



From the author
of the best seller
'Let's Connect!'

HOW TO REALLY USE LinkedIn

- **Get New Customers**
- **Find a New Job**
- **Keep in Touch With Your Network**
- **Discover New Suppliers and Partnerships**
- **Attract New Employees**
- **Get Your Job Done, Faster**

Jan Vermeiren

What top managers and thought leaders say about the book

“Finally someone explaining why LinkedIn is useful. As a typical Gen X'er, I was starting to get frustrated to hear more and more people talking about the advantages and the fun of being Linked In. Once I got it, I immediately made a profile and started connecting. And if I can do it, so can anybody else!”

Hubert Vanhoe, Vice President, USG People Belgium, www.usgpeople.com

“Put simply, “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” is a must read for anybody who wants to grow their business through networking. Even if you’re already a member of a referral or network organization, Jan Vermeiren offers powerfully advanced strategies on how LinkedIn can help you get even more out of your membership!”

Ivan Misner, NY Times Bestselling author and Founder of BNI, www.bni.com

“I have been using LinkedIn for a while now, but other than connecting to people I personally know, I did not use it. This book really gives you structured insights and “off the shelf” tips to increase the effectiveness and the power of your network, and a big help in reaching your goals easier and quicker. Thanks for sharing your expertise, Jan. Strong recommendation to all the people that want to start using their network more efficiently!”

Frank Opsomer, Sales Manager Partner Sales Organization BeLux, Sun Microsystems, www.sun.com

“It is great to read a book that is this practical and gives examples to help you reach your networking goal. Thanks Jan!”

Mary Roll, Career Services Manager International MBA Program, Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School, www.vlerick.com

"This enlightening look at a new form of social media and next-generation communication provides meaningful ideas in an easy-to-read format. Perfect for any age!"

Dr. Nido Qubein, President, High Point University and Chairman, Great Harvest Bread Co., www.nidoqubein.com

"This is an informative and well structured book that everyone who understands the value of networking and building the right connections should read. This book is a must and should be at the top of anyone's reading list this year!"

Paul Bridle, Leadership Methodologist, www.paulbridle.com

"For a marketer networking is a major part building block to do a job. With new social networks coming along it is imperative that these skills are used wisely. This book has helped to sharpen my Linked-in social networking skills and helped focused how to profile myself better to get most out of my network!"

Mic Adam, Director - Executive Center of Innovation, Unisys, www.unisys.com

"Jan Vermeiren has done it! He has written a LinkedIn guide in easy-to-understand language that is a godsend for neophytes and a boon for veteran users as well. Readers internationally will polish their online presence to build more internal and external credibility and learn how to turn connections into more sales and career success!"

Lillian D. Bjorseth, author Breakthrough Networking: Building Relationships That Last, www.duoforce.com

"If there is just one book you buy this year, it should be this one. Social networking is the new marketing medium and LinkedIn is at the forefront. Jan shares all the secrets and strategies in a concise and simple manner and he is undoubtedly the master of LinkedIn. It doesn't matter what business you are in, this book has all the tools to enable you to make more connections and increase productivity!"

Frank Furness, Bestselling Author and International Speaker, www.frankfurness.com

"I thought I knew lots about LinkedIn but "How to REALLY use LinkedIn" goes into every function and process in a simple step-by-step process. Jan, being someone who is also an expert on 'live' networking you of all people have been able to link the online and offline networking systems and principles to ensure this book will be highly prized by people who wish to become modern day all around networkers!"

Will Kintish, UK authority on business networking skills, www.kintish.co.uk

"If you're like me, getting your head around an advanced networking tool like LinkedIn can be quite daunting. Jan Vermeiren has simplified it all - not only by spelling out in easy steps how LinkedIn works as an effective tool to create the right contacts and clients for your business, he also provides priceless wisdom on the fundamentals of intelligent networking. The little time it takes you to read this informative book will save you literally hours online - and impact your business quickly and positively!"

Paul du Toit, Certified Speaking Professional, MD of the Congruence Group, South Africa,
www.pauldutoit.net

"If there is one secret that creates business success it would be "networking." Jan Vermeiren's new book "How to REALLY use LinkedIn" is a powerful tool that helps you implement the age old concept of building relationships and maximizing it with 21st Century tools!"

Don Boyer, Creator of The Power of Mentorship book series, www.DonBoyerAuthor.com

"LinkedIn for me was just another website to connect to people. Since I didn't find any added value, I only logged onto the website after somebody sent me an invitation request. However, while reading the book "How to REALLY use LinkedIn", the ideas just kept coming. I had no idea LinkedIn had so much potential. LinkedIn turned from a '13 in a dozen' website into one big opportunity! If you want to create your own network but you have no idea where to start or you haven't got a lot of time ... start by reading this book! It's easy to understand, very practical and full of tips and tricks. See you on LinkedIn!"

Ellen Van Bossuyt, Jr Academy Manager, Euphony Benelux, www.euphony.com

"As a LinkedIn user with over 600 connections and an active blogger since 2004, I can tell when a book has real value. This book has it in spades! You will find more good, quick, easy answers in this book than any of its kind. I've read the others and learned from them, but this one was written by someone like me: a professional speaker and author, a subject expert whose main product is himself and the talent he offers. Every page is easy to read and apply. Buy this book and keep it on your desktop until your thousands of high-value connections cover it up with money!"

Jim Cathcart, author of Relationship Intelligence®: Who's Glad To Know You?
<http://cathcart.com>

“I have been a regular user of LinkedIn for a while so I thought I couldn't learn much more. However I was surprised about the extra dimension "How to REALLY use LinkedIn" gives to this website, especially how to craft a good Profile. Suddenly it makes more sense not only to use LinkedIn more, but also in a way to get better results in less time and in a way that respects all involved parties!”

Christoph Van Doninck, Sales & Marketing Coördinator DPC, Dupont De Nemours, www.dupont.com

“Networks make sure the labor market runs smoothly. Lots of job openings are filled via informal ways. Due to the structural lack of personnel, employers don't have any other choice than look for alternative recruitment channels. When looking for a job or when looking for talented people social networks like LinkedIn can really make the difference. Read “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” and increase your chances on the market!”

Fons Leroy, Managing Director, Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding (VDAB), www.vdab.be

“The time when it was enough for entrepreneurs to make decent products or render good services is behind us. Running a business is not done on an island anymore. Craftsmanship, a professional drive and creativity remain the core, but communication, PR and selling your product or service are increasingly important. Building a good network is a necessity for every entrepreneur. LinkedIn is one of the tools to do this. “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” explains in a simple, step-by-step approach how to get the maximum out of it!”

Karel Van Eetvelt, Managing Director, Unizo, www.unizo.be

“For several years now, Jan has continued to build a solid reputation as a credible authority in the area of networking. Personally, I have derived many benefits from reading his previous book “Let's Connect”, and attending his training courses. In this new book, Jan revisits some tried-and-tested principles about networking, and adds actionable strategies for putting them into practice. For those that are serious about networking, and want to unlock the potential value that LinkedIn holds for them, this book is a definite recommendation!”

Ago Cluytens, Global Head of Marketing, ING Private Banking, www.ing.com

"In the past years LinkedIn has become a fantastic networking tool for entrepreneurs and managers. Unfortunately only few people realize the power of this website, mostly because we lack the knowledge. That's why I'm so glad that Jan took the initiative to write a book about LinkedIn. As a networking expert he is in the best position to share insights and practical tips. Thanks to "How to REALLY use LinkedIn" we can turn LinkedIn into a powerful tool when looking for new business relations or when building our network!"

Peter Desmyttere, Marketing Consultant for Entrepreneurs, www.peterdesmyttere.com

"I thought I knew all there is to know about using LinkedIn. But after reading Jan Vermeiren latest book I've been able to connect faster to higher level profiles and create more value out of my LinkedIn network than ever before. I highly recommend you read this book and implement what you learn!"

Byron Soulopoulos, CEO, Brian Tracy Benelux, www.briantracy.be

"After reading "How to REALLY use LinkedIn," I'm able to better manage my list of professional business contacts. I can also more easily find potential business and have better contact with experienced professionals worldwide. I met Jan for the first time during a sponsorship seminar and since then I read a lot of his interesting online networking publications because this type of networking will be more and more important in the future. It opens a lot of doors for my professional daily communication work!"

Philiep Caryn, International Communication & Sponsorship Quick-Step, www.gsi-cycling.com

"Native English speakers will be aware of the saying, 'Cometh the hour, cometh the man'. In the case of this book we could correctly say, 'Cometh the technology, cometh the book'. Jan Vermeiren's latest book, 'How to REALLY use LinkedIn' is an essential reference work for any business person seriously interested in the power of social networking technology. It's far more useful than an operating manual. Here you'll find excellent strategies for how to get the best from this technology and what's available through the different levels of membership, for example. There is no doubt in my mind that LinkedIn itself has developed tremendously in recent times and this book is being published at just the right time to help people maximize their use of the technology!"

Chris Davidson, Managing Editor, www.ProfessionalSpeakersJournal.com

“How to really use LinkedIn” from Jan Vermeiren really opened my eyes to the possibilities within LinkedIn and how to go about using it in a very efficient and effective way. I am a member of LinkedIn, and don't tend to spend a lot of time on it. This book, however, changed my mind of the possibilities and opportunities and I will start to spend more time on it with Jan, his book as my guide!”

Menno Siebinga, Entrepreneur, martial artist, organizer of the Body& Brein Festival (The Netherlands) and founder of the Siebinga method, www.teamsiebinga.com

“As a network coach and trainer I meet many people that are on LinkedIn, but use it in a rather passive way. Jan’s book, “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” makes it very clear what a powerful tool LinkedIn is and it makes you want to start using it right away!”

Daphne Medik, networking coach and trainer, DMM Communication, www.dmcommunication.nl

“This book is a must read for anyone wanting to enhance their networking skills and leverage online networking tools, especially LinkedIn. Jan has provided a practical, comprehensive resource with a large number of strategies to apply daily. As an international productivity expert I am often looking for valuable resources to recommend to my clients to boost their personal and professional productivity – I can highly recommend this book. Based on the foundation of the Golden Triangle of Networking, Jan emphasizes a need to give, ask and thank. Do yourself a favor, invest your time and energy in reading and applying the principles in this book – you will be glad you did!”

Neen James, International Productivity Expert, www.neenjames.com

“Thank you Jan for sharing your knowledge and insights on networking again. I have been on LinkedIn for a while, always realizing that I did not really USE it to its full potential. Now I know why and I know how to change that. “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” gives me the insight and the method to do better. And ... especially, it stimulates me to really act upon the eye openers provided, because the rewards are clearly specified and relevant. Powerful and empowering!”

Katharina Müllen, Transition Manager & Vitality Mentor, WinVitality www.winvitality.eu

"I find myself asked by more and more people how to use LinkedIn effectively. People are becoming more aware of its power and importance, to both individuals and to businesses. Jan has yet again succeeded in providing a clear, concise and hugely readable guide. "How to REALLY use LinkedIn" will move people from beginners to advanced LinkedIn networkers. Read the book, follow the steps and watch the benefits flow your way!"

Andy Lopata, Business Networking Strategist and co-author of '...and Death Came Third! The Definitive Guide to Networking and Speaking in Public, www.lopata.co.uk

"Jan did it again! Once more he shows he is the networking expert. Not only face-to-face, but also on LinkedIn!"

Eric Eraly, author of "The Easy To Quit Smoking Method", www.EnjoyQuitSmoking.com

"While some of the technology described in this book may change, the networking and communication principles are key to having a successful LinkedIn experience. Live the "givers gain principle" and LinkedIn might be the best business tool you use!"

Jason Alba, CEO of JibberJobber.com and author of I'm on LinkedIn – Now What???, www.jibberjobber.com

"LinkedIn was the first online network I joined back in 2004 and today it's still one of the largest global networks. In the past years lots of extra features and tools were added to the platform and it was about time that someone wrote a comprehensive manual on the use of this brilliant website. Congratulations Jan, "How to REALLY use LinkedIn" does exactly what it says on the label, it's the best and most complete manual on LinkedIn ... This is what we were waiting for !"

Geert Conard, Management Consultant and author of "A Girlfriend in Every City," www.geertconard.com

"We live in a world in which technology is impacting everything that we do, especially the way we build relationships. While face-to-face interaction is important, Jan shows us how LinkedIn is changing the game and is a must for any professional who wants to stay connected and get ahead in their careers!"

