

HOW TO USE LINKEDIN TO FIND A JOB

A BOOK ABOUT MODERN
JOB-HUNTING



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How to Use LinkedIn to Find a Job

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First edition

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Subtitle

As the title says, this is a detailed guide with actionable advice on how to best use LinkedIn to get your dream job. Not a checklist of things to do but a story to read that will offer tips and insight for overcoming this obstacle. As well as shedding light on things I would have done differently having learned what I did through mistakes. This book is for someone who, such as myself, may have lost their full-time job during covid and has struggled to find a new one. Someone who is looking for their first job out of school, or someone looking to switch jobs or careers to something that is more in line with their dreams. Whichever motivation you may have, if the goal is to get a job then this book will help you achieve that exactly.

Introduction

What inspired me to write this was when I took some time to reflect on how I got the job I have now and the path it took to earn it. The rocky stream of twists of turns that my career has taken in the past 13 months. And how all that I've gained from this experience could be instrumental in helping you.

Fresh out of school I got a job with a marketing agency in Dallas. I had spent the previous two semesters interning with them. It was great. I wasn't making all the money in the world but it kept the lights on and I enjoyed it. Until the first Monday of 2020. January 6th to be exact. Within a couple of hours being back in the office from Christmas break. My boss called me into his office. I step in to see him as well as our COO. I grab a seat and they proceed to tell me that the company had sold during late Q4 and that in a nutshell, we were all out of a gig. I felt blindsided. Yeah, things had slowed down around the holidays last year but that was natural. Work would typically begin to pick up come fresh budgets from clients in Q1. But we weren't going to have a chance to see that and little did I know, 2020 had more in store.

While confused and very frustrated. I was able to roll with the punches. Within 10 days of losing that gig, I pitched and won a bid to develop a Go To Market Strategy for an Edtech Startup a friend of mine was a Co-Founder of. At least that was income but only a slice of the pie that I originally had. From that moment on I juggled contract jobs while in the pursuit of another full

time.

The rest of the story is good and spoiler alert. Ends with me finding my dream job. But for the next 11 months, more and more life felt like a downward slide that I couldn't stop. Looking back now I'm so thankful for those obstacles placed in my life and being forced to overcome them. But I don't sit here naive to how dark it can feel while living those moments. Trust me, there are brighter days ahead.

Hence the topic of this book. I found myself leveraging and finding the most traction on LinkedIn. Though I also used other services like the Indeeds and Ziprecruiters of the world. It was LinkedIn that I used to cold apply for and get an offer for the job I have now. That largely in part to the people component of the platform.

“Connecting the world’s professionals” - LinkedIn

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THE FOUNDATION

The Foundation

My First Fault

Having been a shoo-in for my first full-time out of school, given my previous internship with that agency, I didn't interview much. So it wasn't until that role evaporated that I was in a position to run through the gauntlet of job hunting. Not having much previous experience led me to a lot of trials and errors and learning of nuances after the fact. One, in particular, AI screening of resumes.

A surprise to me at the time but makes complete sense after understanding. Is that many companies will first run your resume through some sort of AI screening. This is done in an attempt to filter top candidates out of the thousands of applications. Meaning you could get booted from the race before a human even has a chance to look at your credentials.

You might think "well that sucks" but actually it bodes in your favor. The fact that AI might conduct the initial screening ensures that every resume will be seen! This first step in weeding out can become an advantage if you know how to best prepare your resume with AI in mind. Most often the algorithm is looking for continuity of work history, job title progression,

and education. Companies might also tailor search criteria depending on company culture or position history. All in all the job description will give you a great starting point for structuring your resume.

To begin, think of 2-3 ideal positions you'd like to have. For me, based on what I've enjoyed most throughout my career. I wanted to find a job that consisted of creating marketing strategies, either in-house or for an agency. I'd also be happy as a Paid Media Specialist or a Project Manager. All three of those positions fitting within my skillset and relating to a single field.

After laying out a hand full of roles I'd be pursuing I then created different resumes for each. One for Marketing Strategy, Paid Media Specialist, and Marketing Project Manager. I know this might seem like unnecessary, extra work but this level of granularity will give you an edge. The algorithm rewards specificity and exactness to a job description. By creating unique resumes for each ideal role, you're giving yourself better odds than by submitting a one-size-fits-all.

I'll be diving into more detailed advice on avoiding *My First Fault*. The concept here though is to study current job descriptions of your ideal positions. Then reverse engineer a specific resume that highlights those attributes in you.

I encourage you to use this [cool little tool](#) too. I used it to see what the AI might see. First, upload your resume to this website. Then view a word map created from the frequency and semantics in which keywords are used on your resume.

Find the Balance Between Simple Language and “Keywords”

While the algorithm might like “keyword dumping”, a human won’t, so it’s best for you not to sound like a robot. Regurgitating every technical term that comes to mind and you start to sound like [this guy](#). But at the same time, those keywords are crucial for grabbing the attention of a human or a robot screening. Let’s walk through how you could do that by using [my resume template](#). I encourage you to pull the resume template up on a separate screen before reading through this section. This will help you organize technical and soft skills, education, work experience, and a mission statement on your resume.

Your mission statement is in essence your elevator pitch. A condensed breakdown of what value you can bring to the table. Also a key section of your resume for setting the tone moving forward. Capitalizing on this section means a happy blend between punctual language and relevant keywords. For example, instead of saying:

“Professional sound engineer with varied experience in a wide variety of software.”

