

Jobs

Careers guide

How to network offline

Your LinkedIn profile isn't enough: Here's where to put in the face time. By Molly Gallagher



You're special. We know that. But in a country with nearly 10 percent unemployment, your résumé is sitting in HR's inbox with equally stellar competition. That's why networking is key. "Ninety percent of all jobs are about fit," says Trudy Steinfeld, executive director of NYU's Wasserman Center for Career Development. "The only way people figure this out is by meeting with you face-to-face." That means that your LinkedIn profile isn't necessarily enough to land you a job these days—old-fashioned, in-person schmoozing is still your best bet.

"A lot of people kind of think that online networking is an end in itself, but it's really a means to an end," says Stuart Schultz, coauthor of *The Gradspot.com Guide to Life After College* (disclosure: this book is also cowritten by two TONY staffers). Steinfeld agrees, adding that the Web should be used as a tool to help you meet someone in real life, where you can start building a relationship that could end in a referral or even a job.

The first rule of networking is simple: Don't discount anyone. "Every individual you meet [has the] potential to find you a job," says Maxine Martens, CEO of Martens & Heads, a headhunting agency for the fashion, retail and beauty industries. But the trick is preparation. Before you sit down with someone, research his or her company and prepare a list of questions, says Schultz. Then gear up to sell yourself. Steinfeld recommends crafting what she calls an elevator speech, a few sentences that will give someone a quick-hit sense of why they ought to hire you: "What can you tell somebody in 60 seconds about your skills that will make them want to help you find a job?" Keep in mind that networking goes both ways, Schultz says: Always think about how you can return the favor.

Lastly, remember that the little things do actually go a long way. Be polite, and treat the receptionist the same way you would the CEO, Martens instructs. Take down (or make private) any Facebook pictures of your Fourth of July keg stands, and stay in touch with your new contacts. Steinfeld notes the biggest mistake people make when networking is not following up.

Where to do it

7 events where you can work on finding a job

The Actors' Enterprise: Bite Size Business Soiree

Good for: Television, commercial and theater actors

The benefits: For the first half of this monthly session, Actors' Enterprise founder Erin Cronican teaches thespians about business skills that will help them keep their careers on track, such as filing taxes and creating a demo reel for auditions. The second half gets them in the same room with other actors and people in the performance world to network. *Next event Aug 15. Part 1: Studio 353, 353 48th St between Eighth and Ninth Aves, second floor (theactorsenterprise.org). Part 2: New York Marriott Marquis, 1535 Broadway between 45th and 46th Sts. Noon, suggested donation \$10. R.S.V.P. to erin@theactorsenterprise.org.*

Business Networking International Chapter 46

Good for: Anyone involved in a business of any kind, from floral designs and event coordination to law and architecture

The benefits: BNI is a group based on the idea that if people in various businesses get together regularly, and know one another's missions and goals, they can establish word-of-mouth referrals for each other as they go about their normal duties. To that end, the 16 to 18 members of each chapter (there are 50 chapters in Manhattan and 62 total in NYC) gather around a table every week to talk about who they are, what they do and how they can help one another. You must apply and pay a hefty fee to join—and only one representative from any industry is accepted into each chapter—but you'll end up with free support and advertising from your colleagues. *Craftbar, 900 Broadway between 19th and 20th Sts (bni46.net). Thu 7–8:30am. Annual corporate membership \$330, plus annual chapter dues \$280; visitors \$20. To attend as a guest before applying, e-mail chapter president Mario Illie at mriilie@guaranteedrate.com.*

The Connectors NYC

Good for: Creative types in fashion, music, graphic design and film

The benefits: The laid-back happy-hour vibe of this invite-only event makes the schmoozing that much easier; just think of it as meeting other cool people doing other cool shit in NYC. The brains behind the connections—Ashleigh Snead, founder of children's clothing lines Punkster and Acoustic; Dayna Ghiraldi, founder of public-relations firm Big Picture Media;

and freelance film publicist Melissa Smolensky—aim to create a networking community of their peers. In one recent success story from a past Connectors event, a guest landed a business-consulting gig at Hayden5 Media, a company that produces music videos, commercials and movies. *August date and location TBA; visit theconnectorsnyc.com or e-mail theconnectorsnyc@gmail.com for details and an invite. Free, R.S.V.P. required.*

