



Network to Work Meeting

May 2019

RESOURCE DOCUMENT – *SEARCHING AND APPLYING FOR JOBS ONLINE*

Using LinkedIn

LinkedIn.com is the most powerful and effective social network for professionals. You can do many things on LinkedIn. You can connect with people who work at your target employers (and who worked there in the past). You can review employer / company pages to gather information about the company and assess if this might be a good workplace for you. You can review postings of jobs at the company. You can also see how you might be connected to current employees of companies of interest.

Many recruiters prefer to use LinkedIn to connect with job seekers because it is a great way for them to quickly learn enough about a person to decide whether to contact them for a particular job opening. Therefore, job seekers should leverage LinkedIn as much as possible to be included in these recruiter searches.

Most professionals cannot afford to ignore LinkedIn today.

Don't make the mistake of confusing the intelligent use of social media with a loss of privacy. Having an online presence is crucial as recruiters and potential employers view job seekers who lack any sign of online activity with suspicion. It is rare to find no signs of online activity for someone, and lack of visibility is particularly concerning when a job seeker is not present online. It suggests that you are either out of touch, behind the times, lack technological savvy, or perhaps are even using a false name.

A CareerBuilder study released in August 2018 revealed that employers are less likely to contact an applicant they cannot find online because they "expect candidates to have an online presence." Another argument for having a LinkedIn presence is that it is possible for a recruiter

researching your name online to mistake you for someone else with the same name who has done something bad that *is* visible.

So, investing time in learning how to leverage social media for your job search, and to leverage LinkedIn, in particular, will be time well spent for you.

Here are suggestions for getting the most out of LinkedIn.

1. Have a Large LinkedIn Network. The heart of LinkedIn is the making of professional connections through inviting others to join one's network. Users of LinkedIn regularly seek to connect not only with their own friends and colleagues (known as first level connections) but also with the connections of their friends and colleagues (known as second and third level connections). This is basically the same as traditional networking, where you connect with hot, warm, and cold contacts.

To be found on LinkedIn, you need to have a large network because LinkedIn search results are limited to those accounts which are the searcher's first, second, and third level connections. If you aren't connected to someone at one of those levels, you won't appear in their search results. Therefore, the more people you are connected to, the more likely you may be connected to recruiters.

Also, recruiters love to be invited to join networks, so, don't be afraid to ask them to join yours. In fact, they may be unable to ask you to join their network because of LinkedIn's built-in rules, so the only way to become connected to a recruiter is to extend the invitation on your end.

2. Use the Right Keywords to Describe Yourself. When recruiters search for candidates in LinkedIn, they focus on keywords just like the resume databases and applicant tracking systems do. Therefore, you need to have the right keywords in your Profile in order to be found.

Your LinkedIn Professional Headline is the perfect place to include the right keywords for your job search. Be specific to attract recruiter attention. No one searches for a "business professional" but they do search for a "marketing manager who understands how to leverage social media for B2B visibility and sales." So, avoid being too general -- general headlines will not be impressive or contain the right keywords.

There are also ample opportunities to sprinkle in your key abilities and skills within the Summary and Experience sections. Every job you list should include the expertise that you demonstrated in that job. ***Think keywords!***

3. Demonstrate Your Professional Credibility. Prove that the keywords you have used to describe yourself are accurate. Here's how:

- a. *LinkedIn Recommendations:* ask a couple of individuals from each of your listed jobs to post a recommendation on your behalf. Unless you have been in one job for many years, two short recommendations are best.
- b. *Your Blog, Presentations, and Videos:* if you have produced or published any of these items, add these to your profile.
- c. *SlideShare:* Use this to post any PowerPoint presentations you may have created. These will demonstrate your skills to recruiters.
- d. *LinkedIn Updates:* Use Status Updates in your Profile to share good and relevant professional news and other helpful information, including:
 - i. Good information posted by other professionals on LinkedIn, whether as a "post" (short discussion in the news feed) or as articles they publish on LinkedIn;
 - ii. Important happenings in your industry;
 - iii. Whenever you publish an article, are quoted in someone else's article, or receive other positive visibility;
 - iv. Images, videos, or documents you upload (*professional* in focus)

4. Clarify your job search interests. If you are actively looking for a new job (*and are unemployed so you safely can announce this*), feel free to post a status of exactly the type of job you're looking for.

5. Read and comment in the Notifications stream. "Like" or share good information shared by others, and when appropriate, comment on the others' posts (positively and professionally, not negatively or nastily).

6. Take advantage of LinkedIn Groups. You can be found more easily if you are a member of LinkedIn Groups for your specialty. LinkedIn will suggest Groups for you to join if you click on the "Work" link at the top of your Profile, which opens the dialog box shown on the left here. You can also find Groups to join by clicking on the "Groups" icon in the options that drop down when you click on the "Work" icon at the top, right of most LinkedIn pages.

Currently, every LinkedIn member can belong to as many as 100 Groups, and over 2.1 million Groups exist.

Recruiters will scan Groups for good candidates, looking for discussions on topics related to positions they are working on in order to find "subject-matter experts." Therefore, posting

good information or making well-informed comments in discussions relevant to your profession or industry can bring you to a recruiter's attention.

Employers and recruiting companies even start their own Groups to share news and attract members. Join, and contribute to discussions or provide valuable news relevant to members.

You can meet and even connect with people on LinkedIn through the dialogs that develop over discussions. People notice those who "like" their posts, and also those who make positive, relevant comments -- not necessarily saying everything is "Great!" Don't automatically "like" a Discussion to bring yourself to the attention of the person who shared it. Read the related web page first to be sure that you do actually agree with it. If you do, then "like" it.

7. Consider posting to LinkedIn's blog. If you are a reasonably skilled at writing and have good information to share, LinkedIn's blog is a very visible platform. The articles you publish are highlighted by LinkedIn near the top of your Profile for everyone who visits your Profile to see (and, potentially, read).

Simply click on the "Write an article" link at the top of your LinkedIn home page, as shown above, and get started. You choose when your article is shared with the public on LinkedIn. At a minimum these posts demonstrate your communications skills and some aspects of your professional knowledge. A recruiter scanning your Profile is apt to check your articles to gain more insight into your qualifications and personality.

8. Don't forget your Contact Info! If you want to be contacted by recruiters and potential employers, you must share your contact info. **If they cannot contact you, they cannot hire you.** Edit the "Contact Info" in the column on the right near the top of your LinkedIn Profile. You can safely include your email address and phone number.

9. Include Your Photo! It's not a bad idea to include a picture, too. Recruiters roll through dozens to hundreds of Profiles a month. They don't always remember names they have seen, but they do remember pictures. Profiles without pictures can send the message of being anti-social media or lacking social media savvy. Lacking a photo can even suggest even that your Profile is fake or you are hiding something

10. Be Open to Connections. Obviously, you need to make sure you are open to invitations to connect. Make sure your contact settings are set appropriately in your Profile. You can include your preferred contact information in this section as well as in the Personal Information section.

You should be open to connecting with recruiters even when you are not looking for a job. You may not currently be a job seeker now -- but some day you likely will be. If you already have a strong network of recruiters on LinkedIn, you'll be way ahead of the game when it's time to look for your next opportunity.

Bottom Line

Notice that the advice above is all about getting a recruiter to find you, not the other way around. You are presenting yourself to recruiters without any extra outreach work on your part. All you need to do is set up your Profile well, keep it current, stay active on LinkedIn (ten to twenty minutes a day reading and sharing), and LinkedIn does the work for you.

Sources:

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<https://www.job-hunt.org/recruiters/linkedin-recruiters.shtml>

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