

How to Use LinkedIn

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10 Ways to Use LinkedIn by Guy Kawasaki

How can I use LinkedIn to my advantage?

The following text is a blog article titled "10 Ways to use LinkedIn" by Guy Kawasaki. Numbers have been modified to reflect more current membership.

Most people use LinkedIn to "get to someone" in order to make a sale, form a partnership, or get a job. It works well for this because it is an online network of millions of experienced professionals from around the world representing 170 industries. However, it is a tool that is under-utilized, so I've compiled a top-ten list of ways to increase the value of LinkedIn.

1. Increase your visibility.

By adding connections, you increase the likelihood that people will see your profile first when they're searching for someone to hire or do business with. In addition to appearing at the top of search results (which is a major plus if you're one of the 67,000 product managers on LinkedIn), people would much rather work with people who their friends know and trust.

2. Improve your connectability.

Most new users put only their current company in their profile. By doing so, they severely limit their ability to connect with people. You should fill out your profile like it's an executive bio, so include past companies, education, affiliations, and activities.

You can also include a link to your profile as part of an email signature. The added benefit is that the link enables people to see all your credentials, which would be awkward if not downright strange, as an attachment.

3. Improve your Google PageRank.

LinkedIn allows you to make your profile information available for search engines to index. Since LinkedIn profiles receive a fairly high PageRank in Google, this is a good way to influence what people see when they search for you. To do this, create a public profile and select "Full View". Also, instead of using the default URL, customize your public profile's URL to be your actual name. To strengthen the visibility of this page in search engines, use this link in

various places on the web. For example, when you comment in a blog, include a link to your profile in your signature.

4. Enhance your search engine results.

In addition to your name, you can also promote your blog or website to search engines like Google and Yahoo! Your LinkedIn profile allows you to publicize websites. There are a few pre-selected categories like "My Website", "My Company", etc. If you select "Other", you can modify the name of the link. If you're linking to your personal blog, include your name or descriptive terms in the link, and voila! instant search-engine optimization for your site. To make this work, be sure your public profile setting is set to "Full View".

5. Perform blind, "reverse", and company reference checks.

LinkedIn's reference check tool to input a company name and the years the person worked at the company to search for references. Your search will find the people who worked at the company during the same time period. Since references provided by a candidate will generally be glowing, this is a good way to get more balanced data. Companies will typically check your references before hiring you, but have you ever thought of checking your prospective manager's references? Most interviewees don't have the audacity to ask a potential boss for references, but with LinkedIn you have a way to scope her out.

You can also check up on the company itself by finding the person who used to have the job that you're interviewing for. Do this by searching for job title and company, but be sure to uncheck "Current titles only". By contacting people who used to hold the position, you can get the inside scoop on the job, manager and growth potential. By the way, if using LinkedIn in these ways becomes a common practice, we're apt to see more truthful resumes. There's nothing more amusing than to find out that the candidate who claims to have caused some huge success was a total bozo who was just along for the ride.

6. Increase the relevancy of your job search.

Use LinkedIn's advanced search to find people with educational and work experience like yours to see where they work. For example, a programmer would use search keywords such as "Ruby on Rails", "C++", "Python", "Java", and "evangelist" to find out where other programmers with these skills work.

7. Make your interview go smoother.

You can use LinkedIn to find the people that you're meeting. Knowing that you went to the same school, plays hockey, or shares acquaintances is a lot better than an awkward silence after, "I'm doing fine, thank you".

8. Gauge the health of a company.

Perform an advanced search for company name and uncheck the "Current Companies Only" box. This will enable you to scrutinize the rate of turnover and whether key people are abandoning ship. Former employees usually give more candid opinions about a company's prospects than someone who's still on board.

9. Gauge the health of an industry.

If you're thinking of investing or working in a sector, use LinkedIn to find people who worked for competitors-or even better, companies who failed. For example, suppose you wanted to build a next generation online pet store, you'd probably learn a lot from speaking with former Pets.com or WebVan employees.

10. Track startups.

You can see people in your network who are initiating new startups by doing an advanced search for a range of keywords such as "stealth" or "new startup". Apply the "Sort By" filter to "Relationship" in order to see the people closest to you first.

11. Ask for advice.

LinkedIn's product, LinkedIn Answers, aims to enable this online. The product allows you to broadcast your business-related questions to both your network and the greater LinkedIn network. The premise is that you will get more high-value responses from the people in your network than more open forums. For example, here are some questions an entrepreneur might ask when the associates of a venture capital firm come up blank:

- a. "Who's a good, fast, and cheap patent lawyer?"
- b. "What should we pay a vp of biz dev?"
- c. "Is going to Demo worth it?"
- d. "How much traffic does a TechCrunch plug generate?"

