

### 3.4.20: LinkedIn

#### Learning Objectives

Describe the primary use of LinkedIn

Launched in 2003, LinkedIn focuses on recruiting and finding talent. Their initial slogan was, “LinkedIn makes your professional network faster and more powerful.” Individual users build profiles similar to a personal resume and are able to search for new jobs. Most importantly, users make connections with each other and build their professional networks.

LinkedIn builds networks through an algorithm that recommends connections to users. For example, if someone you don’t know is connected with several of your connections, LinkedIn will suggest that you connect with that person yourself. People with whom you have a direct connection are your first-degree connections. People connected to your first-degree connections are your second-degree connections and so on. By looking at the networks of your connections—and by letting the algorithm work for you—you expand your own network, connecting with people who might give you a job, fill a job opening you have, or become a client or customer.

In Module 14: Finding a Job, we’ll talk more about the importance of networking and strategies to build your network. For now, we’ll simply focus on LinkedIn and its features.

As of early 2018, over 500 million people use LinkedIn, and there are typically around 3 million open job postings or listings on the site<sup>[1]</sup>.

#### Learn More

You can check out [this detailed article to get started with LinkedIn](#). The article also includes links to higher-level and more advanced techniques, many of which are useful for recruiters.

The most important part of LinkedIn for business communication is recruiting talent or finding jobs; after all, that’s why people build a network. Let’s take a look at both actions.

#### Recruiting Talent

If you are recruiting, LinkedIn can be a powerful platform for finding candidates to fill openings at your company. However, unless you have a premium account, you can only reach out to people who are already a part of your LinkedIn network. Here are a few quick and easy strategies for recruiting on LinkedIn:

- While people can be hesitant to connect with someone they don’t know, if you find a candidate who looks perfect, you can send them a request to connect along with a message explaining the position you think they might be right for.
- If you and the potential candidate share a second or third level connection, you can ask that connection to make an introduction.
- If you’re doing a lot of recruiting, it might be worthwhile to get a premium account and message individuals directly.

#### Finding Jobs

As an individual user on LinkedIn, you can view top jobs recommended for you based on your profile (Figure 1).

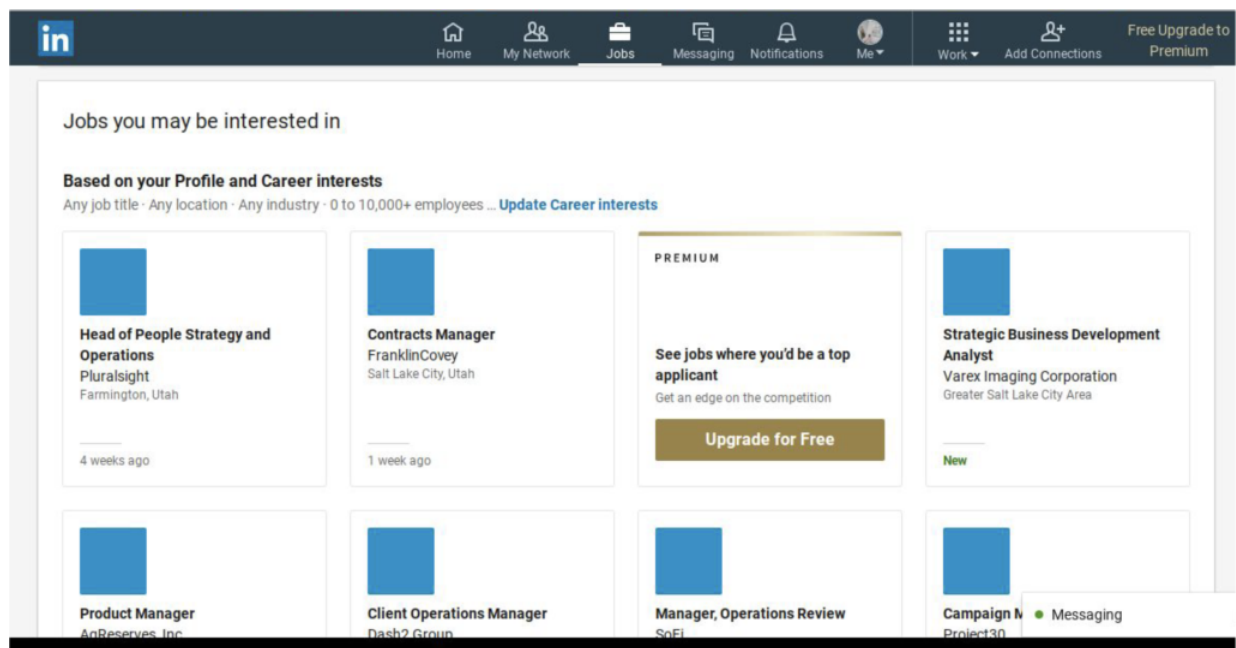


Figure 1. LinkedIn provides “Jobs you may be interested in” based on your profile.

If you click on any of the opportunities listed, you’ll be taken us to the job posting’s specific page. There you will find the full job description and can apply or interact with the recruiter directly. Some job postings will have an Apply button, which will typically direct you to the company’s site to apply; others will have a LinkedIn Easy-Apply button, which will use the information you’ve provided in your LinkedIn account to let you apply in about 5 seconds.

While LinkedIn’s usage is high, the content is often criticized for being overly corporate and somewhat lacking in meaningful exchange. Often people make connections with strangers (or attempt to) or make connections with friends and family who have never interacted with them on a professional basis—all in the name of having a larger network.

### ? Learn More

This [article from The Guardian](#) describes some issues with LinkedIn; in it, the author notes how the platform is unquestionably helpful in finding new opportunities, but the emphasis on presenting a perfect resume or background can water down the overall content.

When assessing the usefulness of LinkedIn, you should keep the pros and cons listed in Table 1 in mind:

Table 1. Pros and Cons of LinkedIn as a Social Media Platform	
Pros	Cons
Excellent for job postings or job searches	Maybe watered-down content (i.e., resumes with exaggerated self-promotion)
Widespread corporate use	Has an exclusive business focus, limiting the type of content you should share
Helpful in constructing and maintaining your resume	Has a limited user base, limiting your reach to potential customers

1. Aslam, Salman. "LinkedIn by the Numbers: Stats, Demographics & Fun Facts." *Omnicores*. 1 Jan 2018. Web. 10 July 2018.

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