

Networking Without the Networking Event

Many opportunities are shaped by relationships, referrals, and conversations before a formal application gets traction. Most people make the ask too vague, too large, or too awkward. The fix starts with people who already know you.

MY WEEKLY GOAL: CONVERSATIONS

REACH-OUTS

DAY I DO THIS

START WITH YOUR EXISTING UNIVERSE

Write names, not job titles. Don't filter yet.

People whose careers I admire

People I know at companies that interest me

Well-connected people who know my work

START WARM, NOT COLD

A former colleague you haven't spoken to recently is usually easier to approach, and likelier to answer, than a stranger. Reference something specific and the awkwardness disappears.

RECONNECTING

"I was thinking about the Henderson launch we worked on. I'm looking at operations roles again and would love to hear what you're seeing. Would you have fifteen minutes in the next couple of weeks?"

ASKING FOR THE INTRODUCTION

"You mentioned you know someone on that team. Would you be comfortable introducing us? Happy to send you a note you can forward."

When there's a clear connection, ask for the introduction rather than stopping at general advice.

WHAT A MESSAGE THAT GETS ANSWERED CONTAINS

1
How you know them

2
What you're exploring

3
One line of credibility

4
A specific, small next step

CREDIBILITY IS ONE PLAIN SENTENCE, NOT A BRAG

"I've spent the last six years leading customer operations for growing software companies."

Never open with "do you know of anything." Try: "I'm exploring X roles, and you know that space well. What am I likely missing?" People like answering that, and it gives them something concrete to remember you for.

TRACK IT OR LOSE IT

Busy people miss messages. Most job seekers send one note and quit. A polite follow-up a week later often gets a reply from someone who simply missed the first one.

WHO	COMPANY / CONTEXT	LAST CONTACT	NEXT STEP	FOLLOW UP ON

MICRO-NETWORKING: THE VERSION THAT FITS A REAL WEEK

☐ Leave three thoughtful comments that add something

☐ Send one note of genuine appreciation, no ask attached

☐ Follow up with anyone who offered help

☐ Reconnect with one dormant contact

☐ Say thank you within 24 hours, every time

☐ Search your alumni directory for one relevant connection

One conversation does more than an evening of scrolling.
Start with one.