

# How to WIN at Linked

A Beginners Guide to the Most Powerful Business-Orientated  
Social Networking Service in the World

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### A History Of LinkedIn

LinkedIn was formed in December 2002 by Reid Hoffman, a member of the board of director at PayPal, the electronic money service. Prior to his time at PayPal he worked for SocialNet, and it was with two of his former colleagues from SocialNet that he founded LinkedIn. It launched on the 5th of May, 2003 as one of the very first social networks dedicated specifically towards forming business bonds, instead of social ones. The idea was to take the basic template of social networking sites such as Myspace and Bebo (hard as it might be to believe, this was in the days before Facebook) and remove all of the informal features, replacing them with applications, groups and platforms through which people could make business connections, search for jobs and build communities of like-minded professionals. Today, LinkedIn has over 300 million users worldwide.

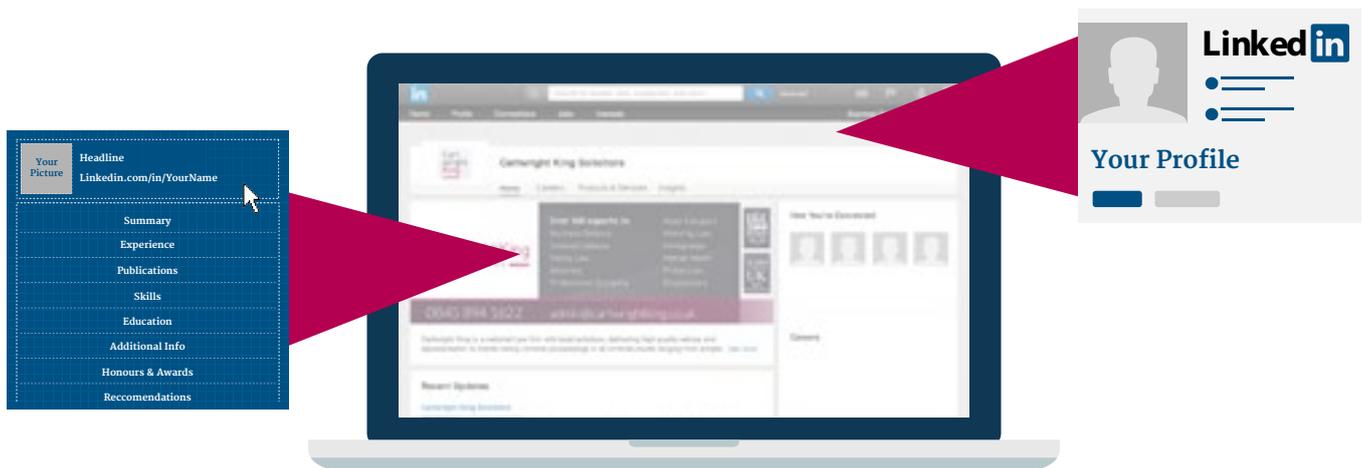
### Creating Your LinkedIn Profile

In business as in life, first impressions matter, and (as harsh as it might well sound), many potential 'links' will make their decision on whether or not to communicate with you based primarily on your profile.

*“Configuring and perfecting your LinkedIn profile should take you no more than an hour, and yet could provide you with the*

*perfect platform from which to advance your career by making contacts with people who matter.”*

Your LinkedIn profile should essentially read like a 'cliff-notes' version of your CV. Here we'll take you through the various sections of your profile, and will be examining how you can make the most out of each.



**Profile Picture:** Which picture you choose as the thumbnail image that will act as your window to the working world depends very much on the impression you're trying to make. For example, if you wish to be seen as a serious, respectable businessman or businesswoman, the picture should be formal; a simple profile shot. If you wish to purvey a more youthful, casual image, however, consider a picture of yourself participating in one of your passions? Maybe playing football or playing a musical instrument? In either instance, the photo should reveal a clear shot of your face, in much the same manner as a passport or driving license photo. And remember, your picture is not set in stone, it can always be changed at a later date if you feel it isn't working for you.

**Headline:** You're limited to 120 characters here so you really need to make the most of the available space. One option would be simply to list your official job title, but you'd be missing

a trick there. Remember that LinkedIn works like a search engine, so you're best bet for drawing attention to your profile is to make it as compelling as possible.

**Summary:** This is your chance to summarise yourself in a few sentences, something that will not come naturally to most, but is a vital skill to possess in a world that seems to be moving faster by the day. Distilling your very essence into a couple of lines is obviously not an ideal situation you need to understand the power of a convincing opening gambit. The best way to start is to simply start writing.

*"Consider your greatest strengths, what makes you stand apart from your peers and what it is you personally feel you have to offer in terms of your profession."*

It's more than likely that you'll have a tendency to waffle on a little, but don't worry. Once you have a decent paragraph, sit back and analyse it. Think to yourself; "Which parts of this are

completely necessary? Am I repeating myself anywhere? Does this in any way come across as a little bit narcissistic?” Then start editing. The most effective summaries are less than 100 words and read organically, with excellent grammar and no ‘fluff’.

**Experience:** This section will take up the main body of your profile and acts in much the same manner as it does on a conventional CV. You will want to include your current position and how long you have worked there, as well as at least two other positions you’ve held. Feel free to copy and paste the lion’s share of this section for your existing CV.

**Keywords/SEO:** If you’re not familiar with the concept of SEO (Search Engine Optimisation), it’s effectively a practice through which certain keywords are placed on a webpage in order to drive traffic to it via search engines such as Google. This can really be used to your advantage with LinkedIn. Consider which words and phrases people in your line of work might use when they are looking for somebody like yourself (with your experience and qualifications) and include them in your profile.

**Connections:** As with any social media platform, the key to using LinkedIn effectively lies in making connections with your fellow users. Of course, this doesn’t mean you should just go adding everyone under the sun. The

first people you should be adding are your colleagues, friends and existing connections, as they will (hopefully) have nothing but good things to say about you, and will be able to help integrate you more organically into the LinkedIn community. You should find your list of connections growing exponentially as you build up your profile.

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*“A good LinkedIn profile will have at least 500 connections”.*

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**Recommendations:** The best thing about making connections on LinkedIn is that you can also get endorsements and recommendations from whomever you’re connected to.

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*“Don’t be shy about asking your connections for recommendations, as chances are they might ask you to return the favour.”*

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In fact, you might want to even consider being preemptive and drafting a potential recommendation for them along with your request. Recommendations can come from anyone; from bosses and colleagues, to friends you’ve worked with in the past, or even happy clients. Indeed, a well written, passionate endorsement from a client might actually help more than a stock-in-trade, clinical endorsement from a faceless managing director. To make sure your recommendations cover a wide breadth of your skills,

make sure you ask each person to focus on a specific skill or experience. For example, if you need somebody to endorse your leadership skills, why not tactfully remind them of a time when you were a successful project leader? It's all about making the most of your connections and the most of your skills and experiences.

