

The Jive logo consists of the word "jive" in a lowercase, bold, sans-serif font. The letter "j" has a distinctive hook that extends downwards and to the left.

work better together™

Contributing to a Community

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Contributing to a Community

A company may invite you to join one of their groups and become part of their online community so they can work closely with you, making you an external contributor. Becoming an external contributor is a way to collaborate in a community on a limited basis. As an external user, you can view content and participate only in the group you belong to.

Learn how to navigate a community as an external contributor.

Once you accept an invitation to join a community's external group, you can begin contributing in that group. If you want some help, see the [Where Do I Begin?](#) topic.

I'm Contributing to a Community, Where Do I Begin?

When you first join a community's external group as an external contributor, you can begin participating by accepting invitations, setting up your profile, and addressing your actions.

The following tips help you fit right in and get started. Once you're set up, take a look at [what else you can do here!](#)

Accept group invitations

The first thing that you should do when you sign into the community is to accept any group invitations. You'll be doing all of your work in groups, so accepting invitations is how you can see group content and activity. Go to **Home > Actions** and then accept group invitations that you see under Pending.



Note: You can only belong to a maximum of 20 groups, so choose wisely!

Set up your profile

Your user profile provides community members with an easy way to learn about your skills and interests. Your profile shows up in search results when community members search for keywords contained in your profile. You can update your information at any time.

Check out your Actions

When you are assigned something to do, such as a task or something that's been [Marked for Action](#) for you, you'll see an alert next to Actions in the left sidebar.

Use the following quick tips to use Actions effectively:

- Click **Action Items** to see a list of your Action Items. From here, you can Resolve them, or bring in other participants. To see the Action Items you have already resolved, click **Resolved**.
- Click **Tasks** to see a list of tasks assigned to you, which you can sort by project. To see the tasks you've completed, select **View: Include completed**. You can also **Create a task** from this page.

Customize email notifications

You can take advantage of [custom email notifications](#) if you feel like you might miss something important when you're not signed in.

Set Up Your Profile

Setting up your profile is the first step to participating in the community.

Your user profile provides community members with an easy way to learn about your skills and interests. Your profile shows up in search results when community members search for keywords contained in your profile. You can update your information at any time.

To set up your profile:

1. Click your avatar in the upper right corner and then click **Edit profile**.
2. Click the **Avatar** or **Photos** tab to change your avatar and to manage your photos. Your avatar and other photos let people "meet" and recognize you in person. Your avatar lets community members quickly associate your comments and status updates with a simple visual cue.
3. Click the **Profile Details** tab and fill in as much profile information as you like. Note that your profile will be found when people search, so if you have professional roles or interests that would be useful for others to know about, be sure to include them. You may not be able to edit certain fields, such as username. Usually the community manager sets up these fields for you.
4. Click **Privacy** to edit your privacy settings. These control how different types of users see your profile. For more information on privacy settings, see [Securing Your Profile](#).
5. Click **Finished**.

What Else Can I Do Here?

Jive is a place where you can build your network, come together as a team, share files, collaborate on documents, and get answers fast.

The first thing you should do is jump in and start asking, or answering, questions! The group you belong to looks forward to hearing your ideas, and they need your expertise to get work done. Think of the group as a 24-hour hotline where you can communicate your concerns and give your opinion. Just start writing documents and get input from all the experts without taking notes or sifting through long email chains.

Open your Inbox

Your Inbox shows the activity that's most you-centric—the information that's sent directly to you and has your name on it. This automatically includes @mentions, replies to discussions you're participating in, content people share with you, your latest acclaim, new follower notifications, and direct messages.

Use the following tips and tricks to get the most out of the Inbox:

- You can follow content items in your Inbox even if you haven't yet or don't want to participate directly. From any of your streams, just click the content item, and then select **Actions > Follow > Inbox > Done**. All updates and replies to that item will now flow into your Inbox.
- Use the **Filter** drop-down menu in Inbox to sort the view to @mentions, messages, notifications, or shares.
- Click the **Jane Doe** box and enter a user's name to filter by participant. You'll see only the items that include this person as a participant.
- Manage your unread communications and follow-ups using the blue dot toggle next to messages you haven't read yet and clicking **Unread Only** to see only the messages marked with the blue dot.
- When you click the **Split View** icon in the top right of the Inbox stream and then select a message, you'll see the content of the message in the lower pane and the list of messages in the upper pane.
- Get rid of activity on any item that no longer interests you by clicking **Hide new activity** in the lower pane of the split-pane view. The current activity stays in your Inbox, but you'll see no more update alerts for that item. (Click **Start following in Inbox** to restore Inbox notifications for that item).

Discover documents, questions, and discussions, and then comment and collaborate

Exchange ideas when you participate in discussions, questions, and documents:

- Commenting is as simple as clicking **Add a Comment** or **Reply** at the bottom of a document, blog post, question, or discussion. You can reply to an individual message in a thread or to the original post. Everyone reading the thread will see your response.
- Documents have owners who control whether you can change the content of the document, comment on it, or even see it. You may be able to see documents that you don't have permission to comment on or participate in. If you think you should be able to comment on a document and you can't, contact the author and ask for permission.
- If you can edit a document, you'll see **Edit** near the Actions menu.
- A comment or reply may have a badge showing Decision, Action Item, or Success. These badges help you avoid endless discussion and quickly determine the state or outcome of the conversation. To learn more about this feature, be sure to read [Using the Marking Feature](#).
- Comments and replies may also be Liked or marked Helpful. These are tallied for reporting activity in places, or the entire community.
- A badge shows others how helpful someone has been to you. To give someone a badge, just go to their profile page and click **Actions > Give Badge**.

Use an Attention stream

You'll see streams on the News page and on the Activity page of any place. Streams are updated when someone creates a document, replies to a blog post, posts a status update, and so on.

What's My Role Here?

Don't be fooled. You're a crucial part of a community that needs your input. You may not be a community member, but someone in the community invited you because they knew you'd add value. The benefit to being an external contributor is that you only see the parts of the community that affect you. You don't have to worry about seeing anything you shouldn't.

Your role is to help the community reach outside of its circle, and to share knowledge so both you and other group members can work together successfully and efficiently. You can feel free to ask questions in your group(s) and to post and comment on documents and discussions. When you become part of the conversation, you'll improve how work gets done.