Jason Jacobsohn, Chicago networking personality, www.NetworkingInsight.com

"I have read many books about networking and most seem to rehash the same old things. Jan, however, "pushes the envelope" in this book by looking at one of the most underutilized tools that all effective networkers have today: LinkedIn. As the relationship networking revolution continues to capture the attention of everyone worldwide, online networking systems like LinkedIn continue to move to the forefront, and Jan outlines some really useful strategies here on how we can take advantage of this powerful utility. This is a definite must-have!"

Adam J. Kovitz, CEO, Founder & Publisher, The National Networker,
<http://thenationalnetworker.com>

"Jan shares his secrets behind successfully tapping into the power of your network on LinkedIn. It's amazing how powerful this tool can be if you use it in the right way!"

Scott Bradley, Social Media Specialist, www.NetworkingEffectively.com

"A really useful set of strategies to build your network - one step at a time, one person at a time. Using 3 steps of know, like and trust; Jan Vermeiren demonstrates how to work on building a really useful and diverse network. Nowadays networking is a dynamic mix of offline and online, where 3 questions are still useful to me: "Who are you?", "How are you?" and "How may I help you?" The difference with online networking is the directness and speed with which I can reach huge numbers of people. Networking only calls for a little of my work time and a consistent effort to make it really effective. Set your goals and use the straightforward strategies in "How to REALLY use LinkedIn" for your network!"

Nathaniel Stott, Life Architect, www.lifearchitect.eu

"As a how-to guide, this book contains everything you may need to know about LinkedIn. I've personally found it very useful indeed!"

Mike Southon, Financial Times columnist and co-author of 'The Beermat Entrepreneur,'
www.beermat.biz

"The good thing about "How to REALLY use LinkedIn" is that it provides excellent insights in the fundamentals, then describes a basic strategy for everybody and then an advanced strategy for several profiles. This makes it worthwhile for every professional!"

Bill Cates, Author of "Get More Referrals Now!", www.referralcoach.com

"Although being a professional speaker on networking for years, it still took me three years to really understand the real powers of LinkedIn. Never before in history of mankind, it was possible to discover the second and the third layer of your network. LinkedIn already rocks when you only want to use it for business opportunities, but the real magic lies in interconnecting the right people and networks that are trying to solve major challenges that we face as human beings, by enabling us to spend our social capital in a much smarter way. To understand why, please read this book!"

Martijn Aslander, Liferhacker - Connector - Resourcerer & public speaker at events,
www.martijnaslander.nl

"If you want to find the best people and cultivate profitable relationships by maximizing the world's most powerful social networking tool, then read Jan Vermeiren's outstanding new book, "How to REALLY Use LinkedIn"!

Don Gabor, author of Turn Small Talk Into Big Deals: Using 4 Key Conversation Styles To Customize Your Networking Approach, Build Relationships and Win More Clients,
www.dongabor.com

With "How to REALLY use LinkedIn" Jan Vermeiren has written an excellent book for beginners and average users of LinkedIn. It contains practical examples of what you could use LinkedIn for (recruitment, sales, finding suppliers,...), but also links online and offline networking. The reader realizes that the gap between them is in fact not so big at all. This book is a must-read for anyone who wants to know more about what he can accomplish with LinkedIn!"

An De Jonghe, author of Social Networks Around The World: How is Web 2.0 Changing Your Daily Life?", <http://andejonghe.blogspot.com>

"How to REALLY use LinkedIn" is stimulating, enjoyable and informative. Jan excels at sharing valuable, pragmatic knowledge in this book. I found it to be very helpful, even for seasoned networkers or experienced LinkedIn users, like myself. I recommend this book to better understand the sound principles of networking and to learn more about the amazing power of LinkedIn. It truly is the best LinkedIn book on the planet!"

Bert Verdonck, Liferhacker & Life Coach, <http://blog.bertverdonck.com>

"Many of my customers tell me they find LinkedIn confusing, complex and time-consuming. Thank goodness Jan has written this book, because I can let my clients have it safe in the knowledge that by reading it they will realize that LinkedIn is a highly effective tool for their business. Plus, they will see that LinkedIn is straightforward, easy to get on with and, when used well, time-efficient. Thankfully Jan's book guides people through the use of LinkedIn in such a friendly way they will be able to use it to truly enhance their business networking for great effect – and quickly. I have absolutely no doubt in recommending this book to my customers – indeed to anyone who uses LinkedIn!"

Graham Jones, Internet Psychologist, www.grahamjones.co.uk

"I love hands-on and practical books. This is one of those rare gems one can put next to one's keyboard as a how-to manual and get (a lot of) things done straightaway. By providing clear insights and a simple, but super effective strategy, Jan Vermeiren shows how everybody can tap into the power of online business networking and more specifically LinkedIn!"

Guido Thys, Corporate Midwife, www.guidothys.nl

"Are you willing to think differently? Are you willing to challenge the current orthodoxy about the use of internet? Jan Vermeiren gives us the right insights for the opportunity to extend our professional network and exchange experiences with professionals in other industries!"

Henno Vos, Managing Director, Flevum Forum Network, www.flevum.nl

"It was to be expected that Jan, as the networking expert in Belgium, would one day write a book on social networks. "How to REALLY use LinkedIn" is a must for all professionals wishing to enter the next era of networking: it contains fascinating insights on the meaningful use of LinkedIn in a business environment; it familiarizes you with the many unknown, interesting features of LinkedIn; and it deals with burning questions around this social network. In short, this book is an indispensable guide to discovering the power of LinkedIn!"

Erik Van den Branden, Director of HR Shared Services, Deloitte Belgium, www.deloitte.com

“Online business networking is a very hot topic. However, many people don’t know how to really deal with websites like LinkedIn. “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” gives more than an answer. Highly recommended! “

Astrid De Lathauwer, Chief Human Resources Officer, Belgacom, www.belgacom.com

“I found the big hype around social networking frustrating and confusing until I read How to REALLY use LinkedIn. Thank you, Jan, finally a resource that shows me how to get the best out of social networking while giving my best to all my contacts!”

Garth Roberts, CSP, www.garthroberts.com

“The information in “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” is a powerhouse book of tips, tactics and approaches for raising your personal profile that simply work. LinkedIn is the buzzword in business networking these days and this book shows how to REALLY use it!”

Dr. Tony Alessandra, author of The Platinum Rule and The NEW Art of Managing People, www.alessandra.com

“Great things come from simple and pragmatic methods and that is what Jan Vermeiren succeeded with his latest book. "How to REALLY use LinkedIn" will not only give you clear strategies to increase your network efficiency with the use of LinkedIn, but it will also tell you the real sense and purpose of networking. A must for every professional!”

Vincent De Waele, Business Transformation Director, Mobistar, www.mobistar.be

“This book is an eye-opener – once you’ve read it you’ll see how easy business (or job searching) becomes. By providing clear insights and a simple, but super effective strategy Jan Vermeiren shows how everybody can tap into the power of online business networking and more specifically LinkedIn. “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” is a must-read!”

Jill Lublin, International Speaker and Best Selling Author of Get Noticed...Get Referrals, Guerrilla Publicity, and Networking Magic, www.jilllublin.com

"If you take networking seriously, use LinkedIn. If you take LinkedIn seriously, read this book!"

Edgar Valdmanis, GoldClub Networker/Business Network International (BNI), www.bni.com

Welcome

Welcome to this light version of the book “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” !

In this “light version” you will find parts of the book which will already help you gain a better understanding of the benefits of (online) networking and how powerful LinkedIn can be IF applied in the right way.

If you like the content and want more, you can of course buy the book via www.how-to-really-use-linkedin.com . We also provide free webinars on a regular basis where we explain the fundamentals and a basic strategy to be quickly successful on LinkedIn. We also answer questions in those sessions. You will find the instructions how to register for them and how to ask your own question via www.how-to-really-use-linkedin.com

You are also invited to join our Global Networking Group on LinkedIn at:

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=1393777>

Finally, if you want to get most out of your LinkedIn membership, consider a LinkedIn Power Package or LinkedIn Personal Profiling Package. You will find them on the website as well.

Enjoy !

Jan



Jan Vermeiren

Founder of Networking Coach and author of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn”

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Hot Discussion Topics and Burning Questions that are answered in the full version of the book

- Not everybody is on LinkedIn so it doesn't work
- No one has contacted me yet. So LinkedIn is a useless business tool.
- I am happy with my current professional situation, why should I build a network on LinkedIn (or elsewhere)?
- Why would I use LinkedIn if I can use Google to find information?
- People with thousands connections
- Block access to LinkedIn for employees?
- Hide or show my connections?
- When should I start building my network?
- How much time do I have to spend on LinkedIn?
- Can I only connect with people I know very well? If I connect with others I can't recommend them.
- When is a relationship good enough to send someone an invitation? And how to do that?
- I have many contacts from years ago. Can I still contact them?
- What to do with an invitation from someone I don't know very well?
- How to deal with invitations from people I don't know at all (or think I don't know)?
- How to deal with requests for recommendations from people I don't really know?
- How do I ask a question to my whole network?
- Do I need to upgrade my membership?
- If only a few people pay for their membership, where does LinkedIn get their money from?
- What is the number of connections I need to make LinkedIn work for me?
- Why use a Group on LinkedIn instead of the Yahoo or PHP forums?
- Should I put my email address in my name?
- What is the value of Recommendations?

Little known, but interesting features and behavior of LinkedIn that you can find in the full version of the book

- LinkedIn is a three degree network
- Hidden connections can still be found
- Direct contact still possible despite invitation filtering
- You have lots of controls over the emails you receive through LinkedIn and your overall user experience
- Send invitations from Outlook
- LinkedIn helps to increase the ranking of your websites in search engines
- Everybody in the chain can read every message of an introduction
- Name is automatically included when sending invitations to imported contacts
- Groups can help you raise your visibility
- Amount of Groups you can join is limited
- Groups have an initial limit of 1000 members
- Abusing Answers might block you from being able to ask questions ever again
- How to become an “expert”
- Where can I find the invitations and messages I have sent and received?
- What will happen when I remove a connection? Will he be notified?
- Can I download the contact details of my connections?
- What happens when I choose “I Don’t Know This Person” when I receive an invitation?
- Most of the times I can’t see the name of the person “Who viewed my profile”
- How did I get two (or more) accounts on LinkedIn?
- What happens with my contacts when I import them? Can everybody see them?
- How can I add my event to the Events list?
- How do I change who can contact me?
- Why are some posts in Discussions higher than others?
- Why does LinkedIn work with a (confusing) area designation instead of the town my company is situated?

Prologue

LinkedIn and other social and business networking websites have found their place in our society. In the past few years we have seen an explosive and exponential growth of many networks. In the beginning most people were very skeptical about them, but now they are not only here to stay, but they offer opportunities we never had before.

In my job as speaker, trainer and coach about networking and referrals I have seen the value of these networks from the moment they had their tipping point in 2003. As an entrepreneur who is continuously looking for customers, suppliers, employees, partners, media contacts, expert's opinions and other help I personally also have experienced the tremendous power they have.

The past years my team at Networking Coach (www.networking-coach.com) received an ever-increasing stream of questions from participants to our training courses or members from the audience in our presentations about what the value is of online business networks and how to deal with them. And in particular LinkedIn. Many people expressed their resistance and were skeptical about this new way of interacting, but like many other things in life it was more "fear of the unknown." Once I explained and showed how they too could benefit from it and how they could immediately start using it, some of them became the heaviest users of LinkedIn.

Since we got so many questions I was already thinking about writing a book. Not only for the participants of our training courses and presentations, but also to give people who are not able to attend our sessions this valuable information which could take their business or career to the next level(s).

So I was already thinking about writing a book about LinkedIn for a while, but what really triggered me to actually write it, was the moment LinkedIn introduced the "Discussions" functionality in the Groups.

Why was that the trigger? There are many, many online networks these days (you find some more in the back of the book) with different functionality. My biggest "problem" with LinkedIn was that there were no forums or clubs where people could discuss topics, help other people and be helped by other people. If people wanted that functionality they had to be a member of other networking websites or Yahoo or Google Groups (or other forums). But on the other hand LinkedIn was and is by far the largest biggest business networking website (over 34 million users and growing) meaning that if someone already heard of online business networking LinkedIn is the website they mention.

So the moment LinkedIn introduced "Discussions" the obstacle of having to use extra Yahoo or Google Groups fell away. Next to that, thousands of new members with a variety of profiles from all industries keep registering on the website every day making LinkedIn even more interesting for EVERY professional.

Why would an increasing numbers of members make it more interesting to become a member yourself? Think about telephones: they only became interesting when there were enough people to use them. The same applies to LinkedIn.