Searching for Jobs

How do I search for jobs?

To do a basic job search, take the following steps:

1. Click on the "Jobs" link in the top navigation area of any page. This will take you to the "Jobs Home" tab.
2. Type a keyword into the "Keywords" field (e.g. Product Manager or Technical Writer).
3. Click on the "Search" button.
4. Review any job by clicking on the job or click on the link under the job to find people in your network who can help you get that job.
5. At the bottom of the last page of search results you can also click on "See more jobs from Simply Hired that fit these criteria".

To do a more advanced job search using the "Advanced Search" feature for Jobs:

1. Click on the "Jobs" link in the top navigation area of any page. This will take you to the "Jobs Home" tab.
2. Click on the "Advanced Search" tab and complete any or all of the following fields:
 - a. Type a keyword into the "Keywords" field (e.g. Product Manager or Technical Writer).
 - b. Select a location using one of the drop down options below:
 - i. "Anywhere" - This is our default setting and will locate all jobs posted with your criteria and will not be limited by location.
 - ii. "Located in or near" - Allows you to select a country and zip code. Results will come back within a 25 mile/40 kilometer radius but can be adjusted to a 100 mile/160 kilometer radius in Advanced Search.
 - c. Type a specific job title into the "Job Title" field. Type a specific company name into the "Company" field.

- d. Click the box next to any appropriate options to identify the type of job you are seeking:
 - i. "Functions".
 - ii. "Experience".
 - iii. "Industries".
 - iv. "When Posted".
 - e. Select one of the following options from the "Sort By" field:
 - i. "Relevance" - Sorts results by taking into consideration all fields you have entered.
 - ii. "Relationship" - Results are prioritized towards the top if you have connections within your network at the company with a job posting.
 - iii. "Date Posted (most recent)" - Results are prioritized based on jobs most recently posted.
 - iv. "Date Posted (earliest)" - Results are prioritized based on earliest jobs posted.
3. Click on the "Search" button.
 4. At the bottom of the last page of search results you can also click on "See more jobs from Simply Hired that fit these criteria".

Job Search Tips

1. The LinkedIn Learning Center offers a "Job Seeker" Users Guide that displays various tips to help you best utilize LinkedIn for your job search needs. Click on "Learning Center" from the "More" dropdown menu (found in the top navigation bar of the home page). User Guides are found at the bottom left side of the Learning Center page along with other articles and video tutorials on how you can use LinkedIn to its fullest potential.
2. Select "Answers" to the left of the LinkedIn Search box at the top of any page on the site. Search for a topic like "job search" to read comments and advice from your fellow LinkedIn peers and experts. Find out what works and doesn't work for them.
3. Browse the LinkedIn Blog (link found in bottom navigation bar of home page) and its archives for articles, videos and success stories on how LinkedIn has helped others in their search for a new job or career.
4. Select "Jobs" to the left of the LinkedIn Search box at the top of any page on the site. Click on "Advanced" to build searches that can help you find jobs posted exclusively on LinkedIn's job board and other jobs posted out on the Web.
5. Utilize the JobsInsider feature included in the LinkedIn Toolbar. This will help you identify inside connections you already have that work for the companies that are hiring.

Job Search Fields and Tips:

1. Advanced Search Fields - Allow you to enter additional information to obtain results that are further refined.
2. Keyword Field - Enter any keywords to search on; the field at the top of the page searches the entire job listing.
3. Location - Limit your search to jobs in a particular area or country.
4. Experience Level - Limit your search only to jobs that require a certain level of experience.
5. Search jobs posted - Limit your search only to jobs posted within a certain period of time.
6. Job Title - Limit your searches to particular job titles only.
7. Company - Limit your searches to jobs at a particular company.
8. Job Function - Limit your searches to jobs with one or more primary job functions. To select more than one job function at a time, click the checkbox next to each of the functions you want to search.
9. Industry - Limit your searches to jobs in one or more primary industries. To select more than one industry at a time, click the checkbox next to each of the industries you want to search.

10. Sort your results by:

- a. Date posted - Show the most recently posted jobs first.
- b. Location - Show the jobs found in alphabetical order by location.
- c. Company - Show the jobs found in alphabetical order by company.
- d. Job Title - Show the jobs found in alphabetical order by title.
- e. Degrees away from you - Show jobs posted for companies in which you have the closest degree of connections first.
- f. Keyword Relevance - Show job postings weighted based on your keywords.

