



Getting Started With LinkedIn

A quick guide from Shawn Kinkade – Aspire Business Development

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Shawn Kinkade – Aspire Business Development www.aspirekc.com (913) 660-9400



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Getting Started With Linked In



Getting Started with Linked In

Linked In is a powerful online networking tool that can be a great asset to building and cultivating your business (and personal) connections. Although it's not difficult to use, there are a lot of components and strategies that can be intimidating at first. Additionally, the real power of the tool doesn't become apparent until you've got 30 – 50 connections.

Background and General Info:

- Based in San Francisco Bay Area
- Founded by Former Paypal Executives
- Launched in 2003
- Profitable, VC Funded
- 500+ Employees

Stats:

- As of March 2011 – 100+ Million Users, 300,000+ in Kansas City!
- 150 Different Industries Represented, 500 of 500 of the Fortune 500 represented
- Average Household Income -\$108,000, Average Age – 43 Years old
- Average Tenure in Workforce-15 years

Overview - A couple of thoughts on how to effectively use Linked In:

1. As mentioned, Linked In is a tool, not a replacement for networking or connecting with people in real life. Having said that, it is effective in helping you keep those networking contacts up to date with you and vice versa.
2. Just as in networking, it's important to have a plan or a goal with why you're networking and how you want to leverage the amazing asset that is your personal network. If it's to grow your business, then your profile and all of the details should be considered marketing materials for you and your company.
3. Be strategic about how you build up your network. Generally it's quality over quantity for most people. Remember who you keep company with reflects on you and people will evaluate your network and make a call on what you're all about.
4. Start by focusing on those natural networks that you already have in place and see on a regular basis. You can build a great foundation and from there it's fairly easy to start adding key connections as you meet people.
5. Once you're up and running, use Linked In as part of your overall business development approach. The power of your network really comes into play when you can use it to meet people and get access to potential clients or strategic partners with introductions from your network.
6. More importantly remember that it's always better to give than to receive - who can you help get connected somewhere? How can you help them?

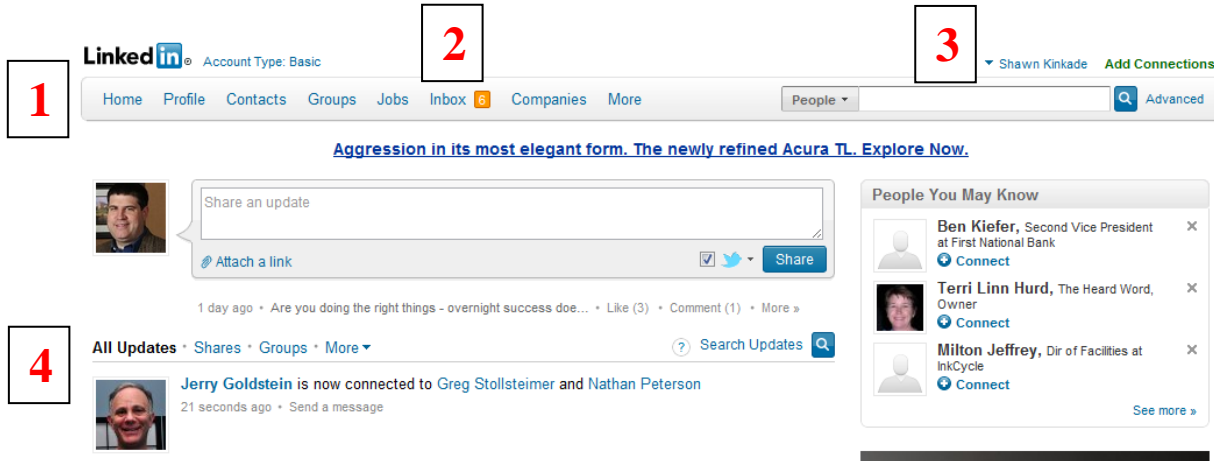


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Getting Oriented

The main page of Linked In can seem crowded, but it's actually not that complicated.



Section 1 – Navigation Bar

This allows for quick navigation to anywhere within the tool at any time, as you get started you'll want to edit your profile; import contacts (from Outlook or other places) and check your inbox for messages.

Section 2 – Inbox

The inbox is where any invitations, responses or messages through Linked In come to you. Once you've taken action on something in the inbox, you can always archive it so you don't have to wade through a bunch of correspondence all the time.