Before I explain the power of networking and how to use LinkedIn as a tool with tremendous leveraging capacity to support you I want to make a few disclaimers:

- The disadvantage of writing a book about things that happen on the web is that some functionality might be different than as described. Some things might have changed or even deleted and definitely more functionality will have been added. For example, when I took a week off to write the first version of this book (November 2008) LinkedIn added the Applications and introduced a new search function. These changes are also the reason I will avoid using screenshots. But I want you to get as much out of your LinkedIn membership as possible so to get a free LinkedIn Profile Self Assessment and to be up-to-date of new functionality and new strategies, you can register for free at www.how-to-really-use-linkedin.com
- Although I will go into the details of LinkedIn, I won't discuss all basic functionality. If you really need lots of screenshots and basic explanations about the functions of LinkedIn, there are other books to help you with that like "How to Succeed in Business using LinkedIn" by Eric Butow and Kathleen Taylor or "LinkedIn for Dummies" by Joel Elad.
- I don't have any business relationship or business interest in LinkedIn. My company Networking Coach and I are independent from LinkedIn and any other website.
- Although I might be able to answer all your questions about LinkedIn, there is a good Customer Service at LinkedIn. They not only have FAQ pages where you can find almost all answers to questions (these are also the pages I turn to when I have a question), but they also they have a help desk with real people who respond to questions (unbelievable for help desks these days, isn't it ☺). You will find the "Help" function on top of each page. Or you can go to: <http://linkedin.custhelp.com>

So what is this book about then? It gives you insights in what networking is about and how to use the fantastic tool LinkedIn is to tap into the power of your network to reach any of your professional goals whatever function you might have and whatever industry you are in. This book starts from a practical point of view: your current job and how you can improve doing your job (better results in less time) by tapping into the power of your network using LinkedIn.

Enjoy !

Jan

PS: This book only has value when you apply the information, tips and wisdom you receive. My advice: read this book once to understand the ideas and strategies. Then read it again and start applying tip after tip. Don't apply them all at once, because you might feel overwhelmed. Pick three ideas that you can start using immediately and when you have integrated them in your life then pick the next ones.

PPS: To help you get even more value out of this book we have started the "Global Networking Group" on LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=1393777>). It is open to anyone who wants to play by the rules of this Group. So come and join us!

What Is (the value of) Networking?

Two of the remarks we hear the most in our training courses or presentations are:

1. “Why do I have to network? What is in it for me?”
2. Especially when it comes down to online networking: “Those people with thousands of connections, are they not just name collectors? I don’t want to be like them.”

What we have experienced is that it is important to understand the value and fundamentals of networking before diving into what LinkedIn can do for us and how to use it.

In my book, “Let’s Connect!” I already explained in detail which dynamics form the foundation of networking and of any networking strategy. In this chapter I will explain some of them again (without going too much into details) so you understand why and what we do in the next chapters. Please read this chapter very attentively because understanding and applying these fundamental principles will make a huge difference in using LinkedIn.

First let’s look at some benefits networking can have and then go deeper in some fundamental principles of networking online and off-line.

What are the benefits of networking?

Many people have already heard other people say: networking is important. And then the person for instance explains how it helps in sales. But if you are not responsible for any sales results you probably won’t listen.

So here is a list of 26 reasons why networking is important. These reasons are the main ones we got from the thousands of participants of our networking and referral training courses and presentations. I published this list on my blog (www.janvermeiren.com) on March 1, 2008, but it is still relevant.

Sales related

- 1) Maintaining relationship with current customers
- 2) Meeting new prospects
- 3) Getting referrals to new prequalified prospects
- 4) Receiving referrals to other departments at current customers

- 5) Word of mouth publicity
- 6) Creating ambassadors who will tell about you and connect you with the right prospects

Not sales related

- 7) Finding a new job
- 8) Finding a new employee or colleague
- 9) Getting to know the right people who can help you with your career
- 10) Attracting the right organizations to form partnerships with
- 11) Notifications when there are important changes (for example when legislation changes)
- 12) Up-to-date information for work-related topics
- 13) Knowing about new trends
- 14) Receiving more visibility as a person or an organization
- 15) Attracting more opportunities
- 16) Getting new ideas, new insights and new wisdom
- 17) Getting another perspective
- 18) Door openings to people you won't be able to reach on your own
- 19) Enrichment in every possible way
- 20) Doing things with more fun
- 21) Developing as a person
- 22) Developing as an organization
- 23) Attracting the right mentors
- 24) Having a filter (= people from your network) for the massive amounts of information on the Internet and elsewhere
- 25) Receiving more invitations to (the right) events as a participant, speaker or co-host
- 26) Security net when something happens
 - 26 a - When you are without a job
 - 26 b - When you have too much work

26 c - On a personal level (getting the kids out of school, help when renovating your house, babysitter, ...)

The rest of this book will show you how LinkedIn can help you to have all these benefits (yes even the babysitter 😊). But let's first look at the foundation of networking: the 2 biggest problems, the 5 fundamental principles and the challenge we all have.

The 2 biggest problems when (online) networking

If people have already given some thought to networking, many times they start going to events, make a profile on a website and start connecting with people.

Then there comes a moment most of them say something like: "I have put some time and effort in it, but I don't have the feeling I get much out of it."

The reason is that they have never thought about:

1. What their goal is.
2. Who the people are who are in the best position to help them to reach that goal.

These are the 2 biggest reasons why networking seems to not "pay off" for many people.

But when you reverse it and set your goals and ask yourself the question who might the people who are in the best position to help you reach them, it becomes so much easier. It becomes clear which organizations, online networks and which Groups on those online networks to join. It becomes clear who to reach out to and whom to ask for help and support.

How you approach them and how you will be perceived will make or break your networking efforts. Understanding and applying the 5 fundamental principles of networking will make sure you really get results. So let's look at what they are.

Fundamental Principle 1: Networking Attitude

In my networking book "Let's Connect!" I define the networking attitude as:

"Sharing information in a reactive and proactive way without expecting anything immediately in return."

Let's have a more detailed look at this definition:

- **Information:** in this definition “information” refers to both very general and very specific knowledge. For example, how to record a television program with a video recorder. Or the specific code of the newest software programming language. “Information” is also about business issues, like sales leads, and about simple day-to-day stuff (like “what are the opening hours of the supermarket”). In a professional environment “information” is, for example, a job opening, a sales lead, a new supplier or employee, opportunities for partnerships, interesting training courses or tips to work more efficiently.
- **Sharing:** this involves two parties. Networking is not a one-way street, but a two-or more way boulevard. It is always about a win-win situation, in which all parties are satisfied. What’s important in this concept is that you are comfortable with both giving help and making requests.
- **In a reactive and pro-active way:** in the first place this means that you offer information or help when you are asked to do so (reactive). But it goes further than that. You can send people information and connect them to each other, without them asking to do this (pro-active). But, of course, make sure you don’t SPAM them. A good approach could be to let them know you have this information and that you are willing to share it. Especially when you don’t know people well, this might be a non-confrontational approach.
- **Without expecting anything immediately in return:** in this era of short-term benefits it’s not a concept that’s immediately embraced by everybody. Let me also stress it is NOT about giving your own products or services away. It is about everything else: what is your attitude when dealing with people. Though it might be hard for some people, this is the one attitude that works best in the long run. This builds trust and makes you more “attractive” to other people.

By giving without expecting anything immediately in return, you will eventually receive much more than your initial “investment.” But you never know from whom or when. And that’s something many people have difficulties with. In our training courses this is always the start of a lively discussion because only a few people see how they can realize this without investing lots of time and money. We’ll see later in this book how we can deal with that and how LinkedIn can help us.

Remember that networking is a **long-term** game that **always involves 2 or more players**. You reap what you’ve sown. So start sowing (sharing) so you can reap more and faster!

Not knowing and applying the networking attitude is reason number one why people feel that LinkedIn doesn’t work for them. Because they are only focused on themselves they don’t receive help from other people and get frustrated with the lack of positive responses.

Fundamental Principle 2: The Golden Triangle of Networking

See the “full version” of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn”

Fundamental Principle 3: The Real Power of the Network is in the Second Degree

When people think about networking and how it can help them they think: I have to have the right people in my network. Your own network is called your first degree network (on LinkedIn you also see the number 1 next to the name of a person to whom you are connected yourself).

Thinking that the power of the network is in the first degree is one of the largest barriers for people to really achieve their goals.

The real power of the network is not in who you know, but in who they know. The real power of the network is in the second degree. There are many more opportunities there.

Of course you need the first degree to reach the second degree, so the first degree is still very important.

Understanding that the real power of networking is in the second degree also helps to deal with your network and the people you meet in a different way. You don't have to do business with them. You don't have to "sell" yourself to them.

If you understand that the power of the network is in the second degree you can have other kinds of conversations. You can take the time to get to know each other a little bit better and see how you can help each other towards each other's network.

How many people do you meet that you think: "No matter how nice this person is, I will never do business with him or her because we are in totally different industries, geographic areas or functions. Let's end this conversation as fast as I can so I can start talking to someone who is really interesting to me."

But you never know who they know. If you make time to have a longer conversation, ask them what or who they are looking for and share what your goals are, you might be very surprised.

Also by getting the "direct or hard selling" part out of the way (and this doesn't only apply to sales people but also to people looking for a new job or a new employee) with the person you are talking to, networking becomes more relaxed and more fun.

One of the biggest advantages of LinkedIn is that it helps to leverage this power of the second degree. What makes LinkedIn the fantastic tool it is, is that it shows you the network of your network. LinkedIn shows the second and third degree contacts together with ALL the connections you have with them

Understanding this concept and being able to apply it, will be the single most important success factor for you on LinkedIn. To help you really grasp this concept we will do a small exercise in the chapter "Experience the Power of LinkedIn"

Fundamental Principle 4: Quality and Diversity are both Important

See the “full version” of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn”

Fundamental Principle 5: Your “Know, Like and Trust” Factor

See the “full version” of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn”

The Challenge

By now you understand that starting from goals makes it lots easier to start (online) networking and to tap into the power of your network to get results. You also learned about the 5 fundamental principles behind networking.

The challenge now is to combine both. If you only focus on your goals and don't use the 5 fundamental principles it will be much harder to get results. You also will get many negative reactions if you only use your network, but don't reciprocate.

The consequence is that it will require some effort from you to help people and to make time to connect your contacts to each other. This might appear to some as time consuming. But if you start expanding your network with your goals in mind and use LinkedIn as a tool in the way it is described in this book, this strategy will get you results so much faster that you save much more time than you have to put into it.

Conclusion of this chapter

(Online) networking is the most powerful and free resource everybody has. To really get results, starting from a goal is key. Understanding and applying the fundamental principles of networking will make you succeed in both networking online, on the phone and in all your face-to-face contacts.

In the next chapters you will learn how to build a successful online networking strategy on LinkedIn on these 5 fundamental principles.

LinkedIn: What Is It and How Could I Benefit from It?

Since you bought this book chances are that you already have a Profile on LinkedIn and had at least some first experiences with this online business networking platform. Or you might be using LinkedIn on a regular basis and want to get more out of it.

For either type it is good to take a moment and look at what LinkedIn is and what it is not, what the single most important benefit of LinkedIn is and how it can improve your (business) life as well.

What is LinkedIn?

At the moment of writing (December 2008) LinkedIn is the largest online **business** network website worldwide with more than 32 million users and growing fast (the last year LinkedIn grew from 19 million users to 32 million, depending on when you read this book this might already have doubled or tripled again). There are people from all industries and a large variation of job titles and it is used by high level profiles (for example, executives of all Fortune 500 companies are members). The average age is 41, which makes it already from a demographic point of view different from Facebook, which is internationally the most used social networking website with more than 150 million users and an average age of 20 (in the USA MySpace is still the largest platform). LinkedIn is a platform to give you visibility, connect with others, help others and be helped by them.

Although some people think it is a sales tool, for me LinkedIn is a networking platform: it is a platform to start and maintain relationships. The consequence of building relationships might be a sale, but also a new job, finding a new employee, supplier, partner or expertise.

Some people don't agree with me (and I'm fine with that ☺). They have a sales or recruiting goal and they just use LinkedIn and other networking websites for that. And they have results. But not as much as they might have. By shortcutting fundamental principles 1, 2 and 5 (networking attitude, Golden Triangle of Networking and the know, like and trust factor) they lose many opportunities. They spend lots of time without getting the results they might have.

