

A smiling woman with long brown hair, wearing a bright red blazer over a white top, is sitting on a blue tufted sofa. She is in an office environment with a wooden shelving unit in the background containing books and papers. A desk lamp is visible on the left. The overall scene is bright and professional.

The 2016

JOB SEARCH GUIDE

A Tactical Toolkit for Getting a Job You Love

LinkedIn®

INTRODUCTION

01 GETTING STARTED

02 DISCOVERING JOBS

03 GETTING THE JOB

The 2016 Job Search Guide

A Tactical Toolkit for Getting a Job You Love

Looking for a job is hard work. Before you roll up your sleeves and start firing off resumes, consider stepping back to take a more strategic approach.

The following pages are meant to be used as a reference guide. They can be read one page at a time, one chapter at a time, or in entirety. The recommended tactics and tools were developed with U.S. job seekers in mind, however many of the strategies may be applied internationally. Good luck with your job search and we hope that the following guide will put you in the driver's seat as you develop your career.



On average, there are **11 million** job openings a month in the United States

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

01 GETTING STARTED

Finding the Right Job Takes Time

Looking for a new job can evoke a range of emotions. Leaving your current role, looking for something new, and surveying all of the possible paths can be overwhelming. While finding a good fit takes time, the right mindset will boost your confidence and ensure a joyful journey. In this chapter we will deliver expert advice and tactics for getting your job hunt started. Here is what you will learn:

- How to make it more than just a job
- How to get started with networking
- How to leverage personality assessments
- How to optimize your LinkedIn Profile
- How to get unstuck



The average job search takes **6 months**



DAY ONE CHECKLIST



Update your LinkedIn Profile and resume

Make sure your profile has a professional-looking photo, compelling summary, and job descriptions that highlight your achievements



Setup saved job alerts

Create one or more searches in the Jobs tab on your home page, then save them. You can select daily or weekly email alerts when new jobs that meet your criteria are posted



Setup time to talk about your search

Discuss your job search with a trusted close friend or family member—someone who will give you an honest assessment and good advice



Make a list of the skills you want to develop

What can you add to your skillset to make your next role more than “just a job?”

Expert Tip:

Uploading your connections to LinkedIn or the LinkedIn Job Search app will allow you to easily see who you know at companies that you are interested in.

Making it More than a Job

Follow the five steps below to turn your future role into more than, “Just a job.”

STEP 1
Specialize & Evolve

Make a list of all of your skills and know where they can take you. Uncover what you're best at and continue to hone those skills throughout your career.

STEP 2
Plot your Progress

Use your specialized skills as a compass for the future. Write a six month, twelve month, and two year plan that describe how you want your career to progress and hold yourself accountable.

STEP 3
Define “Balance”

There's no magic formula for work-life balance. Everyone's different. Make a highly specific list with your top priorities in life and rank them honestly. How much time should you spend on personal versus professional pursuits? Only you can decide.

STEP 4
Combine Passion & Problem-Solving

Having passion for your work is wonderful. But it's your ability to apply that passion to your organization's most pressing problems that will ultimately allow you to grow with the business.

STEP 5
Create Lasting Relationships

Your network is your net worth. Surround yourself with people you admire to ensure learning, growth, and potential references down the line.

“Many professionals think of their home and work lives as completely separate. Instead, try developing a list of professional and personal priorities and explore how they feed into one another. Wrapping your head around how the two relate will often unlock an unexpected happiness in both arenas.”

- J.T. O'Donnell

INTRO TO NETWORKING: GETTING STARTED

Advice from an Expert: Jodi Glickman



Jodi Glickman
President and Founder, Great On The Job

Jodi Glickman is an expert in training young people how to be Great on the Job. Jodi is an entrepreneur, author, public speaker, consultant and regular blogger for Harvard Business Review. She is a faculty member of the Johnson School's Leadership Program at Cornell.

“Remember to make it about others, not about you. Be generous. Share your contacts. Offer to make introductions. It’s a two-way street!”

Strategies for Building Relationships

Networking is paramount to professional success. No matter the industry, your career progression hinges upon developing relationships with like-minded professionals, leveraging mentors, and serving as a resource to others. Before embarking on your career search, use the following tactics to make networking magic.

Break Out of Your Comfort Zone

Many professionals make the mistake of waiting until they need a new job to network. Building relationships and harvesting opportunities takes time. Breaking out of your silo to lay this groundwork will ensure that you’ll make the right move, when the time comes.

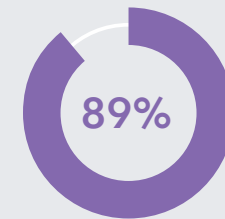
The first step is generosity. You can’t expect to reap the rewards of networking if you’re not helping others. Share your career vision with your friends, family, and co-workers so they can champion your cause. Just be sure to lead the way with a favor or two from your end.

Build Your Own Board of Advisors

Reap the benefits of your network by selecting a handful of people you trust, and can lean on for straightforward advice. After selecting your board from co-workers, peers and mentors, find a way to help each person out. Send a holiday card, offer up referrals, or simply ask what they need help with. The important thing is demonstrating you understand it’s a two-way street. After establishing a connection, ask for advice and apply it to your career.

Nurture Your Current Network

Deepening ties with colleagues past and present will increase the value of your network. Send friendly emails every few months to old contacts, or offer up small favors to co-workers. Better yet, send everyone birthday cards. It might sound simple, but these small gestures are what make you likeable and memorable.



89% of professionals reach out to their connections at some point in their job search

THREE TYPES OF PEOPLE TO INCLUDE IN YOUR CIRCLE

Tapping the Right Professionals for Advice

Three Types of People to Include In Your Circle

Networking isn't all about growing your list of contacts. In fact, it's important to be somewhat selective as you build your professional network. Getting advice and feedback from a hand-picked group of strategic advisors can truly tip the scale in your favor, ensuring you stay on track with your long-term career goals. Consider seeking feedback from the following three types of people within your network.

Connection #1: The Advocate

- Knows you on a personal level
- Acts as a trusted sounding board
- Likely a close friend or family member

Example question for The Advocate:
"Are my career choices lining up with my personal values?"

Connection #2: The Strategic "In"

- Well-connected individual
- Demonstrates willingness to make connections on your behalf
- Likely a past co-worker, alumni, or boss

Example question for The Strategic "In":
"What companies or roles match well with my personality and skill set?"

Connection #3: The Subject Matter Expert

- Offers superior insight on a specific industry
- Can give an unbiased opinion
- Likely a casual friend, alumni, or family contact

Example question for The Subject Matter Expert: "Where have professionals with my skills been most successful in your industry? Which skills should I focus on developing?"



of job seekers consider the advocate the most helpful person in their job search



of job seekers consider the strategic "in" the most helpful person in their job search



of job seekers consider the subject matter expert the most helpful person in their job search

Advice from an Expert: Chester Elton



Chester Elton
Employee Engagement Expert

Bestselling author, motivational speaker, and employee engagement expert Chester Elton has studied people in the workplace for decades. In this interview, he shares how taking the right personality assessment can unmask your core strengths and values.

How can personality assessments help candidates find the right job?

Chester: “Your skills, motivations and personality play an equal role in your overall job satisfaction. As the workplace continues to evolve, taking the right personality assessment can help you match up with an employer in all three areas, instead of just one.”

Once you discover your passion and values, how do you apply it at work?

Chester: “Knowing your passions and applying them are two very different things. After taking an assessment, share the results with friends, family and co-workers. They’ll help you reflect and act on the findings. The second step is aligning your passions with specific skills, and nurturing those skills over time.”

How much does culture matter to success in a career?

Chester: “A lot. On paper you might be a match for a job, but in reality you might not vibe with the staff. Culture is a reflection of values, and people with the same values tend to gravitate toward one another. If your values line up with your employer, you’re far more likely to be successful in that environment.”



Professionals who report being happy at work are **150%** more likely to be happy at home.

Source: Chester Elton

THE TOP PERSONALITY ASSESSMENTS FOR FINDING A CAREER FIT

Explore One or All of the Following Assessments to Start Applying Your Passions at Work

Pymetrics

This approach is wholly unique to this century. Pymetrics uses games backed by neuroscience to help you discover which unique strengths you have. You can then discover how your strengths relate to career pathways based on your personality type.

