Specialized and niche social networking sites exist for any special skill or trade. Read the trade press to find out where to find your peers or check out this list at www.mashable.com for professional and social networking sites. Posting your credentials or discussing career objectives with others can bring about decisions by businesses that may be hiring. Don't ignore Chambers of Commerce meetings, alumni associations, and, especially, networking events!

For those of you leaving the military, Hire a Hero (www.hireahero.org) is a free social networking platform which brings together employers and the military community. It provides access to meaningful employment and also connects veterans with mentors, who have successfully bridged the gap to civilian life and employment. This professional networking site has a unique perspective. It was founded by former members of the military, and to date has helped 3 out of 10 veterans launch new careers.

Other useful sites are:

- Military Exits www.militaryexits.com which lists jobs, career fairs and offers free tips and hints on the job market.
- Troops to Teachers www2.ed.gov/programs/troops/index.html is a Federally-funded program which trains former military members to teach in high-poverty schools and give them the credentials to teach in high-need local agencies or charter schools.

SUMMARY

When you are shifting careers, meeting the right people makes all the difference. Don't limit yourself. Go where your interests lead you. If you love books, even joining a book club (which may be totally unrelated to the career you're seeking) is useful. You share a common interest and have a forum to exchange ideas. Remember: all you need is someone who knows someone who knows someone.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Networking is crucial. It's "Networking or NOT working!"
 - Use the technology, including online databases, job search sites, and, especially, social media sites: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.
 - Get involved! Join professional associations and community organizations
 - Visit websites that cater to your needs:
 - monster.com
 - hireahero.org
 - Troops to Teachers
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