Searching for Specific Results

How do I search for a specific title, company name or job listing?

The search feature allows you to search LinkedIn multiple ways (including Boolean searches). You can specify what type of search you would like to run by selecting from the search menu of one of the drop down menus mentioned below. In some cases an "Advanced" link is made available to the right of the "Search" button.

1. Search People - Search for specific names or use advanced search to narrow your search using additional fields to filter your results (e.g., title, company, industry, language, school, etc.).
2. Search Jobs - Search for general position or use advanced search to narrow your search using additional fields to filter your results (e.g., job title, company, job function, industry, etc.).
3. Search Companies - Type in a company name and get results of people you or your connections know at that company.

Additional dropdown options can be used to search and find answers to topics that are being discussed by other LinkedIn members. You can also search for items in your LinkedIn Inbox and find groups that share your interests.

We do not support wildcard searches but we do support Advanced Search Operators and Boolean Logic. You can also use these Boolean search types to refine your results.

1. Quoted searches - If you would like to search for an exact phrase, you can enclose the phrase in quotation marks. Example: If you want to find Profiles that contain the words "product manager", in that exact order, type the following in for your search:

"product manager"

2. NOT searches - If you would like to do a search but exclude a particular term, type that term with a NOT immediately before it. Example: If you want to avoid seeing any Profile containing the word "computer", type the following in for your search:

NOT computer

3. OR searches - If you would like to search for Profiles which include just one of two or more terms, you can separate those terms with the upper-case word OR. Example: If you want to find Profiles containing either "CEO" or "President", type the following in for your search:

CEO OR President

4. AND searches - If you would like to search for Profiles which include two terms, you can separate those terms with the upper-case word AND. However, you don't have to use AND; if you enter two terms, it will assume that there is an AND between them. Example: If you want to find Profiles that contain both "manager" and "director", type in either of the following for your search:

manager AND director
manager director

5. Parenthetical searches - If you would like to do a complex search (for instance, finding vice presidents or directors of divisions) you can combine terms using parentheses. Example: To find people who have "VP" in their Profiles, or have director AND division in their Profiles, type in the following for your search:

VP OR (director AND division)

Applying for a Job on LinkedIn

How do I apply for a job on LinkedIn?

To apply for a job using LinkedIn, take the following steps:

1. Click on the "Jobs" link displayed at the top of your home page. This will take you to the "Jobs Home" tab.
 - a. Type a keyword into the "Keywords" box (e.g. Engineer or Product Manager).
 - b. Click on the "Advanced Search" tab or on the "Advanced Search" link located under the "Search" button if you wish to refine your search with additional criteria.
2. Click on the "Search" button. This will provide you with a list of available jobs that fit your criteria.
3. Click on individual job titles to view the details of the job posting.
4. Click on the "Apply" button at bottom or in the upper right area of the job description page. The exact verbiage on the "Apply" button may vary.
5. The workflow for applying for a job may vary.
 - a. For some jobs, you will be able to apply on the LinkedIn website. You will be asked to submit a cover letter (limited to 4000 characters) and/or a résumé. We automatically prepopulate your application with the last resume and cover letter you used to apply on our site (even if it has been a really long time). You can update or delete the prepopulated cover letter text. You can also click on the "Remove" link (above the "Continue" button) if you would like to import an updated résumé.
 - b. For other jobs, companies may route you to their career page or company job board in order to continue the application process.

At the bottom of the last page of search results, you can also click on "See more jobs from Simply Hired that fit these criteria". This will allow you to find and apply for jobs not posted on LinkedIn.

Privately Looking for a Job

How do I keep it a secret from my employer that I am looking for a job?

Having a LinkedIn Profile is not an indication that you are looking for a job. Most of our members use the site as a professional networking tool to get personal introductions to potential clients, suppliers, and partners or to search for job candidates for their open positions. Many business development, sales and marketing people use their LinkedIn network to access knowledge resources and to gather information for current projects being worked. People need to continually use their existing networks to make new connections for job-related purposes. While you can't exactly stop people in your current company from learning that you are using LinkedIn, the point is that you should not have to.

If you apply for a position using LinkedIn jobs, your résumé is sent only to the job poster. No information is shared on the site that you have applied for a position.

If you would like to maintain a low profile job search, listed below are some additional items you might consider.