**Publications:** Here you'll be able to add links to any work you've had published online. If you work in a creative industry then this is a particularly valuable as it will allow you to direct potential employers or clients towards previous jobs. When it comes to selecting which publications to use, always go with the ones that have had the most positive feedback.

**Skills & Endorsements:** This is where you can select a range of skills and your connections can effectively confirm them. Each skill will appear with a number stating how many people have endorsed that skill and the best way to increase this number is to increase your connections and make sure that you're interacting with people who understand and value your attributes. Of course, skill endorsements don't speak half as loud as recommendations, but they certainly help once they start adding up.

**Education:** As with your experience section, there is no reason why you shouldn't simply copy and paste this from your CV. It's worth noting, however, that adding particular schools,

college's or universities will give you a valuable link to your former classmates. Remember; every connection counts!

**Groups:** You are allowed to join up to 50 groups on LinkedIn and it's highly recommended that you do just that. Join as many relevant groups as possible (there are over a million to choose from) and actively engage in discussions and conversations within those groups. Show your initiative, interest and value, and you'll be swimming in fresh connections in no time.



### Number of LinkedIn Groups Worldwide

**Video/Slideshow:** If you have expertise in the field, you might want to consider creating a video and/or slideshow for your profile. This will really help it stand out. Of course, a bad video or slideshow will do more harm than good, so make sure you gather genuine feedback from people whose opinions you trust before you upload it.

# Optimal Company Page Layout

The image shows a LinkedIn company page for Cartwright King Solicitors. The page is annotated with several red callout boxes and dashed lines to highlight key layout elements:

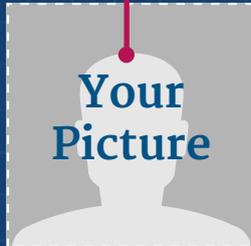
- Logo:** Located in the top left corner of the page header.
- Main Toolbar:** A horizontal navigation bar below the logo containing links for Home, Careers, Products & Services, and Insights.
- Cover Photo:** A large banner image at the top of the profile section, featuring the company name and a list of legal expertise areas.
- Your Company Statement:** A text block below the cover photo providing a brief overview of the company's services.
- Status Update:** A post from the company, including a profile picture (labeled as 'Image') and a text update about social media.
- Comments:** A section below the status update showing user avatars and the start of a comment.
- Connections:** A section on the right sidebar titled 'How You're Connected' showing the number of connections.
- Careers:** A section on the right sidebar titled 'Careers' showing the number of jobs posted.
- Affiliated Company Pages:** A section on the right sidebar showing related company pages.
- Related Ads:** A section on the right sidebar showing advertisements related to the industry or interests.

A large red arrow points from the 'Comments' section towards the 'Related Ads' section, indicating a flow or relationship between these elements.

# How to build your LinkedIn Profile

## Picture:

Smile and look professional.



**Headline:** Use this for your summary headline instead of your job title.

**Headline**  
(180 characters)

**Linkedin.com/in/YourName**

**URL:** Customise this URL to make it shareable and avoid ugly numbers at the end of your profile.

**Tip:** Describe YOU as if this were a headline to a newspaper or book title

**Summary:** Humanise your story to say who you are and what you have done. Speak in the first person.

**8000  
Characters**

**Experience:** Summarise your role and key contributions.

**2000  
Characters per  
Position**

**Publications:** List your blogs, papers and anything published.

**2000  
Characters**

**Skills:** List at least 10 of your core skills to set up others to endorse you.

**50 Skills  
61 Characters**

**Education:** Expand on your degrees to tie in relevant keywords.

**100  
Characters per  
School**

**Additional Info:** List alternative ways for others to get in touch with you.

**1000  
Characters**

**Honours & Awards:** List them!

**1000  
Characters**

**Recommendations:** Secure as many as you can from current & past contacts.

**1000  
Characters**

## A Final Checklist

- ✓ Do you have at least 10 recommendations?
- ✓ Has your profile URL been customised?
- ✓ Has all your relevant contact information been added?
- ✓ Have you added your profile to the bookmarks bar in your browser, so you will remember to update it daily?
- ✓ Have you written your profile in the first person?
- ✓ Have you added all relevant honours, awards and achievements to the 'Honours & Awards' section? This is particularly valuable in media industries, where awards are seen as markers of career progression.
- ✓ Have you informed your other social networks (Facebook, Twitter etc.) that you have joined LinkedIn?
- ✓ Have you added any media to your profile to help it stand out?
- ✓ Have you published your profile changes to your network?



## Reasons You should be on LinkedIn



**44,000** Daily Mobile Job Applications

**1.45 million** Daily Mobile Job Views

**15 million** Daily Mobile Profile Views

## How To Use Special Features – Becoming a LinkedIn ‘Power User’

If you really wish to make an impression on LinkedIn, you’re going to have to go a little further than simply filling in your profile and hoping for the best. Here we’ll be taking you through some of the tricks and hidden features available to those who are willing to find and master them.

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*“You can consider this section as something of a ‘cheat sheet’, if you wish, which you’re going to need to keep handy if you wish to differentiate yourself from the network’s 259 million other users.”*

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Many of these tricks are easy to implement, but are under-utilised or ignored altogether by the vast majority of users.

**Customise your URL:** The stock URL address you’re given by default with your LinkedIn account will undoubtedly contain a lot of random numbers and will look quite ungainly. It will also prove almost impossible for people to remember. Tucked away in your profile editing options, however, is the option to **customise your URL** so it’s clean, professional looking and memorable.

**Use your groups:** One of the primary perks of being part of a LinkedIn group (remember, you can join as many as 50) is that you can directly message members in that group, even if you’re not connected to them. This means that the more groups you join, the more messaging capabilities you have at your disposal. If you are a group manager, you can even email your group’s members once a week with a **LinkedIn**



**Announcement.** These are messages sent directly to the inboxes of all group members and can be a great way to generate leads.

**Improve your blog and website links:** Whilst you can use your own website and blog to increase traffic to your LinkedIn profile, you can also use your LinkedIn profile in the same way. A simple link of anchored text is unlikely to garner attention, though, so consider changing the anchor text so that it includes keywords about your blog or website. For example; people are far more likely to click on an “Expert Solicitors Blog” link than a link that simply reads as; “Blog.”

**Save your searches:** If you’re using LinkedIn to search for a new position, you might want to take advantage of this nifty little feature. Simply tick the

'Save This Search' option to the right of the search engine box when you're job hunting and the same search can be run again with just a click. You can also set daily, weekly and monthly reminders via your inbox for when new members or positions matching your criteria are added to the network.

### **Put a LinkedIn badge on your own**

**website:** If you're looking for a quick and simple way to increase exposure to your LinkedIn profile, you can quite simply create a customer badge that links back to your profile and place it on your own personal site or blog. Simply [follow this link](#) and you'll be taken to a selection of buttons of various shapes and sizes. If you work for a company, you can also promote their presence by adding a **'Company Follow'** button to your site or adding **'LinkedIn Share'** buttons to your posts, which can be added to your blog posts and/or social media.

