

Using LinkedIn to find a Job

1. Don't sign up with LinkedIn unless you are committed to spend some time making it work. Networking is about investing your time, and if that is something that doesn't interest you, or you can't be bothered, then stop now, buy a book and sit on the beach all summer waiting for a job to come your way!
2. Profile. This is absolutely essential and something that you shouldn't take lightly. Make sure you upload a decent looking photo (headshot) of yourself. Make sure you have all the correct dates for your work history, and that it reads well with NO TYPO's! Don't forget, many employers check for online profiles before they interview people so you don't want any glaring mistakes making their decision for them.
3. You need to expand your LinkedIn network with as many people that know as possible. Get all your business cards out, go through your email contacts and spend some time writing down all the people you have interacted with, directly and indirectly. Then search for them on LinkedIn and invite them to your network. Size matters with LinkedIn - the bigger your network, then the bigger your 2nd and 3rd level search network will be.
4. **HOT TIP!** Make sure you join a number of the groups (that are relevant to your sector), as these will become part of your search zone as well. Many groups can be joined simple by requesting to join. Once accepted (usually very quickly) the people in that group will become part of your search network!
5. Make sure you tell people that you are actually looking for a new job. It may sound obvious, but if people don't know you are available, then they won't talk to you about opportunities!
6. Ask current/previous colleagues for recommendations. Fortunately, LinkedIn makes this easy, and takes you through this process well by prompting you. This is a great way of adding to your credibility, and your online profile by showing your strengths, and the fact you were a valued employee (well hopefully anyway!). Also if you are/were a manager, recommendations from your staff is as equally powerful.
7. Use the power of LinkedIn to help you find the people you need to speak to. Hopefully you will have highlighted a number of companies that you want to work for.. There are three things to do next:
 - o Look at the 'company profiles' of the companies you want to work for. Find out what the background are of the people who work there. Have you got similar skills?
 - o Find out where current employees have previously worked - check their profiles - have you worked for a similar company?
 - o Find the names of hiring managers, or HR staff that work there. You probably will have to contact them offline, but having the contact name will be a great start.
8. Do it now! If you are currently working, don't wait for you to become unemployed to start using LinkedIn, start now! Build your network before you need it, then when you need it, it will be one less area to get started.