

Maintain and Leverage your Network

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In this article, you'll learn how to maintain and leverage your professional network once you've built it.

Maintaining

In order to stay in touch with your professional network, you'll have to make an effort towards maintaining those relationships. This is similar to a personal relationship where you want to connect on a regular basis in order to stay close, but a professional relationship can be much easier to forget. Here are some tips on how to maintain your network:

- If you learn about an opportunity that someone in your network might be interested in, take the time to pass it on.
- If you hear good news about someone in your network through a mutual connection or LinkedIn, consider sending a note of congratulations. Here's sample language you can adapt and use:

Hi Karla, hope you're doing well. I saw on LinkedIn that you're launching a new product and I wanted to congratulate you! The new product sounds really interesting, and it seems like a great solution to some of the problems we used to come across at XYZ Company. I hope our paths cross again sometime soon.

- Let people know when you change jobs or get promoted! Ideally, you want to send individual messages, but if you're short on time you can send a mass email or make a post on LinkedIn. Here's sample language you can adapt and use:

Hi John, hope you're doing well! It seems like forever since we were working together at the ABC Company. I really enjoyed working on projects together and learning more about data tracking from you. I wanted to share some news - I've recently accepted a position as Assistant Manager at XYZ Company and I'm really excited to build my experience with business operations. Please keep me posted on how things are going for you - hope our paths cross again sometime soon.

- If you haven't had contact with someone in over 6 months, consider sending them an article that they might be interested in. Here's sample language you can adapt and use:

Hi Maria, hope you're doing well! I saw this article and thought of you - I know how you're always looking for ways to improve operations efficiency, and the author brings up some interesting ideas. Hope things are going well at your new company, and I hope our paths cross again soon.

Leveraging

There are many purposes to having a professional network, including sharing opportunities and resources and staying aware of the trends and issues in your field, but this network really comes into play when you want to make career moves. Think about your professional network as a league of superheroes that you can activate to help you at the right moment! Here are some tips on how to leverage your network:

- If you're looking for more information about a specific type of job or career path, consider asking someone in your network if they know anyone they could introduce you to. You can provide them with a blurb to make it easy for them to reach out via email or LinkedIn. It's your network using their network, which is what makes networking so effective! Here's some sample language you can adapt and use:

Hi Bruno, hope you're doing well! How are things going at XYZ company? My work is going really well ABC Company, and I've really enjoyed using some of the skills I learned when we worked together. Recently, I've become interested in learning more about budgeting and finance. I was wondering, do you know anyone who works in this field who you might be willing to introduce me to? If so, I'll include a short blurb below that you could use to introduce us via email. No problem if no one comes to mind or this is too busy of a time for you. Take care, and I hope our paths cross again soon.

"I worked with Zoey at XYZ Company and she's looking to build on her experience in business operations and learn more about budgeting and finance. She's also working on her Bachelors Degree in Business. She'd be interested in a brief 20-30 minute chat to pick your brain about the field, if you have time."

- If you're looking for a new job, consider reaching out to someone in your network to let them know that you're looking and what you're looking for. Here's sample language you can adapt and use:

Hi Roberto, hope you're doing well! How are things going at XYZ Company? I wanted to let you know that I'm currently seeking opportunities in the business operations field, either remote or in the Bay Area. I'm hoping to use my project management and data analysis skills to help a business grow. Please let me know if you come across any opportunities or think there's anyone or any organization I should be aware of. Thank you in advance! I'll be sure to let you know how things turn out.

- If you run into an issue at your current job, consider asking someone in your network for advice. People love the opportunity to use their experience and feel like experts. It's best to go into details verbally and not in writing, just in case the issue includes sensitive information. Here's sample language you can adapt and use:

Hi Laticia, I hope you're doing well! How are things going at XYZ Company? My work is going really well ABC Company, and I've really enjoyed using some of the skills I learned when we worked together. Recently, I've run into a dilemma that I was thinking you might have some insight into. Would you possibly be willing to talk it over with me virtually for 20-30 minutes sometime in the next 2 weeks? If so, please let me know a couple of days/times that work for you, and I'll send you a calendar invite. No problem if this isn't a good time for you. Take care, and I hope our paths cross again soon.

This article doesn't capture all of the ways you can maintain and leverage your professional network, but hopefully it gives you some concrete ideas. Keep in mind that people like helping others, especially those they know and like, but they won't know what kind of help you need unless you ask.