

# The Ultimate Social Network Job Searching Guide



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A recent [study](#) by Right Management revealed that more than 46,000 individuals selected networking as the most effective way to find a new job — the fifth year in a row networking has topped the list. The study data proves once again that, in the highly competitive job search, it's who you know and who knows *you* that leads to successful employment.

Job seekers understand the importance of networking. They read up on job search experts' tips for [networking events](#), order hundreds of business cards and then hit local industry events like a job search Tasmanian devil, chatting up every professional and jotting down names of new connections to request on [LinkedIn](#) when returning home.

But too often, job seekers simply build up their networks to leave them untapped and unused in their job search. Why? Employers are [using social networking sites to pre-screen candidates](#), and [92% of recruiters](#) use social networking sites to find talent. Job seekers can also take the full advantage of a social network job search. All they need is a beginner's guide, and it begins with "who."

## Who You Need in Your Social Network

When it comes to what people you need in your social network, some may surprise you. Many job seekers mistakenly believe the best and only people they need to have in their social networks are fellow industry professionals, preferably higher up in the industry, who have accomplished a great deal. While these people are a component of job seekers' social networks, they are just a piece of a bigger puzzle.

In fact, the ideal job seeker's network is comprised of [industry professionals](#) as well as fellow job seekers in a variety of industries, former and/or current mentors, family members and friends. Why such a diverse group? Let me explain.

Fellow job seekers in a variety of industries are necessary in job seekers' networks because they're the people staying abreast of job search best practices. They hunt down job search help articles (like this one), subscribe to career newsletters, utilize social network job search tools such as [tweetmyjobs](#) and more. Fellow job seekers, whether they're employed, underemployed or [unemployed](#), are also the best at understanding the frustration of searching in our difficult job market. Their moral support is often more vital to job seekers' psyches than actual job

leads.

Former and/or current mentors, too, are great at providing overwhelming support and motivation as well as job leads and tailored recommendations in the job search. They can also share tales of early career setbacks to keep job seekers motivated in rough times. And family members and friends can refer and recommend job seekers within their companies.

## **How to Prioritize Your Social Network**

Prioritizing your social network begins with deciding what type of job you'd like and at what type of company you'd like to work. Job seekers must remember that previous positions in their industry don't limit them to only applying for jobs within the same industry. For example, job seekers who previously worked as events managers at hotels aren't limited to applying for hotel jobs. They can apply for event planning jobs at advertising or public relations agencies, non-profit organizations and large corporations that hold employee events, to name a few. A bit of career soul searching is required for successful prioritizing.

Once job seekers decide the type of job they'd like, prioritizing their social networks is actually quite simple. Job seekers' most important connections will be those within the industry they're pursuing. These connections are the most likely to know of open positions within the industry, and they can give job seekers the advantage of learning of those openings even before they're advertised.

Below this group are connections with the same or similar positions in different industries. These connections will be able to provide the most accurate picture of what the position requires, and they'll be able to tell job seekers how to best tailor the resumes to showcase how their experience is relevant. Hiring managers and HR professionals also tend to regard these professionals as the best for referrals and recommendations, since they understand the demands of the position in question.

Finally, job seekers have their remaining connections. Job seekers should regard these connections as important components of their network even though they may not be terribly helpful in their current job search. There is, of course, a chance these professionals stumbled upon an open position job seekers are looking for, but there's a better chance that they'll be helpful in future job searches, so maintaining mutually beneficial relationships is vital.

## **How To Tell Your Social Network You're Job Searching**



Telling your social network you're job searching can be a tricky matter, especially if job seekers are searching for new opportunities while [employed](#). Job seekers don't want to post status updates on LinkedIn profiles with job leads and job search advice when public relations or human resource co-workers may be [patrolling profiles](#). After all, the job they currently have is better than no job. So what can job seekers do?

Reach out to connections in personalized messages on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Personal outreach messages are better received and more likely to warrant responses than massive broadcast efforts, and they're less likely to get job seekers into hot water with a current employer.

Job seekers, if you haven't spoken to the contacts you're reaching out to in some time, open your message reminding them who you are and how you know one another. Then, get into the meat of the matter: Tell your connection you're looking for new opportunities; be specific about the position and industry. Ensure you researched their company before composing your message to see if any available positions fit your job search criteria. If there are, mention those positions specifically in your message. Say, "I see your company is currently searching for XYZ. Can you provide me with more information about the position than what is available online? I'd love to apply."

If your connection's company doesn't have any positions you qualify for available, say, "I see that your company doesn't have exactly what I'm searching for available. Have any of your connections mentioned any openings that fit my criteria?" If you have a link to a specific opening, describe the job and include the link. The key item is to make it easy for your connection to help you.

Check out all suggestions your contacts make, even if they don't seem like the right fit on the surface. Make sure you thank your connections for their assistance, and let them know you're prepared to be similarly helpful in their futures. If your connections don't respond to your personal messages, don't envision the worst. Today's professionals are [working more with less](#), so it's very possible that your message is one of the last tasks on their to-do lists. Send them another message the following week touching base. If they still don't respond, move on. Messaging or calling them again could make you look desperate.

A final tip in this ultimate guide to social network job search is to put an online portfolio link in all your social profiles and personal messages. Doing so will give your social connections the opportunity to refresh themselves with your

work and pass your work along to their connections quickly and effectively.

What do you think? Are there other steps you'd add to the ultimate guide to social network job searching?

## Social Media Job Listings

Every week we post a list of [social media and web job opportunities](#). While we publish a huge range of job listings, we've selected some of the top social media job opportunities from the past two weeks to get you started. Happy hunting!

- [Product Manager](#) at Meetup in New York
- [Social Media Community Manager](#) at Walt Disney Parks and Resorts in Glendale, Calif.
- [Sr. Manager/Director of Social Media Strategy & Operations](#) at Univision in New York

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