1. "Contact Settings" (located under "Email Notifications" section) - Adjust your contact settings. The bottom area of this page allows you to select what kinds of opportunities you are open to receiving as a LinkedIn user (e.g., career opportunities, consulting offers, job inquires, etc.). You can also enter information giving advice to those users considering contacting you.
2. "Connections Browse" (located under "Privacy Settings" section) - Hide your connections list. If you have connected to a recruiter no one will be able to see your connections.
3. "Profile and Status Updates" (located under "Privacy Settings" section) - Adjust these settings so your connections are not notified of significant profile updates and they do not appear on your Company Profile.
4. "Group Logo" (located on the "Join Group" page when first joining a group) - When you join a job-seeking group, uncheck the box next to "Group Logo: Display the group logo on my Profile". This will prevent a network update from being sent to your network that you joined the group. It will also make your group membership visible only to other members of that same group.
5. Be aware of status messages you post on LinkedIn or on other social networking sites. Status messages on LinkedIn are visible to others when you enter information in the box that says "Share an update" (on your home page) or "Post an update" (on your Profile).

Note: If a job you applied for in the past does not appear on this tab it is probably because you applied for the job prior to the release of this feature or you have removed it from the "My Jobs" page. Job postings that have expired

will appear in gray and you will not be able to click on the job title to view the job posting.

Saving or Unsaving a Job on the My Jobs Tab

How do I save or remove a job from the list on My Jobs?

The "My Jobs" tab appears after you click on "Jobs" at the top of your home page. This feature helps you track jobs you are interested in or have applied for using LinkedIn Jobs.

To save a job to the "My Jobs" page, you can do one of the following items:

1. Apply for a job posted on LinkedIn Jobs.
2. Click on the "Save job" link in the top right hand corner of the job posting (under the "Apply Now" button) or in the Job search results.

To remove a job from the "My Jobs" page:

1. Click on the "Jobs" link at the top of your home page.
2. Click on the "My jobs" tab.
3. Hover your mouse over the job you would like to remove and click on the "unsave" link.

Note: If a job you applied for in the past does not appear on this tab it is probably because you applied for the job prior to the release of this feature or you have removed it from the "My Jobs" page. Job postings that have expired will appear in gray and you will not be able to click on the job title to view the job posting.

Sorting Job Search Results

How do I sort my job search results?

To sort your job search results take the steps listed below:

1. Click on 'Search Jobs' from the drop down listing in the Search area at the top of your home page.
2. Click on the 'Advanced' link to begin searching for a job.
3. Enter your search criterion and click on 'Search'.
4. Click on 'refine search results' button in the upper right area of the page.
5. Click on the arrow under 'Sorted by' field to reveal your sorting options. This field is in the far right column of the listed search categories. You can sort by date posted, location, company, job title, degrees away from you, or keyword relevance. The default sort option is date posted.

Requesting a Job Referral

How do I request a job referral for a job posting?

From your job search results, you can find people within your network who can refer you for a posted job by taking the following steps:

1. Click on the job title listed in your search results. This will reveal the job posting and additional job information.
2. Click the "Request Referral" button next to the "Apply Now" button in the job posting. (This button is only available when you are connected to someone that works directly for the company.) Clicking this button will generate an Introduction request to someone in your network who is directly connected to the job poster or knows someone who is directly connected to the job poster. If you have more than one first-degree connection who knows the job poster, you will be allowed to choose which connection the Introduction should go through. If none of your connections are directly connected to the job poster, you may see a list of connections who know someone directly connected to the job poster (second-degree connections).
3. Use or modify the pre-populated Introduction messages provided.
4. Click on the "Send" button at the bottom of the page.

At the bottom of the last page of search results, you can also click on "See more jobs from Simply Hired that fit these criteria". If you have downloaded the Internet Explorer® or Firefox® Browser Toolbar, you can use the JobsInsider feature to identify connections in your network at the hiring company.

To identify connections who can refer you for a job on other job boards like Simply Hired®, take the following steps:

1. Click on "See more jobs from Simply Hired" found at the bottom of the last page of your LinkedIn Jobs search results. This will review more jobs outside of LinkedIn Jobs that met your search criteria.
2. Click on an individual job title to view the details of the job posting. This will also reveal the JobsInsider bar across the top of the job posting. If you have anyone in your network or groups that can help you get this job, information on how many connections you have will be revealed in a yellow box.
3. Click on the number underlined in the yellow box that says "You're linked in to _____". This will reveal a list of people within your network who may work at or know someone at the posting company.
4. Compose a message. If you are requesting to be introduced, compose a message to the person you ultimately want to reach and a brief note to your connection explaining why you want to be introduced to their connection.
5. Click on "Send".