



It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year — for Growing Your Professional Network, that is.

Now that December's here, you're probably getting invited to a lot of holiday parties and neighborhood get-togethers. Whether you love them or hate them, there's no denying that these events can provide an invaluable opportunity to meet new people and connect with someone who potentially could lead you to your next job. And since networking is the single best way to land a job and keep your career healthy, it's smart to join in the festivities.

To help you make the most of this month's social soirees, here are few tips to make the most out of your networking:

Talk less, listen more. Smart networkers focus on asking good questions. Do more listening than talking. By asking questions, you'll avoid talking too much or too little, problems that often plague nervous job seekers and introverts.

Keep it low-key. A holiday party is first and foremost a social event. So even if you're desperate to find work, avoid a full-court networking press. Your first objective is to establish a connection that provides a context for future contact.

Offer your business card (and ask for one). You'll want a way to stay in touch with key people you meet after the event, so be sure to ask for a card before ending a valuable conversation and give that person yours. If you're out of work or don't have a business card through an employer, offer a networking card that has your name, job objective or professional tag line, e-mail address, phone number, LinkedIn profile URL and Twitter handle.

For more information on Holiday Networking, check out these great articles:

1. [Tis the Season to Advance Your Career: Networking Over the Holidays](#)
2. [Networking Tips for the Holidays](#)
3. [Holiday Networking Tips for Veterans](#)



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