LinkedIn (and other tools) is also not more and certainly not less than that: a powerful tool to start and build relationships. A tool is something you use to support you, not a goal. When you see the amount of connections that some people have, you might have a different idea about that, but for me LinkedIn is only a tool, but a very powerful one.

It is also one of the many tools we have nowadays at our disposal in the whole Social Media spectrum. Other members of this "family" are blogs, wikis (Wikipedia), microblogging (Twitter), Photosharing (Flickr), Videosharing (Youtube) and social bookmarking (Delicious). What is interesting to see is that they all grow towards each other as well. LinkedIn started this integration in November 2008 when they launched Applications which allows, for example, to show your blog posts or slideshows in your Profile.

Erwin Van Lun, futurist and trend analyst, goes even a step further when describing LinkedIn:

“LinkedIn is an essential part of the new economy. LinkedIn is not just a handy website or a tool to leverage your business, communicate with other people or find contacts. No, LinkedIn shows the foundation of an open, networked system that arises when we have cleaned up the capitalistic, closed system. In such a world new companies help people as a virtual coach in several domains. LinkedIn specializes in the “work” domain.

This evolution in the new economy started with contacts, jobs and events. Then education, job orientation or mediation. When you project this to LinkedIn, you notice LinkedIn has just started. LinkedIn will evolve to a reliable companion in the whole work niche. Worldwide. LinkedIn is just at the beginning.”

Just like Erwin I’m very curious how LinkedIn is going to develop and how it can help us in our (business) lives even more than it does now. Watch Erwin’s blog for his view on LinkedIn and other trends: www.erwinvanlun.com

The single most important benefit of LinkedIn

For me the most powerful concept behind LinkedIn is that it **finds the right people AND the connections you have with them**. It makes the networks of the people we know visible. LinkedIn shows us our second and third degree networks and the paths towards them. This has tremendous value.

Why? Many people already have difficulty keeping track of their own (first degree) network. It is impossible to know who our network knows. LinkedIn makes this visible. This is extremely powerful especially if you start with the end or goal in mind. Many people make the “mistake” to only look in their own network when they are looking for someone to help them. In this way they are limiting themselves tremendously.

What if we start with defining the best person, find them and then find out via whom we can get introduced to them?

For example let’s suppose you are looking for a job at Coca Cola in your country (or you want to do business with them as a supplier or partner).

What most people then do is think of who they might know at Coca Cola. Then they can’t think of anyone and give up. Or they call the front desk, ask for the HR Manager and are stalled by the receptionist. Or the HR Manager says she is going to call back, but never does. Frustration!

Let’s now start with the goal in mind. You define the HR Manager as the person who can help you best reaching your goal (a job, a contract or expertise). Then you use LinkedIn and do a search with “HR Manager, Coca Cola, and your country”. The result is that you don’t only find the exact name of the person, but also the connections you share with this person.

When you then look at the mutual connections you have, you might discover that this person is connected with your neighbor. You didn't know this because Coca Cola never has come up in your conversations. He has never mentioned anything about it and you never told him that you were interested in working for or with Coca Cola. After discovering the connection on LinkedIn and talking to your neighbor about it, you find out that he has worked together with the HR Manager in the past. When he hears about your goal he agrees on writing an email to introduce you to the HR Manager. Five days later you are invited to have a talk with the HR Manager and land the job or contract.

Without LinkedIn you might never have known that they knew each other!

Of course not everybody is on LinkedIn yet, so you won't find every person or function you are looking for. However, LinkedIn is a website focused on business networking. What this means in practice is that we are able to find many people and access to most organizations. What we see in practice is that the majority of organizations are represented on LinkedIn (as already mentioned in the USA, all of the Fortune 500 companies have an executive level presence). Maybe you don't find the Marketing Manager of a company, but you might find the IT Manager. The Marketing Manager is only one step away from him. OK, it is some extra effort, but still lots easier than before LinkedIn existed.

An extra advantage of being connected with people on LinkedIn that many users have reported is that you always have their most up-to-date email address.

How could LinkedIn benefit you?

As already mentioned LinkedIn is a tool that supports the networking process. So it supports all the benefits we already mentioned in the previous chapter.

To make it more clear how it can benefit you in your specific role, let's start with summing up the benefits per "task". This will make it more clear to you how you, in your situation, can benefit from it.

In the next chapter you will be presented with a basic strategy that applies to everybody. In a later chapter you will get an advanced strategy geared towards each task separately.

Benefit / Task	Find New Customers	Find a Job or Internship	Find Suppliers or Partners	Find Employees	How does LinkedIn help with this?
Identifying the right people					Find their profile via search or browse.
Discovering information about ...					Reading their Profile before a meeting.
Maintaining relationship with ...	Prospects and customers	Recruiters or HR responsables	Suppliers or Partners	Candidates	Personal messages, sharing ideas in Discussions and answering questions in Answers.
Getting recommendations which are visible to everybody, but especially to ...					Recommendations.
Receiving introductions or referrals to ...	Prospects and other departments at current customer	Recruiters or HR responsables	Suppliers or Partners	Candidates	Via the introductions tool or outside LinkedIn (Email).

Benefit / Task	Find New Customers	Find a Job or Internship	Find Suppliers or Partners	Find Employees	How does LinkedIn help with this?
Discovering the relationships between ...	Customers, prospects and other contacts.	Recruiters, HR responsible and other contacts.	Suppliers or Partners and other contacts.	Candidates and other contacts.	Via the connections in their Profile.
	Your colleagues from the same and other departments and prospects*.	Your fellow students or job seekers and potential employers.	Your colleagues from the same and other departments and potential suppliers and partners.	Your colleagues from the same and other departments and potential employees.	
Visibility, Personal Branding and Online Reputation of ...	You as a sales (w/o)man and your company.	You	You and your company	You as a recruiter and your company	Your Profile not only on LinkedIn, but also in the Search Engines like Google, contributions in Answers and in Discussions.

Benefit/Task	Find New Customers	Find a Job or Internship	Find Suppliers or Partners	Find Employees	How does LinkedIn help with this?
Word of mouth publicity	People writing about you so your prospects might hear about you	People writing about you so your new employer might hear about you	People writing about you so potential suppliers or partners might hear about you	People writing about you so your candidates might hear about you	Receiving recommendations and people telling about you in Discussions, mention you as the expert in Answers or talking about you outside of LinkedIn
Getting notifications when someone changes jobs, this is a trigger to contact them to see if ...	You can be a supplier to the new organization and to get introduced to the one who will replace them at your current customer.	Their new job is recruiter or HR responsible or if (s)he is going to work for the organization you want to work for.	They can become a supplier or partner.	Someone suddenly qualifies for a job opening.	Via Network Updates.
Picking up trends in the marketplace via Discussions in Groups of ...	Customers and prospects Other sales people	Sector where you want to work in	Suppliers or Partners Your peers.	Candidates Other recruiters	Discussions.
Make yourself be perceived as an expert	You				Contributions in Discussions and Answers (can lead to Expert points).
Finding the Groups and organizations to be member of, both online and offline which are right for ...					Via Group Search and via the Profiles of people from your network

*: This might avoid painful situations when sales people from the same company call the same prospect or customer without knowing that their colleagues from the same or a different department are already in touch with them.

Extra benefits:

- **For sales:** Getting notifications via Network Updates when your customers link with sales reps from a company that offers the same products or services than yours. This might be a trigger to contact your customers again.
- **For job seekers:** LinkedIn offers extra tools to help you. For example, you can react very easily to job postings and use an extra job tool in your browser when surfing any website.
- **For recruiters:** LinkedIn offers extra tools to help you. For example to post a job on LinkedIn and to do a reference search.

Get your project or job more effectively and efficiently done

If the above topics don't apply to you, you have probably an "internal function". Or you may "wear several hats" and have an external and internal role at the same time.

Although many people who only have an internal function don't think networking in general and LinkedIn specifically is useful to them, LinkedIn can also bring many benefits to them. The most important one is that although many larger organizations have their own telephone and email directories, the information is very basic and limited to practical details. When people fill in their Profile on LinkedIn their colleagues might not only discover more about them, which allows better forming of teams, but also who is in their network.

As far as I know, there is no organization in the world which has that knowledge in an internal system. It is also very hard to do because they would have to ask every employee to list their connections and also update them when something changes. Since most people don't have enough time to do their normal work, this is the first thing they will stop doing. The basic principle behind LinkedIn and any other social or business network is that everybody updates their own profile. You can never make this work in an internal system.

A last remark is that people who get things done, get more visibility, get promoted faster and will be the last ones to get fired. Getting things done also means that the job needs to be done, not that you have to do everything yourself. Finding the right people is crucial in this new economy of specialists.

So if you have an “internal function”, LinkedIn can bring these benefits to you:

1. Getting answers to your questions (via Answers or Discussions)
2. Receiving introductions or referrals to colleagues. This is especially helpful when you are forming a team as a project leader or want to be part of a team in a large organization (via the introductions tool or outside LinkedIn via email or telephone)
3. Identifying the experts inside your company (finding their Profile via a search or via the Expert rating)
4. Visibility for your own strengths and expertise + Personal Branding or Online Reputation (your Profile, contributions in Answers and in Discussions)
5. Identifying the right colleagues in your own department, in other departments or in another state or country (finding their Profile)
6. Discovering the relationships between your colleagues from the same and other departments (see the connections in their Profiles)
7. Discovering information about colleagues which makes the conversations online and offline easier (reading their Profile)
8. Maintaining relationship with colleagues, especially when they are in offices in a different location (Personal contacts, Discussions in Groups and answering questions in Answers)
9. Make yourself be perceived as an expert (contributions in Answers and in Discussions and Expert points)
10. Word of mouth publicity (receiving Recommendations and people telling about you in Discussions, mention you as the expert in Answers or talking about you outside of LinkedIn)
11. Getting Recommendations (Recommendations written by other people which can't be modified by you on LinkedIn which makes them stronger)
12. Finding the right groups and organizations to be member of, both online and offline. For example, alumni groups, women's groups or colleagues with the same function (via the Profiles of people from your network)
13. Picking up trends in the marketplace (Discussions in the Groups of your peers)
14. Getting notifications when someone changes jobs, this is a trigger to contact them to see if they can be on your next team or you on theirs and to get introduced to the one who will replace them (via Network Updates)

Increase the amount of members of your (professional) organization

Many (professional) organizations have a hard time to keep their organization interesting enough for their members and are also continuously looking to attract new members.

Starting your own LinkedIn Group can both add to the value of the membership and attract more members in many ways:

1. An online presence next to events will help members to keep in touch between meetings.
2. Members who can't attend many meetings will still be able to contact each other.
3. The LinkedIn Group is an extra platform to help each other and to discuss trends.
4. Some potential members might have never heard of your organization. They can get in touch with you and become a member of your organization after finding the LinkedIn Group.
5. It is a good and free alternative to a forum on your own website. Many organizations have a hard time building a successful community because they don't have a critical mass of people who participate in discussions. As a result, people won't visit the forum anymore, the negative spiral continues and they also hardly ever visit the website anymore. Since people use LinkedIn to connect with other people and to build their network with other people than the members of your organization, they will keep using LinkedIn and once in a while visit the LinkedIn Group of your organization.
6. Free membership of the LinkedIn Group might generate interest in a (paid) membership for events.

Conclusion of this chapter

LinkedIn is a business network that has exponentially grown over the past few years. The single most important reason why to use LinkedIn is that it helps you not only find the people who can help you reach your goals, but also the mutual contacts who can introduce you to them.

LinkedIn offers many benefits for every profile: finding new customers, a new job, new employees, suppliers, partners, expertise internal or external to your company and other information to get your job done faster.

Among many other things LinkedIn helps with discovering relationships between people, getting access, introductions and referrals to the people you are looking for, getting answers to your questions, raising your visibility, finding the right groups to be a member of both on LinkedIn and in real life, getting notifications when someone changes jobs, discussing issues and picking up trends in the market place.

Also for people who run professional organizations or associations LinkedIn helps to stimulate the interaction between members and attract more members.

So now you know what LinkedIn can do for you, let's look at the features LinkedIn has.

LinkedIn: Functionality

See the “full version” of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” for this chapter.

How To Use LinkedIn: Basic Strategy

In this chapter we will go through a basic strategy to be successful at LinkedIn. This basic strategy is for everyone. In a next chapter we will focus on more advanced strategies geared to the different “tasks” we have discussed in the first chapter.

In this chapter we will focus on making a good Profile, how to build your network, how to make connections, how to build your visibility and what the added value of Groups is.