Example Question:

"You will be presented with a series of balloons. You can click on the "Pump" button to increase the size of the balloon, receiving 5 cents in a temporary bank for each pump. At any point, you can stop pumping the balloon and click on the "Collect" button to transfer the accumulated money from your temporary bank to your permanent bank labeled "Total Earned". You will then start on the next balloon."

[Play the Pymetrics Game](#)

Motivators Assessment

Developed by Chester Elton, this assessment uncovers passions and prioritizes your top motivators and identities, helping you put them to work.

Example Question:

"Being expected to take responsibility for tasks:

- a) Greatly reduces my motivation to work*
- b) Tends to reduce my motivation to work*
- c) Has no effect on my motivation to work*
- d) Tends to increase my motivation to work*
- e) Greatly increases my motivation to work"*

[Take the Motivators Assessment](#)

Keirsey Temperament Sorter

The Keirsey approach is widely adopted in corporate settings. Based loosely on the ancient Greek study of temperaments, the Keirsey Assessment describes professionals as Artisans, Guardians, Idealists, or Rationals.

Example Question:

"Do you prize in yourself:

- a) a strong hold on reality*
- b) a vivid imagination"*

[Take the Keirsey Temperament Sorter](#)

THE TOP PERSONALITY ASSESSMENTS FOR FINDING A CAREER FIT

Explore One or All of the Following Assessments to Start Applying Your Passions at Work

Clifton StrengthsFinder

Developed based on the theory of positive psychology, the StrengthsFinder approach is all about uncovering inherent strengths and fostering them further. This approach utilizes, "talent themes" to describe test takers, which include Achiever, Developer, and Learner.

Example Question:

"I have a commitment to growth; I have a commitment to my values"

Please choose the statement that best describes you and indicate to what extent they are descriptive of you. "

[Take the StrengthsFinder](#)

Myers-Briggs

This is one of the most popular and longest-running personality assessments out there. First released in 1944, the test uses a psychological approach to help professionals discover their interests, needs, values, and motivations.

Example Question:

"When you go somewhere for the day, would you rather:

- Plan what you will do and when, or*
- Just go?"*

[Take the Myers-Briggs](#)

Parachute Test

Made famous by the book, *What Color Is Your Parachute?*, this test is based on the theory that the employer-employee relationship should be more balanced. This test contains a series of self-learning activities, and can only be found in the book.

Example Question:

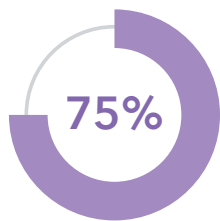
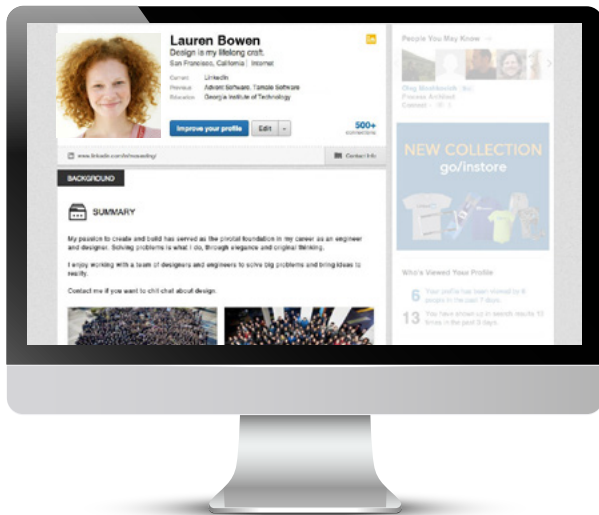
"List out the kinds of people I'd most like to work with, in order of preference"

[Take the Parachute Test](#)

PROFILE INTRODUCTION, PROFILE VS. RESUME

What are the Differences between a LinkedIn Profile & Resume?

If you start with a rock solid resume, your LinkedIn profile won't take too much work. Nevertheless, there are big differences between the two. Address the following differences to ensure your LinkedIn profile shines:



of hiring managers report looking at LinkedIn profiles to learn about a candidate's background

Level of Specificity

Your traditional resume is tailored for a single opportunity, whereas your LinkedIn profile should speak to all potential employers. Get specific with each position on your profile, and include additional details, including accomplishments, awards, skills or special presentations.

The Length

It's fair game to elaborate on LinkedIn. Include past positions, initiatives, skills, college projects, publications, and interests. But remember, it still needs to be concise and compelling. Most importantly, use the profile to tell your unique story.

Recommendations

Your resume rarely contains recommendations, whereas your profile should be littered with third-party references. Recommendations allow employers to quickly assess the reliability and accuracy of your profile.

Profile as a Platform

Your LinkedIn profile is a living and breathing platform where other professionals and employers can interact, learn, and contact you. It's a living resume more than a statement of skills. Put this organism to work by optimizing your profile.



PROFILE VS. RESUME

Your profile should include additional details that add onto what your resume already has, including recommendations—but remember to keep it concise, compelling, and unique.

PROFILE OPTIMIZING & CHECKLIST

The Ultimate Guide to LinkedIn Profile Optimization

Your LinkedIn profile is where potential employers will get their first glance at your experience and background. Leave a great first impression by getting your profile in order with the following checklist.

Your Photo: Appear Professional but Personable

- Smile in your profile picture. Employers like to hire happy people.
- You do not need to have a suit on, but you do need to appear professional and approachable.
- Shoot in a bright location against a solid background, and upload a high-quality photo. You'll be surprised how much it makes you stand out.



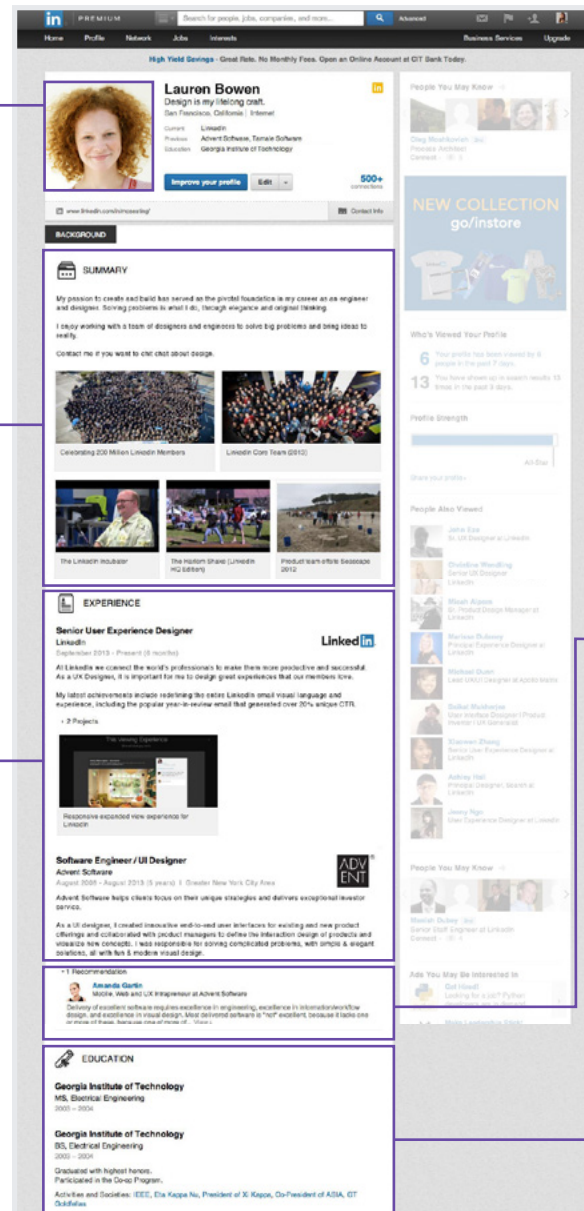
Members with photos get **14x** more profile views on average

Your Summary: Get Descriptive & Aspirational

- Think of your summary as your "Elevator Pitch".
- It should describe what you do to someone who is unfamiliar with your position and role.

Your Experience: Demonstrate Future Potential

- While describing specific jobs, connect the dots between your overall vision and your achievements in that role.
- Describe your major projects and wins as well as the value that you brought to the team.



Click Here to See Our Checklist with More Tips



Members who customize their experience on their profile get **21x** more views on average

Your Recommendations: How To Standout

- Before asking for a recommendation, develop an outline. Make it as easy as possible for your boss, co-worker or client to write your recommendation.
- Ask a supervisor at each of your jobs to write a brief recommendation. Be prepared to write one in return.
- While recommendations from co-workers help, recommendations from managers are most impactful.

