**10 Ways to Expand Your Professional Network**

**(Even if You’re Shy)**

Use this checklist to take simple, effective steps toward growing your professional network—without the overwhelm. Each item is designed to help you build meaningful relationships at your own pace.

1. **Reconnect with 1–2 people from your past (colleagues, classmates, etc.).**

**💼 Professional & Career-Focused Reconnection**

* [**LinkedIn**](http://www.linkedin.com) – Ideal for reconnecting with former coworkers, classmates, or industry contacts.
* **Networking Events** – Local Chamber of Commerce, career expos, or professional associations.
* **Email or Direct Outreach** – A short, thoughtful message can revive an old connection.

**🌐 Online Platforms for Personal & Social Reconnection**

* [**Facebook**](http://www.facebook.com) – Great for finding old classmates, neighbors, or family friends.
* [**Instagram**](http://www.instagram.com) **/** [**TikTok**](http://www.tiktok.com) – Follow or message people you used to know to start a conversation.
* **People Search Tools** – Sites like [Whitepages](https://www.whitepages.com/), [Spokeo](https://www.spokeo.com/), or [BeenVerified](https://www.beenverified.com/) (for more serious reconnection efforts).

**🏢 Local or Community-Based Reconnection**

* **Churches, Mosques, Temples, or Spiritual Centers** – People often reconnect over shared values.
* **Community Events** – Town fairs, block parties, and volunteering opportunities.
* **Gyms, Clubs, or Classes** – Hobby groups or continuing education classes are great for rekindling bonds.

**📝 Tips for Reaching Out**

* Be honest and kind: "I was thinking about you and wanted to reconnect."
* Mention a shared memory or mutual interest.
* Keep it light and pressure-free—reconnection takes time and mutual interest.
1. **Join an online community related to your industry or interests.**

**💼 1. LinkedIn Groups**

* **What it is:** Professional communities based on industry, job role, interests, or geographic location.
* **How to use:** Search for your industry (e.g., “[Human Resources Professionals](https://www.linkedin.com/company/human-resources-professional-group/)” or “[Marketing for Small Business](https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/success/small-business-advertising/resources?selectedFilter=all-categories)”) and join groups with active discussions.
* **Link:** [linkedin.com/groups](https://www.linkedin.com/groups)

**🧵 2. Reddit Communities (Subreddits)**

* **What it is:** Forums organized around specific topics or professions.
* **How to use:** Search subreddits like [r/Entrepreneur](https://www.reddit.com/r/Entrepreneur/), [r/Sales](https://www.reddit.com/r/sales/), [r/DataScience](https://www.reddit.com/r/datascience/), [r/UXDesign](https://www.reddit.com/r/UXDesign/), etc.
* **Link:** [reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com)

**👥 3. Facebook Groups**

* **What it is:** Many industries have niche [Facebook groups](https://www.facebook.com/groups/discover) that are supportive and very active.
* **How to use:** Search your industry + keywords like “networking,” “freelancers,” or “professionals.”
* **Example:** “[Freelance Graphic Designers](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1547241878904191/),” “[Virtual Assistants Tribe](https://www.facebook.com/groups/virtualassistanttribe/),” “[Black Women in Tech](https://www.facebook.com/groups/223806115941297/)”

**🧑‍💻 4. Slack & Discord Communities**

* **What it is:** Private chat-based communities for real-time discussion.
* **How to use:** [Google](https://www.google.com/) “[your industry] [Slack community](https://slackcommunity.com/)” or “[your profession] [Discord server](https://discord.com/servers).”
* **Examples:** [Online Geniuses](https://onlinegeniuses.com/) (marketing), [DevChat](https://web.devchat.ai/) (developers), [Design](https://www.design.com/) (UX/UI), [TechMasters](https://techmasters-tc.com/) (tech professionals)

**🌐 5. Industry-Specific Forums and Associations**

* **Examples:**
	+ [**SHRM Connect**](https://www.shrm.org/community/shrm-connect) – for HR professionals
	+ [**Stack Overflow**](https://stackoverflow.com/questions) – for developers
	+ [**ProZ.com**](https://www.proz.com/) – for translators
	+ [**Behance/Dribbble**](https://dribbble.com/tags/behance) – for creatives/designers
	+ [**The Knot Pro Community**](https://forums.theknot.com/community) – for wedding industry pros

**🚀 6. Mighty Networks or Circle Communities**

* **What it is:** Growing platforms for niche, often invite-only communities.
* **Examples:** Some coaching programs or professional memberships (like career coaches or resume writers) host their own private spaces here.

