



How do I Network using the Internet and Why?

The Internet can be a great way to begin casual relationships that turn into wonderful networking opportunities. Since we aren't face-to-face with the other person, the stress of making these new connections is greatly alleviated but don't think that it's an easy market. It is very important to begin these relationships in the right manner. Our voices and body language cannot be used to express ourselves. We are limited to choosing the right words and use words in context to properly represent our intentions. To be blunt:

Don't make a mess of a great opportunity to connect with people in hiring places!

I'm not just referring to new Internet users. A lot of Internet oldie-moldies need a reminder that there are real people behind the electrons and real people make real decisions based on your electronic communication blunders.

Advantages of Online Networking

- There are thousands of discussion groups and community forums covering hundreds of subjects.
- You can 'break the ice' before meeting someone in person
- You can listen, engage or be engaged as you wish. No one can see you sweat and you don't have to feel like a wallflower since no one can see you standing by yourself.
- Many recruiters are searching the lists to find potential candidates.

Disadvantages

- Networking online is just as difficult as networking in person! In fact, it may be harder because you can't really establish a true personal relationship online.
- First impressions count even more. Be very careful with your first public posting. Don't get too comfortable if you are one of those oldie-moldies.
- Your online behavior matters more than you think. Don't be a jerk – I really mean it!

You may chuckle at that last line but a friend of mine who participated in a mailing list for professional engineers told me that one participant on the list was so nasty online that no one would attend his presentations at conferences nor refer business opportunities to him. *Talk about having your online persona affect your offline professional reputation.*

Please [contact us](#) for further assistance.