Your Education: Bring it Full Circle

- Include your past school, degrees, and majors in your profile. It's common for companies to recruit alumni from specific schools.



Members with a school in their profile get **10x** more views on average

QUALIFICATIONS

Advice from an Expert: Jeff Selingo



Jeff Selingo
Author of College (Un)Bound

Jeff Selingo is a best-selling author and award-winning columnist who helps parents and higher-education leaders imagine the college and university of the future and how to succeed in a fast changing economy.

“Your resume will make its way through an applicant tracking system at some point. And even if it doesn’t, some hiring managers are pickier than others. Make sure at least half the skills listed on the job posting are mirrored on your resume. Happy job hunting!”

On Paper versus In Reality: How to Cross the Skills Divide

Most job descriptions contain a long list of required skills. You have some, but not all of them. You might size up your resume, wondering whether it’s even worth applying. Don’t walk away yet. Even when your qualifications don’t quite align with a job description, your chances of landing the job may still be high. When you’re staring down a skills gap, cross the divide with the following tips:

Common Mistakes, Simple Solutions

Mistake: Highlighting Weaknesses

Solution: If your experience doesn’t quite line up with the description, don’t call attention to gaps or weaknesses. Instead, accentuate the positive and emphasize the unique skills you can bring to the company.

Mistake: Over-applying

Solution: Many professionals apply to a wide variety of jobs, hoping something sticks. Instead, focus on a few positions that best match your strengths, values, and career goals. Quality trumps quantity every time.

Mistake: Lack of Customization

Solution: It sounds simple, but many applicants do not draft personalized materials. Stand out by ensuring your cover letter and resume map your skills directly to the position description. Customize your qualifications, listing them in the same fashion and order as the employer.

Shaking up the Qualifications Criteria

Don’t focus solely on the skills and qualifications explicitly listed by the employer. Job descriptions are more like goals than strict guidelines. Do some digging to discover some of the core challenges the organization is up against. Demonstrate how your skills and experience can solve these problems, and you’re likely to get a foot in the door.

GETTING UNSTUCK

Common Job Search Challenges: How to Blow Past Barriers

Presenting yourself as the best possible candidate is essential to landing a new job, but being seen as the best isn't easy. Don't fret, because getting past barriers like a skills gap, or recent unemployment is well within your reach. **Below are some common obstacles job seekers face, as well as tactics for overcoming them:**

YOU'RE UNEMPLOYED

- If you're getting passed over for jobs that are in your wheelhouse, you may be shooting too low. Start applying for more senior positions. Of course, do the opposite if you've been aiming high.
- Make sure your resume is rock solid. More often than not, correcting simple mistakes on a resume will do wonders for your search.
- Be willing to freelance or work part-time. Getting your foot in the door might result in a full-time job.

YOU'RE UNDERQUALIFIED

- Highlight recent accomplishments rather than years of experience.
- Customize your qualifications, listing them in the same fashion and order as the employer.
- Demonstrate how your skills and experience can solve key business problems.

YOU'RE SHY

- When reaching out to LinkedIn connections for feedback or help, imagine how you would feel if the tables were turned. You would help out, and they will too.
- Use LinkedIn Company Pages and LinkedIn Pulse to read up on topics you may discuss. Acing your preparation can really help with your confidence.
- Practice, practice, practice. If a phone call to a connection or employer is going to be difficult, iron out potential rough spots in advance by rehearsing with a job search buddy.

MEMBER SUCCESS STORIES

LinkedIn Member Success Story: *Krishna Vempati*



Leveraging LinkedIn Features to Find a Niche Job

Fresh out of grad school, Krishna was seeking a job at a Toronto startup where he could combine his background in technology with his keen business acumen. He had a solid goal, but no idea how to get there. "I didn't have any startup contacts," he said. "But, I kept hearing that Toronto was becoming this tech-hub in Canada. I really didn't have much luck right away." When he started leveraging some simple LinkedIn features, he had better luck. Here's how:

STEP 1 Optimize Your Profile

"I imported my portfolio and past jobs, then cleaned up and customized my resume," Krishna said. "This allowed me to control how people viewed my previous experience, and offer a downloadable version of my experience."

STEP 2 Set Up Job Alerts

After discovering the *Jobs You May Be Interested In* feature, Krishna leveraged advanced preferences and reacted quickly to email alerts about his most desired positions. "LinkedIn got a sense of what types of roles I was applying to," he said.

STEP 3 Use Company Pages

As Krishna discovered employers through Company Pages, he also uncovered current and past employees. He reached out cold to many of these professionals. "I sent messages on LinkedIn to professionals asking if they would have a brief conversation," he said. "Many times we would sit down and chat over coffee, and I would end up with a couple interviews later that week."

STEP 4 Tap Current Connections

As Krishna discovered openings and employers, he also realized many of his current connections could be bridges to new organizations. In one instance, a position opened up at a desirable company where his former manager and fellow alumni was working. He reached out, had a successful sit-down, and the rest was history. "He invited me for an interview, and we took things from there," he said. "I've been at the company for over a year now."

"The job recommendations improved as I applied to more and more roles. Keeping after it really paid off!"

02 DISCOVERING JOBS

Between online job boards, social media, and good old-fashioned face-to-face networking, job seekers have more resources for discovering jobs than ever before. But, having more options can also be overwhelming at times. In the following pages, we will explore tools and tactics for discovering the right job for you. Here is what you will learn:

- How to use LinkedIn to find a job you'll love
- How to leverage the LinkedIn Job Search App
- How to discover jobs through your connections



The average job seeker views **148 different jobs** in their job search.



FINDING A FIT

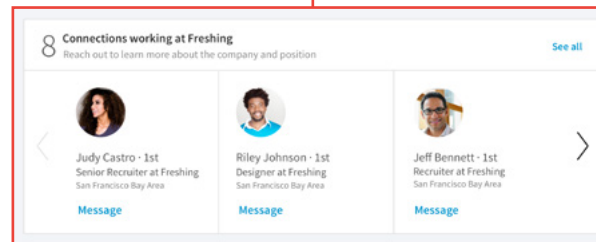
How LinkedIn can help you Land a Job You'll Love

As technology has evolved, the job application process has lost some of the personal touches it used to have. As a result, many professionals either don't find the right opportunities, or run into road blocks trying to access those opportunities. The LinkedIn platform is designed with the specific purpose of getting good candidates un-stuck. It arms professionals with timely job recommendations, relevant connections, and useful job insights.

Let's explore LinkedIn's new jobs pages to see how you can unlock your next opportunity.

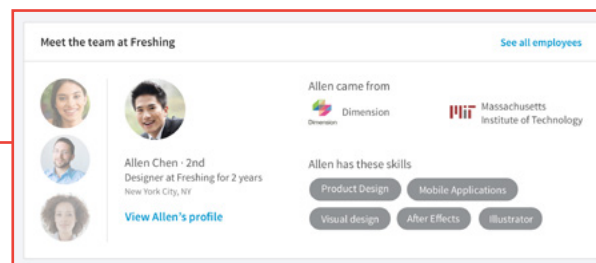
1. Surfaces Potential Connections

Our platform evaluates your network and automatically shows you who you know at interesting job opportunities. These insights can help reveal old connections that you never would have thought of to reach out to.



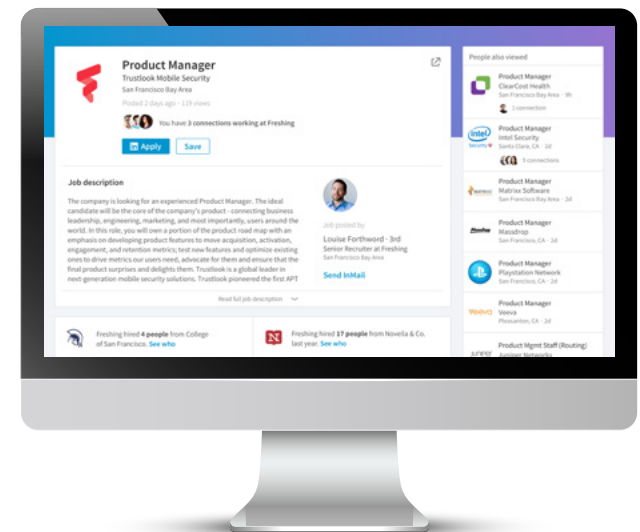
2. Targeted Insights:

LinkedIn's new jobs pages provide unique insights such as who from your current company as well as which alumni from your school now work at the company of interest. These connections are a great way to reach out to find out more about the position.