**✨ Bonus Tip from On Point Resume & Coaching:**

* When joining any group, **start by observing**. Like or comment on a post, then slowly join conversations when you feel ready. You don’t need to be loud to make meaningful connections—your presence matters.
1. **Comment on 2–3 LinkedIn posts this week with a thoughtful insight.**
* Commenting on posts on **LinkedIn** is one of the most powerful (and underrated) ways to **build your professional network and visibility**—especially if you're shy or not ready to create your own content yet.

**Here’s what commenting does for you:**

**✅ 1. Increases Your Visibility**

* Every time you comment, your name and headline show up—not just to the post’s author, but to their entire network (and sometimes beyond, depending on the post’s reach). This gives you passive exposure without having to create content from scratch.

**✅ 2. Builds Relationships with Key People**

* When you comment meaningfully on someone’s post, they notice you. Do this consistently, and it’s an easy way to start a relationship or reconnect with someone you'd like to work with or learn from.

**✅ 3. Establishes Your Voice and Expertise**

* Thoughtful comments (especially those that add insight, ask a question, or share an experience) help showcase your knowledge in your field—without having to publish your own long posts.

**✅ 4. Increases Engagement on Your Own Profile**

* The more you interact, the more likely people are to check out your profile, send a connection request, or engage with your content if you post something in the future.

**✅ 5. Low-Stress Networking**

* You don’t have to make small talk or initiate DMs. Commenting is a simple way to get involved that feels less intimidating and more authentic.

**📌 Example of a Thoughtful Comment:**

* "Love this perspective on remote leadership—especially the part about building trust asynchronously. I’ve found success using short Loom videos for daily updates. Thanks for sharing this!"
1. **Sign up for a small virtual or local event that interests you.**

**🌐 1. Eventbrite**

* **Why it’s great:** Tons of free and paid professional events, webinars, and virtual meetups.
* **How to find local virtual events:** Search your city + filter for “Online events.”
* **Link:** [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)

**💼 2. LinkedIn Events**

* **Why it’s great:** Events are hosted by professionals and companies on topics like career development, leadership, marketing, etc.
* **How to use:** Go to the “Events” tab on LinkedIn or search using keywords and filter by “online.”
* **Link:** [linkedin.com](http://linkedin.com)
* **Bonus:** Great for connecting before/after with attendees.

**👥 3. Meetup**

* **Why it’s great:** Known for in-person groups, but many groups now host regular virtual events.
* **How to use:** Search your location + topic (e.g., “young professionals Atlanta,” “women in tech”), then filter by “Online events.”
* **Link:** [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com)

**🧠 4. Local Libraries, Colleges & Chambers of Commerce**

* **Why it’s great:** They often host free virtual workshops, career panels, resume reviews, and networking events for locals.
* **Where to look:** Check their websites or Facebook pages.

**🚀 5. Professional Associations & Industry Organizations**

* **Most industries have local chapters that host regular virtual events, such as:**
	+ [**AMA (American Marketing Association)**](https://www.ama.org/)
	+ [**SHRM (HR professionals)**](https://www.shrm.org/)
	+ [**NSBE (Black Engineers)**](https://nsbe.org/)
	+ [**NABA (Black accountants)**](https://nabainc.org/)
	+ [**IIBA**](https://www.iiba.org/)**,** [**PMI**](https://www.pmi.org/)**,** [**ASQ**](https://asq.org/?srsltid=AfmBOoq9M8Dt2qTU42sr7H7imgKAh9rofbay0AcGTiZmyUnh6m_nhInk) **and more**
* Search for "[your city] [your industry] association" or "[your industry] virtual event."
1. **Look into volunteer or committee opportunities in your field.**

**🔍 1. Check Local & National Volunteer Platforms**

* [**VolunteerMatch.org**](https://www.volunteermatch.org)**:** Filter by industry, skill set, and location.
* [**Idealist.org**](https://www.idealist.org)**:** Offers listings for mission-driven and nonprofit roles, including virtual opportunities.
* [**HandsOn Connect**](https://www.handsonconnect.org)**:** Connects people with causes in their local community.