Although I have already mentioned that it is best to be logged in to LinkedIn while reading this book, this is especially true for this chapter.

Crafting a Good Profile

To be found by other people starts with having a good Profile. Also if you send invitations to other people your Profile is very important for others to decide whether or not they are going to connect with you.

Having a Profile, which contains the right information also, allows you to increase your visibility, which supports your personal branding and online reputation. This will make it easier to attract the right people to you.

It is also very important to know that a good Profile not only increases your visibility on LinkedIn, but also on the web. Google and other search engines also index part of the information on LinkedIn: from your Public Profile. Since LinkedIn has a large PageRank in Google (which means that LinkedIn is a very popular website) the Profiles will also appear very high in search results.

One remark before we start: some people have the tendency to look at their Profile from another point of view than it really happened (yes, I mean they lie 😊). Avoid doing that, people will find out and it will always be at the worst moment in time.

As a general rule: LinkedIn is a business networking website. The focus is on the business side of people (with also a small part for personal interests). More and more people use LinkedIn to look someone up before they have a meeting with them. This means that LinkedIn is the first professional impression someone has of you. So make your first impression a good one!

Let's look at what you can do to increase your Profile on LinkedIn and on the web.

1. **Your Name, Professional Headline, Location and Industry:**
 - a. **Name** if you want to be found by other people who know you, use the name you use in a professional environment. So no nick names.

- b. **Professional Headline:** describe your current function. If you want to be found by others on LinkedIn and on the web, use words that other people use to search people with a function like yours. If the title on your business card is Marcom Director, but people search with Vice President Marketing or Communication Manager, chances are small that you will be found.

The headline is very important because this is the first thing that people see when they do a search and what is shown when you answer a question in Answers or in a Discussion. In many cases the Headline will encourage or discourage people to click on your name to read your Profile.

- c. **Location:** Although you have to fill in your postal code, this is not shared with others on LinkedIn. For privacy reasons LinkedIn works with geographic areas instead of exact addresses.
 - d. **Primary industry of expertise:** fill this one to find colleagues in other companies in your industry and to be found by them. If your industry is missing in the list LinkedIn provides you with, you can suggest one.
2. **Your Profile Photo:** use a professional picture. Especially students tend to put holiday pictures on their LinkedIn Profile like they would do on Facebook. Since LinkedIn is a professional website it is better to have a “normal” picture. By the way, since there is not much space for your picture, just your head will be enough. Although it is not necessary to upload a picture, this makes it easier for others to remember you. For people who have never met you, a picture might give them more confidence that you are serious about networking on LinkedIn. So I would suggest that you upload a picture and make it visible for everybody who visits your Profile.
3. **Your Status:** tell other people what you are doing. This is comparable to Twitter or “What are you doing?” on Facebook or other websites. You have 100 characters for the text. This is also called microblogging.
- If you fill something in other members of LinkedIn will be notified, depending on your own “Profile and Update settings” in the “Privacy Settings” part of the “Account & Settings” page. It also depends on whether the people you allow to see these updates have included these updates on their “Home Page” settings on their “Account & Settings” page.
4. **Public Profile:**
- a. **Your Public Profile URL:** personalize your LinkedIn Profile page by using your name in the URL. This will boost your online presence on the web: when someone searches on your name in Google, Yahoo, MSN Live Search or another search engine your LinkedIn page will be in the top rankings. The URL’s are unique so be the first to have a LinkedIn URL with your name.
 - b. You can also choose which details of your Profile are visible to people who are not logged in to LinkedIn. This means: when someone does a search on the web with your name and finds your LinkedIn page, which details do you allow them to see?

5. **Summary:**

- a. **Professional Experience and Goals:** free text. If you write more than two lines, make it more pleasant to the eye to read it. Use, for example, bullets or dashes. Also don't put too much text here because people won't read it. Focus on the results you have obtained, not on the task you did. This will appeal much more to the reader. This is also a good spot to share what you can offer people without expecting anything in return. For example, in my Profile I share that the visitor of my Profile can subscribe to a free networking e-course on the website of Networking Coach (www.networking-coach.com)
If you talk about yourself, use "I" and not "He" or "She". The latter puts people off. You don't talk about yourself in the "He" or "She" form when you have a normal conversation with someone. Think of your Profile as a "virtual you" who responds on your behalf to the questions "What do you do? What is your expertise? What do you have to offer?" when someone visits the page.
- b. **Specialties in Your Industries of Expertise:** this is the place to share the skills and knowledge you have accumulated in all the jobs you have done. This is the place to share what your expertise is. If you have a certification like Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer, this is the place to mention it. Also use the abbreviation if it is used a lot. In this example that would be MCSE.

6. **Experience:** here you can list all the organizations you have worked for. Always be sure to add a title and the right time period. This will help other people to find you and it will help you to find old colleagues back. Make sure you fill this in because we are going to need it to build your network. It is also a good idea to add one or more specific results for this work experience if you haven't done this in the summary.

7. **Education:** list the schools you went to in order to find old classmates and people who went to the same school. Even if there is 10 years in between, having studied at the same school or university or having belonged to the same student union, creates an instant bond between two people. Depending on their experiences this might be a weak or a strong bond, but it is something you have in common which makes conversations online and offline easier. Make sure you fill this in because we are going to need it to build your network.

8. **Additional information:**

- a. **Websites:** visibility tip: use the "other" option and then give your own description. Why? Because this helps for the search engine rankings of your own websites. Search engine rankings take into account links from other websites (in this case LinkedIn), the PageRank of these websites (in the case of LinkedIn it is 8 which is very high) and also the words that are used in the description. For example, instead of using "My Company" I have used "Other" in my Profile. Then I put in the name Networking Coach and the URL www.networking-coach.com. When someone searches in Google with the words networking coach this small tweak in LinkedIn will help to get a

higher ranking (actually this is one of the techniques that allowed us to be number one in Google worldwide for the words networking coach).

- b. **Interests:** list some of your personal interests here. Next to the professional information that is already abundantly present in your Profile personal interests and hobbies help other people to get a better image of you as a whole person. Many times common interests are found in this small box, which make online and offline conversations much easier.
 - c. **Groups and Associations:** list here which groups and associations you belong to. Don't confuse this with the Groups on LinkedIn. List here all the associations and clubs you are a member of outside LinkedIn. Of course some of these organizations will also have an online presence on LinkedIn, but the LinkedIn Groups you belong to are automatically added to your Profile.
 - d. **Honors and awards:** if you have received awards or honors that are relevant for your Profile, list them here. If they help other people to have a better picture of who you are as a person or which expertise you have, list them. Otherwise it is better not to mention them because it might confuse people.
9. **Contact settings:** this is a link to this item on the Account & Settings page.
10. **Applications:** you can choose to add some applications to your Profile like your blog or a Slideshare presentation.

One general tip for all fields: if you want to be found on LinkedIn, use the words people will use when they look for your expertise or the things you might have in common. Use synonyms (for example, Marketing Manager in your title and Marketing Director in the description) and both abbreviations and full names (for example, UCLA and University of California, Los Angeles).

If you are not sure what exactly to write down: LinkedIn offers examples for most parts of the Profile. It is also a good idea to look at other people's Profiles. Use the ones you like the best as a model for your own. It is also always a good idea to ask someone else's opinion about your Profile. Some things are so obvious to us that we forget to mention them or we don't see them as skills or strengths. Other people might help you to look at it more objectively.

An extra tip is to use the Google Keyword tool to find more synonyms or suggestion for alternative words. This tool is primarily used for Google ads, but you can also use it to find the right words for your Profile. This free tool can be found at: <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal> (or use search on "Google Keyword Tool"). One remark: don't overdo it. Don't stuff your Profile with keywords. People still need to be able to read it.

How to build your network ... Fast

In my network book, "Let's Connect!" I wrote about the 6 degrees of proximity (better known as the theory of the 6 degrees of separation): we live indeed in a small world. LinkedIn helps us to discover these links by presenting us ALL the mutual contacts and is hence a super powerful tool.

The only disadvantage is that LinkedIn only shows the network till the third degree. Fourth degrees and further are not in your LinkedIn network anymore.

To really benefit from the enormous power of LinkedIn it is necessary to build our own first degree network. The real power of the network is in the second degree, but to be able to reach second and third degrees we need first degree contacts first.

So let's look at a strategy on how to build a network on LinkedIn. And moreover how we can build it fast.

Phase 1: Lay the Foundation of your Network

1. **Upload your contacts from Outlook, webmail like Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or AOL or other address books.** You can do this via the green "Add Connections" button in the menu on the left on every page and then click on the "Import Contact" tab.

When you upload these contacts they are only visible to you. There is also no message sent by LinkedIn.

Remark: this is what you need to do when you get a processing error when you use Vista and Internet Explorer 7 (from the LinkedIn Help pages):

Security settings on Internet Explorer 7 running on Windows Vista may cause you to receive the following error: 'There was an error processing your request'. To upload your contacts you will need to modify your Security settings.

- *Open Internet Explorer 7.*
- *Go to 'Tools' and choose 'Internet Options'.*
- *Select the 'Security' tab.*
- *Select the 'Internet' zone.*
- *Disable/uncheck the checkbox called 'Enable Protected Mode'.*

- Click 'Apply', then 'OK' until you exit this dialog.
- Restart IE 7 - The status bar at the bottom should now state 'Internet | Protected Mode: Off'.
- Retry uploading your contacts to LinkedIn.

2. **Look at the contacts, which are now available in "Imported Contacts"** (under "Contacts" in the menu on the left on every page). The people who are already on LinkedIn have a small blue icon with the letters "In". Since they are already using LinkedIn they will be open for a connection with you.

Select the people who are already on LinkedIn and who you know (with some people you may have just exchanged business cards with them 10 years ago which decreases the chance that they will remember you and you them in some cases). If you have lots of people in your address book this might take a while and several pages to go through. If this is the case for you, you can divide this group in several smaller ones. The people you have selected will appear on the right hand side.

3. **Write a semi-personal message to them.** First check "Add a personal note to your invitation". Then replace the standard "Hi, I'd like to add you to my network" message with a semi-personal one. You can't make it too personal when you use this method because you have selected several people. To give you an idea what this might look like, this is an example of a message that I used recently:

I see you are a member of LinkedIn as well.

Let's Connect! :-)

By the way did you know that the "Group" functionality has improved a lot with the "Discussions"?

In the meanwhile there are already many Groups in different sectors and professions.

It's definitely worth your while to find out which Groups are interesting to you.

Have a great networking day!

Jan

A few remarks:

- **You don't see any name at the beginning of the message.** The reason is that LinkedIn automatically adds the first name of the person to the message. Since there is no preview function, this is something that only a few people know!

- You see that my **message in itself is not personal, but I make it less a mass mail by adding a tip**. I got many good reactions after connecting with people using this message. Many people told me they hadn't really looked into the Groups functionality. This tip doesn't have to be related to LinkedIn. If you connect with people with the same function you might share a trend or the link to an interesting article. It doesn't have to be much, but the recipient must perceive it as valuable (more tips about what you can offer to other people can be found in my book, "Let's Connect!"). Always add something extra to the invitations you send to people. Remember, this is an extra contact moment with someone. The better you do this, the faster you can get results. People who have received the invitation with the tip might remember you and might get back in touch with you to see if you can work together in one way or the other.
- If you have a large address book you want to split it into more groups. At the same time **you don't want to type your message again and again**. Of course, you can use notepad or Word to store your text and do copy/paste. However, there is also another tool that you can use for many repeating tasks, which can help you with this. It is called "Texter". Read more in the chapter "Free Tools to save you time when working with LinkedIn".

After doing these 3 steps people will respond to you. They will accept your invitation and your network will start to grow.

Phase 2: A Second Layer for your Network.

While you are waiting for people to accept the invitations you have sent in phase 1, you can add more people to your network. Again we first focus on the people who are already on LinkedIn because they will be more open to accept your invitation.

We will use the tools LinkedIn provides for retrieving colleagues and classmates. Since LinkedIn works with the information in your Profile it is important that you have filled in the companies you have worked for and the schools and universities you went to.

Let's start with current and past colleagues.

1. **Look for current and past colleagues.** You can do this via the green "Add Connections" button in the menu on the left on every page and then click on the "Colleagues" tab. You will see all the companies that you have listed yourself in your Profile. You will also see how many people from each company are already LinkedIn members.
2. **Click on a company** you are working for or have worked for. You will get a list of people you might know. Select the people you actually know.

3. Write a **personal message** to them if you are going to invite them one by one or write a **semi-personal message** like the one in step 3 of phase 1.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for every company.