3. Meet the team

With this feature you can learn more about the type of people you may work with if you pursue the opportunity. It highlights people with similar roles, as well as their skills and career highlights.



Click here to start your job search.

GOING MOBILE

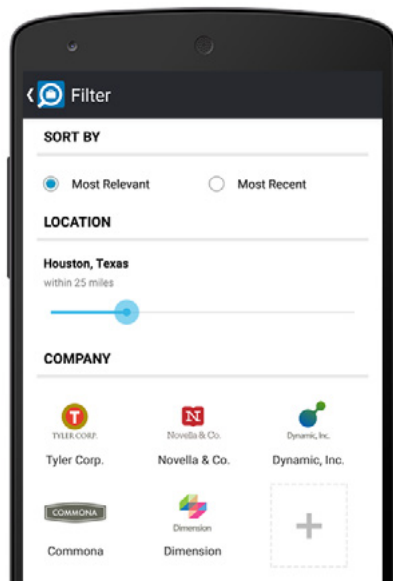
How to Leverage the LinkedIn Job Search App



More than **50%** of LinkedIn members look for jobs via their mobile devices. Applying to jobs in a few clicks with your smartphone will soon be the norm.

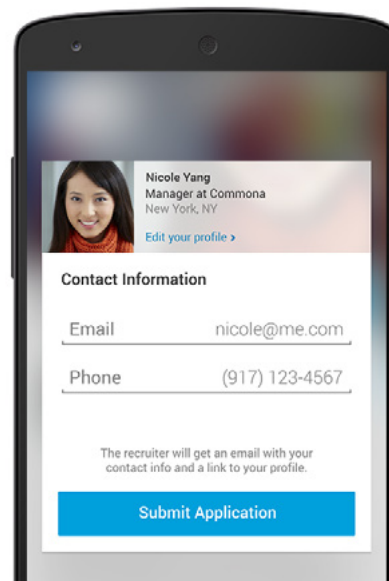
Even a few short years ago, making a shift in your career meant plunking down in front of a computer for long hours of drafting resumes, checking job boards, and dealing with complex application processes. Fast forward to today and we find a world ruled by social media and smartphones. Read on to learn how LinkedIn's iOS and Android Job Search apps can simplify your career journey.

Quick Tips: Taking the LinkedIn Job Search App a Layer Deeper



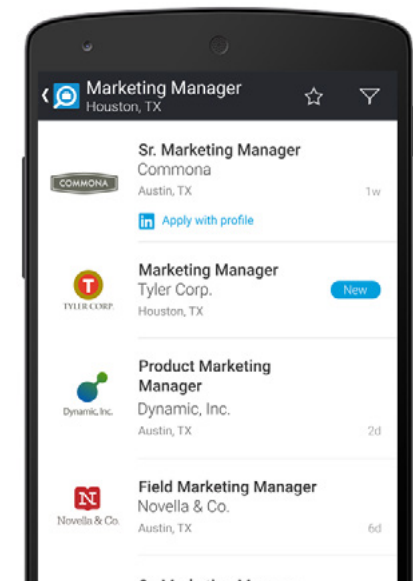
1. Advanced Filtering

Advanced filtering allows you to sort jobs by location, companies, job functions, industries, and seniority level. Use these filters to find the jobs that meet your criteria.



2. Apply with Profile

Many employers now allow users to apply by submitting their profile directly from their smartphones.



3. Job Alerts & Notifications

As you search for jobs, click the star in the upper right-hand corner to save your search. This triggers a daily email with fresh results that match the saved search. In addition, you can set up push notifications which will alert you when new jobs are posted that match these criteria.

“The most powerful aspect of this app is having the people, companies, and advice to re-shape your career right in your pocket.”

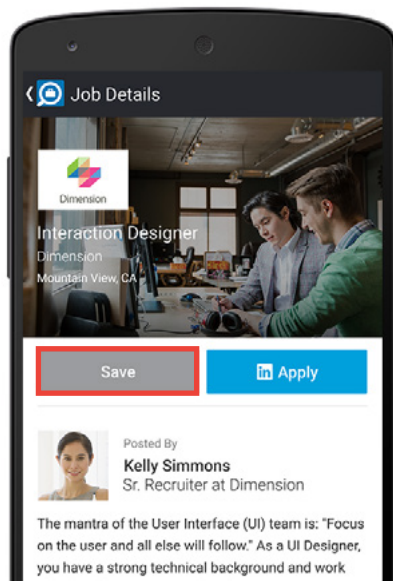
- Daniel Ayele, Senior Product Manager, LinkedIn

SEARCH—HOW LINKEDIN CAN HELP YOU DISCOVER

Save, Search & Automate

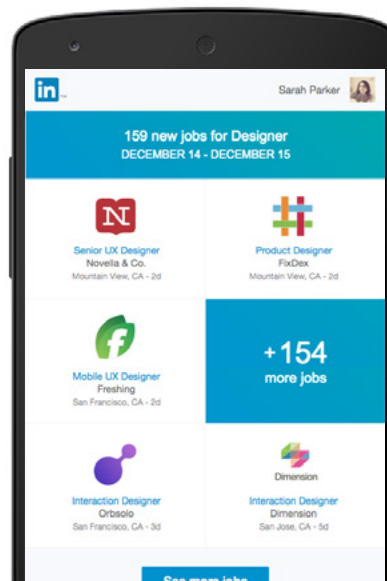
LinkedIn Features to Streamline your Career Discovery Process

When used correctly, the following seemingly simple LinkedIn features can significantly streamline your job search across all your devices.



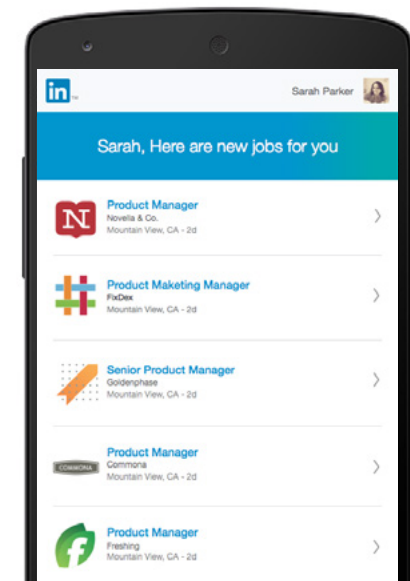
1. Saved Jobs

When browsing through listings, it's easy to lose track of all your opportunities. The Saved Jobs feature allows you to save jobs in a single click—with automatic syncing across all your devices. If you see an opportunity during a busy workday, simply flag it on your smartphone and apply later from your desktop or tablet.



2. Job Alerts

With a single click you can set up daily, weekly, or monthly alerts for relevant listings. When the right role opens up, you'll be first in line to apply, thereby increasing your chances of getting the job.



3. Jobs You Might Be Interested In

The information on your profile and search activity will all influence the listings LinkedIn displays as "Jobs you might be interested in." Navigate to your "Jobs" tab to customize the location, company size and industry of these listings.

GETTING SPECIFIC WITH SEARCH

LinkedIn offers search filters to help users hone in on the perfect job. These include:

- Location
- Date posted
- Industry
- Company
- Job function
- Level of experience

SEARCH-NETWORKING STRATEGIES

The Value of Relationships: Who You Know Determines Where You Work



89% of job seekers report networking as a part of their job search. 65% found it, "Very Effective"

Networking can seem a bit scary at first, but most networking actually just means talking to the people you already know. Talking with like-minded professionals, mentors, and potential employers can be flat out fascinating. In the following pages you'll find networking strategies that will help you make your next move. **Here's what you'll learn:**

HOW TO WARM UP COLD AND CASUAL CONTACTS

- Believe it or not, you probably already have connections who can help you make your next move. Sometimes, however, you may discover a great opportunity where you are not connected. We'll help you make these connections easier.

HOW TO APPROACH INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

- There's an art and science to the informational interview. In this section you'll find highly applicable but simple tips to master this process and grow your list of career advocates.

HOW TO UTILIZE LINKEDIN GROUPS & COMPANY PAGES

- As you learn to warm up cold contacts and begin nailing informational interviews, LinkedIn's Groups and Company Pages can help you broaden your network, and build bridges to more in-person interviews.

