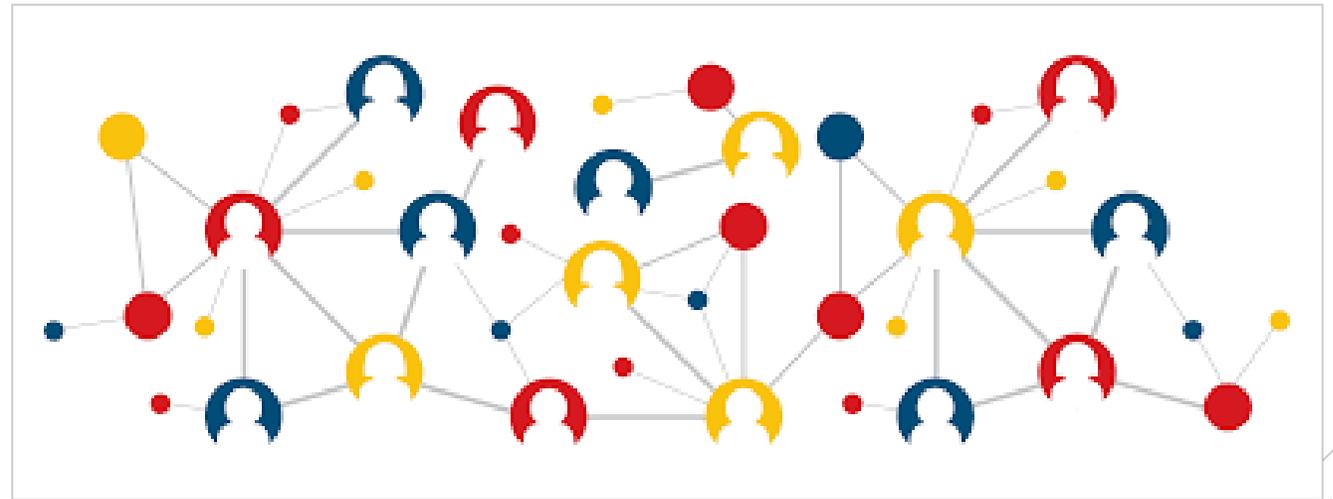


Building and Leveraging Your External and/or Global Network

July 14, 2020

One of the most important endeavors for our professional growth and success is building and leveraging networks. This may be challenging for some people and many professionals are turning their backs on opportunities that could alter their careers simply because of their reluctance to network.



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Building Networks

A personal network is a set of human contacts known to an individual, with whom that individual would expect to interact at intervals to support a given set of activities. In other words, a personal network is a group of caring, dedicated people who are committed to maintain a relationship with a person in order to support a given set of activities.



Types of networks:

- Social vs Professional – based on use
- Internal vs External – networking opportunities within or outside your own organization
- Local vs Global – geography or organization scope
- Professional organizations and interest groups, Alumni organizations are also used for network building.

Leveraging Networks

Once you have a network, what do you do with it?



- Build your business footprint – use your new connections to reach new clients, customers, or even coworkers in different departments
- Ask for advice – networks, especially external, can provide new perspectives and ideas that you can use to better your work
- Gain opportunities – you never know who is going to need your skill set one day
- Explore role or career changes – having a diverse web of connections allows you to ask around and investigate what other possibilities might exist for you
- Increase visibility – word of mouth and who you know is an important aspect of growing and receiving new opportunities, whether they be business or personal related

Virtual Networks

- Much more relevant in this day and age
- Utilize the tools available on social media to:
 - build your network;
 - promote your brand; and
 - also leverage your network
- Select a fit for purpose social media platform and remember whatever you post reflects 'you'
- A personal website may also be appropriate
- Professional organizations, interest groups, alumni organizations are available on social media
 - Opportunity to build your network externally and globally
 - Networking Rules!
 - Estimated 70%- 85% of critical jobs are filled via networking
 - The "six degrees of separation" concept suggests that any two people are connected by six steps of connection or fewer.

