

Using LinkedIn Effectively

Now that you have LinkedIn, you need to make the most of it. Here are 8 key steps!

1. Keep Updated on News and Developments

Follow companies and organisations of interest and connect with industry peers. The information these accounts post will help you to stay on top of industry news, knowledge and developments.

2. Who is your Network?

Get clear on who your audience is. Who are you trying to impress? Which industry do you want to work in? Who are you looking to engage with? What opportunities are you looking for?

3. Find your Network

Join both alumni group and LinkedIn groups relevant to your career goals. This not only helps you with networking, but it will also keep you updated on industry news, as well as make you look more credible, since the groups you are a member of appear on your profile.

Network! Research people before reaching out to them and when you do, write customised and personalised connection requests. Where did you meet? Why do you want to connect? What do you have in common? What aspect of their experience do you want to discuss with them?

4. Engage with your Network

Comment on posts and discussions, both in your news feed and in groups you have joined. Also share information both by updating your status and contributing to the groups you have joined.

Request informational interviews from key contacts – many willingly give advice or insight.

Think how you can help others – share useful content, connect others, forward jobs and opportunities to specific people, and help others with their requests.

Provide recommendations and skill endorsements to others.

5. Stay Visible

Update your status regularly to remain in the minds of your network. Talk about your projects, what you're reading, events you're attending, etc.

Be responsive and make sure you stay on top of your notifications and inbox.

6. Professionalism

Write concisely and proofread before posting.

Be professional but also authentic. Be the real you.

Be consistent – make sure you're sharing the same message in your posts, in your CV and on other social networks.

7. Build your Reputation

Keep your profile updated and regularly update your skills, awards, accomplishments, etc.

Ask for recommendations and endorsements.

Showcase your work and publish quality content regularly to position yourself as an expert in your field. Give advice and help others.

Think about personal branding - what makes you unique and what can you offer?

8. Use LinkedIn in Other Places

Create your unique LinkedIn URL. On your profile click "Edit public profile and URL" on the top right, then "Edit your custom URL", again on the top right. Make sure your LinkedIn profile is set to "public". Add this URL to your email signature, website, business cards, etc.

Also remember to connect with your network offline. Arrange calls, attend live events, meet up for coffee, etc. Online is great, but offline is better.