SEARCH-NETWORKING STRATEGIES-WEAK TIES

Advice from an Expert: Jim Citrin



Jim Citrin

CEO Recruiter & Author, *The Career Playbook*

Jim Citrin leads Spencer Stuart's North American CEO Practice. During his 21 years with the firm, he has worked with clients on more than 600 CEO, board director, CFO and other top management searches and CEO succession assignments.

How to Connect with a Cold Contact

So, you found a stellar company, but you're not connected with any of its employees. You are in luck, because connecting cold is quite common. If you plan to reach out, here are some tips for personalizing your LinkedIn request:

- **Find common ground**
Do research on the professional or organization and make mention of your common ground in the first sentence.
- **Get to the point**
Tell them what you want and why you're relevant in a respectful, but honest tone.
- **Keep it short**
You're the newest person on their radar.
- **Open up a two-way street**
Be sure to offer something up in return for connecting, and say thank you.

Using LinkedIn to Network with Weak Ties

Contrary to popular belief, you should network with both professional and personal contacts. Distant friends, relatives and some of their connections can open many unexpected doors. Consider the following tactics for building a LinkedIn network:

- **Connect with fringe friends**
Whether you met in college or that random Pilates class, all those friends and colleagues you have lost touch with are perfect candidates for growing your network.
- **Prioritize super-connectors**
Comb through your list and connect with the ones that have the largest networks. These are the relationship builders, and they can unlock an exponential amount of data about future jobs.
- **Contribute to conversation**
Get set up in groups that interest you and weigh in where you feel comfortable.

“Networking shouldn't feel like work. Whether business or personal, a relationship is a relationship. Be real about it, and be yourself. If you invest time in building new relationships, you'll stumble upon unexpected opportunities.”

SEARCH-NETWORKING STRATEGIES-INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Networking Strategies

The Art & Science of the Informational Interview

Informational interviews offer an unprecedented platform to ask candid questions, learn about an organization, and make personal connections. And despite all of the information available online, face-to-face meetings are the most effective tactic for uncovering the culture and nuances of an organization. Sitting down for coffee with the right professional can set you on a whole new path. But, there's an art and science to the informational interview. Follow these five tips to ensure both of your time is well spent.

Do Your Research

Science

It's crucial that you arrive prepared. Get familiar with your interviewer's LinkedIn profile. Research the organization's key services. And, read up on news stories that feature the company. Be prepared!

Ask the Tough Questions

Science

Ask more questions than you answer, and prepare your questions with care. Listen more than you speak. Keep the focus on the organization or professional across the table and remember you're there to learn.

Ask for Another Contact

Art

If the conversation goes well, ask if they can introduce you to another relevant contact. But, networking is a give and take. Be prepared to make introductions from your end, too.

Lead the Conversation

Art

This skill is more art than science. Ask well informed questions to set the tone of the conversation. Remember to be yourself whether the conversation is going the direction you want or not. Being authentic is key to forming a lasting relationship with your interviewer.

Tell Your Story

Art

You need to demonstrate your value without explicitly asking for a job. Be prepared to tell your story in a succinct manner. Leave the interview having shared your key strengths.

COMPANY PAGES

How LinkedIn Company Pages Can Help

Connect, Learn, and Find the Right Fit

LinkedIn Company Pages can help you connect with, learn about, and decide whether an organization will make a solid match for your skills, personality, and values. Here's what you can expect to learn:

- **Relevant Company Info**

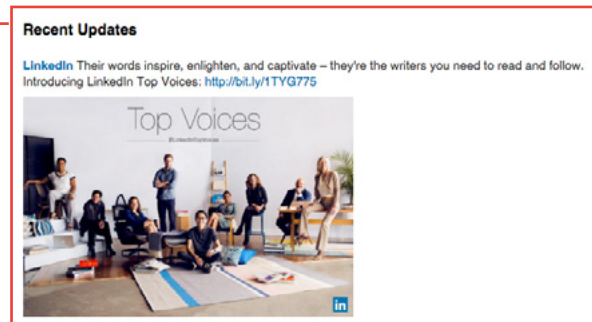
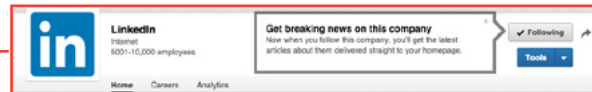
A common mistake job seekers make is to skimp on the research. Company Pages can give you an edge, offering information on an organization's past operations, current news, products, services, culture, and employees.

- **Current Openings**

Most Company Pages contain, "Careers" sections where you can browse current openings or apply. These are often more up-to-date than traditional job boards.

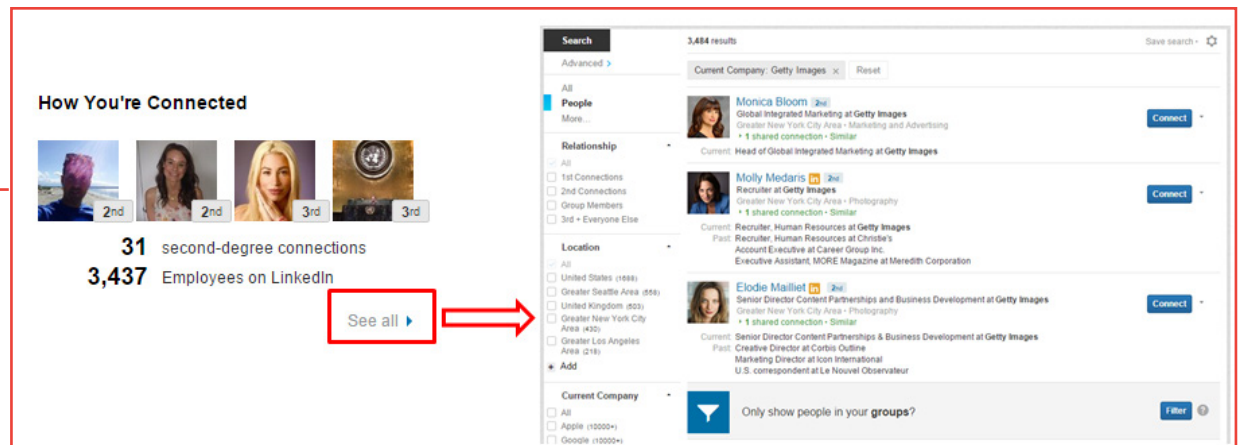
- **Current and Past Employees**

Company Pages allow you to view 1st or 2nd degree connections who currently, or previously, have worked for the company you're interested in. Reaching out to these professionals and learning more about their experience could be the fast-track to a new job.



Make an Impression

If you are interested in an organization, take advantage of opportunities to interact with them directly on social media. Commenting on posts, sharing their content, and even posting similar articles can help make an impression over time.



GROUPS

How LinkedIn Groups Can Help



People who join conversations within groups get **5X** more profile views

Reap the Rewards of the Conversation Economy

We're living in an era dominated by social media. With all the noise, it can be difficult to discern where to add your voice. LinkedIn Groups offer a platform for discussion on highly specific topics, making it easier for professionals just like you to join in on relevant dialogue. The following are a few ways LinkedIn Groups can help in your job hunt:

- **Find New Connections**

LinkedIn Groups brings like-minded professionals together who often connect over shared skills, industry learning, and job-specific questions. Tap into this wellspring of knowledge to advance your career with new connections.

- **Gain Access to Group Member Profiles**

When granted access to a group, you're also granted rights to view full profiles of its members. In addition, you can message members, even if you're not connected.

- **Discover Industry News**

Group members are constantly engaging in meaningful discussions about their industries. Leverage what you learn in groups to shine during meetings, interviews, and more.

