

Getting the Most Out of LinkedIn



Chances are, you have a LinkedIn profile. Like any other kind of social media, it's something you check when you need a mental break from whatever task has your attention. Over the years, you've updated your professional summary with educational achievements, jobs, and promotions. You may notice that there are folks writing intriguing content. Maybe you decide to even join a few groups specific to your industry. Unlike other social media like Facebook and Instagram, the groups you belong to on LinkedIn can help you grow your network. Doing so can even highlight you as a viable candidate in the job market. If you're considering looking for a new job, or even just to grow your network, there's some do's and don'ts you should follow in order to get the most of your time and presence on LinkedIn.

Investigate

Just like any networking event in real life, you probably wouldn't just walk in and start spouting off your accomplishments and unfound knowledge. The same goes for groups on LinkedIn. You need to get a feel for what's happening within a group. What types of things are being discussed? Who's posting the content that's the most engaging? What's their background? Are they someone you should connect with? Read the comments. That's often where the richest ideas and discussion take place. What's the tone of the group like? Is it casual? Or, is it strictly professional? How does the group fit with the type of culture you're accustomed to?

If one group isn't a good fit, don't fret. There are plenty of other groups you can research and join.

Participate

When you join a group on LinkedIn, you need to understand that there's a certain decorum that's expected. Believe it or not, life in the virtual world isn't all that different from life in the real world. When you first join a group, don't come in guns-a-blazing. Even if you're an expert in your field, people are put off if you jump in with both feet and start preaching.

That doesn't mean you shouldn't participate though. In fact, that's exactly what you should do. Like and comment on other posts. This shows that you're engaging and can add value to the conversation.

If you come across an article, YouTube video or something else that pertains to the group, feel free to share and comment on how it's beneficial to you or why you think it's relevant. Trust in these groups is something that has to be earned.

By sharing relevant content and engaging with others, you make the point that you're in the group to learn and share ideas, not promote your own agenda.

Think Before You Post

You're to the point that you want to start posting regularly. It doesn't matter if it's someone else's content or your own. Before you pull the trigger, ask yourself if what you're about to share is relevant to the group. Does it add value to the greater conversation taking place? Is it something that can be beneficial to other people?

Something else to keep in mind is posting too often. This habit does two things. First, it makes you look desperate for attention. Second, you come across as a know-it-all.

There's a balance and art to posting. The key is to make what you're sharing is worthwhile and, the frequency with which you post isn't so high that your content ends up as spam.

Don't Troll

In the age of technology, cyberbullying is a real thing. And it's not just high school kids on Facebook. If you've ever read a political editorial and read the

comments, chances are you've seen this type of behavior.

The last place you want to be disrespectful is LinkedIn. If you disagree with what someone has to say, ask meaningful questions and be professional. Or, don't say anything at all.

LinkedIn can be a powerful resource if you use it the right way. Joining and participating in groups is a great method for growing your network and learning about industry trends and happenings. You need to go about it in the right way, however. If you take the time to investigate what's going on, participate and post content that's engaging, you might just surprise yourself with what you can get out of LinkedIn.