Section 3 –Settings

Settings can be found under a dropdown from your Account Name. This is where you'll need to go to really get everything really set to your liking. You can enter and manage all of your personal settings, privacy settings – generally how stuff looks to you and people viewing your profile.

Section 4 – Network Updates

Network Updates are where you can keep track of activity from your network. It's pretty common to notice someone from your network connecting with people you may have lost touch with – now you can connect with them too.

The Profile Views box on the right hand side of your home page is an indication of how many people are looking at your profile and how many times you show up in search. With a free account you can't get specific information on who's looking at your profile, but it's generally not too hard to figure out from the choices they give you when you click on this section.

Your LinkedIn Network gives you interesting statistics on your connections, which you can click on to get more information.

Who's Viewed Your Profile?

- 8 Your profile has been viewed by 8 people in the past 3 days.
- 11 You have shown up in search results 11 times in the past 3 days.

Your LinkedIn Network

- 852 Connections link you to 6,764,785+ professionals
- 9,867 New people in your Network since April 12

Add Connections



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LinkedIn Footer (bottom of every page)

[Help Center](#) | [About](#) | [Blog](#) | [Careers](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Recruiting Solutions](#) | [Tools](#) | [Mobile](#) | [Developers](#) | [Publishers](#) | [Language](#) | [Upgrade My Account](#)
LinkedIn Corporation © 2011 | [User Agreement](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Copyright Policy](#) | [Send Feedback](#)

You should also check out the footer of the Linked In page which contains links to various tools and information sources for Linked In, including the Linked In Blog, the Help and FAQ sections, Advertising, Recruiting and other stuff.

Getting Started

1st step for getting started:

Add all of your email addresses into Linked In **NOW!**

Here's How:

- On the home page, go to Settings (drop down from your account name)
- You'll have to login again to get to your account settings
- Select the Account Tab towards the bottom, Click on Add/Change Email Addresses.
- Add in any and all email addresses that you use – make sure to designate a primary address that you check more frequently.
- You will not be publishing all these addresses to the web, others won't be able to see them, but these will be key in getting contacts later! (LinkedIn keys your account, who you are from your email address).

Note – there are some people that have inadvertently setup more than 1 account on Linked In (because it's keyed by email address). If this has happened, you will need to ask customer service to delete 1 of the accounts and manually consolidate everything over to the existing account. However if you add all of your email addresses up front, this can't happen.

Next step – establish your Linked In Profile

Your profile is really the heart and soul of Linked In. It serves the following purposes:

- Web Page and Advertisement for you and your business
- Online Resume (with testimonials)
- Job Search Resource (add links to your profile in your email address or other correspondence)
- Reference Tool – shows who you know and testimonials from past customers, partners and people you've worked for or with.

Ultimately think of your profile as a marketing tool...and write it with that in mind.



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In order to edit your profile, go to Profile on the top menu bar and the first dropdown choice is 'Edit Profile'.

Add a photo

Start with adding a photo (this is more important than it seems, not only does it give you a level of credibility that you are who you say you are, but it really helps people remember you and place you...put a face with a name.).

Add a Headline (edit your name and description block at the top)

Next add a headline that is clear, direct and really speaks what you want it to say. If you're marketing for your business, you should reference how you help your target market. If you're more interested in potential job opportunities, then it should really be a concise summary on what you are looking for.

Think of the headline in terms of a hook that will draw the right people in to learn more about you. Tour around and see what others have done.

Add in all of your past information (that's relevant to you)

Edit your current and past positions. It's often helpful for people to see where you've been and what you're experience has been over time. However it's your profile, feel free to only put what you want to put on there (as long as it's true). If you've got an employment gap or you don't want to admit to flipping burgers for 2 years, don't add it. As a general rule, keeping it to the last 10 years or last 3 or so positions is probably a good idea.

The summary is the key

The summary is the most important part of the profile. You get up to 2000 characters, try to use as much as you can without dragging on or being redundant. This is a great place to build in a lot of keywords or phrases that you would want people to find you by. This is the section that you can use to really let people know who you are and what you're all about. However don't go overboard, it's more important that it's readable and gets your point across.

You'll likely rewrite your summary several times as you get more comfortable with what you want to say. But you can't rewrite it until it's written in the first place! Again – a good place for ideas is to check out what other people have done.



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Add in links to websites

Make sure to include relevant websites and your blog if you have one – people **will** click through and Linked In can become a great source of web traffic for your site.

Websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspire Business Development • Aspiring Business Blog • Sign Up for my Newsletter
Twitter	AspireShawn
Public Profile	http://www.linkedin.com/in/shawnkinkade

* **Little known secret** – instead of selecting ‘My Website’ as the description, select ‘other’ and you can type in the actual name of the website, company name, anything that’s like to be more descriptive and helpful than ‘My Website’. You can also include a link to a signup for a newsletter, or to download a whitepaper...be creative!

You can also add in a connection to your Twitter Account if you have one (your LinkedIn status updates can automatically be sent to Twitter as well).

Go Public – with your profile...

Once you’ve got everything entered in, make sure you edit your Public Profile Settings (bottom of the profile box on the edit profile page).

Your public profile URL

Your current URL
<http://www.linkedin.com/in/shawnkinkade>
[Customize your public profile URL](#) • [View your public profile](#)

The first thing you should do is edit your URL and change it to your name (i.e. <http://www.linkedin.com/in/shawnkinkade>) this also helps with Search Engine Optimization when people are searching on your name.

Also on the public profile settings, make sure you turn everything on (Make my public profile visible to Everyone). You created it so people could see it...you can make sure by viewing your public profile (there’s a link on the page to do that).



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Start Using LinkedIn

You've figured out how to navigate around the toolset, you've updated and filled out your profile and settings...now you can actively start using LinkedIn.

Add Connections

At the very top of any page on the right hand side (above the menu bar and next to your Account name) you'll see the words 'Add Connections'. When you click that link, you have a few choices for inviting connections to your network.

1. Direct Entry – names, email addresses, very manual and slow, but easy
2. Import Contacts (from Outlook or Webmail), straightforward and you won't spam anyone, you have the choice of who you want to actually invite from that list (and you can see who's already on)
3. Add Colleagues – does a search on Linked In members that share work history with you (via company name). Great way to find former co-workers.
4. Add Classmates – does a search based on your education and timeframe. It will show anyone that might have overlapped with you even for a year.
5. People you may know – LinkedIn does some magic in the background and tries to suggest people you're likely to know. Usually you will find people you know, but they may or may not be someone you want to connect with.

General recommendation on adding connections is to stick with people that you Know, Like and Trust...a connection is an implied relationship, someone you would be comfortable introducing to your friends and colleagues.

Don't feel like you have to add hundreds of connections at once, do them in batches and start adding people organically as you run into them. When you see someone's profile, you can invite them directly from their profile as well.

Recommend and Be Recommended

Last step of the initial setup is to do several recommendations of people that you like or feel good about. You may need to invite them to connect first, but give out at least 3 or 4 recommendations. More than likely, you will get a recommendation in return but if not, it is okay to ask for recommendations from people that have worked with you and would be able to give you one. You can't edit recommendations, but you can choose to reject them or not show them if you're not happy with them.

Go out and start connecting!

You're good to go. You'll want to review and update your information periodically, but you should be in good shape to start building your network.



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Putting it All Together

Hopefully this was helpful for you get moving. The next step is to take action on what you've learned here and just get started.

Here are a few other things to think about:

1. Join groups that you are interested in or have a connection with – you can invite people that are in groups with you, even if you don't know their email address. Additionally this gives others more information about the types of things that you're interested in. Groups support discussions – a cool way to interact.
2. Build up your connections – initially shoot for 50 connections. If you're at 50, shoot for 100, but follow a strategy. Linked In recommends that your connections should be trusted individuals that you know – so start there. Most people will have at least 250 quality connections; many will have a lot more.
3. Linked In is a tool for improving your networking (not a replacement). Use it to find people you'd like to be connected with and get introduced, use it to reconnect with people you haven't seen for a while and use it to help keep up with and keep in front of people that you are networking with.
4. Ask and answer questions – ideally you should try to answer something at least once or twice a week that highlights what you or your company does. You can use this to build credibility and drive people to your website for more information.
5. Prospect for clients or networking partners on Linked In and research their profiles to find out what you have in common with them before you meet.
6. How to have fun with it and go out there and grow your business!

Looking for more?

There's a lot of great information out there on how to really get a lot of value out of LinkedIn, here are some places to start:

LinkedIn Learning Center: <http://learn.linkedin.com/>

100 Smart Ways to Use LinkedIn: <http://linkedintelligence.com/smart-ways-to-use-linkedin/>

Guy Kawasaki – 10 Ways to Use LinkedIn:
http://blog.guykawasaki.com/2007/01/ten_ways_to_use.html#axzz1JQTYQXy2