

## Using LinkedIn as a Recruiting Tool

Recruiting is highly competitive these days. Earlier this year, the Labor Department reported a record high of 7.4 million job openings, and at the same time the number of people quitting a job was unchanged. That means, more companies are competing for a smaller pool of applicants, and often the most qualified candidates are not looking for a job.

That is where LinkedIn can be a valuable tool for recruiters. Founded in 2003, LinkedIn is a social media application based on an individual's work experience. It has more than 500 million members and provides valuable access to information. It is one more way for a recruiter to get in contact with potential employees.

### **Create a company profile page**

To start, you have to create a LinkedIn page for your company. This gives a brief description about the company and an overall profile. It's a key foundation for building a recruiting pool on the site. LinkedIn research has shown that 58% of the people who follow your company's profile page are interested in working for your company. These followers are also 95% more likely to accept an InMail message, the internal messaging service from LinkedIn, and 81% more likely to respond.

### **Post jobs on LinkedIn**

The easiest way to identify potential new employees is to post a job. Potential employees can search job listings on LinkedIn and the site also lists potential job opportunities to members. It's easy to post a job on LinkedIn. You select the category of the job, and you post the job description with title. Applicants can either apply through LinkedIn or be directed to apply through an external site. You can also start the process by asking screening questions. It's no different than using any other job-posting site.

### **Use your network**

Any recruiter who is on LinkedIn will have a network of contacts. These contacts can be used to identify potential candidates. You just post on your feed that you are recruiting for a particular position. People in your network might be interested in the position, but they might also know someone who is attracted to the position. You might be able to identify some well-qualified individuals, and the search process will be easier because you have a relationship with the person.

### **Build a network of former employees**

When employees leave, you want to maintain contact. You don't want to burn any bridges so make them part of your LinkedIn network. These are valuable contacts within your industry. They may reach back out to you at some point, or they might be able to point people in your direction. You can also contact them about potential opportunities. The individual might be interested or might have a friend or colleague who is interested in the position. At the very least, you can follow what people are doing. If someone leaves a job, the individual might place that information on LinkedIn.

### **Conduct talent management research**

As a recruiter, you need the best data. LinkedIn has a powerful database that lets you access important information. The LinkedIn Economic Graph can help you see trends in terms of geography, job type, and more. Also, with LinkedIn Recruiter, you can conduct advanced searches. You can search by people, jobs, content, companies and schools. You used to be able to search by zip code as well, but those features have been removed. You can look for a particular job title and discover how many people with a particular job title work at a particular company. There are multiple ways to cross-reference the data that enhances your research.

### **Build relationships**

Recruiting is about building relationships. You can easily introduce yourself through email to a potential employee if they have the experience you are seeking. If the individual responds, you have started a relationship. That person can respond to your inquiry in a number of ways. He or she can say they are interested or can refer you to someone else. They can also reconnect with you in the future if circumstances change. It's a no pressure way of building up the talent pool and finding the best-qualified candidates.

### **Create great content**

LinkedIn allows you to post blog on its site or links to other content. Profiles on successful people at your company or an article about the benefits employees at your company are great content that can attract potential talent. You can direct people to look at current job openings if they read the content. You can also direct them apply on LinkedIn. It's another avenue to try and locate the needed talent.

### **LinkedIn Groups**

LinkedIn has numerous chat groups. There is pretty much one for ever industry. You can join these groups and follow the discussions. This will help you understand major issues in the industry and can also another be an avenue to find potential candidates. For example, someone might post something that is relevant to a particular job you are trying to fill or a problem your organization is looking to solve. You can engage them on the topic and learn about their skills outside of a formal interview process. In this way, you are a talent collector and not just someone who collects resumes.