



SHOULD I JOIN MY INDUSTRY'S TRADE ASSOCIATION?

Whether you are an electrician, a health care worker, an entrepreneur, or a lawyer; almost every profession has their own trade association. And a common question young professionals ask is, "Should I join my industry's trade association?" The answer is emphatically yes and here is why.

Your trade association can provide you with many benefits, some more obvious than others, that are beneficial to your profession and your personal career.

Your association will provide you with continuous professional development providing regular programs, often on a monthly basis, that feature key speakers from your profession that will talk about topics related to your profession both directly and indirectly.

Special programs are often offered throughout the year and most trade associations also offer ongoing training opportunities that may be directly related to your profession or related to self improvement, self motivation, or other personal improvement areas.

Membership also provides you with some terrific opportunities to network with others in your field. You'll make some important contacts, and you'll get to exchange experiences and ideas with other professionals. It's a great way to expand and deepen your knowledge.

Some trade organizations have annual trade expos or opportunities where members can show their products and services as well as broaden their horizons.

Monthly newsletters keep you informed about what's going on in your industry locally, regionally, nationally, and around the globe. You'll be provided with new information on a wide range of topics and in a timely manner.

Your participation also gives you an industry voice in your profession. You'll have some influence over government and industry regulations. You'll be able to voice concerns relating to workplace safety and other issues within your field.

Membership will provide you with a directory of your colleagues which makes staying in touch or locating a colleague easy.

Some industry trade associations also provide you with benefits such as life insurance, disability, travel discounts, reduced entry fees, and a host of other services. Generally you are provided with a membership card and all you need do is present it at a participating outlet. Insurance options and other such benefits may be automatic or you may be required to apply for them.

It's also important that you support your industry, and membership allows you to do that as well as reap all the other benefits. So the answer to your question is you should always join your Industry's trade association whenever possible. It's definitely worth the cost!

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