



Recruiting via LinkedIn

...5 top tips for getting started

*by Kathryn FitzGerald
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It was simpler back in the day. You had a vacancy, placed your advertisement in the paper and waited for the applications. Then came online job boards....access to huge volumes of candidates in a single click!

The popularity of online job boards like SEEK have now hit a point where their traffic volumes are almost unmanageable; and the huge numbers of applicants often represent a low level of suitability or relevance.

Also, it is widely acknowledged that often the best candidates - technically skilled, engaged and motivated to succeed - are not actively looking on job boards. You are invisible to this smaller, highly relevant, highly attractive group of candidates.

Enter LinkedIn - a professional networking site where personal profiles are their resumes and their technical skills and experience is visible for almost all to see. Yes...**almost** all. For the most part, it's there - you just need to know where and how to look.

So how can you go about harnessing this platform to improve your recruitment results? Here are **5 simple steps** to getting started.

1. Market yourself and your company

LinkedIn is currently the largest professional networking platform. With over 50 million users in Asia Pacific and approximately 3 million unique visitors in Australia each month, if you are working and not on LinkedIn, you are one of the minority.

But LinkedIn isn't designed to be an online equivalent of yellow pages. Its benefit is not in the static information available but, like all social networks, the key is in the interactivity; it's a two-way communication venue.

So get your Company Page up and running and get your employees to interact with your company page, sharing and liking your company updates to promote your business to their extended networks.

Then ensure your own profile is complete, relevant and looking impressive before you start checking out other people's profiles. When you look at other people's profiles, they can see your own profile (you can pay for premium membership to remain confidential). So once they see you looking at them, they'll check out your profile too.

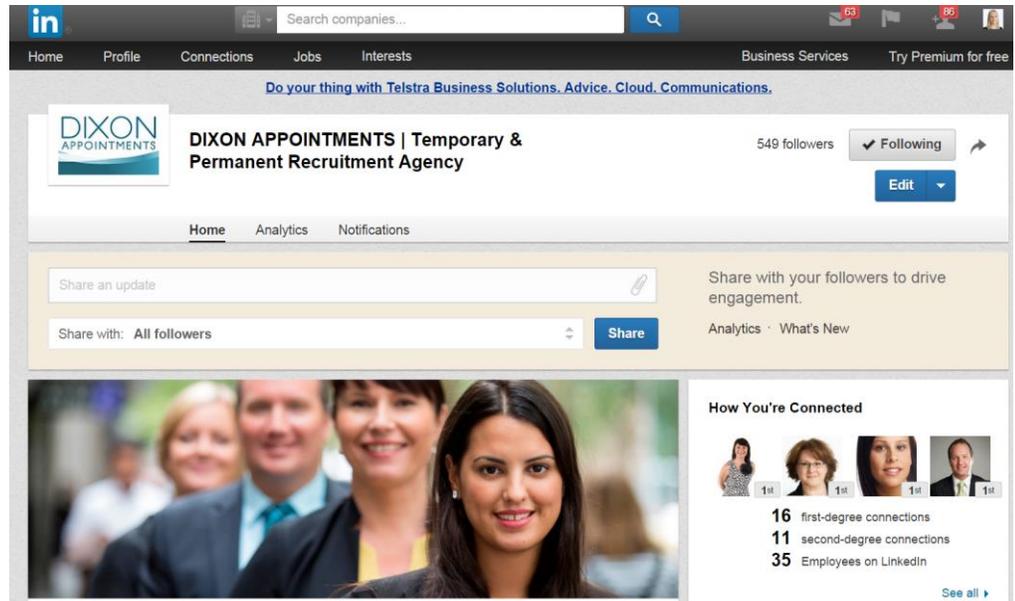
It's not enough anymore just to post a job vacancy on a job boards. Employers are spammed with hundreds of resumes from unqualified applicants when they post on the big boards!

2. Find your competitors

The next step is to check out your competition. This benefits you two-fold; first, you can see what your peers are doing and saying in the market through their company pages and second; you can see their employees.

Start by reviewing their recent updates; both for content and for engagement. What are they posting? Who is liking, sharing and commenting on their updates? Do these represent potential customers for you? If yes, how will you differentiate your business from theirs? What could you adapt, avoid and learn from their LinkedIn activities?

Then you can review their employees. Simply go to their company page and on the right hand side under '**How You're Connected**' click on '**## Employees on LinkedIn**'. This is particularly useful if you already know that one of their employees is on your potential talent hit-list.



3. Identify passive candidates

The beauty of LinkedIn is in the access it provides to unique candidates; that is, those who are not actively seeking a change of role or who are just about to start actively job hunting, or who may not see your job ad because it dropped down to the second or third page on SEEK.

By using LinkedIn you are accessing unique candidates; the potential cream of the crop, before they get snapped up by one of your competitors, before they apply for 5 other ads and get job seeker fatigue, before they get to second or third interview for another role. By proactively approaching candidates who are not applying for jobs, your visibility is not reliant on your job ad, competing against everyone else with a similar role. You don't get lost in the noise in the marketplace.

It's not all good news though; just because you can access them doesn't necessarily mean you can recruit them. You will need to be prepared to approach more potential employees as some candidates will genuinely not be interested in making a move.

4. Use Advanced search

By using the advanced search (click on the word 'Advanced' next to the magnifying glass icon) you get access to more detailed, specific search criteria. Keywords, current and or previous employer combined with location, should bring up highly relevant results for potential candidates in your area.

You can then contact these candidates directly; either using LinkedIn's connection requests and InMail or, alternatively, you can call the main switch number at their current employer and ask for them.

5. Best to recruit for technical, professional and senior roles

In my experience, I have found LinkedIn to be more beneficial within certain industries and for finding professional and technical employees, rather than administrative or support employees. This is largely due to the fact that, like a resume, a LinkedIn profile cannot tell you a candidate's personality, their typical behaviours or motivators. Their profile may give you some clues, but for positions where their 'soft skills' are just as important (if not more important) than their technical or professional experience, you might find you are wasting your time.

So think about what your selection criteria really is. If you could go without that niche skill or industry experience, your best candidate may not be easily identifiable in search criteria.

If this is the case then you might be best to go the more traditional route of posting an ad - but making sure you are targeted and highly specific in the types of behaviours you would like to target.

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