



Four Ways to Use LinkedIn for Your Job Search

Are you leveraging your LinkedIn profile correctly? Today's job seekers think that they're making the most out of their LinkedIn profiles, but in truth many aren't using LinkedIn to its full potential. Some job seekers don't use every part of their LinkedIn profiles to their advantage and others are missing out on some of the networking opportunities that LinkedIn makes available.

Here are four ways to ensure that your LinkedIn profile is primed and ready for your job search.

Write a strong headline and include keywords.

Think of your LinkedIn headline as your online branding statement. When another LinkedIn user performs a search, your name and headline will be the only things they see. Your headline should be strong and attention grabbing to inspire people to click through to your full profile. "Mobile Developer looking for a new opportunity" is a weak headline. Consider your value proposition. What do you have to offer and what problems can you solve for an employer? Also consider the keywords an employer will use when searching for a candidate and incorporate these into your headline.

Include relevant experience.

Most LinkedIn profiles list full-time and paid work experience, but job seekers should think beyond that. A thorough LinkedIn profile will include internships, volunteer experience, part-time jobs, and other projects. Include all relevant experience that demonstrates your real world skills. This extracurricular experience can be especially important if you are transitioning into a new field or trying to move into a new position in which you don't necessarily have direct experience.

Become an expert.

Use LinkedIn as a platform to share your expertise with others. Market yourself as an industry expert appropriately by sharing first-hand knowledge as well as articles and resources from trusted sources. In addition



to posting on your own LinkedIn page, join relevant groups and share your insights there. By sharing quality content and helping others with their industry problems, you'll develop a reputation as someone who knows their stuff.

Make connections.

Build your network by sending personalized connection requests to everyone you know on LinkedIn – family members, friends, classmates, co-workers, and more. As you build up your network, you'll begin to see how these contacts connect you to job opportunities. Most jobs are found through networking. When you connect with someone on LinkedIn, send them a personalized message and let them know you're on the job hunt. You can ask them for advice, an informational interview, or see if they can connect you with anyone in your field. Don't be afraid to be specific. If you are looking for a job at Company X and see that one of your LinkedIn contacts is connected to a hiring manager at the company, reach out to your contact and ask them to make an introduction.

LinkedIn is a powerful job search tool, if you are willing to put in the work. You can save valuable time on your job search by being an active participant on LinkedIn and reaching out to contacts. ■