### **Check in on who's visiting your profile:**

The handy (and quite self-explanatory) "Who Viewed Your Profile" tool can be accessed through your Profile drop down menu. As one would expect, this tool allows users to check which visitors have visited their profile, which could provide you with a valuable connection. It is worth noting, however, that this feature can only be used if you've made your own profile identifiable by selecting the "Your name and headline" option in the "Select what others see when you've viewed their profile" settings box.

**Network updates:** Essentially, LinkedIn's network updates work in much the same way as Facebook status updates. Be sure to check into it every once in a while to see what your connections are sharing or talking about. Like your Facebook news feed, these updates are also completely customisable, so you'll only see what you want to see. Of course, you don't want to over-do it on the updates (just because it works like your Facebook page, that doesn't mean it is your Facebook profile), so keep it relevant!

**Import and export connections:** Through the 'Network' tab you'll be able to add connections to your LinkedIn profile by importing contacts from your email accounts. This is a simple and quick way to expand your profile, and could give you the impetus you need to check in on connections you might not have talked to for a while. You will also be able to use the [contacts tool](#) to add new contacts which LinkedIn will suggest to you, based on your current contacts and the groups you are a member of. Conversely, if you wish to export your LinkedIn connection to another system, it's a very straightforward process. Simply find the 'Export LinkedIn Connection' link under the 'Contacts' tab.

**Use Twitter:** Whilst Twitter and LinkedIn ended their partnership back in 2012, it's still possible to share your LinkedIn updates on Twitter automatically, even if the opposite is no longer possible. If you have posted a LinkedIn update that you

want to be reiterated on your Twitter feed, simply select the 'Public + Twitter' option from the drop down box before sharing your update.

**Start a Company Page:** Even if you're self-employed, creating a LinkedIn company page offers some serious benefits. Through a company page you can post job opportunities, industry news, company news and more, and it will also legitimise your business in the eyes of the wider LinkedIn network. It's also far easier to collect analytical data through a company page, and the new 'Showcase Page' feature allows businesses to devote pages to specific niche products or services. These pages will branch off your company page, expanding your reach exponentially. If you do decide to take the plunge and create a company page, make the most of it by remembering to post frequent updates. By necessity, they will probably be more formal and clinical than the updates on your own personal page, but that doesn't mean they have to be dull. You can also target specific users with your updates through criteria such as job title, company size and geography, so only the 'right' people see the content you want them to see.

**Trending:** By using the relatively new '**Trending Content**' tool, which was unveiled earlier this year, you will be able to see which sort of content is generating the most clicks on LinkedIn. By monitoring this tool you'll be able to gain a valuable insight into what content you should be creating in order to generate engagement.

**Use group statistics:** Another hidden gem that many LinkedIn users seemingly don't know about is the 'Group Statistics' feature that can be found in the 'About' section of every group. Using this tool you can find out the details of any group, regardless of whether or not you're a member. This means you'll be able to more accurately analyse which groups you should be joining, which is especially valuable considering you can only sign up to 50.

**Page insights:** By using 'Page Insights', you'll be able to track how well your updates are faring and how your own data compares to other, similar companies. You can access these insights by using the 'Edit' drop down box on your company page. Please note this feature is not available on personal pages.



## To Pay or Not to Pay?

Whilst many of LinkedIn's features are free, and many users will be perfectly happy getting by with the features offered by the platform without having to fork out, the premium LinkedIn service holds a number of serious benefits that should not be overlooked. It's easy for most social media users to become accustomed to a free model, but once you understand what LinkedIn has to offer over social platforms such as Facebook and Twitter (both of which can be used to build business relationships,

but lack the specialised features of LinkedIn) you'll see just how reasonable the asking price is.

Of course, whether or not you choose to opt for the premium package will depend very much on what you use LinkedIn for and how seriously you use it. For example, if you're a casual user who simply requires a platform from which to find others and be found by others, paying the premium fee is not going to make you any more or less visible.

## What a Paid Account has to Offer

First, let's examine exactly what a paid LinkedIn account has to offer that a free account does not. Standard social networking features are completely free, but the following features require a paid account.

The ability to send direct messages to other users without already having a connection with them. This can be an invaluable feature for more experienced users, whose jobs rely on making connections without having to wait for an introduction. It also means you can plead your case (so to speak) to any potential connections, giving them reasons to accept your connection request, even if they don't know you. This is referred to as an 'InMail', and is seen as the most credible way to approach another business or individual on

LinkedIn. Users are limited to a number of InMails per month, the amount depending on which payment plan you decide to opt for.

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*"Whilst a free account limits users to 100 profile search results, a premium account will enable you access to as many as 700 results per search, depending on which account option you choose."*

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With a premium account, users are able to gain more information on who has viewed their profile over the past 90 days. With a free account, you're only given access to the names and profiles of the last 5 people to visit your profile, with a premium account, you not only have access to more information on the individuals and businesses who have been checking you out, but you can see

everyone who has done so over the last 3 months! This is definitely one of the most valuable features of a premium account.

The advanced search option is expanded dramatically with a premium account. The more detailed query options will allow you to perform searches that (for example) only include certain companies (perhaps FTSE 100 companies), which

can really reduce search times.

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*“You can also perform searches based on company size, seniority level and much more, which might prove useful if you find yourself using the LinkedIn search engine on a regular basis.”*

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Premium accounts allow you to save more than 3 searches. How many you can save depends on your account level.

## The Four Premium Account Options

There are four different levels of payment plan available to LinkedIn users in the UK. All accounts offer different levels of the features listed above, and are named to appeal to specific individuals.

**1 Job Seeker:** This option will set you back **£19.99 a month** and gives you access to **3 monthly InMail messages**, increases the amount of **profiles per search to 300** and gives you access to **five profile organiser folders**. As the name implies, this level is engineered towards those looking for employment.

**2 Business Plus:** A Business Plus account will set you back **£39.99 a month** and will give you access to **10 monthly InMail messages**. It also increases the amount of **profiles per search to 500** and gives you access to **25 profile organiser folders**. This level is geared towards business professionals.

**3 Sales Plus:** A Sales Plus account will also set you back **£39.99 a month** and also gives you access to **10 monthly InMail messages**. It also increases the amount of **profiles per search to 500**

and the amount of **personal organiser folder to 25**. This, however, is an account tailored towards sales professionals, which offers specific features including ‘Lead Builder’, which will help you find potential buyers.

**4 Recruiter:** This is a service designed from the ground up for recruiters. For **£79.95 a month**, you’ll get **25 InMail messages a month** (which for recruiters is probably the most valuable boon) and will have access to a **recruitment-specific LinkedIn design**. This powerful tool allows you to organise candidates into folders, make notes on their individual characteristics and set alerts to remind you to follow up on people. It will also give you access to the **‘Recruiter Mobile’** smartphone app, that allows recruiters to search for and review candidates on the move.

## Which to Choose

The clues are very much in the names, but the vast majority of professional users who are not selling or recruiting (entrepreneurs for example) might find the 'Business Plus' category to be a good fit.

