



Use Strong Communication Practices to Grow Your Network Throughout Life

A diverse social network is a valuable asset at every stage of your life. Meeting new people can introduce you to new ideas and alternative perspectives while offering a support system for your personal and professional endeavors.

As an older adult, [networking yields surprising benefits](#), especially if you are interested in starting a business. Here, [Communication Power](#) offers helpful tips on connecting with new people and maintaining strong relationships.

Understand the Benefits of Networking

Whether you have entrepreneurial aspirations or are looking for opportunities to [get more involved by volunteering](#) in your community, networking can improve the success of your small business, nonprofit organization, or passion project. When launching a new venture, it's helpful to have access to a sizable social network so you can share and exchange new ideas and uncover unique opportunities.

You can also contribute to your future success by [creating a business plan](#) detailing how to structure and manage your company. Another vital step is forming a business entity, which determines your tax rules and benefits. S corps are a popular option for many businesses since they provide pass-through taxation and allow you to deduct losses on your tax return. While forming a C corp means you'll be subject to double taxation, but it'll be easier to raise capital. Learn the difference between C corp and S corp to determine which designation suits your business best.

In addition to the professional benefits, [expanding your social network](#) promotes your overall well-being by boosting your confidence, raising your self-awareness, and allowing you to foster meaningful relationships.

Connect With People in Your Area

When seeking out new social connections, local networking events such as seminars, workshops, and group meetups are great venues that offer a comfortable and convenient environment where you can meet like-minded people. If you aren't a confident communicator, consider setting up [coaching sessions with Communication Power](#). How you present yourself in networking events will influence how likely people are to recommend you for other opportunities. You want to make a great impression!

When attending networking events, it's a good idea to have business cards with you at all times, but especially if you are attending a networking event. You don't have to spend a lot of money to have great looking cards designed. You can do it yourself! [This may help](#): it's a free business card design tool that comes with plenty of templates and design additions. Just pick one, customize it, add your information, and get ready to print!

Look for networking events by asking friends or colleagues, checking postings on local bulletin boards in cafes and community centers, and contacting organizations directly. Several online resources are also available to help you improve your networking capabilities.

Utilizing Online Resources

The internet is a powerful tool for connecting you with people from all over the world, which is especially helpful if you live in an area with a lower population or have difficulty finding local networking events. [Online communication tools](#), such as social media networks, video meeting software, and online discussion forums, can help you find people who share your professional interests.

Consider building a profile on LinkedIn, or similar social media networks, where you can connect with other professionals while investing in your career development. In addition to new contacts, you can read informative articles about relevant business topics.

Maintaining Relationships (and Reconnect with Old Ones)

As you build friendships, you may need to work to maintain your new connections. According to experts, following up with people you meet and investing time and effort helps to [build strong professional relationships](#). It's also essential to be present in the relationship, which you can do by responding promptly to messages and emails, accepting invitations, and expressing a sincere interest.

Believe it or not, one of the easiest ways to build and maintain relationships is by connecting with former schoolmates. Many platforms, such as LinkedIn or alumni network websites, make it easier to find and connect with former classmates or colleagues. These connections can be valuable resources for networking, sharing ideas or seeking advice, and can also help keep track of changes in the industry or job market. Additionally, joining alumni groups or attending school reunions can provide opportunities to reconnect with former schoolmates, build new relationships, and strengthen your professional network.

Embrace New Professional Opportunities

While growing your personal and professional network can be challenging, especially as you age, there are many opportunities for connecting with new people. Networking offers valuable benefits, so consider seeking opportunities to attend in-person events or join online groups.

Image: [Pexels](#)