

TWITTER NETWORKING: A SAFE SPACE FOR INTROVERTS; A PARTY FOR EXTROVERTS

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“You can’t stay in your corner of the Forest waiting for others to come to you. You have to go to them sometimes.”

— *Winnie the Pooh*

We like Twitter because it is the great equalizer: satisfying and effective for introverts, extroverts, and ambiverts. In simple terms, introverts get their energy from within and extroverts get their energy from people. Ambiverts enjoy social interaction but also relish some time alone. Statistics say that the latter describes most of us.

If you’re an introvert, says Wendy Gelberg, author of *The Successful Introvert: How to Enhance Your Job Search and Advance Your Career*, “there’s a good chance you prefer to have a small number of close friendships in your life rather than a larger number of more casual relationships. Too much social interaction is draining, and you need quiet time to recharge your batteries. Twitter can provide that.”

“On the other hand,” declares August Cohen, our extrovert expert, “extroverts can more easily demonstrate many of the talents employers value, and Twitter is the perfect platform to showcase these skills.”

For both introverts and extroverts, the challenge in job search is to become known and trusted by those in a position to hire you or recommend you to others, and do so in a way that is both authentic—true to your personality—and manageable in terms of energy.

As we asserted in chapter 1, “Twitter is what you want it to be.” We might also have said that Twitter is what you *need* it to be! If you are an introvert, Twitter is the quiet, controllable, “safe” space you need to build relationships that are so critical to job search. If you are an extrovert, Twitter unites you with a universe of people who

can provide the energy and stimulation you need to stay upbeat and connected in your job search.

Top 10 Twitter Tips for Introverts

We tapped Wendy Gelberg and Kim Batson—a coach and personal brand strategist for CIOs and other technology executives (60 percent of her clients are introverts)—for their best advice on using Twitter for an introvert’s job search. Here are their recommendations:

1. **Network.** By definition, people who use Twitter are open to building new relationships and interested in attracting followers. You can search for people that you’d like to get to know and initiate a conversation with them; most people will be quite receptive to your overtures. And if you connect LinkedIn (another introvert “safe place”) to your Twitter account, you’ll have even better results.
2. **Target.** Look for people in your industry, occupation, or target companies; use Twitter’s “Find People” feature to identify them. You can use the Direct Message (DM) feature for a private reply. Suggest a phone or e-mail follow-up for a more in-depth exchange.
3. **Break the ice.** Introverts frequently prefer to dispense with superficial chat, but even face-to-face conversations begin with some kind of superficial ice-breaker comment, which then leads to a more in-depth conversation. On Twitter, you can initiate a conversation privately in a DM. Once you establish an initial connection, you can continue the conversation through e-mail, by phone, or in person.
4. **Build relationships.** One key to relationships is demonstrating an interest in others, and introverts often have a desire for deeper understanding. Draw on this strength and read, comment on, and retweet people’s links, blogs, Web sites, and tweets. When you read what others have written and show a genuine interest in them, you build relationships.
5. **Deepen relationships.** You can further a relationship with networking contacts by spending a week or two retweeting their tweets or responding to their conversations. Then send them a public message when the time is right. For example:

@YourContactsName Enjoyed hearing your thoughts on [fill in the blank]. Would love to have a deeper conversation if you’re available. Please DM me to exchange email/phone info.

6. **Give to others.** Many introverts love Twitter for its treasure trove of information. Expand your own professional knowledge and, in turn, become a resource for others by passing along information. They will appreciate your passing it along, and so will those who originated it. It’s a win-win.