- **Join the Conversation**

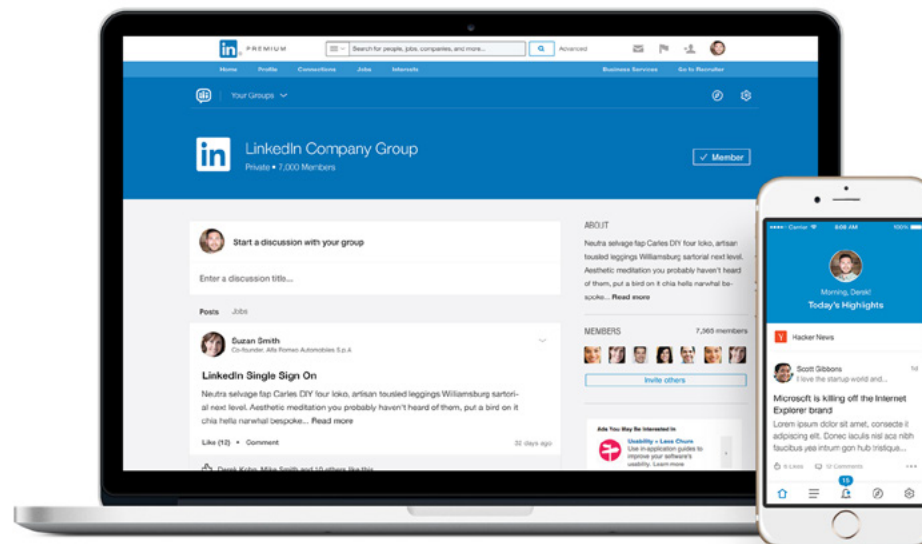
Just as you can learn for others, others can learn from you, too. Sharing your expertise allows you to build mutually beneficial relationships, and demonstrate that you're passionate and educated on relevant topics.

A Final Note on Being Authentic

You're you, and that's awesome. Whether you utilize LinkedIn Groups, or LinkedIn messaging features, give yourself permission to be authentic. Learning to be honest with the world about your skills, passions, and personality will expedite your job search.

50%

of executives who changed jobs in 2014 participated in groups within three months prior to a job change.



MEMBER SUCCESS STORIES

LinkedIn Member Success Story: *Sharon Achilles*



Overcoming a Rough Economy & Switching Careers

After studying journalism in college, Sharon struggled through a part-time job while applying for bigger opportunities. Then, the economy crashed. “There weren’t enough jobs in journalism to go around,” she said. Sharon’s tale demonstrates how uncovering a new path can be challenging, but fulfilling too. “I certainly had to take a leap of faith in my job search,” Sharon reported. This is how she made the leap:

STEP 1

Bring Your Offline Persona Online

Sharon attended a seminar where she learned how her LinkedIn profile and resume should differ, and how to start networking online. “I realized that my profile was a little bare,” she said. “Things really clicked during this seminar for me. I knew I needed to make my personality shine through and beef up my profile with experience, skills and endorsements.”

STEP 2

Get Social on LinkedIn

After adding some personality to her profile, Sharon began making new connections on LinkedIn. “I started getting comfortable and reaching out to more contacts for advice, interviews, or just to answer simple questions about specific jobs and career paths,” she said. Her network confirmed her sneaking suspicion that human resources was ultimately the direction her career should go.

STEP 3

Practice Persistence, Patience, and Thankfulness

Sharon worked two different jobs in staffing before ultimately finding a fit in Human Resources. She practiced patience and was grateful to everyone in her network, “As I reached my full potential, I got busy. I had to remind myself to follow up, thank everyone and stay in touch with important contacts,” she said. “Ultimately, I was contacted for a new position because of my persistence, and I took it!”

“Your LinkedIn network is like a small community, or team. If you start surrounding yourself with the right people and just be yourself, your community will give you the perfect job eventually!”

03

GETTING THE JOB

You've heard it a hundred times; Looking for a job is a job in and of itself. Despite all that hard work, approaching the application process strategically can open unexpected doors, create jobs where none previously existed, and help you secure the right role in spite of tough competition. The following pages contain tips and tactics that will ensure you are prepared to apply. Here's what we'll cover:

- **How your network can help you find your "in"**
- **How to tackle the interview process**
- **How to put yourself in the shoes of a recruiter**
- **How to negotiate your job offer**



*In 2015, **70% of LinkedIn members** who changed jobs were hired at a company where they had a personal connection, an alumni connection, or their new company had a history of hiring from their previous company.*



GETTING THE JOB—NETWORKING STRATEGIES INTRO

Networking Strategies for Getting the Job

As you prepare to apply for your next role, remember that relationships can be the most positively powerful resource at your disposal. People like to help and you shouldn't be afraid to ask for a favor. Apply the following relationship building skills as much as possible in preparation for getting a job:

How to Combine Online and Offline Conversation

As you build relationships, it helps to know which mode of communication is appropriate in different scenarios. Many online dialogues result in an informational interview. Use the following tips for getting the most out of each channel:

- **Face-to-Face**

Master the Art & Science of Informational Interview: Do your research, lead the conversation and ask thoughtful questions.

- **Digital**

Utilize apps like LinkedIn Job Search for networking success. The messaging feature on our app is a popular way to strike up dialogue with your connections you haven't spoken with in a while.

The Expected and Unexpected Bridges that Unlock New Opportunities

1. Former Bosses & Coworkers

The fastest way in is through professionals who can vouch for you directly. Reach out to former bosses and coworkers to speed up your search.

2. The Friend

Talk shop with your neighbor, club sports teammate or ex-classmate. These relationships are career gold mines. Don't be shy, because you'll both benefit from professional dialogue.

3. The Cold Contact

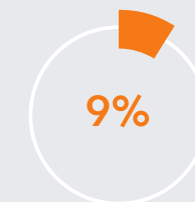
Whether you meet someone new at an event, or find the profile of a potential ally on LinkedIn, making an impression on someone you've never met can have a magical impact on your career prospects. Don't be afraid to strike up a dialogue.



of job seekers reported former bosses and coworkers were most effective in getting a new job



of respondents reported friends being their most effective channel for getting a new job



of respondents reported cold contacts being their most effective channel for getting jobs

MAXIMIZE YOUR ODDS OF GETTING AN INTERVIEW

Advice from an Expert: J.T. O'Donnell



J.T. O'Donnell
Author of CAREEREALISM

As a career strategist, syndicated columnist and author of CAREEREALISM: The Smart Approach to a Satisfying Career, J.T. O'Donnell has studied workplace satisfaction for nearly 20 years. In this exclusive interview, she shares strategies to maximize your odds of securing your interview, and ultimately the job too.

How important is networking?

J.T. : "It's crucial. Your network is your net worth, when it comes to getting a foot in the door. Having third-party credibility is absolutely critical to improving your odds. And keep in mind this is about quality more than quantity. It's not about the number of connections you have.

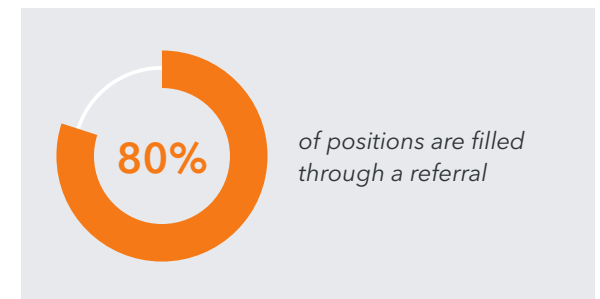
It's more about what you pour into your network. People that serve their networks get the best interviews and opportunities. If you're going to apply to a job, make sure you network first. This will give you an edge."

Let's talk about long-term goals. How can they help you secure an interview or ultimately a job?

J.T. : "You have to think of yourself as a business of one. If you're able to set long-term goals the same way a business would, then you'll be speaking their language when it comes time to interview. Employers want candidates who think big picture, but also apply this to their everyday skills. Align your long-term development with the everyday needs of a business, and you'll have a good shot at getting the job."

Is there some secret to developing a career that's meaningful while also getting paid enough?

J.T. : "There's no secret door to success or money. Just make sure you never stop learning. Align this continued learning with the job you're applying for, so the recruiter or HR professional can connect the dots. With every year that passes in your career, more will be expected of you. So keep honing your skills, and totally own it! This will get you all the interviews you need."



Source: J.T. O'Donnell

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

What to Expect & How to Make an Impression

When your networking skills and resume land you that coveted interview, it's time to start preparing. There's no substitute for confidence, and preparation breeds confidence. In the next three pages, we will explore common interview questions and how to best answer them.

How to Answer Background Questions

Example: "What's your biggest weakness?"

Background questions are designed to uncover candidate's strengths and weaknesses. In this section you will learn how to use storytelling to make all of your responses more memorable.

How to Answer Behavioral Questions

Example: "Tell me about a time when you..."

Behavioral questions are meant to evaluate how those strengths and weaknesses play out in the real world. We'll show you how to use the S.T.A.R. (Situation, Task, Actions, Results) method to ace them.