Try something more like:

“Professional sound engineer with four years’ experience using Avid Pro Tools.”

In the latter example, they were more direct with his/her tenure of experience plus listed the specific software they had experience in. Versus, what starts to sound like typical resume conundrum, “varied experience in a wide variety of software”. (robot voice)

This can also serve as a chance for the reader to get a feel

for your professional personality. Don't be afraid to show that! Maybe your career is a catalyst for the global impact you plan to make someday. Cheers to that. If so take a sentence to detail that. More than it would with an algorithm, that could hit an emotional chord with the human reader. In a best-case scenario, you could double-dip by including relevant keywords from the job description too.

The Core Competencies and Technical Skills sections are shameless opportunities to mirror the job description. Of course, be honest but the Technical Skills for example. This is where you can include your top 5-7 technical skills that are directly listed in the description. Same with the Core Competencies, which in many instances will also be detailed in the job listing. Take this screenshot from an open listing for a marketing strategist position:

Competencies

Ability to:

- Establish and build enriching business relationships
- Maintain excellent organizational skills, including time management and attention to detail
- Remain calm and professional under pressure and make split-second decisions
- Outline priorities and develops methods and procedures to complete projects
- Listen and communicate effectively with a diverse group of people

1. "Maintain excellent organizational skills, including time management and attention to detail" = **Detail-Oriented | Time Management**
2. "Outline priorities and develops methods and procedures to complete projects" = **Project Process Development | Project Management**

Education should be kept to a minimum. Not to undersell but cover the general need of having at least a bachelor's degree. Many experts recommend highlighting your highest level of completed education. If including a minor or other educational credit correlated to the job description. Go for it but be concise with the number of lines used.

Professional Skills is a chance to more thoroughly explain your top technical/soft skills or core competencies. As well as more real estate to hammer home keywords that the algorithm will take a liking to. Use these bullet points, underneath your skills, to feature specific, past work experiences that reinforce. As you can see I used this space to highlight professional skills such as *Data-Driven Thinking*, *Project Management*, and *Leadership*. Professional qualities that were in demand for strategist roles I was pursuing. Compounded by examples from previous roles. At this phase in my job hunting journey and career. I didn't have many certifications. You may have some worth mentioning here. If so by all means. Certifications are one of the stronger arguments for a skill you claim to have.

Now take a look at Work History. As you can believe this is the most important section of your resume. What I've learned is whether a human or an algorithm is viewing this section. Results over responsibilities will garner a much deeper impact.

“A resume filled with results — not duties and responsibilities — attracts employers like moths to a flame,”
JobMarketExperts' Meier says.

I'll add that my new boss said to me, “that highlighting results from previous positions and campaigns was a leading factor in getting the first call.” Depending on your trade, domain, and

previous roles this will look different. As an overarching concept though, try your best to articulate tangible successes instead of responsibilities. Try phrasing accomplishments as revenue, income, or time or money saved. Perhaps you made some aspect of a company function more efficient or found a way to cut costs. Try your best to include specific numbers, percentages, and quantities. The algorithm as well as people will value resumes that include these details over ones that don't.

After having gathered tangible metrics and condensed your past successes. Make sure to format your work history in reverse chronological order. Being your most recent job first, then backward from there.

Spelling and Grammar Counts

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to guess this one. As with any professional document, email, or form of communication. You want your spelling and grammar to be spotless. The same goes for AI resume screening.

Siegel (CEO of ZipRecruiter) said, "You might be cavalier about spelling and grammar, but that's an easy signal."

Make it easy on yourself and use a free tool. I recommend [Grammarly](#). It's a tool that will scan any text, while you write on the web. In this case your resume. And provide spelling corrections along with scanning the tone of voice. I'm a big fan and use it while writing emails to make sure I come across as professional.

I won't hit hard on this point because it should be a given. Take the time to double-check your resume for these errors. Or use an app. You may be the most qualified candidate in the world

for the role but if you have a few spelling errors. The algorithm will stop your resume dead in its tracks.

Have a Text-Formatted Resume

This versus a .PDF or god forbid an image. Make sure your entire resume is text. This so the AI can actually scan the entire document. If you happen to be a marketer or web developer reading this. It's the same as your website content is an image or video with no metadata or alt text. The Google Bots can't crawl and decipher the details of that content in a .jpeg, .png, or .mp4. Which inevitably hurts your ranking results in the SERPS.

Enough of the technical jargon but hope someone will appreciate that metaphor. If you follow my template and export as a .docx you'll have nothing to worry about.

If Your Resume was a Webpage

Before losing my job at the very beginning of 2020 my LinkedIn wasn't much. My profile wasn't complete. My About section didn't accurately describe me. There weren't any recommendations to my name. And my job descriptions were bare-bone. One of the best steps I could have taken was to reach out to this guy that I previously worked with. He was a part of the sales team for that start-up I began contracting for. We had had a few conversations but only in a group setting. More or less recognized each other's name from the Slack channel we were both on. While passively scrolling through LinkedIn, I ran across his profile. Turns out he was a Founder & Recruitment Advisor of a staffing and recruitment agency. Assuming he had all the wisdom in the world on how to get a job, I reached out.