7. **Focus on what you know.** Many introverts are subject matter experts (SMEs) who can find and garner Twitter followers around that expertise. People often follow other tweeters based on topic. This is a terrific way for introverts to build a network, connect with recruiters and companies who seek that type of expertise, find opportunities, and even stay confident in a job search.
8. **Get on the radar.** It can be difficult, even exhausting, for introverts to keep up with a lot of relationships. By frequently tweeting about your professional activities and sharing links to other resources that are helpful to others, you can almost effortlessly connect with your followers. When opportunities or projects come up that match your background, you're top-of-mind.
9. **Feel free to think.** Many introverts like to think first and act later. Twitter allows them to do just that. Unlike face-to-face conversations that require an immediate response, you can read a message, think on it, and then reply.
10. **Feel free to listen.** Twitter allows introverts to listen intently to the views, comments, and questions of others and to look and listen for clues on industry, company, products, and service challenges. Introverts pay attention to what is going on around them. This observing trait may allow you to find opportunities that others may miss!

Top 10 Twitter Tips for Extroverts

"It has been said that Twitter is a virtual cocktail party," August Cohen told us when we asked her about Twitter's fit for extroverts. "It provides immediate engagement, a continuous stream of small talk, and connection with the external world. In short, it is a perfect fit for extroverts' need for constant connection and stimulation as well as a conduit for the relationship building necessary for effective job search."

We asked August to share her best practices for extroverts' job search on Twitter. Here are her recommendations:

1. **Go from bored to busy.** Turn your tendency to be easily bored into motivation to use Twitter. Twitter provides variety and immediate gratification. You can review the activity of your favorite people, create a new industry-specific list, review your @ mentions, or thank people who retweeted your posts. Every time you log on, there will be something new for you to explore.
2. **Optimize without overwhelming.** While it is tempting for extroverts to rapidly build a large network of followers, focus on finding people in the industries or companies where you want to work. This will allow you time to develop meaningful online relationships that could lead to opportunities.
3. **Start conversations.** After finding people you want to follow, review their timelines to learn more about them. Go back several pages. Through updates you will learn more about their personas, the companies they work for, and

issues they may be struggling with. Extroverts enjoy small talk, so use this skill to start some casual conversations and build rapport.

4. **Balance your brand.** Review your tweets on occasion to ensure there is a nice balance among information, discussion, and advice, while being brand consistent every time you post. Extroverts are enthusiastic and positive in their approach to life, and these characteristics, supported by your unique value proposition, will draw potential employers your way.
5. **Be generous.** Extroverts love being the center of attention, and without real-world verbal cues that can keep that behavior in check, you risk having it be all about you. Retweeting a post or helping someone solve a work-related problem can capture his or her attention—and gratitude—which can pay off.
6. **Organize.** Combine your expertise with your enjoyment in participating in and conducting group events. Demonstrate your leadership skills by organizing a virtual mini-conference or think-tank using a hashtag (#). Make sure you invite followers from companies where you would like to work. If you are attending an offline conference, be sure to tweet it for your followers who can't be there in person.
7. **Be patient.** Receptive and tuned into their environment, extroverts are quick to respond. Just as in the workplace, Twitter is a diverse community of personalities, so don't take offense if someone is not as responsive as you are; he or she may be busy or could have missed your comment.
8. **Think before you tweet.** Extroverts tend to think as they speak. This can backfire online where comments have a long shelf life. Don't get caught up in the moment and become involved in a controversial or heated topic. You don't want a prospective boss or coworker to have something harsh or negative be their first impression of you. Quickly delete anything inappropriate.
9. **Feed your energy.** Extroverts are energized by people and fade when they are alone. Twitter offers 24/7 companionship and can be a great antidote. And by using your mobile device, you can even manage your search activity while away from your PC. A job search can be a lonely process; Twitter will help keep you engaged. Just be aware that Twitter can be so much fun that it is easy to lose track of time. Stay focused!
10. **Take it offline.** Extroverts are great at marketing themselves, and love being in social situations. Organizing a local event will increase your chances of meeting company decision makers that may know of hidden job openings. Arrange a local tweetup, or DM a follower you may be able to help. Or invite a connection to have lunch or coffee with you. The odds are good he or she will say yes, especially if he or she is an extrovert like you.

Notice that many of the tips for introverts and extroverts are similar—best practices that have the same intent, but can be applied in ways that meet introverts' and extroverts' particular needs.