In this way your network grows with current and past colleagues.

Now we are going to do the same for the people you studied with (or are studying with). While you might have fewer contacts or current interests on a professional or personal level with them, old classmates might be very valuable for your network. Remember the fundamental principle of the weak ties and the importance of a diverse network.

1. **Look for classmates.** You can do this via the green “Add Connections” button in the menu on the left on every page and then click on the “Classmates” tab.
You will see all the schools that you have listed yourself in your Profile.
2. **Click on a school.** You will get a list of people you might know. Select the people you actually know. You can only select one classmate at the time.
3. Write a **personal message** to them.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for every classmate of that same school.
5. Repeat steps 2, 3 and 4 for every school you studied at.

In this way your network grows with current and past classmates.

Phase 3: The Third Layer of your Network

The next step you can take is inviting people you know, but who are not on LinkedIn. Now it is very important to avoid the standard invitation message. Why? Because these people might never have heard of LinkedIn. When they get an email from the LinkedIn mail server with an impersonal message from you they might think it is SPAM and delete the message. And that’s not the action you want them to take!

How do we do this?

Again we are going to use the tools LinkedIn provides.

Since you already imported your Outlook or Webmail address book in phase 1, we are going to start from there.

1. Go to the “**Imported Contacts**” under “Contacts”.
2. **Select the people** you want to invite.

3. Write a **personal message** to them if you want to invite them one by one or write a **semi-personal message** if you want to invite a group of people at once. First check “Add a personal note to your invitation”. Then replace the standard “Hi, I’d like to add you to my network” message with a personal or semi-personal one. This is an example of a semi-personal one:

*Have you already heard of the LinkedIn website?
I’m now a user for a week and already was able to reconnect with people from my professional network and also with old classmates. One of the advantages of LinkedIn is that it helps to keep in touch with your network even if they change jobs or move to another country.*

I would like to invite you to also join. It is free so that is already a barrier less 😊

Whether you join or not, drop me a message to let me know how you are doing.

Jan

Of course you can change this message depending on the background of the people you send this message to. For example, you can select a group of old colleagues from company ABC and refer to particular things or people in that company. It is also a good idea to change the message when you invite suppliers or customers.

Since most standard invitation messages (and also the example I just gave you, but in a lesser extent) might feel like a sales pitch, you might also include an offer to help them set up a Profile by taking a few minutes and talking them through it via the phone.

An alternative for using the imported contacts is to invite people manually. These are the steps to take:

1. Click on the green “Add Connections” button. You will automatically land on the “**Invite Contacts**” page.
2. **Fill in the first name, last name and email address** of the people you want to invite. You can invite maximum 6 people at the same time.
3. See step 3 above.

A third way to invite people is from within Outlook.

LinkedIn provides a toolbar for Outlook that can be downloaded for free from the LinkedIn website (look at the bottom of the page). When you have installed this toolbar a small icon “Info” appears in every email. When you right-click with your mouse on this icon you have the option to invite this person if he is not in your LinkedIn network yet. Interesting fact is that this toolbar comes with a set

of different invitation templates while on the website there is only one invitation message. More about this toolbar in the chapter “Free Tools to save you time when working with LinkedIn”.

Phase 4: Grow your Network Passively

In the first three phases you took action to invite other people by sending them an invitation message. In phase 4 you will set up some tools that will passively invite people to connect with you, which means you set them up once and then don't have to invest time in them anymore.

1. Mention your LinkedIn Profile in your email signature. How?
 - a. Scroll to the bottom of a page on LinkedIn. Next to “Tools” click on “Overview”.
 - b. In the middle of the page, you see “Email signature”. Click on the “Try it now” button.
 - c. Create your LinkedIn email signature.
2. Mention you LinkedIn Profile on your website or blog.
 - a. Click on “Edit Profile” in the left hand menu
 - b. Click on “Edit Public Profile Settings” on top at the right hand side
 - c. Click on “Promote your Profile with customized buttons” (approximately 4th line, this one is hidden well)
 - d. Choose the button and code you want to use on your website or blog.

When you are going to use these email signatures and buttons some people will click on it and invite you to connect with them. In this way THEY take action not you, that's why I call phase 4 a passive phase.

By going through the first 3 phases you will lay the foundation of your network. Over time phase 4 will bring you more connections.

One of the mistakes I see people make the most in networking is that they only start to build their network when they need it: when they are looking for a new job or when they need new customers. The danger of doing that is that you will definitely need some time to build your network and you may not have this time. An even greater danger is that you will contact people out of a need. In such a situation it is hard to network without expecting something immediately in return. People will feel that. As a consequence, many will be reluctant to connect with you and make introductions for you.

So avoid that situation and start building your network right now!

In a next chapter you will get some extra advanced strategies for further expanding your network. Start now to build the foundation of your network.

What you will experience is that your network will expand automatically. Other LinkedIn members will find you and invite you to connect with them. People from your network will also discover LinkedIn, become a member and then invite you to connect. Another interesting fact is that the larger your network grows, the more people will be interested in connecting with you. Even people you don't know. How to deal with them will be discussed in the chapter "Hot Discussion Topics and Burning Questions".

The Added Value of Groups

As I already mentioned in the introduction of this book, the trigger that caused me to actually write this book is the Group functionality that has improved a lot the last few months.

Why is that?

Before the Discussions function was added to the Groups, LinkedIn was primarily a directory of people with the links between them. The Answers functionality brought more interaction on the website, but since the introduction of the Discussions function LinkedIn is going towards a real community where people can help each other and receive help from each other.

The building of relationships resides in the actions between the members, not in the fact that their Profiles are linked to each other. Discussions and the sharing of News makes this not only lots easier, but it gives the opportunity to tap into the power of Groups: 2 know more than 1, 3 more than 2 and so on.

Become a member

Interactions in Groups are also more intuitive than the Answers functionality. People are used to coming together in clubs and associations in real life. Sharing ideas is also one of the first things the Internet was used for.

So I encourage you to become a member of one or more Groups or start one yourself. Once you are member these are the benefits of belonging to one:

- By asking questions in the Discussions-forum you are able to **receive help from the other members**.
- **You can see the Profiles of the other members**. This gives you direct access to additional people who might not be in your first, second or third degree network.

- **You can contact other members directly.** Many people don't allow to be contacted directly (they disable that option in their Account & Settings). However, the standard option in every Group is that members can contact each other directly. Almost nobody knows this option can be turned off.
- **By answering questions in the Discussions-forum you not only gain visibility, but you also have the opportunity to show your expertise.** As a consequence, your "Know, Like and Trust" factor increases. When you answer questions, make sure you give good answers and don't make it a sales pitch.
- **By sharing articles in News you also raise your visibility.** Again don't make it a sales pitch. It is OK to share links to your own website, blog or article that features you as long as it gives other people more insights or helps them in some way.
- **When responding to a question in the Discussions you can add the URL of your website.** This gives your website more visibility and helps to boost your ranking in Google and other search engines. However, don't overdo it. One, maximum two lines.
- **Some extra advantages of being a member of a Group which also organizes meetings where the members can meet each other face to face:**
 - You can ask who else is going so you can make a decision if it is worthwhile for you. You can also make arrangements to meet other people there. This helps a lot when you are not comfortable in new environments.
 - If you have never been to a meeting, you can ask about the past experiences of other members and which expectations you can have
 - You can make arrangements to car pool so you don't only save some money and are friendly to the environment, but also can maximize your networking time.
 - Tips about how to prepare for live networking events, what to do when you are there and how to follow up, can be found on the networking CD, "Let's Connect at an Event".

I strongly encourage you to become a member of one or more Groups. I also encourage you to be an active member: help people and share insights. This will make you more attractive for other people. They will make contact with you and consult you in your area of expertise, whatever that may be.

The biggest question for many people remains: which Groups do I have to join? In the next chapter with Advanced Strategies I will go deeper into detail because it depends on your Profile.

For now I can share these tips because they apply to everybody:

- Alumni groups of schools (former students)
- Alumni groups of companies (former employees and many times also current employees)
- Groups of the organization you work for

- Groups of organizations you belong to in the real world

How to find a Group on LinkedIn?

1. In the left hand menu, click “Groups”
2. Then click on the menu item “Groups Directory” (at the top of the new page) or click on the right hand side on the button “Find a Group”.
3. Then use the search box in the new button. You can refine your search with the type of Group you are looking for or the language.

Some people browse rather than search. LinkedIn doesn’t offer that function. An alternative is the list that Jacco Valkenburg, author of “Recruitment via LinkedIn”, offers on his website <http://www.recruitmentvialinkedin.com>

Note: when joining Groups keep in mind that you can be a member of a maximum of 50 Groups.

Become a Group Manager

And why not create your own Group? As a Group owner you have a special status, which raises your visibility. However, do this only if you have enough time to spend on managing a Group. This means inviting people to the Group, accepting Join Requests and most importantly keeping the conversation going. You have to post questions and answers to questions. Although this might scare you, there is also good news: you don’t have to do this alone. Up to 10 people can be the manager of a Group.

See the chapter for Advanced Strategies for Organizers and Group Managers for many more tips.

Maintaining Relationships

LinkedIn is not only a great tool to find people, but also to maintain your relationships. These are some actions you might take on LinkedIn (next to the many other things you can do via email, telephone or when you meet them):

- Introduce two of your LinkedIn contacts to each other. By far the best networking action you can do. It doesn’t cost you any money and just a very small amount of time. The results for your contacts might be huge.
- Write a Recommendation for your contacts.
- Suggest one of your contacts as an expert in Answers.
- Refer to one of your contacts as an expert in a Discussion in one of your LinkedIn Groups.
- Suggest interesting LinkedIn Groups to your contacts.

- Notify your contacts when there is a question (in Answers or in a Discussion) in their area of expertise.
- Notify your contacts of interesting events that are posted on LinkedIn or somewhere else. By posting this in a Discussion in a Group you can notify more people at once and increase your own visibility.
- When you see in the Updates that someone got promoted or changed position, this is a good trigger to congratulate her.

Note: a feature that is at the time of writing still in beta phase is the notes in the Profiles of your first degree connections. When you are looking at someone's Profile, scroll down and at the right hand side you will see a box titled "Your private info about *name*". You can add some notes here or click below on "Add/view contact details" and add some more details. In other words, LinkedIn is adding some CRM (Contact Relationship Management) functionality here.

I'm not inclined to transfer all the contact details and extra information I have to LinkedIn and only rely on LinkedIn as my contact system. Why? Because your contacts might delete their Profile or disconnect from you. And then you lose all your information.

Raising your Visibility and Credibility with Answers

I just explained that the value of the Groups functionality is in the interactions between people. Before the Discussions function was introduced, there was already another tool that stimulated interaction: the Answers.

Actually the concept is pretty simple. Some people ask questions and others answer them.

Again this allows you to receive help from the network on the one hand and raise your visibility and credibility on the other hand.

Just by answering questions you will be on other people's radar.

When responding to a question you can also add the URL of your website. This gives your website more visibility and helps to boost your ranking in Google and other search engines. However, don't overdo it. One, maximum two lines.

If they really think you are an expert in your field of expertise, they will give you expert points. These points are awarded by the person asking a question to the person they thought gave the best answer.

Once you have gained some expert points you will also be listed in the experts directory, which raises your Profile even more. How many points you need to be in that list depends on the category. In some categories there are only few questions and also only a few people who answer them. It is easier to get in the expert list of that category. But since there are not so many questions your visibility as an expert will be limited.

Does that mean you shouldn't put in any effort? No, it is not about the expert points, but about genuinely helping other people and sharing good tips. By doing this you will be perceived as an expert.

However, since the categories are open for everybody and worldwide, this might not be the place you want to focus your attention and time on. Answering questions in the Groups that you have chosen gives you much faster visibility and more credibility. However, in Groups you can't earn expert points (you won't get expert points in private messages, only in public ones).

The advantage of Answers on the other hand is that all the answers are stored and visible for everybody months after you have answered a question. So this is another way of passively raising your visibility and credibility. Answers in Groups are not searchable and can only be browsed by people who are a member of that Group.

Note: if you ask a question yourself whether in Answers or in a Group, people appreciate knowing what you did with the input you got. So take the time to react.

Conclusion of this chapter

In this chapter you have gone through a basic strategy so you know how to use LinkedIn and to make LinkedIn work for you.

After you crafted your profile you have built your network in 4 phases: importing your contacts, contacting current and old colleagues and classmates, inviting your contacts who are not a LinkedIn member yet and making a LinkedIn signature or banner.