## Conclusions

Ultimately, you should only begin to consider upgrading to a premium account if you begin to feel in any way restricted. If you find that your daily interactions on LinkedIn are constantly being interrupted by roadblocks and messages telling you that you need to upgrade in order to progress, it's probably time to bite the bullet.

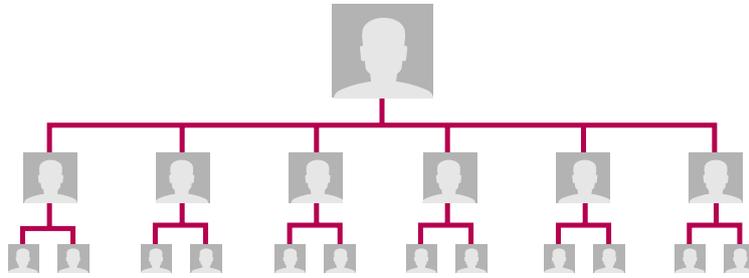
Your chosen career will also dictate which account you're best suited for. For example, solicitors, whose business relies on them 'making the first move', having access to more detailed profile information and being able to contact individuals via InMail could prove invaluable. Whereas a copywriter or creative individual, who is often the one being contacted, should have no need for the features offered by the premium service. If your basic account is working for you and you don't think you'll need any of the features detailed here, by all means continue enjoying all that a free LinkedIn account has to offer. If, however, you're looking to seriously expand your digital rolodex, are serious about finding a new job, are looking for

fresh talent or are serious about sales, there is no other platform that can compare to a LinkedIn premium account.

The best news is that LinkedIn are currently offering a free month trial for all prospective premium members, so if you're even remotely curious, now is the time to see what a premium account can do for your business!



**LinkedIn is seen as the most credible network with 88% saying they perceived the content they received from the network as being trustworthy**



## How To Get The Entire Firm On LinkedIn

Whilst you might (understandably) balk at the thought of your employees spending all day on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, LinkedIn is the social media platform with a difference. It's genuinely maddening, but many firms are still blocking LinkedIn from all company computers because they see it as a waste of their employees' time or believe they'll use it to look for new jobs. This is rarely the case, but as a result, many employees might feel as if they need to hide their social media use from their employers, when their employers should actually be encouraging it. This is especially true in the case of solicitors, who could be using LinkedIn to find new clients.

*"By using LinkedIn through your employees, you'll be able to maximise*

*your digital footprint, drive traffic to your website and drive awareness of your brand or firm without spending a penny."*

Of course, it's likely that most of your employees are already on LinkedIn, talking up your firm and their roles within it to their connections, so the hard part has probably already been done for you. But if that's not the case, you might want to try encouraging your employees that do have profiles to suggest the idea to those that don't. Let them know that you understand what LinkedIn is, and that it's not simply a platform for sharing idle gossip and amusing cat videos. Let them know you are aware of the site's power when it comes to interacting with potential leads, as well as building relationships with potential clients.

## Why Everyone at Your Firm Should be on LinkedIn

**Visibility:** LinkedIn themselves state that *"Employees are 70% more likely to engage with company updates"* on LinkedIn. So if you have a company profile set up and update it frequently, your employees might 'like' or 'share' the update, which will make it visible to all of their contacts. In this way, every

member of the firm who is on LinkedIn becomes a brand ambassador almost by default. It's estimated that 9 of the top ten firms with the most followers on LinkedIn have over half their employees signed up to the service. So imagine how valuable having 100+ of your workforce signed up could be!

**Ranking:** Brand visibility on LinkedIn will result in a higher page rank on search results, which means after a while, you might not even need to search for leads, they will be searching for you! The best part is, you don't have to put in any extra effort in order to be seen. As long as you have set up a company profile, once your employees have listed your firm as their place of work, your logo and link to your page will automatically show up on their personal profiles.

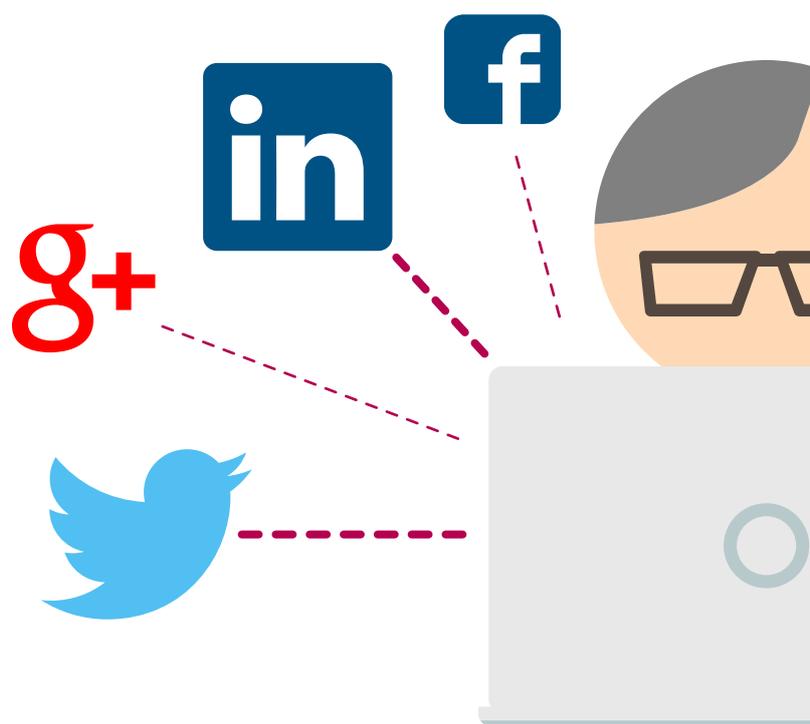
**Encouragement:** Once you have everyone signed up, encourage them to share links, videos and updates. Not only will this increase your firm's Google value, but it will hopefully mean people your employees are connected to might end up on your company profile or website.

**Reflection:** If your employees have compelling profiles, it reflects directly on you as a firm. If you actively encourage your staff to build their profiles and make connections with people that matter, it speaks volumes of your company brand. Think of each of your employees profile pages almost like a 'product' page, because in many businesses (at a solicitor's firm for example), it's the talent that you're really selling. Of course, this has the unwanted side-effect of also advertising your staff to other firms, but it's up to you to keep them happy, so if anything, this will encourage you to create a more rewarding workplace environment.

**Emotion:** Social media has allowed businesses to create a more emotional connection with their clients and become more 'human', which is especially important to solicitors, who are often seen as quite 'cold' and 'clinical'.

**Morale:** If you're preventing your staff from accessing LinkedIn, they might feel as though you don't trust them. Trust, as we all know, is an essential element in any business, especially with a solicitors. If you can't trust your employees, your employees' clients won't be able to trust them.

**Connections:** Keeping your employees connected works on two levels. It not only makes them feel like they're part of the same 'team', but also allows them to endorse each others skills, which makes their profiles look better, therefore making your business look better.



