

LinkedIn Networking

Quick Start Checklist



by OnlineBusinessNetworker.com

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I have my LinkedIn® account, now what?

Whether you are trying to find customers, clients, a new career, or just develop relationships that will profit you in other ways these 10 tips will immediately make your time spent on LinkedIn more effective.

Set up your profile.

You must first go to the “Edit My Profile” in the left menu of your homepage and fill out each of the sections. The most important are your work experience and summary which is the key to who you are. Your profile is like a resume and sales letter combined, it is what tells others who you are and gives them a reason to *Connect* with you.

Make sure that you include in the header, “Summary” and “Contact Settings” that you are an open networker. And that you include all relevant jobs in the experience section.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Remember when you are writing your profile to describe what you produced in a position rather than what you *did*. Giving the results of your efforts is far more powerful than telling people what you did.

Add Recommendations to your profile

Find some people on LinkedIn that you already know and have worked with, invite them to *Connect* with you and then request a ***Recommendations*** from them.

Make sure when requesting recommendations that you tell the person writing it exactly what you wish to be recommended for. You want your recommendations to be in alignment with your objectives.

I have found it useful to write my own recommendation and send it along asking the person to use it if they feel it is accurate or modify it if they have changes they think need to be made.

One of the most powerful things about the LinkedIn profile is that it allows you to include references.

Join a number of the open networking groups.

Go to the groups menu in your homepage and join groups such as “Invites Welcome,” “LION500.com,” or “Open Networkers,” these are open networking groups that indicate you will engage anyone. Your network will grow faster and easier if you are an open networker. Don’t forget to make clear throughout your profile that you are an open networker. This will get a lot of people to invite you.

Design a thank you email

Tell your new contact that you are happy to *Connect*, ask them specifically how you might help them, and then offer to help them in any way you can. Send this to everyone that accepts an invitation to *Connect* with you. I recommend that you include your email address and phone number as well making it easy for them to contact you.

Never send a canned or standard invitation

Always write a custom note preferably by making reference to something in the person’s profile that is of mutual interest. This is half the battle to getting *Connected*.

If you are concerned about getting flagged with an “I don’t know ...,” add a final statement that says they may feel free to archive your invitation if they wish. If you give them a good reason to *Connect*, they will and you won’t have problems.

Get Connected with some super networkers.

Once you are approved and a member of some of the Open Networking groups, use their membership list to find and connect with some of the people who have very large networks.

Most of the time you can search by the number of *Connections*, and in LinkedIn, using the refined search you can search by group or put it in the keyword box, then searching by “number of *Connections*.”

When you invite these folks tell them you are new and just getting started and wish to get your network going. You can even ask for help – most will *Connect* and many will offer you some help.

Join some groups that are directly related to your professional interest.

Once you have joined some of these groups begin looking for influential networkers in your niche and *Connect* with them. Start by looking for these people in the Open Networking groups to make *Connecting* with them easier. Otherwise, invite them to join based on the mutual membership in the group and if possible mutual interests you find in their profile.

You might say something like:

“As a fellow member of Sales Leaders I would be happy to connect. I am just getting started and am trying to get some people with similar interests in my network. Please feel free to archive my invitation if you do not wish to connect.”

You could and should consider enhancing this message by adding some relevant connection you find in their profile. Do NOT copy the above message verbatim, you do not want it to look like a form letter when others who have this report do the same thing.

Spend some time answering questions.

The “Question & Answer” forum is one of LinkedIn’s most powerful tools.

Your answers give you visibility and the chance to show your expertise. Make sure you give your best answer, don’t hold back. And, if you feel you must say something that is critical or might make the questioner uncomfortable use the “Private Answer” section of the response for those comments.

Look for quality connections.

These are the people you came to LinkedIn to meet, the ones that can offer you a job, become a client, or other valuable relationship.

Using the search or group membership lists find the people you're looking for. Often they will be "third level" *Connections*, making it more difficult to contact them. When this happens see our advice in the 4 Power Tips report you received along with this report.

Give, give, give

Giving information, answers and contacts to your fellow LinkedIners is your key to success. Don't worry about getting business right away. Just spend your time trying to make contributions and establishing our presence in the community. Look for people to introduce your *Connections* too and send them a note, answer their questions, and even offer to chat with them off line and give them more help if they need it. You want to get the reputation of someone that provides value to others.

BONUS TIP

Marketing Yourself and Your Website on LinkedIn

It is of course not proper to place ads for yourself in the Q&A. You can reference things and provide links but they should be directly relevant to the question.

However, you have a website and blog and you find a question on LinkedIn that is relevant here is a sneaky thing you can do to promote yourself very legitimately.

A blog would probably work best for this, but you could just put an article on your website. Take the question you wish to answer on LinkedIn and write a good article or post on the subject. Then, go back to LinkedIn and answer the question in different words and maybe slightly less completely. Put in your final paragraph that you just posted an article or blog post on this subject and if people want more data they can click your link.

You have now created a perfectly proper promotion for your own site.

Stay tuned to our site for an upcoming release that will give you even more help ringing the LinkedIn cash register.