

Part II: The Importance of Networking

Networking is crucial in today's job market because most opportunities aren't advertised publicly, and having connections can give you access to opportunities that you wouldn't have otherwise been able to access. Having lots of business connections is also great for being able to have referrals that you can rely on when you are ready to seek out even more opportunities. It helps you stand out amongst other candidates for positions, build credibility in your industry, and stay informed about news and trends in your industry. Having a strong professional network accelerates career growth and opens doors for more opportunities.

Ways that I could use to begin to build my professional network include using LinkedIn, reaching out to existing contacts that I have who might have opportunities to offer in my field, and attending professional events. I could use LinkedIn to reach out to alumni from my school or to professors who may know professionals in my field. I could also use existing contacts I have, like my professors, classmates, or casual acquaintances, to ask for advice or opportunities in my field. Attending career fairs and other job fairs allows me to converse with recruiters and industry professionals about opportunities they may offer.

The first concrete strategy that I can use to expand my professional network is to do informational interviews with professionals in my industry to learn about their career path, challenges, and advice. The second concrete strategy is to have active participation in professional communities, whether that be for in-person events or participating in online professional communities, so that I can expand my reach for connections and visibility in my field.