

Leveraging LinkedIn

Personal Branding & Career Development Checklist

Create your profile, completely and in detail. Go to www.Linkedin.com and fill in the blanks under “Join LinkedIn Today.”

- This includes a color photo.
- Add keywords that will help potential clients to find you. Present your profile to match the clientele you want to target. List results, accomplishments, and skills.
- Customize Your “Public Profile” LinkedIn address to match your name, e.g., <http://www.linkedin.com/in/YourName>
- In “Additional Information” add customized links to your blogs or websites.
- Under “Privacy Settings,” make your profile as *public* as possible.
- Under “Network Updates,” list presentations you’re going to give or events you’ll attend.

Build your network

- Invite referral sources, faculty, colleagues, classmates, and clients to join your network.
- Invite people who give you their business card to connect.
- Use LinkedIn to sift through your Outlook contacts and send them an invitation.
- Accept invitations from people you know, have met, or interacted with on LinkedIn.
- Add your LinkedIn Profile web address to your email signature.

Get active and build a reputation

- Contact well-known colleagues, clients, or professors and request that they write a recommendation for you. Within “Your Profile” there’s a handy “Request Recommendations” link. Write Recommendations for others in your network.
- Search “Groups” for industries and associations of clients, local city groups, and business networking groups that focus on your niche – and join multiple.
- Start a discussion within the group (and be viewed as a leader). Pick any topic in current events, issues your clients face, and topics you want to become known for.
- Comment on a discussion that is already underway. Contribute to the discussion from your professional perspective.
- If you can’t find the exact group you want, start a group and be its leader.
- Under “Network Updates,” in your Profile, add something new every week. It could be something you are doing, attending, or have read.
- Use the free add-on applications that add richness to your profile. You can use these “apps” to poll your network or group; to pull posts from your blog to your profile; to post documents, presentations, photos, videos and PowerPoint presentations; to add a Twitter feed; and to share your travel plans with those in your network.

Ask and answer questions to highlight your expertise.

- Go to the “Answers” page and “Ask a Question.” Ask questions about topics or industries you are researching. Genuine requests for expertise generate the most responses.
- Search the active “Questions” by topic area and answer from your professional expertise. Good Answers often lead to new contacts.

Search Jobs

- Search by keyword, job function, industry, and location on the Jobs tab. Create “saved searches” that will email you new job listings that match your search criteria daily or weekly.
- Search for job discussions in the groups that you have joined. You can set up daily or weekly email updates on group discussions that will include these jobs.

Monitor and Meet your contacts

- Read the weekly email digest you get from LinkedIn, highlighting changes in the lives of your contacts. Be on the alert for people who have started or left jobs, because they can be a source of business. Even if someone has merely changed their photo, investigate and find out what really changed.
- Once a week, contact someone in your network you’d like to know better and meet them for coffee or lunch. Always try to bridge the gap from virtual to real world.
- Be outgoing and host a LinkedIn meet up in your city or at a conference.

Resources

CIO.com – The LinkedIn Bible

[http://www.cio.com/article/495098/LinkedIn Bible Everything You Need to Know About the Social Network for Professionals](http://www.cio.com/article/495098/LinkedIn_Bible_Everything_You_Need_to_Know_About_the_Social_Network_for_Professionals)

Inc. Magazine – Introduction to LinkedIn & Small Business Guide

http://www.inc.com/maisha-walker/2009/07/an_introduction_to_linkedin_in.html

http://www.inc.com/maisha-walker/2009/08/linkedin_small_business_success.html

LinkedIn – Official Resources

The Help Center	https://help.linkedin.com/
The Learning Center	http://learn.linkedin.com/
Success Stories	http://press.linkedin.com/success-stories/
The LinkedIn Blog	http://blog.linkedin.com/

Books – These are some of the most current

[Using LinkedIn](#) by Patrice-Anne Rutledge

[The Power Formula for LinkedIn Success](#) by Wayne Breitbarth

[LinkedIn for Dummies](#) by Joel Elad

3rd Party Software – Social Media Dashboards

<http://hootsuite.com/> - Twitter oriented social media dashboard

<http://seesmic.com/> - Powerful suite of social media management and collaboration tools

<http://ping.fm/> - Post status updates to anywhere from anywhere

<http://www.digsby.com/> - IM, Email, and Social Networks in one application

RSS Feeds

<http://reader.google.com>

Blogs and Websites about LinkedIn with helpful tips and resources

<http://linkedintelligence.com/>

<http://socialmediasonar.com/>

<http://www.dummies.com/how-to/internet/Blogging-Social-Networking/LinkedIn.html>

<http://patricerutledge.com/category/social/linkedin/>

Microsoft Outlook Social Connector – Plug-in that integrates LinkedIn and MS Outlook

http://www.linkedin.com/static?key=microsoft_outlook