

## Networking Tips 1: Top 7 Suggestions for Getting Connected

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Common wisdom has it that less than 50% of jobs (perhaps as low as 20%) are posted publicly, on job boards, on corporate career pages, or through recruiters. This means that more than half the available jobs out there are invisible – they’re either being marketed through business connections and recruitment agencies, or are still in the formative stages and haven’t even been approved yet. How can you access these jobs? Network!

For many job seekers, networking is intimidating, but it doesn’t have to be. In Part 1 of our networking series, we review some of the top ideas for finding connections and creating opportunities to meet.

1. Know yourself. If you don’t know yourself, do some self-discovery. Key in on past successes, how you achieved them, what skills you used, what you like doing, what kind of environment you like working in, what industry or companies really grab you. Use your findings to develop an “ideal work situation,” and use that as a starting point for networking. If you need help, get a copy of “[What Next?](#)” by Barbara Moses, or download “[Advanced Techniques for Work Search](#)”.
2. Prepare an “elevator speech.” The [elevator pitch](#) is a 30-40 second sound bite that tells someone the most important things about you as a person and potential employee or colleague. Your elevator pitch and your resume objective/profile should deliver the same message.
3. Refine which industries and companies you will pursue. See who’s posting jobs on the Alberta Accountants online [CPA Alberta Job Board](#). Look at the [Advantage Employer](#) information on the CPA Alberta website. Employers listed are committed to hiring designated accountants and accounting students, and supporting students through project placements and coaching and mentoring from designated accountants on staff.
4. Find a way to connect with people already working at your target organizations. Leave no stone unturned. Ask members of your existing network (classmates, other designated and non-designated accountants, current and former colleagues and clients, friends, family) if they know anyone working at those companies. Request introductions, even if the potential connections have nothing to do with Accounting and don’t seem in a position to help. Hopefully you can arrange a meeting, and that person can in turn introduce you to someone who is in your field.
5. Attend a “Brown Bag” seminar. These are hosted and presented by CPA Alberta Career Services, and focus on both job search and career advancement topics, with a presentation followed by a brief networking session. For a schedule of upcoming events, and to register, visit the [Career Services Events](#) page.
6. Join your local chapter of CPAs. Attend some of the monthly lunch meetings; these usually have a speaker, so you learn something interesting (and score CPLD hours). You also get to network with chapter members over your meal, which can be helpful in discovering new job opportunities, and generating introductions to new contacts.
7. Attend networking events, conferences, job fairs... anything. Events needn’t be accounting related. As long as there are professionals who work for companies that need good people, there is potential for useful contacts. A great way to hook up with like-minded people is through the “Meet Up” website, which has events listed for [Calgary](#), [Edmonton](#), and other cities.

Once you’ve gotten connected, it’s time to start meeting, either in person or virtually through a phone call or email/web exchange. In Part 2, we examine some simple strategies for arranging and holding effective networking meetings and informational interviews.