

HOW TO USE
LINKEDIN TO
SUPPORT YOUR
JOB SEARCH!



How to use LinkedIn to support your Job Search!

The purpose of this article is to show you how you can utilise the power of LinkedIn to supercharge your job search strategy.

Whether you are a regular user or completely new to LinkedIn, this article will show you how to significantly increase your impact. I will show you how to create a professional LinkedIn profile and how you can maximise your reach with minimal time investment.

The aim of the article is to help you build and interact with a targeted LinkedIn network. Once you have started to build your network, I will show you a number of strategies to utilise the power of this network to support your job search activities.

Looking for a new job can be hard work, however the content covered in this article will allow you to significantly increase your coverage through the creation of a more effective profile.

Why use LinkedIn?

The answer is quite straight forward and that is because, it's where the attention is!

LinkedIn is a social network and so even if you don't think that many people in your profession are using it, then it's probably more reason to be on it! If you are targeting potential hiring managers, then there is a strong chance that they will be active on the site and so learning how to engage effectively with them is a key part of your job searching strategy.

To give you an idea of its reach we have some stats from Business of Apps:
<https://www.businessofapps.com/data/linkedin-statistics/>

Key LinkedIn Statistics

660 million LinkedIn users, spread over 200 countries, November 2019

Over 30 million companies have profiles on LinkedIn

In 2019, 90 million LinkedIn users were senior-level influencers, and 63 million were in decision-making positions

46 million student and 87 million Millennial LinkedIn users (11 million of whom are decision makers) in 2016

27% of US adults are signed up to LinkedIn

LinkedIn users spend an average of 10:20 minutes on the site daily, visiting 8.5 pages, or an average of 7:18 minutes, visiting 7.99 pages, depending on who you ask..

Median number of connections between 500 and 999

122 million users have been invited to an interview through LinkedIn, with 35.5 million getting a job through someone with whom they are connected

20 million jobs listed on LinkedIn

3 million US jobs posted every month

57% of LinkedIn traffic comes from mobile devices

9 billion content impressions take place on LinkedIn weekly

280 billion feed updates viewed annually

130,000 articles are published on LinkedIn weekly

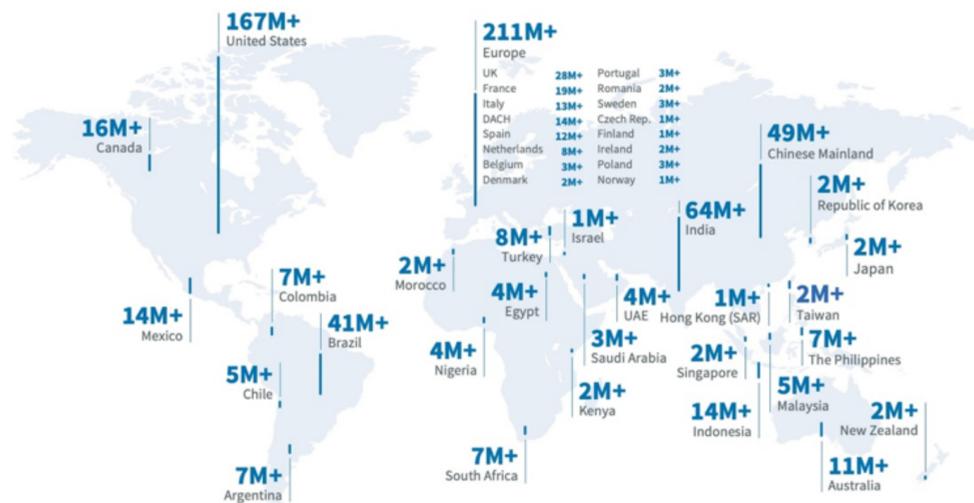
80% of B2B leads come through LinkedIn

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LinkedIn was purchased by Microsoft in 2016, a deal finalised in December 2016 for \$26.2 billion

In the 2019 fiscal year, LinkedIn brought in \$6.8 billion worth of revenue, contributing to \$38.1 billion of commercial cloud revenue for Microsoft, which in turn made up part of \$126 billion in total revenue.

675 million members in 200 countries and regions worldwide



How to create an effective LinkedIn profile?

This is the first and most important step as first impressions do count and so if you are looking to build a network of new contacts, you want them to be able to easily identify why they should connect with you.

Invest time to complete your profile properly.

This is very important as the more complete your profile is, the more chance you will get connected with your target audience. Once they have connected with you, they also want to see how you can be of benefit to them. If this is a Recruiter for instance then they want to clearly see where you have been working, what you have been doing and check out any recommendations you have received.

Don't think I will come back and do this later. Invest the time immediately and complete an awesome profile. LinkedIn gives you tips on what you need to do and so follow their guidelines to make it stronger.

