

## SOCIAL NETWORKING



# LinkedIn – Job hunting the smart way

By Laura Hutchinson

Are you in the job market? Are you LinkedIn? With more than 100 million users, LinkedIn is undoubtedly the most popular social network for professionals, as well as one of the top social networks, currently in existence. Conceptualised in the living room of co-founder, Reid Hoffman, in the fall of 2002; some nine years later - almost everyone in the professional community boasts a LinkedIn account. The game has certainly changed when it comes to securing a new job and these days, your arsenal of skills would do well to include a sound knowledge of how to navigate the digital highway. This is almost essential in ensuring that you are at least in the line, not necessarily next in line - for that successive BIG job opportunity.

The following tips on LinkedIn, aim to help job seekers the net over, make the most of this professional network.

### 1. Optimise your profile:

"Optimise" is a buzz word, coined by social media geeks to impress the less informed. By engaging in the optimising process you simply include keywords that are most relevant to your skills and experience within your profile. You can add these in your summary and job description section to aid visibility of your profile and ensure that it reflects more often in relevant searches.

### 2. Privacy settings:

Be cautious and aware of those within your network. If your current boss is a member of your network and you don't necessarily want him or her to know you are looking for a new job; you will need to be selective in arranging your privacy settings. However, if this is not an immediate concern, then it's best to be openly and easily identifiable.

### 3. Viewing

You can confirm who is screening your profile, by allowing others to do likewise. This information can be viewed when you click under "Who's Viewed My Profile" on your profile page.

### 4. Make it personal:

Although LinkedIn is a professional site; it is highly advisable to ensure your profile is as personal as possible. It is vital to portray a glimpse of the real person behind the profile. Therefore, be sure to use first person when you pen your profile; this communicates confidence. Understand and appreciate that your profile is your life story; engage in the use of storytelling to strengthen your case. This will ensure a distinctive profile and extend to the reader; a better insight into you, as a person.

### 5. LinkedIn recommendations:

Recommendations from people you have worked alongside carry much weight. To a potential employer, a LinkedIn recommendation is a reference in advance, and can greatly assist in securing that first, sometimes elusive interview.

As with most professional relationships, recommendations are often mutual. Therefore, it's no surprise that many individuals will provide recommendations for each other. The fact that your reputation is tied to any recommendation you write, is indeed an incredibly significant incentive to keep words honest, as well as defensible.

### 6. The power of LinkedIn groups:

There exist groups for every topic and industry, which enable you to network specifically with applicable peers and specialists. But did you know you can directly message most group members? What's more, you don't have to be a first degree connection, in order to achieve this. An ideal way to bring you into contact with those in the know; it is also the perfect platform to ensure that you are noticed, when attempting to make a move in your career. Harness the power of LinkedIn groups.

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