www.LinkedIn.com is a business networking website for people who are interested in increasing their professional visibility and contact information. LinkedIn is a type of social networking but it is not similar to Facebook in that it relates to your business life and not your social life.

LinkedIn is often used by personnel recruiters, people conducting a job search, and business owners who want to expand their marketing and sales. Members typically use their email addresses and don't initially divulge their address or phone number.

The Power of Networking

How many times have you heard the phrase, "It's all about networking?" This is especially true when conducting a job search or trying to expand your marketing presence, sales or business.

But how many people really know how to network? Not many. And it takes time, dedication and hard work. The time to build your network is right now! You don’t want to wait until you’ve been laid off and need to find a job to start networking. If you do, it will come across as desperate and actually repel rather than attract connections.

It's important for you to help others on LinkedIn who need to find connections that can advance their objective – be it sales or a job. In this way, you can expect some help from them down the road. It's not just a one-way street where you ask for help and don't give anything in return.

It's important to have these two things in mind when networking.

1. What's your goal?
2. Who are the people in the best position to help you reach your goal?

Also, it's crucial to ask the right indirect questions when job hunting. For example an indirect question would be, "Who do you think I should contact when looking for a new job as an editorial assistant?" This is much more effective than asking a direct question such as, "Do you have a job for me as an editorial assistant?"

The larger your network, the more people will want to connect with you. It's not about picking out the most popular person at your former company but, rather, about who you think might know someone who could help you reach your goal.

Degrees of Networking in LinkedIn

1) First Degree – the people you actually know – your own network. They will have "1" beside their name in LinkedIn.
2) Second Degree – these are the people that your first degree network people know – they will have a "2" by their name. This expands your network dramatically and represents the real functionality of LinkedIn. Don’t dismiss someone because they don’t seem relevant to your field or your business. You never know who that person might know.
3) Third Degree – The next layer out -- people that your second degree contacts know. You can only see their profiles if you upgrade your LinkedIn account. It is good to get an introduction from your first or second degree contacts to your third degree contacts. You may be able to see them if they are in one of your groups.
The first layer of Linkedin – your profile and privacy settings

You should use your full name and a professional picture (not a casual snapshot with your dog) and just a "head shot" would be good as it will be very small picture.

It is important to fill out your profile and to describe your current function (in the professional headline).

In your profile, describe your general location, your primary industry or expertise, and your current status. You can look at other people's profiles to get an idea of the appropriate information. When you fill out your status, other members of Linkedin will be notified, depending upon how you set your "Profile and Update settings" in the "Privacy Settings" part of the "Account & Settings" page.

The second layer for your network:

Add connections from people already on Linkedin (they will have a blue icon "in" next to their name)

Click on "Add Connections"

1. Import contacts – you can use your existing email(s) contact lists and import the names.
   - They will only be visible to you and no message will be sent.
   - Then, select specific people to send a personalized message asking them to connect with you on Linkedin.

2. Look for current and past colleagues. Use green "Add Connections" button. Click on a company that you are currently working for and you will get a list of people you might know. Select the people you actually know. Write a personal message to them (or a more generic one if you are going to invite a group); repeat for every company you've worked for.

3. Now import classmates from Linkedin – click on a school, select people, type a personal message and invite to connect. Repeat for every school.

The third layer of your network:

In this layer, you can invite people you know who are not yet on Linkedin.

- Go to "imported contacts" under "Contacts."
- Select the people you want to invite to connect.

Write a personal message and explain to them what Linkedin is so that they won't think your e-mail is some kind of spam. You could ask them if they've heard of Linkedin and explain that you can use it to connect with current and former colleagues and classmates. Even if they don't want to join, you can suggest that they drop you a line to let you know how they're doing.

Groups

It is useful to become a member of one or more groups. Being a group member makes it easier for you to contact people; you can use the discussions forum. You can also add your website URL in your answers in the discussion groups. You can be a member of a maximum of 50 groups.

To find a group:

- Click on Groups & bring up Group Directory
- Use search box or browse the groups
A Smattering of Relevant Websites & References
(not a comprehensive or complete list)

http://www.networking-coach.com/  -- free networking e-course & tips


Book: A Foot in the Door: Networking Your Way into the Hidden Job Market by Katharine Hansen (May 1, 2008)

Book "Let's Connect!" (Jan Vermeiren) at www.letsconnectbook.com

Book: How to REALLY use LinkedIn (Second Edition - Entirely Revised): Discover the true power of LinkedIn and how to leverage it for your business and career. Paperback by Jan Vermeiren (Author), Bert Verdonck (Contributor)

Book: LinkedIn For Dummies (For Dummies (Computer/Tech)) by Joel Elad (available Feb 10, 2014) or get the 2011 version available now.

Book: Maximum Success with LinkedIn: Dominate Your Market, Build a Global Brand, and Create the Career of Your Dreams... by Dan Sherman (Dec 11, 2012)


Book: LinkedIn In 30 Minutes: How to create a rock-solid LinkedIn profile and build connections that matter by Melanie Pinola (May 7, 2013)
Check out more books on Amazon.com or more information on training on the web

Some further resources:

Anson Alexander Tutorials on YouTube (scroll down the page and you will see all of the 2014 LinkedIn Tutorials he has posted:  www.youtube.com/user/AnsonA4?feature=watch

Here is the article we didn't get to discuss, but is worth reading and thinking about:  www.pbs.org/newshour/making-sense/ask-the-headhunter-a-challenge/

Here are some important notations:

1. It seems you have a standard set of fonts to go with on LinkedIn, as it did not accept different fonts when used in MS Word, and when copied and pasted into the LinkedIn format.
2. Be cautious about what you post and read each screen as you progress through any type of sign-in on any type of social networking site. Consider everything you put on a site as public.
3. You can use MS Word as a "draft before launching" area when composing your documents or information. You can copy and paste from your resume if you choose to do so.
4. Consider having a different e-mail address for LinkedIn to have more control over your contacts for this social networking site.