

# Finding the Best Places to Network

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Getting and maintaining a job in today's business world is about more than having the right skills and experience. Knowing the right people can make all the difference. That's why networking is so important to many people. Of course, you don't just go out to network with other people just to look for new or better work. There are many opportunities where you can learn more about what is happening in your field and learn interesting tips from colleagues and fellow professionals. You can take the things you learn and apply them to your own job and career.

There are many places where you can socialize, bring your work to the front and do better. Just keep in mind that networking is an ongoing process that should occur even when you're not looking for work. Otherwise, looking for a job will become arduous. Here is a closer look at some ideal places to network:

## Business events for important people

User groups, associations and organizations like the local Chamber of Commerce are good places to start networking. These networking and trade organizations operate with the intention of promoting business interests in the area, according to Business Pundit. One of the main functions of these groups is to [host business events on a regular basis](#), including meetings, dinners and special functions. They bring people together and have them mingle. These social gatherings present an opportunity to chat with people and hand out your business card. More importantly, they give you an opportunity to listen to others. You may meet another person who works in your field who can offer new insights. One thing is for sure, if you start networking when your job search begins, you are too late and your job search may be arduous.

*"Attending the local Chamber of Commerce presents an opportunity to chat with people and hand out your business card."*

Along with the Chamber of Commerce, many areas have local trade publications. Many of these organizations host events in the form of speakers, panels and banquets honoring feature issues such as the top 40 business professionals under 40. Sales professional Jeffrey Gitomer suggests visiting these events to hobnob with the best business people in your area. These events often [attract a variety of professionals](#), which means you will likely meet someone in your industry or in a related field.

Trade shows are an excellent place to network.

## Keeping it in the trade

In some cases, thinking local isn't enough to spread your wings. For example, maybe you already know everyone in the field who lives within a 100-mile radius. That's when you want to consider looking up events such as trade shows and conferences. They tend to serve multiple roles, such as bringing in leaders in the industry to host panels on new or important aspects of the business. They also bring together specialists from around the country. Trade shows and conferences become a pond filled to the brim with fish looking for you, and your business card is the bait.

In addition, you should consider joining a trade association or regularly attending special interest groups related to your industry or profession, either at the national scale or through a local chapter. While they may not frequently host major events like trade shows, they often hold smaller events that will get your foot in the door and meet some new people. From there, you

can build your career on a social level.

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