

Use LinkedIn for Recruiting Employees

From [Susan M. Heathfield](#),

LinkedIn and other social networking sites are advantageous for employers who use them for both networking and recruiting. I am increasingly receiving email notes from my LinkedIn contacts asking me to refer potential employees or help them make a contact for hard-to-fill positions.

The potential for [LinkedIn](#) and other social networking sites to play a major role in your employee recruiting strategy increases as millions of potential employees profile themselves on these sites each year.

It's not enough anymore to post a job vacancy on Monster.com, CareerBuilder.com, Craigslist.com. Employers are spammed with hundreds of resumes from unqualified applicants when they post on big boards. (I have still found great candidates through these job boards, so continue to utilize them as a part of your recruiting mix.)

But, the world of recruiting is changing. More and more the online focus rests on social networking sites and smaller, specialized job boards. Here's how employers are using LinkedIn, a popular networking site, for recruiting. LinkedIn users:

- Develop and expand a personal network of professionals to whom the employer or recruiter can send a request for a referral of a recommended candidate for a particular job opening. According to [About.com's Alison Doyle](#), at LinkedIn, "There are members from all 500 of the Fortune 500 companies. LinkedIn members comprise 130 different industries, and include 130,000 recruiters."

About.com's Scott Allen says that in addition to building a referral chain, you need to build relationships: "by building authentic relationships, virtually as well as face-to-face, people will actually make referrals — taking the time to think of possible candidates/prospects in response to your query, or even proactively referring people to you when they hear of a need. But they only do that if they have a strong enough relationship with you. Otherwise you're undifferentiated from the dozens or hundreds of other recruiters they're connected to. Strong relationships, not large contact databases, build this kind of business."

- Stay in touch with former, valued, trusted colleagues for potential future employment relationships. You don't want to lose touch with people who have worked successfully for you or with you in the past.

- Actively search for candidates among the members by searching on keywords for people with the required qualifications listed in their LinkedIn profile. (This is why keyword rich, well-developed profiles are recommended for professionals on LinkedIn.) Share your contact information so others can easily contact you whether you are actively or passively job searching.

- Search for potential employees by past or current employer who may have employed people with the needed skills and experience.

- Search for employees based on references from recommenders, the process used on LinkedIn in which members of your network can write notes of recommendation for you.

- Can ask your employees to activate their networks to reach out to potential passive candidates for jobs. Employee referrals are valued (Not everyone is looking, but most people are open to the right opportunity.)

- Can use Inmail, your internal inbox at LinkedIn, to request assistance from your network or selected professionals to find a qualified candidate.

- Respond to questions in the "Answers" section of LinkedIn. That's how I researched this article and responding can raise your profile in the LinkedIn community.

- For a fee, you can post jobs on LinkedIn and recruit and hire candidates. According to LinkedIn, "LinkedIn combines job listings, candidate search, trusted referrals and the power of networks to give you results."

How Employers Are Using LinkedIn for Recruiting

Susan Graye, the [Hewlett Packard](#), Global Staffing Strategic Initiative Manager from the Houston, Texas area says "she has been part of the LinkedIn network for over three years. During that time, she has used the LinkedIn network in a number of different ways to find employees including: searching by employer (current/past), using InMail, purchasing advertising, and networking.

Graye indicates that she has filled jobs from sales to executive level roles using LinkedIn. She thinks LinkedIn "is a great venue to build and develop long term strategic relationships. It allows us to proactively network and learn on a continual basis."

Devin Blanks, of [DB Search Group](#), a Minneapolis, MN-based staffing and recruiting firm, says,

"I have personally been a part of the LinkedIn community since my early career. Currently I have been using it frequently to connect with many hard-to-find professionals whom we may not have had the opportunity to connect with using more conventional means. Most recently, we wanted to fill a Senior Director of HR position. As this position was more complex than usual and called for a very specific skill set, I used two different approaches to using LinkedIn.

"First, we posted the position, and second, we viewed potential candidates through second and third party connections via my immediate contacts and requesting an introduction. I got great response, met with a few candidates, and filled the position with a LinkedIn member.

"Most of our candidates come from either our own internal database, referrals, cold-calling, and non-online networking associations. However, when I can't find a very specific candidate through those means, I will definitely keep LinkedIn as a serious recruit networking source."

Greg Buechler, the founder, and CEO of [Off the Hook Jobs](#) says that he uses LinkedIn for every search: "I do advanced searches to identify potential candidates and typically will send InMails (rather than trying to get to a person via the introduction route.) If an individual has an email address posted in their profile, I may also send an email directly to the person.

"I have filled several jobs over the years and typically they are at the executive level. I don't see much below a Senior Manager or Director level as being very effective on LinkedIn. But at Senior Manager, Director, VP, CEO levels, it is great."

http://humanresources.about.com/od/recruiting/a/recruit_linked.htm