## Top Tips

We'll finish this section with a list of tips you could follow in order to further entice the members of your firm to join LinkedIn and become actively engaged with it.

- ✔ Start at the top and let it trickle down. In other words; start by convincing the top brass at the firm to create a profile.
- ✔ Make LinkedIn profile integration part of the process when it comes to integrating new hires into your firm. Not only will they be impressed with your forward-thinking approach, but you'll instantly gain a slew of potential new connections through them.
- ✔ Make LinkedIn a consistently important part of your everyday operations. Consider creating programs specifically focused on LinkedIn and on how to use LinkedIn in order to better do their jobs.
- ✔ Have a few partners demonstrate what a valuable lead generator LinkedIn can be and then use the results as a presentation to get buy in from the rest.
- ✔ Create interesting content specifically for your LinkedIn page. Consider holding a weekly brainstorming session with the members of your firm. You might be surprised just how savvy they are when it comes to social media marketing.
- ✔ Educate your employees by holding a seminar on LinkedIn or by pointing them in the direction of an online tutorial that teaches them how to use LinkedIn effectively.
- ✔ Ask your employees for feedback on how you could better be utilising your LinkedIn presence. They might have more experience with the platform than you, so don't overlook their opinions.
- ✔ Encourage your employees to take the initiative to make their own LinkedIn posts and updates relating to the firm.
- ✔ Make it fun! Incentives and competitions can help make the process feel less like a slog.



## How To Engage With your Audience and When To Post

It's all well and good keeping on top of your LinkedIn updates, but there comes a point where 'consistent' and 'informative' becomes annoying. The key comes in staying on the right side of the divide and only posting when you actually have something of genuine interest to say, or something that you think might be able to net you a few connections.

LinkedIn is currently the third-fastest-growing social network on the web, and

you'd be foolish not to take advantage of this growth. But how do you make the most of your posts and engage with the largest audience possible (and the audience you want) without becoming a spam artist? Of course, there is no easy answer to that question, but here, we'll try to help you decide when you should be posting. Remember though, timing is an art form, not a science, so expect more than a little trial and error before you hit the sweet spot.

### How Often Should I Post?

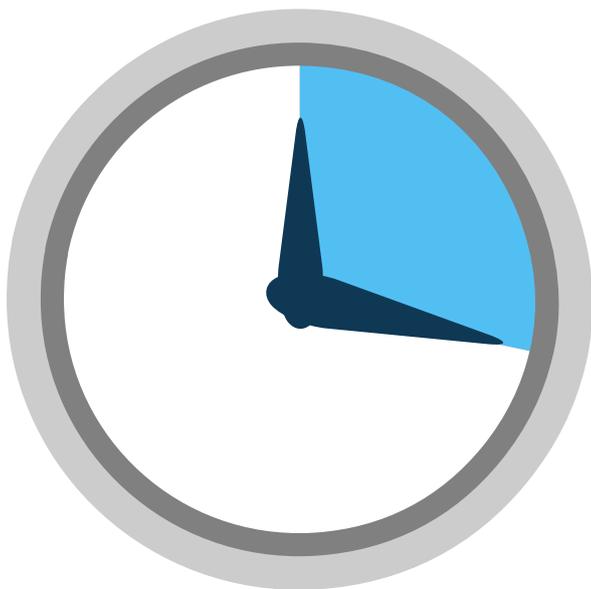
LinkedIn themselves posted a report claiming that by posting 20 times a month you'll reach roughly 60% of your connections. This equals once every weekday, which (I'm sure you'll agree) seems a little lacklustre, especially considering you don't want to be reaching 60% of your audience, you want to be reaching 100%. On the other hand, posting every hour could result in your connections growing weary of you and deciding to ignore you altogether, so striking a balance is key. Remember, this isn't Facebook or Twitter, where the primary purpose is to entertain. This is business. As such you'll probably want to aim to post between 2 and 3 pieces of content or updates per working day, but only post if you actually have something worth sharing and something that's relevant to your

business. Ultimately it depends on your business and how much important and interesting information comes your way on a daily basis. You might consider getting into the habit of posting at exactly the same time every day, so people actively wait for your posts, or maybe post once in the morning (when you get to work) and once in the evening (just before you leave). As I will repeat time and time again, it's very much a trial and error situation, not an exact science.



## The Best Times to Post

The best time to post on a social network depends on the network in question, but with LinkedIn you're better off posting during the work day, as it's whilst they are at work that most people will actively be logged into their profile. Of course, this isn't always the case. For example, posting between noon and **1PM** could be a good time to catch people whilst they're at lunch and if you post around **6PM** you'll catch people just as they're arriving home from work.



## The Worst Times to Post

Posting at night is generally fruitless, as most working people will be asleep. Posting a funny cat video to your friends Facebook wall at 2AM might be fine, but generally, between the hours of **10PM and 6AM** social media is a complete 'dead zone' and this is certainly true with LinkedIn.

## The Best and Worst Days to Post

Generally speaking, the best days to publish anything on LinkedIn are **between Tuesday and Thursday**. Monday's are a bad idea because people are getting back into the daily routine and are probably still clearing the sleep from their eyes, so will be less inclined to concentrate or take interest in your posts. Friday's have the opposite problem, with everyone being so eager to get out of the door that they completely neglect their profile. Also, some people might leave the office early on a Friday. Saturday and Sunday, meanwhile are generally dead zones for business related updates, as most of us like to 'switch off' and forget about the office at the weekend.

## Knowing Your Audience

The best way to decide when is best for you to post is to work by trial and error.

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*"Try posting at various times and measuring how much feedback you get from your target audience in each instance."*

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Also, pay attention to the days and the times of day that people comment on or share your posts and time your future posts to coincide with these times. Many people will have specific daily routines when they're at work, so if you manage to latch onto the routine of a person or a group of people you really want to reach, remember to make notes of when they are generally logged on.

## Status Updates in Detail

### Enter a Status Update:

Post about breaking news, industry trends etc.

**Tip:** Limit text length to 50 characters and your engagement could increase by 28%

### Insights:

Use these to get to know your audience and increase the relevance of your posts.

### Call To Action:

Include a URL in your post copy. Drive people to a blog post, landing page or YouTube video.

### Status Update

Image

Description

### Description:

Don't forget to edit the default text when you add a link. Keep it simple and reduce redundancy.

### Engage:

Posting is just the start! Stay engaged with the conversation by adding a question or comment on the conversation.

Like • Comment • Share

### Target Your Post:

Narrow down your audience by industry, role, region/city or company size. Exclude or include your employees.

### Tip:

LinkedIn does not allow you to respond as the brand, so post as yourself on behalf of the brand to answer questions and be a resource.

View Comments

Impressions • Clicks • Shares • Engagement

### Measuring Success:

Strive for more than 1.0% engagement on each post. Engagement is defined as the percentage of times members clicked, liked, commented or shared the update.