What to Say When It's Your Turn to Ask Questions

Perhaps the most intimidating part of a job interview is when the interviewer says, "So, what questions do you have for me?" In this section, you will learn how to ask intelligent questions that continue to demonstrate why you're perfect for the job.

BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

- Make answers relevant
- Confront weaknesses with what you're doing to improve
- Give examples of your experiences

BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

- Use S.T.A.R to tactically answer questions
(*Situation, Task, Actions, Results*)

ASKING QUESTIONS

- Align visions and culture
- End with the next interview in mind

HOW TO ANSWER BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

How to Respond to the Standard Questions with Memorable Responses

Tell Your Story and Make Yourself Memorable

It can be difficult to come up with original answers to the standard strengths and weaknesses questions. No matter the job, there are a handful of strengths every employer is looking for, and even fewer weaknesses that won't make you look bad. It can seem like you're limited to a few rote answers. Since most interviewers are used to hearing the same cliché responses, you can truly stand out with some thoughtful preparation. Here's how:

STEP 1 Make Your Answers Relevant to the Job

Instead of saying, "my greatest strength is my integrity," tie your response to why you are a good fit for the company. For example, you could say, "one of my strengths is my integrity, which is why XCorp is such an appealing company to me. I feel like the corporate culture here matches my values."

STEP 2 Confront the Weakness Question Head-On

This question is less about identifying weaknesses and more about seeing if you are honest, able to assess yourself, and coachable. So admit to a genuine weakness, how it affects your performance, and (most importantly) what you are doing to improve. For example, "I know I have trouble organizing, which can keep me from being as efficient as I could be. So I use a daily planner and task lists to stay on track."

STEP 3 Use Anecdotes for Memorable Responses

Add a brief example of how you use your strengths or overcome a weakness to make your responses more compelling. For example, "Clients say one of my strengths is my ability to communicate. We had a project that involved twenty people speaking four different languages, and I was able to keep everyone on the same page. I really enjoyed helping everyone understand each other."

“Most people think the best way to excel at an interview is to answer questions better than any other candidate. But, the more important skill is to weave those questions into a story, a narrative that gives the interviewer a sense of who you are and what you're about.”

– Jim Citrin, CEO Recruiter

HOW TO ANSWER BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

Be a S.T.A.R. with Tactical Responses

Recent trends saw companies asking oddball interview questions such as, “Describe the color yellow to a blind person,” or, “Tell me how you would unload a 747 full of sheep.” Thankfully, most companies realized responses to those questions didn’t indicate future job performance, and settled on behavioral questions instead.

Behavioral questions take the form of, “Tell me about a time when you...” or, “Describe how you would handle...” The purpose of these questions is to see how the strengths and weaknesses you identified play out in a real-world setting.

To answer these questions in a coherent and compelling way, use the **S.T.A.R.** structure:

Let’s say the question is, “Tell me about a time you had to solve a problem as a manager.” **Your response could be:** “I had to manage a new hire who would not answer emails from the rest of the team (**Situation**). His lack of communication was affecting the entire department’s productivity. Emailing him didn’t

help, because he didn’t answer my email either (**Task**). So I had a face-to-face meeting with him to discuss the importance of being available to his team members, followed by an email to the whole team to reinforce the message for everyone (**Action**). The meeting got him to answer emails, and the message for the whole

team made everyone more communicative. Now the team’s productivity is up 50% from last quarter (**Results**).”

S.T.A.R STRUCTURE

- Situation:** Explain the scenario that required you to use your skills and experience
- Task:** Briefly identify the challenge you had to overcome to succeed
- Action:** Detail the specific steps you took to resolve the task
- Results:** Demonstrate what you accomplished, with specifics and stats if available

YOUR TURN TO ASK QUESTIONS

Turning the Tables: Your Turn to Ask the Tough Questions

Nailing the interview requires more than answering questions. The best candidates find a way to turn the tables, and learn from their potential employer. Respectfully asking the right questions can uncover crucial information about a company's culture, practices, and your potential position. If you want to find a fit, you'll need to learn to ask the right questions.

Aligning on Vision, Values, & Culture

Finding a career fit is about more than skills and capabilities. Your job satisfaction will be directly linked to whether or not your vision, values, and culture align with your employer. Which is why asking the right questions is so important. When you get beyond the bullet points, you begin to uncover the true nature of an organization.

Questions to Ask During an Interview:

- "How do you see this position changing, or evolving in the coming years?"
- "If you could improve something about this company, what would it be?"
- "What will I learn, if I work here?"

- "What's frustrating about working here?"
- "Is there anything holding the company back?"
- "If it were six months in the future, what would success look like?"
- "How did you get your start?"

End With the Next Interview in Mind

Leave the interview with your strongest foot forward by asking specific questions. You want to leave an impression, and get them thinking you can meet their needs immediately. Consider asking the following:

- "What are the challenges that keep you up at night? How can I help you solve those problems?"

Answers to this question will demonstrate what the hiring team is truly looking for, and which problems are top of mind. If you make it to the next round, you can prepare your plan for how you can solve their specific problems.



AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Crossing the Finish Line: What to do After the Interview

Writing a Memorable Thank You Note

Preparing for an interview is hard work. Once it's over, you may be tempted to sit back, relax, and wait for a phone call. Don't let up just yet. If you wish to remain top of mind, it's time to write a proper thank you note.

Standard etiquette is to email, or send a LinkedIn message, within 24 hours of the interview. Your note should convey sincere appreciation for the opportunity and the interviewer's time. After that, include the following:

1. A brief recap of your qualifications.

Be specific about how your skills map to the job. Now is a good time to highlight any previous experience or skills that didn't get discussed in the interview.

2. A more specific statement of interest.

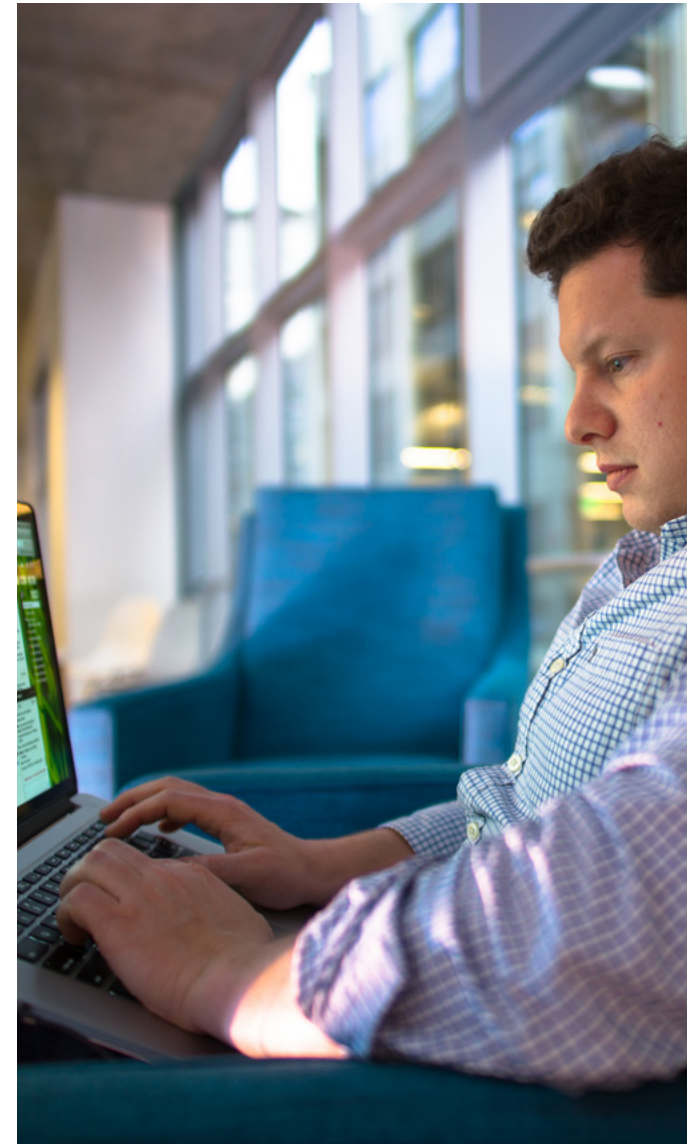
Use what you learned in the interview to call out one or two aspects of the company or culture that make you want to work for them. Compliment the company in a way that demonstrates you paid attention during your interview.