Then you learned the added value of Groups both as a member and Group Manager, how to maintain relationships using LinkedIn and how to raise your visibility and credibility using Answers.

Now let's turn to the next chapter to understand more deeply how to tap into the power of our network and how to use LinkedIn as the tool to accomplish that. This will be the foundation for the advanced strategies.

Experience the Power of LinkedIn

One of the most frequently asked questions in our networking and referral training courses is: “Which groups, associations and organizations do I have to be a member of?” and also “Where do I start with networking? How can I tap into the power of my network?”

Most of us grow our online and offline networks rather accidentally: we start working for a certain employer and meet colleagues, customers, suppliers and partners. We go to a conference and meet other participants. We attend a seminar or training course and meet new people. We become a member of an organization and meet other members.

Most of these encounters between people are rather random and are a consequence of being at the same spot or in the same situation. This is important in networking, especially to get new ideas and new perspectives.

On the other hand many people complain about the lack of a work-life balance. They tell us they can't spend another evening from home to attend another reception, conference or another networking event. Or they tell us that they actually don't have time to join LinkedIn or other networking websites. But they still do because other people tell them they have to do it or share success stories. However, they only feel like it is a waste of their time.

When I ask them “When attending a networking event or joining a Group on LinkedIn, how does that relate to your goals?” almost all of them remain silent. Why? Because they have never REALLY given thought to their goals.

And that is the clue to successful networking: starting from your goals and then making decisions which online and offline groups and associations to join.

For some people this approach might seem very goal oriented which takes the fun and spontaneity out of the interactions between people.

At first sight that might be the case, but actually starting from your goals will allow you to be more spontaneous to other people. Since you know who might help you, you can lower your expectations of your conversations with all other people. This gives more room for spontaneous conversations.

This chapter is divided in three segments. First we are going to do the GAIN exercise as a preparation for the second and third segment. In that second segment you will receive insights in the one super tool that leverages LinkedIn, the Magic Email. In the third part you will experience where the real power of LinkedIn resides.

See the “full version” of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” for the rest of this chapter.

LinkedIn Advanced Strategies

Next to the basic strategy the “full version” of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” contains advanced strategies. They have been put together around the types of questions people are having or the “tasks” they have to do. These are the topics:

- 9 advanced strategies for finding new customers.
- 11 advanced strategies for finding new employees.
- 12 advanced strategies for finding a new job (or internship).
- 10 advanced strategies for finding a new supplier, partner or expert.
- 9 advanced strategies for finding internal or external expertise.
- 9 advanced strategies for getting more value from your referral or network club membership.
- 12 advanced strategies for organizations or group managers to increase the membership value and increase the amount of members of a (professional) organization.

See the “full version” of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” for this chapter.

Answers to Hot Discussion Topics and Burning Questions

Since we receive lots of questions about following or not following certain strategies, I have listed in this chapter some of the topics that always lead to discussions. You will also get answers to frequently asked questions.

Sometimes I will give you direct advice; sometimes I will just show you both sides of a discussion.

Not everybody is on LinkedIn so it doesn't work

A comment we hear often is: "Not every person or every function is on LinkedIn. I can't always find the right person. LinkedIn doesn't work for me." It is right that not everybody is a member of LinkedIn. But the network is growing VERY fast. From 19 million to 32 million users worldwide in one year (2008) is a fast growing pace. So maybe the person you are looking for was not on LinkedIn yesterday, but signed up today.

Let's also look at it from another perspective: a few years ago, when LinkedIn didn't exist, it was almost impossible to find the paths between people. Or it cost lots of time. Now LinkedIn makes it a lot easier. And if you don't find the person you are looking for, what keeps you from doing it "the old way"?

I repeat what I wrote before. Despite the fact that not every person is on LinkedIn, it is a website for business networking. What we see in practice is that the majority of organizations are represented on LinkedIn (In the USA, all of the Fortune 500 companies have an executive level presence). Maybe you won't find the Marketing Manager of a company, but you might find the IT Manager. The Marketing Manager is only one step away from him. OK, it is some extra effort, but still lots easier than before LinkedIn existed.

No one has contacted me yet. So LinkedIn is a useless business tool.

On the contrary! LinkedIn is a super tool, which helps you to find the people who are in the best position to help you reach your goals, whatever they may be.

However, many people think that if they make a Profile other people will contact them. When I ask the people who complain about this if they ever contacted someone themselves almost all of them remain silent.

Does that mean that LinkedIn doesn't work? No! If you use the strategies explained in this book to proactively use LinkedIn, it can quickly bring you new customers, a new job, new employees, suppliers, partners, expertise,...

Remember that if you want to see some results, you are responsible for them. You have to take action. And LinkedIn is a great tool to support you.

I am happy with my current professional situation, why should I build a network on LinkedIn (or elsewhere)?

Let me start by answering you don't have to do anything. All the tips in this book are suggestions and tips that are derived from my experience with giving hundreds of training courses and presentations about networking or referrals and from using LinkedIn myself.

So why build a network on LinkedIn? For starters almost everybody needs some expert advice once in a while or new connections inside or outside a company. LinkedIn helps you to find these experts and the people who can introduce you to them. So that is one reason.

The second and maybe even more important reason is that I see too many people only start building their network when it is too late. People who got unexpectedly fired and needed to find a new job suddenly realized they needed a network to help them. Then they get on LinkedIn and start building their network, which takes time. Many times time they don't have.

The same applies to entrepreneurs. I meet so many people who have a great idea, leave their job, start a company, invest a lot of money and after a few months they realize they also need customers. And a lot. And fast. Why? Because the monthly costs and investments are high. Then they realize they need to start building their network while they should have done that months ago.

In these two examples they start building the network when they NEED it URGENTLY. This creates an energy of despair, which turns people off instead of making them interested to help you.

So start building your network before you actually need it. You can then interact in a normal way with the networking attitude of sharing without expecting anything immediately in return.

Why would I use LinkedIn if I can use Google to find information?

Google is an excellent resource to find information. So use it when you look for **information**.

LinkedIn is a collection of people and the relationships between them. Use LinkedIn when you are looking for a **person**.

For more opinions about hot discussion topics and burning questions: see the “full version” of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn”.

These are the other topics:

- People with thousands connections
- Block access to LinkedIn for employees?
- Hide or show my connections?
- When should I start building my network?
- How much time do I have to spend on LinkedIn?
- Can I only connect with people I know very well? If I connect with others I can't recommend them.
- When is a relationship good enough to send someone an invitation? And how to do that?
- I have many contacts from years ago. Can I still contact them?
- What to do with an invitation from someone I don't know very well?
- How to deal with invitations from people I don't know at all (or think I don't know)?
- How to deal with requests for recommendations from people I don't really know?
- How do I ask a question to my whole network?
- Do I need to upgrade my membership?
- If only a few people pay for their membership, where does LinkedIn get their money from?
- What is the number of connections I need to make LinkedIn work for me?
- Why use a Group on LinkedIn instead of the Yahoo or PHP forums?
- Should I put my email address in my name?
- What is the value of Recommendations?

Little known, but interesting features and behavior of LinkedIn

LinkedIn has many small and big features, which are not generally known. Or at least not many people know how they really work.

This chapter will give you more insights in those sometimes hidden gems, sometimes seemingly obvious options.

LinkedIn is a three degree network

It is important to know that LinkedIn considers only your first three degrees as your network. People you are connected with in the fourth degree or higher will appear as “out of your network”. In one way this makes sense because the more degrees in between, the less personal the connections are and the harder it gets to reach them.

If you still want to reach people who are not in your network, become a member of a Group they are also a member of. Then you can contact them directly (if they didn’t change the standard Group settings; what most people don’t do).

Hidden connections can still be found

On the “Account & Settings” page under “Privacy Settings/Connections Browse” you can turn off the option that other people can browse through your network from your Profile.

However, if you use the search function and find someone who is in the network of a contact who has turned the “Connections Browse” off, both will still appear in the list.

Direct contact still possible despite invitation filtering

On the “Account & Settings” page under “Email notifications/Invitation filtering” you can choose who is allowed to contact you:

1. All invitations (default).
2. Only invitations from people who know my email address or appear in my “Imported Contacts” list.

3. Only invitations from people who appear in my “Imported Contacts” list.

Some people choose option 2 or 3 so they will receive only invitations and messages from people they know.

However, they still can receive messages from people they don’t know. From whom? From the members of the Groups they are a member of.

There is also an option to turn off to receive messages from other members, but standard this option is “on”. You also have to change that for every Group you are a member of.

If you want to do that, go to “Groups”, choose a Group, then under the tab “Settings” check off the Member Messages box “Allow members of this Group to send me messages via LinkedIn “.

You have lots of controls over the emails you receive through LinkedIn and your overall user experience

LinkedIn offers many options whether to receive invitations from people or not, to receive daily or weekly emails, or to personalize your Home Page,...

The majority of these settings can be found at:

- Account & Settings page: see Chapter LinkedIn Functionality
- Home Page: see Chapter LinkedIn Functionality
- Settings page of a Group: Select a Group and then the tab “Settings”

Send invitations from Outlook

Most people use the LinkedIn website to send invitations to other people. This is also possible from within Outlook.

To be able to do that you have to download the free Outlook Toolbar which can be found at the bottom of every page under “Tools”.

Once you have installed the Outlook Toolbar, in every email you see a small “Info” icon on the right hand side.

When you move your mouse over the icon, you have the possibility to “invite” the person (if he is not in your network on LinkedIn yet) or “keep in touch” (you get a reminder if you haven’t emailed with this person in 60 days).

LinkedIn helps to increase the ranking of your websites in search engines

Without making it too technical: websites get better rankings if they get links from popular websites. So what you need to do in your Profile is list one, two or three of your websites.

To increase the chances for a high ranking put the words you want to be found with, in the name of the description. How to do this? Choose “Other” and then give the website the name you want it to have. This doesn’t have to be the official name of the website. So you can use keywords you want to be found with. Always make sure that it is still readable.

Apply this same tactic on all the other online business and social networks you are a member of.

For the other little known, but important features of LinkedIn, see the “full version” of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn”.

These are the other topics:

- Everybody in the chain can read every message of an introduction
- Name is automatically included when sending invitations to imported contacts
- Groups can help you raise your visibility
- Amount of Groups you can join is limited
- Groups have an initial limit of 1000 members
- Abusing Answers might block you from being able to ask questions ever again
- How to become an “expert”
- Where can I find the invitations and messages I have sent and received?
- What will happen when I remove a connection? Will he be notified?
- Can I download the contact details of my connections?
- What happens when I choose “I Don’t Know This Person” when I receive an invitation?
- Most of the times I can’t see the name of the person “Who viewed my profile”
- How did I get two (or more) accounts on LinkedIn?

- What happens with my contacts when I import them? Can everybody see them?
- How can I add my event to the Events list?
- How do I change who can contact me?
- Why are some posts in Discussions higher than others?
- Why does LinkedIn work with a (confusing) area designation instead of the town my company is situated?

Free Tools To Save You Time When Working With LinkedIn

Many people don't want to work with LinkedIn or another online network because they don't have time to do it.

I hope that you understand by now the tremendous value of LinkedIn. And also that it doesn't take that much of your time. Of course there are the initial steps to build your network. But afterwards you can reap the rewards by finding the right people very fast.

However, when you receive many messages and are building a huge network, some extra tools that can help you do more in less time are more than welcome.

In this chapter I will show you some of the tools that LinkedIn offers and also some other tools that will make your online networking life much easier. All tools mentioned in this chapter are free.

LinkedIn Tools

LinkedIn Outlook Toolbar

Download the free Outlook Toolbar, which can be found at the bottom of every page under "Tools".

Once you have installed the Outlook Toolbar, you get these extra features in Outlook:

- **Dashboard Button:** overview of actions
- **Grab Button:** when you select the email signature of someone and then click on the "Grab" button a new contact card is automatically created with the details of the signature automatically filled in. Some remarks for this function:
 - Street, town, state and country data are not always retrieved. For the other contact details this works almost always perfect!
 - Can be used from within the preview pane and from within an opened email.
 - To change the folder where the new contact cards are saved: click "Dashboard", "Preferences" and then "General".
- **Search bar:** search in LinkedIn from within Outlook. The LinkedIn website will then show the results in Outlook.
- **"Info" icon in emails:** when you move your mouse over the icon, you have the possibility to "invite" the person (if he is not in your network on LinkedIn yet) or "keep in touch" (you get a reminder if you haven't emailed with this person in 60 days).