## What to Post

The idea is to connect with people without driving them away and the best way to do this is by posting consistently informative content. Make a note of what content you're posting and at what times you're posting it and record how well each post fares. It's worth noting that LinkedIn results in almost four times as many homepage referrals as any other social media network so content counts. This means quirky little updates about "What you had on your lunch break" are simply not going to cut it. The ideal goal is to get people to click onto your LinkedIn page and for them to click from there onto your corporate homepage, so make sure you're posting things that people in your business would actually find interesting or useful.

## In-demand Content

The most popular types of content that lead to clicks are industry insights and company news. This means that your content should link to either opinion pieces or news stories, which you think will appeal to and be valuable to the members of your audience that you're trying to connect with. As LinkedIn themselves state; "Your followers are active on LinkedIn because they want to be more productive and successful professionals. Informative, useful updates receive the highest

engagement rates because that's the information members expect from company's they follow on LinkedIn."

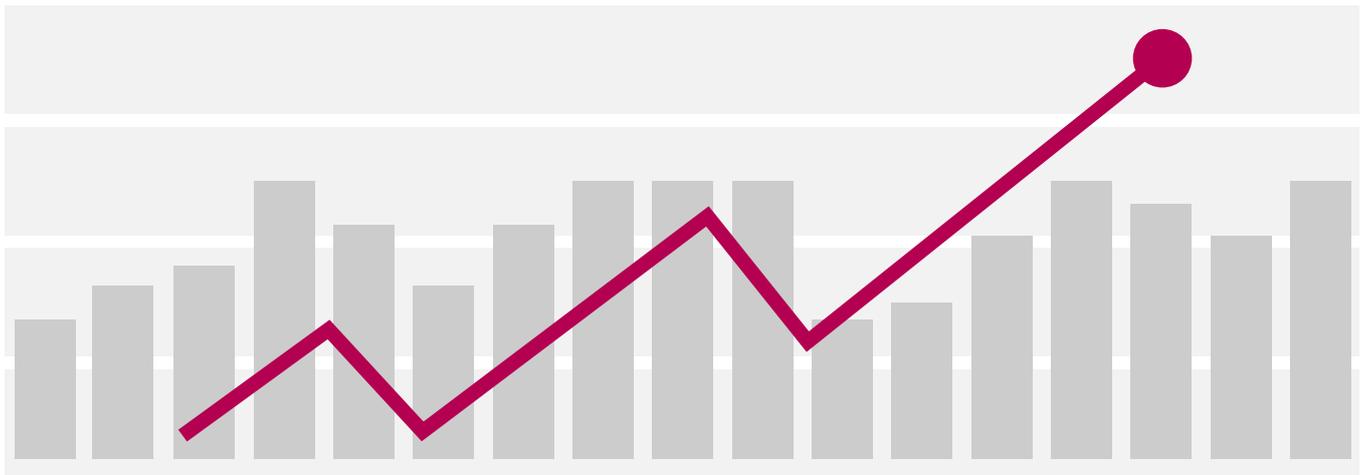
## Re-Posting

Of course, if you have a particularly juicy piece of content that you are desperate for each and every one of your connections to see, it can be frustrating when you only get a few views. In this case, re-posting at a later date might be acceptable, but be sure to at least post a few more pieces of content before-hand. Posting the same thing twice in a row looks desperate. It's thought that on most social networks, a single status update will reach (on average) around 20% of your followers. This means that (in theory) for all of your connections to see every one of your updates you'd need to post everything 5 times. Of course, this is not recommended. Remember that many of your connections might live in different time-zones too, which could further complicate matters when it comes to whether or not you decide to re-post.



## Use LinkedIn Analytics

Finally, the LinkedIn Analytics tools exist to help you get the most out of your LinkedIn experience. This is a feature available to all company page admin (assuming you have a company page), which reveals information about when your profile was visited and how that corresponds to your posts. Focus primarily on the 'engagement' percentage, which measures how many clicks and followers you acquired after each update. This is one of the most valuable tools in the network's arsenal, so use it often and use it wisely!





## LinkedIn For Law Graduates

As a recent graduate, the first thing on your mind once the initial thrill and satisfaction wears off, will undoubtedly be; “So what next?” Job hunting is less of a science and more of an art form, especially in a field as highly contested as law, so as a law graduate specifically, simply waltzing into your local job centre simply isn’t going to suffice, you’re going to have to do the vast majority of the ground work yourself.

Thankfully LinkedIn makes much of that work either, and is a platform built from the ground up to facilitate the process of pairing job seekers with employers. There are, in fact, thousands of graduate recruiters currently using LinkedIn to help them find the best fresh-faced candidates, indeed, you’d be hard pressed to find a modern law firm who didn’t have some kind of LinkedIn presence.

Here we’ll be taking recent graduates through the features and possibilities that LinkedIn offers for those “Fresh off the boat.” LinkedIn isn’t just a job board, it’s a social media network geared towards professionals, and with the right tweaks, your profile can act as beacon for employers.

## Adapt Your Profile

If you’ve spent the last few years studying for a degree in law, chances are you’ll already have a LinkedIn profile of your own. But is it 100% complete? A profile that’s 100% complete and has been edited specifically to attract clicks will be far more visible and effective than a bland, default profile that looks as though it was knocked together in a spare afternoon.

**Headline:** LinkedIn will place your current position as your headline by default, but as your current position will

probably read as “Unemployed,” you’ll definitely want to change it. Make your headline stand out by putting what you

have to offer in real terms. This is not Facebook or an online dating profile, you're selling your skills, not your personality.

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*“So, for example, putting “Law Graduate, Specialising in Family Law with Valuable Experience” would be a great headline, whereas “Enthusiastic Solicitor, recently graduated and eager to work” would not be.”*

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The headline should reflect your goals and where you want to be, not where you are or have been.

**Photo:** Again, this is not Facebook, but it is also not a passport or drivers license. Choose a good headshot that could be classified as professional, but personable. Working in law, it's probably also best that you're wearing a tie in your photo and have sensible haircut. People will judge you on your photo, whether you want them to or not, so you might as well give yourself a decent chance.

**Keywords:** Subtly plant keywords that relate to the profession throughout your profile. Many firms will be searching through LinkedIn using keywords in order to filter out potential applicants.

**Experience:** If you're looking to find work as a solicitor in a decent firm, your summer spent washing dishes at the local pub probably won't help you. Edit your experiences to only include jobs (including work experience) that are

relevant to your career.

**Summary:** Edit your summary to the extent that it posits you as the perfect solicitor. Recruiters are looking for motivation more than anything else, so a great idea could be to use your legal work experience to reveal why you are pursuing a career in law. This can include anything from open court session you attended where you gained a great deal of respect from “Seeing justice done,” to potential work experience at law firms where you got a “Real taste for the lifestyle and the work.” Also try to alter the tone of this section so that it strikes a more professional tone. Professionalism is an essential skill in the legal sector, so reveal just how professional you are through your language, your attention to detail and your tone.