3. A strong close that establishes rapport.

If you connected with your interviewer on a personal level, now is the time to mention it. Mention a witty exchange, a challenging question, or other aspects of your interview that lock in your personal connection. Finally, close with a firm reiteration of your interest: "I look forward to taking the next step in the hiring process. I am available to meet again at your convenience. Thank you again for your time, and hope to talk to you soon."

4. An authentic tone of voice

Following the structure outlined above does not mean you should take your personality out of the equation. On the contrary, your personality should shine through in the tone of your writing. Hiring managers are looking for candidates with personality. Read your letter aloud. Make sure it sounds conversational and authentic.



A RECRUITER'S PERSPECTIVE

Advice from a Recruiter: Lauren Babek



Lauren Babek
Talent Acquisition Manager, LinkedIn

“A solid job search is a marathon, not a sprint. It takes time to build a healthy network, get reliable referrals and find the right job.”

Your resume is just one among dozens that a recruiter might see in a single day. In order to get picked from the pile, take a look at the hiring process from the recruiter’s side. Here are a few tips from a member of LinkedIn’s Talent Acquisition Team:

1. Highlight Key Differentiators

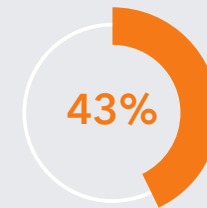
A recruiter will only spend a few minutes reviewing your resume. They’ll do a quick scan for skills and experience that both qualify you for the role and set you apart, and then they are on to the next candidate. Make it easy on their eyes by putting your most impressive skills, experience, and background front and center.

2. Get Referrals

A referral from a trusted source can be a powerful tool in moving you ahead of the pack. Recruiters greatly appreciate quality referrals as they are usually appropriately qualified for the position, already interested in the job opportunity, and coming from a trusted source be it a co-worker, a former colleague, or a member of their proverbial Rolodex.

3. Personality

After the initial resume evaluation, LinkedIn’s team does a phone screening with each candidate that is qualified to continue through the interview process. While companies recognize the importance of skills and experience, there is an increasing value being placed on personal brand. Whether it is how you correspond with your recruiter or the questions you have and the preparedness you exemplify to the hiring team during interviews, personal brand is ultimately how you choose to “show up” and the way you conduct yourself can play a large part in how far you advance.



*In our recent recruiting trends survey, 43% of respondents reported social professional networks as their top source of quality hires.***

Source: LinkedIn Global Recruiting Trends 2016**

NEGOTIATION TIPS

A Guide to Negotiating a Job You Love

More than Money

Money matters. But not as much as finding a role that fits. As you move through your career, you will discover that room for growth, role responsibility, and access to the right resources can add immense value, just like money in your pocket.

After identifying what your ideal role looks like, learning how to negotiate effectively and what is up for negotiation will make it a reality. Pave the path to rock-solid negotiation skills with the following exercises:

1. Think Big Picture

Many professionals focus too much on the present. Instead, try to imagine your resume in ten years. Jot down where you believe your ideal role will lead you and list the skills required to get there. Be prepared to discuss this progression with potential employers. You may find them quite keen on your future, too.

“Contrary to popular belief, more money does not always translate to increased happiness and career satisfaction. Know your personal priorities. If paid time off or upward mobility are what matter most, wrap those items into the negotiation.”

– J.T. O’Donnell

2. Negotiate With Yourself

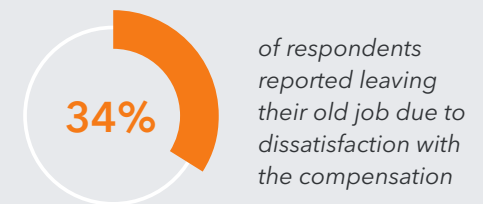
Develop two or three scenarios, each with a unique combination of benefits, role responsibility, compensation, and promotion. If your pay is not ideal, would additional vacation days bring the role back into balance? A few months into the new job, you will feel better having wrestled with the tough questions and having been honest about your priorities.

3. Interview Others

In today’s connected world, it’s not hard to find like-minded professionals. Reach out and ask them what their day-to-day looks like, or what types of questions they wish they had asked during their interview. This will give you a solid baseline when negotiating for your dream job.

NEGOTIATING LEVERS

- Salary
- Benefits
- Stock
- Promotion
- Role Responsibility
- Vacation
- Resources
- Title
- Hours



Sources: LinkedIn Talent Solutions “Why & How People Change Jobs” 2015 report

CHANGING INDUSTRIES OR JOB FUNCTIONS

Changing Careers

Do Your Homework: 7 Steps for Positioning Yourself for a New Career

Changing careers can be a daunting process, but the prospect of a new role with new responsibilities is also exhilarating. Whatever your reason for deciding on a career change, do your homework before taking the leap. The following seven steps will allow you to learn more about yourself and your new field, and help you successfully land a new job:

1. Spend Time Assessing Yourself

Make a list of all your talents and passions. This list will allow you to identify all your transferrable skills, as well as what you're looking for in your next position. Once your list is compiled, compare it to the job requirements of your desired position. In addition, update your LinkedIn profile to include all your skills, and a new profile headline that shows recruiters and hiring managers you're looking for new opportunities.

2. Conduct Informational Interviews

Reach out to connections in your desired field for an honest review of your cover letter and resume. If they're open to reviewing your resume, ask them to participate in an informational interview.

3. Start Talking

Join LinkedIn Groups that are relevant to your new field. You can ask questions, connect with new people, and discover where to find new career opportunities.

4. Find Mentors

Ask your colleagues that you can see on LinkedIn's new jobs pages to be mentors during your career change. They should work in the desired field, and have knowledge about career opportunities.

5. Get Credentials

Does your new field require licensure, certifications, memberships, or other trainings? Explore Lynda.com's courses before actively applying or talking to recruiters. This will show you're serious about entering the field.

6. Test the Waters

Take on temporary assignments in your spare time. This will allow you to refine your idea of the perfect position, help you build contacts, and could lead to a permanent position.

7. Take Your Time

Don't rush the process. Taking time to learn about the field, refine your profile, and engage with relevant connections will lead to more success and less frustration.

“It's not just about getting ahead. It's about loving your job and loving who you get to work with.”

– Dan Shapero, Career Product Lead, LinkedIn



1 in 3 who changed jobs, also changed industries in their job search.

MEMBER SUCCESS STORIES

LinkedIn Member Success Story: *Ali Alizedah*



Overcoming Lack of Professional Experience using LinkedIn

After studying biochemistry in University and managing a restaurant for a few years, Ali was struggling to make his way into the professional workforce. After applying online to dozens of jobs with no luck, Ali set a lunch with a family friend who worked at a Fortune 500 company. “He asked me if I was on LinkedIn, and at the time I wasn’t,” he said. “Well, there’s your problem!” his new mentor exclaimed. Read on to hear how Ali leveraged LinkedIn to uncover a new career path and secure a job.

STEP 1 Leverage Skills & Endorsements

Despite not having any professional experience, Ali had developed plenty of soft skills managing a restaurant. “My contact told me to list some skills that he could endorse,” Ali said. “He endorsed me, and this at least put me on the map.”

STEP 2 Tap Into Your Network

After tagging his skills, Ali began leveraging his new network. “My mentor was kind enough to let me connect with his contacts,” Ali reported. “I just kept connecting with people and asking for feedback. Pretty soon, I got a few phone calls, too.” Ali quickly applied what he learned from professionals, “I realized I had to reach out to a LOT of people to get the answers I was looking for. I also realized I had to be unique if I wanted a response.”

STEP 3 Use Pulse, Influencers, and Articles

After having a few candid conversations with the right professionals, Ali realized he was a good fit for recruiting. The next step was learning everything he could about the industry. “Using Pulse, influencers and by reading articles, I honed my craft and learned how I could upgrade my skills.”

STEP 4 Craft Your Own Opportunities

After all this effort, Ali was ready to dive into the professional world of recruiting. He used everything he learned to craft a custom strategy, “I challenged employers to take a chance on me and give me a month. If it didn’t work, no hard feelings in letting me go.” Pretty soon, Ali was well on his way. He now works full-time as a corporate recruiter for Marty Bassett Associates Inc.

“If you don’t have experience, you still have immense potential. Give people something to believe in!”

If you are ready to start your job search,
[please click here.](#)



The world's largest professional network
with more than 400 million members in 200
countries and territories around the globe.