



Simpler Way to Expand Your Network

Some years ago, job search was very simple. Take the latest resume, write the cover letter and post it online. That's it. But that doesn't work nowadays.

In today's ultracompetitive job market, you need to look extraordinary and as such you have to take untraditional methods of job searching, meaning you should not depend on one method or the other. You have no option but to go for the two strategies.

You have to reach out to people for getting access to new networks and seek contacts outside your field. You may have exhausted your network and it has to be expanded. It boils down to a situation where you have to use every available strategy. Not only that, you have to select a strategy that is a perfect fit for you.

Some are afraid of being too bold. But in the changed job market scenario, you have to be bold and at the same time find creative ways to be noticed. The best choice is to be between being bold and loathsome. Here are five nonprofessional places and events to look for career opportunities.

Sports event: You may be enjoying a football match and start conversing with a guy sitting next to you not knowing that he is looking for someone to assist him in his venture. After initial chit chat, you may find that the guy is in fact looking for one who fits your skill set.

Social networking sites: Millions make friends through Facebook , MySpace, BrightFuse and LinkedIn. Why don't you send in a message to your pals and contacts about your job search? Reach out to your own network to tell your friends and colleagues that you are looking for a job. First research the people in the network, their companies and organizations they are connected with. Then seek help of your contacts and get yourself introduced to them.

Farmers markets: These are great information centers of trade. You may be rubbing your shoulder with someone who can be a good resource for you. Same is the case in the next door grocery shop. These are the places where you have a conversation with another shopper and talk about your favorite apples and exchange recipes. This casual talk may end up sharing career status and skills.

Conferences outside your field: Here you bump into many career changers. People who want to switch fields may find these places very useful. You can start building a new network of contacts and meeting professionals with different networks by attending conferences like this one.



Local restaurants, gyms and hair dressing saloons: While visiting these places you may not connect them with job search. But these places may be breeding grounds for job opportunities. You have a chance to strike a conversation with people whom you know already may ultimately help you in your job search.

Here are four ways you can sell yourself to prospective network contacts when in nonprofessional situations:

- Prepare a synopsis of three to four sentences that introduces your most marketable skills.
- When networking, introduce yourself and ask them what they do for living. After breaking the ice, tell them you are looking for a job and explain what type of a position suits your skill set and talent.
- Carry business cards always.
- Keep ready your resume and cover letter so that you can immediately send out if a contact is made.