

LINKEDIN PEOPLE SEARCHING

Your Ticket to Improved ROI

LinkedIn is perfectly designed to help you search for individuals and uncover relationships that may have previously been invisible to you. Of course, you can also get information about the companies with which those individuals are affiliated. Developing a strategy for finding the right people on LinkedIn will be your ticket to improved ROI.

The development of your strategy for people searching on LinkedIn boils down to being able to answer and work through the following five questions:

1. Who do I want to meet?
2. What keywords would those individuals use to describe themselves?
3. What titles do they typically have?
4. What relationship(s) can I leverage to assist me in meeting those individuals?
5. What goals or objectives can I set relating to those types of individuals?

When answering the first question—who do I want to meet—our tendency is to think solely about customers we want to sell to. I challenge you to think past that category and move into other classifications, including employees, vendors, suppliers, donors, board members, referral sources, and strategic influencers, just to name a few. Based on the businesses and organizations you are involved in and what your objectives are, you may come up with others. It becomes a bit easier if you think about past relationships that have been important to your success and then look for new relationships that will mirror those.

The next step is to identify the different keywords those types of individuals usually use to describe themselves. If you are having trouble with this, start by looking at the profiles for some of your current connections who are in the same category (customer, employee, etc.) and identify the keywords they have included in their profiles.

Now use those keywords you have identified in the Advanced Search function, along with any other relevant criteria (such as geographic region), and perform a search to identify potential targets. This will help you find people you would like to meet and show you how you are connected to them, through a first or second-degree connection.

Now that you have uncovered potential targets, you will want to come up with specific actionable goals related to those types of individuals. Those goals may look something like this:

- I am going to use LinkedIn to identify, get introduced to, and meet two new people from this category each month.
- I am going to play a round of golf each summer with at least four people from this category whom I have not previously met.
- I am going to set up one of my search alerts to find individuals who meet the criteria for one of these categories.
- I am going to review the connections of at least one of my first-degree connections in a target industry in order to find new people to connect with on a monthly basis.

Here is a worksheet to assist you in developing your people-searching strategy and process on LinkedIn.

LINKEDIN PEOPLE-SEARCHING WORKSHEET

Titles used: _____

Current or past employers: _____

Category (i.e., customer, referral partner, etc.): _____

Keywords that describe them: _____

LinkedIn defined industry: _____

Schools they attended: _____

Geographic Region(s): _____

Specific certifications or skills they have: _____

Specific strategic action step to meet the right people (be sure to include time frame for accomplishment)

To help jumpstart your thought process, I have included some examples of how I might have completed this worksheet to identify important targets when I owned an office furniture dealership:

EXAMPLE #1

Titles used: Facilities Manager, Facilities Director, Facilities Planner, VP-Facilities

Current or past employers: Harley-Davidson, Rockwell Automation, Caterpillar

Category: Customer

Keywords that describe them: Purchasing, procurement, buyer, project management

LinkedIn Industry: Facilities Services

Schools they attended: Marquette University, UW-Whitewater

Specific certifications or skills they have: LEED, CIDA, NCIDQ, Haworth Certified Installer

Geographic region(s): Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Specific Strategic Action Step: I will join and be active in one new facilities-related group in the upcoming year

EXAMPLE #2

Titles used: Architect

Current or past employers: HGA, Epstein Uhen

Category: Referral, strategic influencer

Keywords that describe them: Architectural, Design

LinkedIn Industry: Architecture & Planning

Schools they attended: UW-Milwaukee, UW-Madison

Specific certifications or skills they have: AIA, LEED, structural

Geographic region(s): Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Specific Strategic Action Step: I will meet with an architect for an extended period of time (i.e., lunch, dinner, sporting event) each quarter of the year.

Wayne C. Breitbarth

Author of *The Power Formula for LinkedIn Success: Kick-start Your Business, Brand, and Job Search*

wayne@powerformula.net

Connect with me online!



powerformula.net



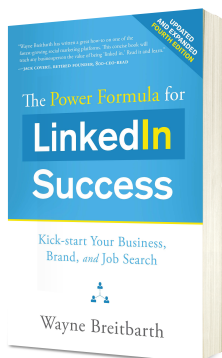
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