If you are using your LinkedIn profile for job seeking, then you want to fill out the experience section in a similar manner to your CV. You may not want to use the exact same information, however, you do want to add enough information so that a potential recruiter can quickly see the scope and responsibility of your role. They want to see what you did, the results you achieved and the impact that you had.

A good tip here is to look at the job descriptions of roles that you are interested in and identify any keywords or phrases and then incorporate them into your experience. Recruiters will be looking for these words and phrases and so make sense to include them where you can. Don't go over the top though! You don't want a string of buzzwords, you need to make sure that the sentences still make sense!

Don't be afraid to highlight your achievements as this is exactly what Recruiters and Hiring Managers are interested in. If you have led projects, won awards and achieved a number of promotions, then don't be afraid to include this.

In order to maximise your visibility in search results, you also want to ensure that you have a current role on your profile. If you are currently not working, then it is a good idea to leave your last role open, and maybe reference your finish date in the description, or add your target job title in the current role and then explain what you are looking for below. This just means that if anyone searches on your current job title you are going to show up.

You also want to get a custom URL as it is easier to share on different platforms. The way to do this is to click on the "edit public profile & URL". Which is found in the top right-hand section of your profile page. Ideally, you want to set it to [linkedin.com/yourname](https://www.linkedin.com/yourname)

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Choose your photo carefully!

There is a whole load of debate as to what a professional image should look like. Some people think a formal headshot, others lean towards a more relaxed style. I think what's important here is that it is a clear picture that is relevant to your role, industry and target audience. It's easy to have a quick look through to see how your peers are presenting themselves and then choose a style that you are comfortable with.

Maximise the impact of your headline

Many people simply use their current job title and company in the headline. This is one of the first things that people will see when looking at your profile and so you want to clearly show them what you are all about. As you will see in my profile I use "Recruiting Talent in HR across the UK and mainland Europe" as quite frankly that is what I do and so anyone looking for an HR job, or needing support with an HR assignment is quickly able to see what I do. If for instance, I used "Director at OD Recruitment" then it is less clear.

If you are currently employed, then you may not want to highlight the fact that you are looking for another job. This is fine, however, you do want to think about what a recruiter or hiring manager will be looking for? If for instance, you work as an HR Manager at a technology company in London, you could use something like this. "CIPD qualified HR Manager, currently leading the HR team at a high growth technology company based in London"

If a recruiter or hiring manager is looking to recruit into a similar role, then this headline quite quickly tells them what they want to hear. You don't need to overcomplicate things, as when writing your CV, just tell people simply and easily what they need to know!

This 120-character section is a prime marketing zone and so make the most of it!

Use the summary section to your advantage

This is another area of prime marketing real estate! Similar to the profile section on your CV, it allows you to outline what you are all about and what you are looking to achieve.

There are many ways that you can use this space and so ultimately you have to go with what you are comfortable with. You will see from my profile that I have used a combination of a direct marketing message i.e. "Why you should work with me?" and then a personal history. This gives readers an insight into both my professional and personal life. We are, after all, all people, and so it's good to inject a bit of a personal touch as well.

When looking at it from a job-seeking angle, then you could start off with top reasons to hire you and then follow up with a run-through of your career, similar to what you may answer the "tell me a little bit about yourself" question. If you are currently employed and want to keep it simple then you could also use something like this, which is short and sweet but gives an overview of what you are about.

"I have over 15 years of experience working in the world of Human Resources. Currently, I work as RAD Europe's Head of HR, leading a small team to deliver commercial HR interventions that enable us to build an engaged and high-performing workforce.

Previously, I was HR Manager at ATS, where I led a number of HR change projects focussing on the management of growth including a number of acquisitions and talent management initiatives to support a rapidly expanding business.

Competencies: Change Management, Talent Management, Recruitment, Employee Relations"

You can also add pictures, videos and presentations to your summary and so don't be afraid to add any of these that will boost your profile.

Ask for recommendations

Recommendations are a great way for you to showcase what you are all about, by getting people that have worked with you to share their experiences working with you. When doing this, you want to be a little bit strategic as simply swapping recommendations with your mates is easy to see through and in my opinion, can actually take away the focus from some of your more relevant recommendations. I would look at where you have been particularly happy with your performance and contribution and ask colleagues to make that the subject of your recommendation. If you don't think a recommendation improves your profile then you don't have to include it. I'd rather have a handful of quality well thought out recommendations than 25 basic ones saying "Paul is Great"etc.

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Build your network

Now that you have created an awesome profile, it is time to build your network and start engaging with it!

There are many ways that you can do this, however, the key theme is quality over quantity. There is no point having 25000 connections if they are not relevant and you never engage with any of them.