LinkedIn Browser Toolbar

Download the free Internet Explorer or Firefox Toolbar, which can be found at the bottom of every page under “Tools”.

After installing the Toolbar these are the tools that are available in the browser:

- **Search bar:** search in LinkedIn from the toolbar (so you don’t have to go to the website).
- **Bookmarks:** after you have bookmarked some Profiles on LinkedIn, you can manage them from here.
- **JobInsider:** opens up a new pane in your browser. When looking at job postings in your normal browser window you can use this extra pane to look up how you are connected to people from the organization you are interested in.

Widgets

LinkedIn Widgets are small applications that other organizations can use on their website or blog. They can be found at the bottom of every page under “Tools / Developers”. At the time of writing there were not many widgets, but it seems that LinkedIn wants to offer more in the future. These are the currently available widgets:

Company Insider

Description from the LinkedIn website: *“Let your users discover how they are connected to companies on your site. You pass a company name and we’ll show how many people the user knows and a few sample names. This widget works great for news sites and blogs, letting readers connect to people at companies you mention. It also works well on jobs sites where job seekers can see who they know at hiring companies. Use it anywhere to inject professional networking into your site.”*

Sounds interesting, but maybe more for portal websites than for most organizations.

Share on LinkedIn

Description from the LinkedIn website: *“Add a Share on LinkedIn link to your website or blog allowing your users to share your content with their LinkedIn connections or networks. This gives your content legs: one user visits your site and can notify literally tens, hundreds, or thousands of others. Works great for news sites, blogs, and other content-rich sites.*

For visibility reasons it might be a good tool. If you put this widget on your blog or your own website and your LinkedIn connections use it, you might get some extra visibility.

Tools to Make Life on LinkedIn Easier

Next to the tools LinkedIn offers itself, there are also some other tools that can help you save time or increase your results on LinkedIn.

Texter

This is a small tool that allows you to replace chunks of text with what they call a “hotstring”. What does this mean in practice?

Do you remember the tip about how to deal with invitations from people you don’t know? This was the text that I use myself:

Hi xxx,

Thank you for your invitation to connect!

Unfortunately I meet so many people that I can’t always “put the name and face together”.

Can you help me by reminding me where we met?

Thanks and ... have a great networking day!

Jan

I don’t like repeating work and it also takes some time to write this message. So I used Texter to create a “hotstring” called link-inv. When I type “link-inv” and then hit “enter” the text above appears. The only thing I still need to do is replace xxx with the actual name of the person who invited me.

Of course you can also use these hotstrings for many other chunks of text you use frequently in your daily job.

You can download Texter for free from the Liferhacker website:

<http://liferhacker.com/software/texter/liferhacker-code-texter-windows-238306.php>

Thanks go to liferhacker, Bert Verdonck (www.bertverdonck.com) for sharing this one.

More free tools that can help you save time can be found in the “full version” of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn”.

Epilogue

Now you know why you are (or should be) on LinkedIn, what it is (and what it is not) and how to use it to reach your goals faster than ever before.

However, knowledge alone is not enough. It's up to you to take action.

Remember that most people only start to build their network when it is too late: they start building it when they need it. Other people feel this "need", they sense the urgency, even online. And that repels them rather than it attracts them.

So start building your network now. If you do it following the 5 fundamental principles of networking and using the strategy in this book, results are guaranteed!

LinkedIn is not the only website. There are more online business networks. Many more. I selected a handful of them, which might be useful for you to use next to LinkedIn. Despite the fact that the features might be different, the fundamental principles and the "start with your goal in mind" apply to all of them. You find them in the appendix.

As I already mentioned: a book about a website is always dangerous: it can be outdated the minute it is published. But for me it is important you get the most value out of this book and out of LinkedIn. That's why I will publish updated parts of the book and extra tips whenever something changes or whenever I get new insights.

To get these updates and a free LinkedIn Profile Self Assessment, register at www.how-to-really-use-linkedin.com."

To help you get even more value out of this book and to get even bigger results we have started the "Global Networking Group" on LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=1393777>). It is open to anyone who wants to play by the rules of this Group. So come and join us and experience the power of networking via LinkedIn!

To your success!

Jan

PS: when you have closed your 100 million deal by applying the tips in this book or found your dream job, don't send me a check. Just write a Recommendation on LinkedIn with how the tips worked for you and you will make me happy as well 😊

Appendix: Other Online Business Networks

See the “full version” of “How to REALLY use LinkedIn” for this chapter.

About the author Jan Vermeiren



Jan Vermeiren is the expert in Belgium, the Netherlands and the rest of Europe when it comes to networking and referrals. He is the founder of Networking Coach and according to HR Tribune one of Belgians top 10 speakers.

Jan and his team not only provide (key note) presentations, training courses and personal coaching about networking and referrals, but also advise organizations how to stimulate networking at their own events and how to integrate networking in their sales and recruitment strategy.

Besides that he is also regularly interviewed about networking and referrals by different media like Belgian national television and radio (De Zevende Dag, Lichtpunt, Radio 1), newspapers and websites (Forbes), job sites (Vacature.com, Jobat) and the magazines of several Chambers of Commerce.

Jan is the author of the networking book, "Let's Connect!," the networking CD "Let's Connect at an Event!," the "Everlasting Referrals Home Study Course" and now also of "How to REALLY use LinkedIn"

The US version of Let's Connect reached the Amazon bestseller list on October 9, 2007 with a number 2 position in marketing books and number 9 in management books. This made Jan the first Belgian author to reach this position.

Jan and his team are hired by large international companies like Alcatel, Deloitte, DuPont, IBM, ING, Mobistar, Nike, SAP and Sun Microsystems as well as by small companies and freelancers.

Jan is also a guest lecturer in the international MBA programs of Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School (Belgium) and RSM Erasmus University Rotterdam (the Netherlands).

Other books and websites

From the same author

- Vermeiren Jan, Let's Connect!
- Vermeiren Jan, Let's Connect at an Event (CD)
- Vermeiren Jan, Everlasting Referrals Home Study Course

Books that are mentioned in this book

- Alba Jason, I'm on LinkedIn, now what?
- Allen Scott and Teten David, The Virtual Handshake
- Baker Wayne, Networking Smart
- Burg Bob, Endless Referrals
- Butow Eric and Taylor Kathleen, How to Succeed in Business using LinkedIn
- Comaford-Lynch Christine, Rules for Renegades
- Covey Stephen MR, The Speed of Trust
- De Jonghe An, Social Networks Around The World
- Elad Joel, LinkedIn for Dummies
- Fisher Donna, People Power
- Valkenburg Jacco, Recruitment via LinkedIn

Some websites, which group super connectors or give additional information about LinkedIn

- TopLinkedIn: <http://www.toplinkedin.com>
- TopLinkedIn Discussion Group: <http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/TOPLINKEDIN>
- LIONS: <http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/linkedinlions>
- MLPF: <http://www.mylinkedinpowerforum.com>
- MyLink500: <http://mylink500.com>
- MyLinkWiki: <http://toplinkedin.pbwiki.com>
- LinkedIntelligence: <http://www.linkedintelligence.com>
- MyLinkSearch: <http://www.mylinksearch.com>

Other Products and Services of Networking Coach

Other than other training companies Jan Vermeiren and the team of Networking Coach are specialized in the topics of online and offline networking and referrals. We don't do anything else (but are happy to connect you with a specialist from our network).

Products

- **Free networking e-course:** www.networking-coach.com
- **Network book and bestseller, "Let's Connect!** A practical guide for networking at events and on the web for every professional whether in sales or not" (free light version available at www.letsconnect.be)
- **Network CD "Let's Connect at an Event,** 30 immediately applicable networking tips to make every event a success" (free light version available at www.networking-coach.com)
- **Everlasting Referrals Home Study Course:** how to create a network of ambassadors that will bring in customer after customer so you don't ever have to cold call again (www.everlasting-referrals.com)
- **How to REALLY use LinkedIn** (yes, this book ☺)

Services

For individuals:

- **Workshops and training courses** (open format and tailored in-company versions):
 - Introduction session networking or referrals (half day)
 - What's Your Sticky Story[®]? (half day)
 - Proactive Networker Training Course (2 days)
 - Everlasting Referrals Training Course (2 days, for business owners and sales people)
 - Power of Networking and Referrals Course (3 days, for business owners and sales people)
 - Smart Networking Training Course (3,5 days)
 - We happily provide tailored training courses in class room format, via teleseminars or webinars or a combination of these formats
- **(Interactive) Presentations and Key Note Speeches,** some examples:
 - "Everlasting Referrals, No More Cold Calls". What are the 7 main reasons that most organizations don't get (spontaneous) referrals and what to do about it?
 - "Your Net Works". How to tap into the Power of your Network.

- “What's your Sticky Story©?” How to answer “And what do you do?” in a way you will be remembered.
- “Help, I need a new job”: How to tap into the power of your network to find a new job.
- Oh no, another reception”. How to network more efficiently, more effectively and with more fun at a business drink, conference or any other event.
- “How to REALLY use LinkedIn”. How to find and get introduced to the people who can help you reach your goals using LinkedIn (can be adapted to find new customers, a new job, new employees, suppliers, partners or experts).”

All interactive presentations, keynote speeches and training courses are adapted to the audience and the situation of the organization.

Detailed descriptions and the calendar of open training courses and seminars can be found at www.networking-coach.com

For organizations:

- Interactive presentations and key note speeches (see above)
- Strategic consulting about how to integrate networking and referrals in the sales strategy
- Strategic consulting about how to integrate networking and referrals in the recruitment strategy
- Advice on how to stimulate networking between the participants of a networking event

References:

These are some of the **companies and professional organizations** the team of Networking Coach has worked for:

Accenture, Agoria, Alcatel, Antwerp Diamond Bank, Belgacom, BIASS, Bosch, Colruyt, CTG, Deloitte, Delta Lloyd Bank, Dexia, Dupont, Eandis, ECM Congres (European Cities Marketing), EDS, Ernst & Young, Euphony, Fortis, Gemeente Den Haag, Getronics, IBM, ING, Janssen Farmaceutica, Johnson Controls, KBC, Leaseplan, Mobistar, MOVI, Nationale Bank van België, Nike, Partena, Resources Global Professionals, SAP, SD Worx, Securex, Siemens, SOFIA, Stad Gent, Stichting Kwaliteitskring Limburg, Stichting Marketing, Sun Microsystems, Telenet, TNT, TvZ-congres, Unisys, Unizo, USG People, Van Breda Risks & Benefits, VIK, VKW, Vlaamse Overheid Bestuurszaken, VMA, VOKA, VVSG, Women and Network and many small business owners and freelancers.

These are some of the **universities, alumni organizations and non-profit organizations** the Networking Coach team has worked for:

Aiesec, Ehsal Alumni, RSM Erasmus International MBA Rotterdam, Hogeschool Arnhem Nijmegen Alumni, JCI (Junior Chamber International), Karel De Grote Hogeschool, Markant, Palliatieve Zorgen Netwerk, Provinciale Hogeschool Limburg, PSA Holland (Professional Speakers Association Holland), Solvay Business School Alumni, University of Antwerp Management School and Vlerick Leuven Management School International MBA.

Subscribe also to the monthly e-newsletter with tips from Jan Vermeiren and his fellow network and referral experts from all over the world (www.networking-coach.com).

Read Jan's weekly blog full of networking and referral tips at www.janvermeiren.com

Get even more out of this book

As I already mentioned: a book about a website is always dangerous: it can be outdated the minute it is published. But to me it is important you get the most value out of this book and out of LinkedIn. That's why I will publish **updated parts of the book** and extra tips whenever something changes or whenever I get new insights.

To get this for free plus a **free LinkedIn Profile Self Assessment**, sign up for them after you buy the book via the website www.how-to-really-use-linkedin.com. You will also get free access to some other great resources to help you to leverage the power of your network to achieve your goals.

To help you get even more value out of this book and to get even bigger results we have started the **"Global Networking Group"** on LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=1393777>). It is open to anyone who wants to play by the rules of this Group. So come and join us!

If you really want to get the most out of your LinkedIn membership, consider buying the **LinkedIn Power Package** or the **LinkedIn Personal Profiling Package** (with a LinkedIn Activity Self Assessment and personal feedback on your Profile by one of our coaches). These packages can be found at www.how-to-really-use-linkedin.com (look under "Bought the book? Get even more out of LinkedIn).

So what are you waiting for? After you have applied the tips from the book, go to www.how-to-really-use-linkedin.com and experience even more the power of networking via LinkedIn!