

I have the opportunity to speak at the Onward to Opportunity cohort orientations. It's a fun hour of fielding questions on transitioning careers. The folks ask questions on all sorts of concerns and issues. There are no boundaries. We talk about the job market, resumes, education, all sorts of burning questions. As the questions are usually of the same vein no matter the session, I usually have the answer.

This last one was the exception. A participant, I'll name Charlie, asked a question about a new offering of the Texas Veterans Commission that was new to me. He'd seen an article about this program that assisted veterans interested in the energy industry. My response was "I'll get back to you". I asked that he send me more information on his query. It was now my turn to do some research.

After reviewing the materials he sent, I contacted Tom Palladino, executive director of the Texas Veterans Commission. I know Tom through my various activities and my participation on the TVC Veterans Advisory Committee. Tom was great. He called that afternoon. We chatted about the initiative, explained how new the program was and referred me to a TVC local rep. I now had a local connection.

I called James. He explained that he had a training meeting on the calendar for the next day. Perfect timing to get the latest on this new program. I then provided Charlie with a virtual introduction to James. They connected and now Charlie has a local connection on not only that program but the vast variety of services available through the TVC.

One question led to all of this. So – the lessons learned. If you have a question, don't hesitate to ask. The second lesson is to value and expand your network. You will connect to other networks that can lead to the unknown. Think of a spider web spreading out.

Best of luck,

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