

Leading Outside of the Office

To grow professionally, you must network outside of your organization. Industry Associations, professionals from other organizations, and online communities provide great opportunities to expand your knowledge and become known as a leader within your field.



Associations

Every industry has a professional association. To make the most of the association membership, work all avenues.

Volunteer to serve on association committees and sub-committees. Write articles for the newsletter, website or online forums. Attend regional and national conferences and local chapter meetings. Keep in touch with those you meet. Ask questions of those you meet and absorb their

knowledge. Let it be known that you are committed to your field and are in the business for the long-haul.

Mentors from Other Organizations

Finding a great mentor makes a big difference in a young professional's career. While it would be great if your boss could serve as your mentor, and sometimes that relationship works, it is often more comfortable to look outside your workplace for a mentor. Find someone who you feel comfortable with who has been in the field for a while--preferably someone who is knowledgeable and actively learning. Arrange to meet regularly for lunch or coffee, and find out if you can email or phone your mentor when you need to. Mentors can also be previous supervisors or bosses, internship coordinators, professors, or anyone with whom you feel comfortable talking about your work situations, and who can be there as a resource for you.

Online Forums

Joining the online discussion of topics in your field can be a great way to network and get involved. One important thing to keep in mind when participating in online discussions is that they are VERY public and anything you post can and will have an impact on your current and future employment. Even when you are not at work, the accessibility of personal information is so great that anything you say or do will impact each part of your life.