

Ten Tips for Networking with LinkedIn

1. Create a compelling profile – personal and corporate

Pay attention to the details – highlight your most significant accomplishments and your company's unique attributes.

2. Search for contacts

Look for individuals that you know that you can invite to join your network. Remember you can only invite individuals that you know to join your network and those first generation contacts are important gateways to additional contacts. So, spend time each day mining your contact lists to build a strong network.

3. Grow your network shamelessly

Make sure you mine all of your contact lists to expand your contact list. For example, you can send an invitation to join your network to everyone on your email contact list.

4. Grow your network strategically

In addition to growing the number of contacts you can accumulate in your LinkedIn contact list, you will want to reach out to LinkedIn members to get them to join your network. Often the best way to make that connection is to write a recommendation for someone you want in your network. Not only will that person be more likely to join your network, but most often you will get a reciprocal recommendation.

5. Ask for introductions

Your LinkedIn colleagues and friends will also have friends that you want in your network. If you are not personal friends, you'll have to ask your contact to introduce you to his or her contacts. Spend some time each week searching for additional contacts using the "friend of a friend" strategy.

6. Fill down time with LinkedIn activities

Success requires your constant attention. Take advantage of any down time you have during the day to build your LinkedIn network. You'll be surprised at what you can accomplish in a few minutes.

7. Join groups that have members in your targeted audience

To build a reputation as an expert in your field, you will need to join groups related to your industry and begin to build your voice.

8. Act on network updates

You will get updates as individuals in your network update their profiles. Take the time to recognize your colleagues' accomplishments by sending notes and/or commenting on their postings.

9. Ask and answer questions

Use your network to get answers to your business questions. And, expand your credibility by answering questions that are posted by individuals in the groups you have joined.

10. Build a weekly action plan for your LinkedIn activities

Put your LinkedIn activities on your "must do" weekly list. Allocate specific time periods to work on your networking to gain the most from your participation on this powerful networking site.