Ed2010 Speednetworking

Good for: Aspiring magazine editors

The benefits: You can think of these get-togethers as speed-dating for your editorial career. As Ed2010 founder and president Chandra Turner explains, newbies to the publishing field each get five-minute informational interviews with various magazine editors (in the past, the lineup has included folks from *Sports Illustrated*, *Popular Mechanics* and *Glamour*). *Location and price of next event TBA; visit ed2010.com for details: Sept 20 7pm. R.S.V.P. to events@ed2010.com.*

NewsMakers

Good for: anyone who works in entertainment, fashion, media and advertising

The benefits: "You can't build a relationship over a modem," says Shawn Sachs, who founded NewsMakers with George Uribe. Sachs knows about building relationship: He spends his days as partner and CEO at PR firm Sunshine, Sachs & Associates. "You need to be in front of someone—you can't replicate shaking someone's hand," he says. You can find arms to pump at this no-frills night, which occurs every six weeks, offering attendees the chance to meet and greet in a happy-hour-type setting with food and cocktails. Though the early NewsMakers gatherings started with a guest list mainly made up of media professionals, the laid-back soirees (which take place at various bars and restaurants) have evolved to include a mix of reporters, public-relations representatives, TV producers and even financial analysts. *August date, time and location TBA; visit the [NewsMakers Facebook page](#) for details. Free. R.S.V.P. to sachs@sunshinesachs.com.*

The Science Alliance

Good for: Graduate and postdoc science students

The benefits: The Science Alliance is the career-development arm of the New York Academy of Sciences. Various seminars, webinars, conferences and discussion groups throughout the year cover topics such as how to find a job in academia, how to build your online presence and how to use your science knowledge in the business world. At these events, members of the academy—along with relevant real-world types like venture capitalists, entrepreneurs and consultants—offer advice and socialize with students. *Next event date, time and location TBA; visit nyas.org for details. Annual student membership \$36, most events free with membership.*

Turnaround Underground

Good for: Mid-level professionals who work in the restructuring field

The benefits: Restructuring is the process of rejiggering the inner workings of a company to help it either make more money or bounce back from bankruptcy—something we're seeing a lot of these days. At Turnaround Underground, lawyers, financial advisors, accountants and bankers who work in this field meet up to bounce ideas off one another without their bosses hovering around; in the past, lawyers have found financial advisers to assist them on bankruptcy cases over the drinks here. *Next events Aug 25, Sept 29, Oct 27. Location TBD, visit turnaroundunderground.com for more info. 6:30pm, \$50. To R.S.V.P., e-mail adrienne.blankley@kattenlaw.com.*

And if you want to meet people who've found a way to take a break from work:

Meet, Plan, Go!

Good for: New Yorkers who want to take a sabbatical from work to travel, or make a career out of traveling

The benefits: No matter what job you have, sometimes you just need a change of pace. So if you're daydreaming about taking a year off to travel, or want to go as far as making a career out of your wanderlust, mark September 14 on your iCal. That's when Meet, Plan, Go! is hosting its firstCK conference, geared to help desk prisoners break their chains and take time off from the nine-to-five lifestyle. A panel of those who've done it successfully—and even created their own new careers on the road—will speak, and then much mingling will take place to help attendees prep their own trips. The event is also taking place in several cities nationwide and is the brainchild of IT consultant turned travel photographer Sherry Ott, freelance designer Michaela Potter and "life sabbatical" career coach Tara Russell. *Professor's Loft, 219 Second Ave between 13th and 14th Sts, second floor (meetplango.com). Sept 14 at 6:30pm; free. Registration required.*