

How to Get the Most Out of LinkedIn

On the Surface

- An estimated 80% of mid-to-senior level job offers are the result of Networking. **LinkedIn helps you expand your network.**
- Your chance of success increases with an introduction: Just as your friends can help you get a job, so can your “friends of friends.” **LinkedIn provides a transparent way for you to see how people are connected to one another so that you can build strong relationships—and request appropriate introductions for networking.**
- A complete LinkedIn profile allows you to develop a snapshot of another individual’s job history and interests. **LinkedIn helps you prepare for introductions.**

Beneath the Hood

- LinkedIn allows you to be a snoop—and make the information work for you. **Evaluating other people’s profiles allows you to see how others with your skill set present themselves—a cheat sheet for resume writing since it may provide you with an additional perspective on your work.**
- **LinkedIn provides a safe place to search for answers to the questions you may have—but be afraid to ask**—you can search the Question and Answer section for previously asked questions and how they were answered.
- LinkedIn limits the number of characters you can write in your profile summary as well as each job description. As such, **LinkedIn is a guaranteed tool for resume development—it forces you to be concise and to have a consistent tone.**
- **Your profile becomes an abbreviated resume as you write it.** Note the PDF icon in your LinkedIn account—it is a pdf version of your profile that can easily be sent to others.

As a Marketing Tool

- A well written profile can help boost your online presence—and your job search. If you search for an individual name, a LinkedIn profile frequently lands in the coveted “first page” of search results. **LinkedIn has a very high search ranking on the web—**
- In addition to posting job opportunities on the site, many recruiters use the site as a way to source candidates, conduct background research, and acquire references. **Employers are increasingly using LinkedIn as a way to find talent.**
- You can use the Question and Answer section to ask and answer questions in your area of expertise. Many innovative job seekers and current professional uses LinkedIn to share information; the site also allows individuals to “rank answers”—resulting in “Best Answer” acknowledgments to people who have answered questions. **LinkedIn is a forum to demonstrate your expertise.**
- Credibility counts—and LinkedIn can help you build it. One of the best ways to do this is through the recommendation section of your resume. **LinkedIn is a way to show the world who you recommend and who recommends you—it’s a great way to provide references for your experiences.**

As a Search Engine

- Through the JobsInsider tool, you can view position listings—and then explore potential contacts that you know within the company of interest. Once you know, “who you know” or how you’re connected, you can then develop a 1-2 punch for your application (you can both apply for the position, then follow-up with your contact to let them know you’ve applied or follow-up with a contact and ask questions before you apply). Either way, **LinkedIn helps you increase the chances that your resume will be seen and evaluated.**
- If you seek to transition into a new industry or job function, you are more likely to be taken seriously as a candidate if you can demonstrate familiarity with the subject matter at hand. Search for profiles of candidates who have pre-existing work experience in your area of interest—and ask for an informational interview. **Many people love to share their expertise and answer a well written question.**

RESOURCES

Leveraging 2.0 Job Search Skills

Good introduction to LinkedIn. Covers how to get started and why it is a good tool for your job search:

<http://www.docstoc.com/docs/2898929/LinkedIn-Leveraging-Job-Search-20-Tools>

I’m On Linked In, Now What?

Blog maintained by Jason Alba, author of “I’m on LinkedIn, Now What?” Great tips for how to use, maintain, and thrive with your LinkedIn accounts: <http://imonlinkedinnowwhat.com/>

Write Your LinkedIn Profile for your Future:

Chris Brogan, social media marketing expert, shares strategy on how to develop your LinkedIn profile so that your past experience is presented in context with future career goals.

<http://www.chrisbrogan.com/make-your-linkedin-profile-work-for-you/>

THREE ESSENTIAL STRATEGIES

1. **Help people find you.** You can set up a custom URL for your LinkedIn profile in the “Edit Your Public Profile.” This will allow you to a customized name that is easy to share (i.e. my URL is <http://www.linkedin.com/in/chandleebryan>) instead of a long hard to remember URL like <http://www.linkedin.com/XCB178654KMB>
2. **Treat LinkedIn as your online resume.** LinkedIn isn’t Facebook—it has a decidedly professional spin. Since there are those who use it as more than an address book of friends, colleagues, and professional contacts—your chance of job search success increases if you use it that way too!
3. **Decide upon a strategy.** Do you want to be a LION (LinkedIn Open Networker) or an “Ambassador” (Accepting invitations from only those you know well)? I recommend the Ambassador approach since that guarantees that everyone in your network will be able to vouch for you, but it’s up to you to decide!