**Skills/Endorsements/Recommendations:**

One of LinkedIn's most valuable tools, and what sets it apart from conventional CV's, is the ability to list your skills and have these skills endorsed by people who matter. Be sure to use the skills section to highlight your skills and achievements, and ask your relevant connections to endorse them. Or go that extra mile and consider asking for a recommendation? This would be especially valuable if you've done any internships where you made a good impression.

## LinkedIn Do's and Don't's for Graduates

**DO** - Be thorough. By listing all of your pertinent skills and experiences without skimming on the details, you won't have to make the hard sell elsewhere.

**DON'T** - Think that LinkedIn is like all social media networks. It's essentially an online CV, so don't use it as your personal soapbox or platform from which to inform people you've just returned from the gym.

**DO** - Keep your profile up to date. If it looks like you've been neglecting your profile it will reflect badly on you to potential employers.

**DON'T** - Make spelling and grammar mistakes. Of course, you're not applying for jobs as an English teacher, but in law, correct spelling and grammar is absolutely crucial, so don't get lazy!

**DO** - Treat people on LinkedIn as you would in the real world. Apply the same rules to LinkedIn as you would to real life. Bombarding people with job requests over and over, for example, or gushing about the firm without any solid facts, will make you look unprofessional.

**DON'T** - Undersell yourself. Positivity is the key in this profession, so show potential employers that you're a positive and enthusiastic individual with your updates and content. Also, try to steer clear of arguments unless you have a clear point to make as there is nothing more of-putting to law firms as needlessly argumentative people.

## Make Contacts

Of course, a LinkedIn profile is nothing without contacts, in much the same way a Twitter profile is nothing without followers. You should start by requesting connections with those in your graduating class, both those you were close to and those who were simply aware of you. Chances are that they will all accept, as it's in their best interests to make connections too. This also includes your lecturers or anyone from firms in which you served an internship. Past and present university contacts should be easy to find, as everyone who

lists themselves as an alumni will be linked to the university's LinkedIn page. Remember to use the site's 'Introduction form' if you're unfamiliar with them though, or use the InMail feature to pen a more personal introduction if you've opted to pay for the site's premium features. Also, find company pages for firms you think you might be interested in and connect with them. Most firms will direct their recruitment through LinkedIn, and the first place they will probably look is at recent graduates who are connected to their profile.

## Join/Create Groups

LinkedIn will suggest relevant groups for you, but why not show some initiative and create your own? There will be numerous groups dedicated to helping users find jobs in the legal sector, but probably very few in specific niches. Consider starting a group related to the niche area of law that you feel is your speciality and firms looking for someone with your skills will eventually come knocking. Groups will also contain jobs that might not have been posted elsewhere and will provide access valuable industry trends and discussions.

## Student Jobs

Finally, LinkedIn has its own [Student Jobs page](#), which specialises in finding jobs for recent graduates. This is a tool that collates all jobs available to graduates by sector and also lists companies who are looking to hire graduates. An invaluable tool for recent graduates that is quick and easy to use.



## Finding Law Jobs On LinkedIn

Though LinkedIn is so much more than simply a job board, that doesn't mean it's not still the best place on the internet for professionals to find employment, which is especially true for those working in Law.

*Social networking has completely revolutionised the world of job hunting, to the extent that you really can't afford to ignore it if you're in the market for a new position.*

The problem is, not only will you be using LinkedIn, but so will everyone else, so to get ahead of the pack there are a few valuable tips you're going to want to take into account.

Here we'll explore LinkedIn's job hunting features. Both the obvious and not so obvious tools, which should help you find a firm willing to take you on, whether you're a recent graduate or an experienced solicitor.

## LinkedIn – The Only Social Network for Job Hunting

*Ok, this is not technically true. Indeed, many people have found new jobs, even new careers through Facebook and Twitter, but these are generally jobs in the creative industries. In Law, LinkedIn is the only viable option and with more than 300 million members, it's also the most respectful of the major social networks when it comes to its members' privacy. It's estimated that 92% of recruiters have hired employees through LinkedIn, whilst only 24% have used Facebook and only 14% have used Twitter.*

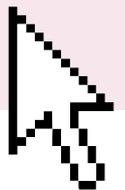


## Applying

The best thing about applying for jobs via LinkedIn is that you'll be able to get in direct contact with everyone involved in the firm. You can also contact your personal connections, who might be able to refer you for the job or send you a personal recommendation. Simply jumping right in without laying the groundwork is certainly not recommended though. Before you even consider applying for a position, make sure that your profile is up-to-date and reflects your professionalism. Also, make sure you have a number of connections and recommendations already attributed to your profile, as if your profile is completely barren, it will not leave a good impression on your potential employers.

## Search Engine

*The LinkedIn job search engine is a very powerful tool, through which you can search for specific job titles, keywords and even company names. Don't underestimate its usefulness just because it looks like a generic tool. Be specific and use as many keywords as possible. Especially if you specialise in a niche area of law.*



## Jobs You May Be Interested In

Getting started with this incredibly useful tool is as easy as selecting the 'Jobs' tab from the bar at the top of every LinkedIn page. You'll be presented with three boxes to fill in; 'Location', 'Company Size' and 'Industry'.

**Location:** In the location box, simply start typing one of the locations on your radar and it should eventually fill itself in automatically. Remember not to stick to just a few locations, as many firms might not be located in the area you ideally wish to work in, but they might be within commuting distance. If you live on the outskirts of a city, for example, chances are that most of the law firms (or at least the larger ones) will be based there.

**Company Size:** This box takes the form of a sliding scale, which can be used to select exactly how large a firm you wish to work for. So if you fancy working for a smaller, local firm, for example, you can set the slider to "Between 1 and 50 employees." If, on the other hand, you desire to work for a larger, city-based firm, or indeed have no preferences when it comes to firm size, you can also set the slide to "Between 1 and 10,000+" employees, which is selected by default.

**Industry:** Here you'll want to select the 'Legal' tab. Also consider selecting the 'corporate services' tab though, if you're interested in corporate law.

## Job Postings

When you have selected a job post, you'll have the options to either apply for the job through LinkedIn or the company's own website, save the job for later, share the job through your profile and through other social media networks or follow the company. If you have paid for a premium account, you'll also have the option to send a direct InMail message to the job poster. As you only get a certain number of InMail messages per month (depending on your package), it's recommended that you only use this feature if you are very keen indeed on the firm in question. On the righthand side of the page you'll also see a list of other jobs that people who viewed that job also viewed recently, which is an incredibly valuable feature if you're looking to throw a lot of darts at the wall (so to speak).



## Job Description

The rest of the page will read a lot like a traditional application form. The job description section will be the most detailed section, as it outlines exactly what the role involves and what will be expected of applicants. For most Law firms, this will involve:

- ✓ Providing support and advising public and private sector clients.
- ✓ Developing relationships with existing clients.
- ✓ Developing new leads and opportunities.
- ✓ Developing working relationships with co-workers in your department and in other departments within the firm.
- ✓ Taking an active role in furthering the firm via marketing and by developing professional relationships with other professionals.