**💼 2. Explore Professional Associations**

Many industry organizations offer volunteer committees, mentorship programs, or event planning opportunities. Check out the following organizations:

* [**SHRM**](http://www.shrm.org) **(for HR professionals)**
* [**AMA**](https://www.ama.org/) **(marketing)**
* [**PMI**](https://www.pmi.org/) **(project management)**
* **Your state or city’s professional chapters**

**💻 3. Use LinkedIn Strategically**

* Search for posts using hashtags like **#VolunteerOpportunity** or **#SkillsBasedVolunteering**
* Join [LinkedIn](http://linkedin.com) groups in your field and ask if anyone is seeking help
* Message nonprofits or small businesses offering services in your niche

**🤝 4. Reach Out to Local Nonprofits or Small Businesses**

Offer to assist with something in your wheelhouse:

* Resume workshops (for career coaches/HR)
* Social media help (for marketers)
* Tech troubleshooting (for IT pros)

**🧭 5. Ask Your Network**

Sometimes the best way is to simply ask:

* “I’m looking to volunteer my skills in [field]—do you know of any organizations or causes that could use help?”
1. **Ask a mutual contact for an introduction to someone you'd like to meet.**

**Subject:** Would You Be Open to Making an Introduction?

Hi [Mutual Contact’s Name],

I hope you're doing well! I noticed that you're connected to [Name of Person You Want to Meet] on LinkedIn, and I’ve been really impressed by their work in [industry/role/specific topic].

I’d love to connect with them to learn more about their journey and possibly explore opportunities to collaborate or share insights. If you feel comfortable, would you be open to making a brief introduction?

Of course, no pressure at all—just thought I’d ask. I truly appreciate your time either way!

Warm regards,
[Your Name]
[Your Title/Company]
[Your Contact Info]

1. **Write or share a short post on LinkedIn showcasing your expertise. Example below:**

🎯 Resume Tip of the Week

Want to know the one mistake that keeps strong candidates from landing interviews?

* + They write resumes filled with responsibilities… instead of results.
	+ ❌ “Responsible for managing schedules”
	+ ✅ “Managed scheduling for 3 executives, reducing calendar conflicts by 40%”

At On Point Resume & Coaching Services, we help job seekers *own their value* by transforming vague duties into powerful, measurable accomplishments.

**🔹 Quantify your impact.
🔹 Use action verbs.
🔹 Tailor your resume to the role.**

✨ A great resume doesn’t just list what you did, it tells the story of how well you did it.

If your resume needs a glow-up, I’d love to help. Let’s connect or book a consultation.

#CareerTips #ResumeWriting #JobSearch #OnPointResumeAndCoaching #LinkedInTip #JobSeekers

**8. Schedule a 15-minute virtual coffee chat with someone in your industry.**

Here’s a professional and friendly message you can send to request a 15-minute virtual coffee chat with someone in your industry:

**Subject:** Quick Virtual Coffee Chat?

Hi [Name],

I hope you're doing well! I’ve been following your work in [industry/area] and really admire your insights and contributions. As someone who’s also passionate about [specific topic or shared interest], I’d love to connect and hear more about your journey.

Would you be open to a brief 15-minute virtual coffee chat sometime this week or next? I’d truly value the opportunity to exchange ideas and learn from your experience.

Thanks so much for considering—and no pressure if your schedule is tight!

Warmly,
[Your Name]
CEO, On Point Resume & Coaching Services
[LinkedIn or contact info]

**9. Follow up with someone you met recently—send a thank-you or relevant article.**

**Subject:** Great Connecting with You!

Hi [Name],

It was such a pleasure meeting you [yesterday/earlier this week/at the event]! I really enjoyed our conversation about [something you discussed], and I appreciated your insights on [topic].

Thank you for taking the time to connect. I’d love to stay in touch and continue the conversation—whether it's sharing ideas, resources, or ways we might support each other's work.

Wishing you continued success, and I hope our paths cross again soon!

Warm regards,
[Your Name]
CEO, On Point Resume & Coaching Services
[LinkedIn Profile] | [Email]

**10. Remember yourself: You don’t have to be extroverted to build powerful connections, just be genuine.**

* If you're an introvert, remembering to “be yourself” while networking is less about pretending to be outgoing—and more about embracing your natural strengths. Here's a helpful reminder you can repeat (or turn into a personal mantra):

**💬 Introvert Networking Reminder:**

*“I don’t have to be the loudest in the room to make a meaningful connection. My presence, my questions, and my ability to listen deeply are enough. I lead with authenticity, not performance—and that is my superpower.”*

**🔑 Tips to Help You Stay Grounded While Networking:**

* Prepare a few go-to questions you enjoy asking (e.g., “What inspired you to get into your field?”)
* Set small goals (like making 2 quality connections, not 20 quick ones)
* Take breaks, it’s okay to step outside or pause between conversations
* Follow up in writing—this is where introverts shine: thoughtful reflection, not small talk

**Remember:** being yourself doesn't mean being outgoing, it means showing up as someone who’s real, respectful, and curious. That’s more than enough.

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