

10 Tips to Enhance Your Job Search Using LinkedIn

In today's electronic age, LinkedIn is an essential tool for all job seekers. Because the site is an online network for over 8.5 million experienced professionals, many hiring managers and recruiters scour LinkedIn profiles to find top quality candidates.

If you're an active job seeker you must join LinkedIn and learn the many ways the site can enhance your job search or career.

Here are 10 tips to help you enhance your job search using LinkedIn:

1. **Complete your profile thoroughly.** Think of your LinkedIn profile as your executive bio and complete your profile **thoroughly**. Often when clients tell me they've completed their profile and I go look at it, it's rarely complete. This is what I mean by complete.
 - Include your picture as it allows for a deeper sense of connection to you and should be part of your brand on all social networking sites.
 - List your education, past employers, professional affiliations, awards, and keywords related to your jobs and activities. Some people advise to include employment only up to ten years ago. That is often good advice, not always. I've been a career coach for 10 years and previously I was an executive search consultant and recruiter. Letting people know I spent many years helping people to land jobs adds to my credibility as a career coach. See <http://www.linkedin.com/in/minosullivan>. Use your best judgement on this one.
 - Contact past supervisors, peers and subordinates for recommendations. Also include recommendations from customers, clients and colleagues. Hiring managers and recruiters regularly check recommendations to vet potential candidates.
 - Create a descriptive headline (under your name). The generic title "Corporate Attorney" will not inspire many, but IPO Specialist will certainly attract those seeking to take their companies public. Make sure your headline is something your target audience is looking for.
2. **Build your network.** Build your network to increase the likelihood that your profile will come up at the top of the list when hiring managers/recruiters are looking for candidates. Invite five people a day, every day, to join your network and you'll be amazed at the results. If you're VP Marketing, you don't want to show up on page 10 when people are looking for marketing pros. You want to be on page 1. The more contacts you have the higher you'll be.

3. **Prepare for interviews using LinkedIn.** Expand your research by reading about the people who will be interviewing you. Knowing that you went to the same school, share a sport, both love the theatre, or have an acquaintance in common is a great way to establish rapport.
4. **Join LinkedIn groups.** Join as many groups as possible, but concentrate first on those whose members are people who could hire you (hiring managers) or can help you find a job (recruiters/executive search consultants). You may also want to join job search support groups and industry groups.
 - Larger groups allow for more potential contacts and allow you to contact fellow group member even if they are not in your direct network. This can be very valuable in your job search.
 - Groups are a great source of like minded individuals and are great places search in order to expand your network.
 - Five groups for job seekers include:
 - [Executive Suite](#) - Community of over 100,000 US-based executive-level and recruiter members.
 - [Star: Candidate for Hire](#) - Group working in tandem with Linked:HR, the largest Recruiters' Group on LinkedIn, to help top candidates find jobs quickly and efficiently.
 - [Career Change Central](#) - Group linking job changers and professionals in career transition with recruiters, hiring managers and career coaches.
 - [Jobs Alert](#) - Job search group for middle and senior-level managers worldwide.
 - [Indeed.com](#) - Official job search group on LinkedIn for [Indeed.com](#).
5. **Participate in discussions.** Share your insights and answers to questions on discussion boards thus demonstrating your knowledge and desire to contribute. Post questions or discussion topics yourself. This will help you make valuable connections while building your personal brand. Always be sure to include your email address in your posts.
6. **Search for jobs daily.** LinkedIn's job board functions like other job boards with the exception that many of the opportunities listed are exclusive to LinkedIn. In addition, many of the opportunities list the recruiters or employers who posted them, offering another level of personal connection for networking.
 - Here your profile recommendations really can make a difference, for after you apply, employers and recruiters can instantly refer to your recommendations as support for your resume, cover letter and profile.
7. **Ask and answer questions.** Using the "Answer" tab you can contribute your knowledge and insight in your area of expertise. For example, if you are an employment lawyer who is looking for a job you can click on "Answer a question" then select "Employment law"

where you'll find two pages of employment law questions. By answering selected questions and offering your insights you will establish your brand and expertise and potentially create some networking and job opportunities.

- You can also post your own questions. If you are writing an article, which I often suggest to my job search clients, LinkedIn can be a great resource to get some ideas and answers to your own questions which can enhance the value of the content you offer others.
8. **Identify target companies.** You can identify companies by industry and geography to expand your list of target companies. You can filter your LinkedIn list by exploring the company's web site and job postings. Then, by going back to LinkedIn, you can identify hiring managers and HR managers for additional information and potentially informational interviews.
 9. **Promote your blog and/or website.** Many executive candidates have a website and/or a blog. You can promote your website/blog to the search engines by optimizing them on LinkedIn. Just go to the category "My Website" on your LinkedIn profile while in the edit mode and select "Other." You can then add your name or a descriptive phrase describing your web site/blog. This is so much more inviting than a simple URL.
 10. **Final Tid-bits.**
 - Update your profile regularly. Every time you update your whole network will be notified and you'll get exposure.
 - Include the link to your LinkedIn profile in your signature on every email. That way people can see all your credentials with one click.
 - Post an "out of office" auto responder when you're away.

Please forward this on to anyone you know who is searching for a job.