And more such requirements. Of course, if you have a Law degree any of these requirements should be a given. Still, make sure you read through the description thoroughly before you apply, as they might be looking for somebody versed in a specific niche that you don't understand or have no formal training in.



## Firm Introduction & Background

The vast majority of law firms will, underneath, or as part of the job description, include an introduction to the firm. This will include listing how many partners and lawyers are employed and where the firm sits in terms of the global rankings. There might also be a longer 'Background' section, which will give you some insight into the history of the firm and in what sectors it specialises. I cannot stress enough how vital it will be for you to read through this section and make sure you absorb it fully. If you can somehow use this information to your advantage in your application, then do so by all means.

## Desired Skills and Experience

This section acts almost as a checklist of skills and experiences the firm will expect you to have if you are to be a viable candidate. This section might also include a list of what the firm will be able to offer the applicant so study it carefully.



## Groups

Of course, not all jobs will be visible through the job search option. Many positions with more niche firms might only be accessible by joining a specific Group. Every LinkedIn member with a free account is able to join up to 50 groups. There are hundreds of UK-based Groups for solicitors, so choose wisely.

## Recruiting Solicitors On LinkedIn

If you work at a solicitors firm and are looking to recruit new talent, LinkedIn can be an immensely powerful tool. It might not have the pop culture ubiquity of Twitter or Facebook, but it has spent the last decade working in the shadows, quietly changing the way jobs are filled.

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*“LinkedIn is the third-fastest-growing social media network in the world, and has become ubiquitous in all sectors of the business world.”*

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In fact, it's caused a complete sea change in the way employers find new workers. It's become less of a “Post an ad and hope for the best” process and more of a “Hunt” for the best talent.

If you're going to be joining that hunt, however, you're going to be up against some pretty experienced sharks. Here we'll be guiding you through the process of posting a position and divulging some top tips so that you'll be able to net exactly who you want, before the competition strikes.

## Passive Candidates

Around 80% of LinkedIn members are 'passive' members who are not actively looking for a new job. Now obviously, it will be significantly more difficult to engage with these members than it would be to engage with those who are actually seeking a new employment opportunity, but that doesn't mean you can't try if you find someone who you think would really be an asset to your firm. To attract these "Passive Candidates," consider building your employer brand by building a LinkedIn career page and feature your current employees as brand ambassadors on that page.

## Posting A Job

**Price:** A typical job will be posted for 30 days and the cost will depend on your region and the size of your company. *A typical 30 day post for a single position in a small company based outside a major city will set you back £189.95*, though you can post 5 and 10 "Job Packs" if you're looking to fill multiple positions,

which will save you 22% per post and 40% per post respectively.

**Building Your Post:** Setting up a job post on LinkedIn is a lot like building a post on any other recruitment site. You'll select what experience level, job function and employment type you require from a drop box and will fill in the job title, description and the skills and experience you desire from candidates.

**Selling Your Firm:** You will also be given a 'Company Description' box, which is your chance to really sell your firm. Besides simply listing how many partners and lawyers you have working for you and your ranking within the global law firms, try telling your potential candidates something about your firm's history and personality. You might want to include some examples of recent cases and a list of the niches in which your firm specialises. This way you're likely to attract only those who are genuinely interested in working for your firm.

## Talent Solutions

Larger firms might want to consider signing up with 'Linked In Talent Solutions'. This is a premium service which gives recruiters access to a number of specific features, primary amongst which is the 'Recruiter' service. This a much more effective search engine, which is anchored to a Recruiter homepage, where headhunters and human resource professionals can conduct more thorough research on their potential employees.

## Reasons to Recruit with LinkedIn

**It's easy to learn.** So much so that you don't even need to be well versed in recruitment in order to get the most out of it. This will be especially handy for smaller firms who can't afford to hire or employ their own recruiter.

**It's inexpensive.** Even with the premium features, LinkedIn is still significantly more affordable than many other alternatives and will certainly have a larger reach.

**InMail.** A feature available with premium packages, which allows recruiters to contact potential employees directly through LinkedIn's messaging system, even if they are not 'connected'.

**Integration.** LinkedIn can be easily integrated with numerous other sites such as Amazon and Twitter, and link to blogs and websites of your own.

**Referrals.** Because of the nature of the platform, it's incredibly simple for your current employees to connect with others in the profession, which might eventually lead to an employee referral. Recruiters could also ask other members of the firm to attempt to build relationships with certain individuals they have their eyes on in the hope of eventually turning them into a referral

**Everyone's on it.** Well, not everyone, but 300 million people can't be wrong and that number is increasing rapidly by the day.

**Accuracy.** Research has shown that members of LinkedIn are less likely to lie on their profiles than they are on their resumes. This is because they know their LinkedIn profile will be subject to more scrutiny by more people than a conventional CV.

**Comparisons.** Comparing resumes can be a complete nightmare as, by their very nature, they are so different. The uniform nature of LinkedIn profiles, however makes it that much easier for recruiters to accurately and fairly compare individuals.



## Top Tips for Recruitment on LinkedIn

### **Know what it is and is not good for:**

Whilst LinkedIn is a peerless tool to find new talent, it's not the best place to find low-level jobs or potential interns. For those positions you are better off going through the traditional processes, as LinkedIn is geared more towards low volume, high-level hires.

**Keep building your network:** Even if you have a full staff at your firm, that doesn't mean you should completely neglect your LinkedIn network. LinkedIn is a resource that thrives on connections and if you simply stop making those connections, your network will eventually fall apart, then when you do need to start recruiting again you'll find you have to start over from scratch.

**Search for your own firm:** This is the best way to accurately judge exactly how visible you are. Run a search for your job in the legal category and see where your post shows up. Also consider asking a friend or colleague who had no part in the job posting to search for the job, as they won't have the same knowledge you will in terms of the keywords. If they can't find it, then tweak it accordingly.

**Advanced search features:** The advanced search features on LinkedIn allow recruiters to refine results to within a very fine degree of specificity. Using the site's various advanced parameters will save you hours of wading through

hundreds of profiles, instead focusing on the ones you really want. Also, if you save your search as a 'Search Alert', it will run once a day for you automatically.

**Google:** Even though LinkedIn has its own powerful search engine, Google is the most powerful search engine in the world. If you're struggling to find any inspiring candidates through LinkedIn's own engine, you might be surprised what Google turns up.

### **Spam the network when necessary:**

Whilst LinkedIn allows you to export data from your connections list to create a mailing list, you don't necessarily want to spam everyone you know. It's a great resource for getting the word out, but remember that not every one of your LinkedIn connections is going to be a solicitor so they might end up getting irritated by the constant spamming. This could result in the loss of a valuable connection!

**Speak to the middle-men:** Sometimes it's better to reach out to people in your network that know your promising prospects than to reach out to the prospects directly. Be sly about it. Tell them you have a position to be filled and ask them "If they know anyone who might be interested." It's an old trick, but a good trick! And that's the best thing about LinkedIn. It might be revolutionary, but it fits like an old glove.

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