- 1) Start with people you know. LinkedIn has an option to send invites to your email contacts and you can find this in the "My Network" section. If you don't want to do this, then you can search for people manually, as well as look at the recommendations LinkedIn give you in the same section.
- 2) Consider your target audience and connect with them. You can undertake many searches on LinkedIn and find relevant people in your target industry/location/job title etc. It sounds simple and it really is! You do however need to put some thought into this part of the process. If you are trying to connect with people you don't know very well or at all, then you want to include a message with your introduction to let them know why you want to connect. Once you have connected, it's polite to thank them, however, take time to build rapport with them. Nothing worse than accepting a request and then getting bombarded with a massive pitch.
- 3) Join groups and participate in them. There are groups for everything on LinkedIn and so have a good look and join ones that are relevant to you. Once a member you can take part in discussions and start your own. These are a good place to build your credibility and engage with those from similar industries etc.
- 4) Comment and share a like on interesting posts and articles. If you read a post and you like the content, then share the love and give it a like. If you have something credible to contribute, then add a comment to the discussion. Remember that we are going for quality over quantity and so don't start commenting for commenting sake as you can start to devalue your contribution. Be known for credible and well-thought-out comments, not for stating the obvious on every post you see!
- 5) Publish articles, share blog posts or start a discussion via status updates. If you have something to share that will be of interest to your network, then don't be afraid to get it out there. The more you can post the more chances to engage with your network. You can mix this up with original content i.e. articles/blog posts as well as just sharing interesting articles etc.

Depending on your situation and the time available to you, I would target a certain amount of time to do this daily. It doesn't have to be a lot, but it all adds up and slowly but surely, you'll start to see an increase in your network and importantly it will be of relevant people that are of use to you and you to them.

How can I use all of this to help my Job Search?

So, you have completed your profile and are looking the business! You have also started to build your network with relevant contacts, and you have been having some interesting discussions with them. This activity alone helps to elevate you above the majority of your competition. Karen with 12 connections, no picture and an incomplete profile is literally no competition for you!

I have talked in the last section about building your network and this needs to be something you get used to doing consistently. I, for example, do this to continually build my HR network as it benefits me from a talent pooling point of view. I obviously fine-tune when I am looking at a specific assignment, but in general, my aim is to continually build and add value to my network where I can.

When you are active in your job search, you can like me, start to fine-tune and become more active.

If for instance, I was an HR Manager, looking for a job in Cambridge then I would attack my search in the following manner.

- 1) Create searches for people who that may be responsible for hiring someone like me within the geographic area that I am able to consider.

These could include:

- HR Directors/Head of HR
- CEO/CFO/COO etc
- External HR Recruiters
- Internal Recruiters
- HR Contacts

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You don't want to be too specific as you never know exactly who will be handling a search. It could be that an HRD does it themselves or they may ask their HR Assistant to coordinate the first stage. Connect with them all as you never know where it will pay off!

As we discussed earlier, you want to include an intro message. I personally would just go with something simple like "I see that we have a common interest in HR and would love to connect with you on here". The vast majority of people that see that message will connect with you.

You get some that for whatever reason are on a networking site but don't want to hear from people that they don't know, but they thankfully are very much the minority. When they accept your connection, you can then send your follow-up with a message of thanks and nothing wrong with slipping in that you are looking for a new job. Be cool though, you don't want to come across as pushy!

2) I would follow up on all job applications with a search of the HR team within the companies I had applied to and connect with them. Using the same principles as above, nothing too intense just a general network-building message. It helps to keep you visible and can't hurt.

3) I have seen people get a lot of traction from sharing their job search journey with their network. They have done this by sharing tips, other vacancies relevant to their network, challenges they have faced etc. If done correctly, I think it can add a lot of value to your search. It keeps you visible and also shows the human element of your character. As mentioned earlier, the only caveat to this is that you want to make sure what you are sharing adds value to your network. Keep it positive, even if it is a challenging time for you.

4) Ask former colleagues to not only add a recommendation but also share a recommendation with their network. It will only take a former boss a couple of minutes to write a quick post telling everyone what a legend you are. You could even write it for them and so they only have to cut and paste and tag you in! They can only say no and so worth a go!

5) Trust the process! Even if you don't see immediate results, you need to stick with it. Allocate an hour a day and do all of these different things and it will pay off somewhere.

I have tried to keep this as straightforward as possible, if you have any specific questions, you can always contact me at www.odrecruitment.com. Feel free to book a call or drop me a message as I am always happy to help where I can.

Good luck with your search and if you haven't already, don't forget to connect with me on LinkedIn!

All the best

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www.odrecruitment.com