“I'm on LinkedIn—Now What???”

Book Excerpt

A Guide to Getting the Most OUT of LinkedIn

By Jason Alba

Foreword by Bob Burg
Author of *Endless Referrals* and Coauthor of *The Go-Giver*
BOOK EXCERPT Table of Contents

• Foreword by Bob Burg
• Part I: Getting Started
• Chapter 1: Introduction
• Chapter 4: Account & Settings
• Appendix A: LinkedIn for Job Seekers
• Appendix B: LinkedIn for Sales Professionals
• About the Author
• Getting the book and other books from Happy About
## Contents

**NOTE:** This is the Table of Contents (TOC) from the book for your reference. The eBook TOC (below) differs in page count from the tradebook TOC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td>Foreword by Bob Burg</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part I</td>
<td>Getting Started</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>What Is LinkedIn?</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Your Profile</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>Account &amp; Settings</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Connecting with Others</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part II</td>
<td>Making It Work for You</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
<td>Finding Contacts</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Understanding Degrees of Separation</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>Jobs</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
<td>Companies</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td>LinkedIn Groups</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
<td>LinkedIn Answers</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part III</td>
<td>Wrapping It Up</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 13</td>
<td>LinkedIn for Personal Branding</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
<td>Shady Practices</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 15</td>
<td>On Netiquette</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 16</td>
<td>Complementary Tools and Resources</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 17</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>LinkedIn for Job Seekers</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>LinkedIn for Sales Professionals</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>About the Author</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>Other Happy About® Books</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foreword

Foreword by Bob Burg

Several years ago, I began receiving requests from friends inviting me to join a new online membership site called LinkedIn. Soon I was getting emails from people I barely knew, asking me to "join their LinkedIn network." Although I'd been using the Internet for networking and relationship building for some time, I really wasn't all that interested in LinkedIn. Still, not wanting to hurt these people's feelings, I accepted.

I went through the process of posting my profile, but didn't do much with the site. As time went on, more and more people sent me invites.

Every so often, I'd be asked for help connecting someone with someone else, who apparently knew someone who knew someone I knew. From time to time, people from specific groups who'd read my book, *Endless Referrals* would notice I was a LinkedIn member and ask me to contribute an article for their newsletter. I guess you could say I'd become a part of the LinkedIn community. But I wasn't really utilizing LinkedIn in any active or significant way.

Why not? No perceived need, and no desire. (You might remember those two reasons from Sales Training 101 as the two most common reasons prospects say "no.") And why didn't I have any perceived need or desire? Because I had frankly no idea what to do or how to make LinkedIn a positive experience for me.

---

That's exactly where this book comes into play. Jason Alba has done a first-rate job of solving that challenge for me, and he will for you, too.

A former unemployed IT professional and business strategist, Jason found that finding a good job, even in a "job seeker's market," was a pretty daunting task. Today, he runs a career management company, called JibberJobber. In *I'm on LinkedIn—Now What???,* he presents us with an actual system to tap into the power of the LinkedIn service.

And that's the key word here: system. That's what I was lacking in my early LinkedIn experiences.

Why is having a system so important? I define a system as "the process of predictably achieving a goal based on a logical and specific set of how-to principles." In other words, if it's been proven that by doing A you'll achieve B, then you know that all you need to do is follow A and you'll eventually achieve B. As Michael Gerber points out in his classic, *The E-Myth Revisited* (slightly paraphrased): systems permit ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results—predictably.

Whatever the B is you want to achieve here, *I'm on LinkedIn—Now What??* provides you with the A for getting it. After an excellent introduction explaining exactly what LinkedIn is and how it (basically) works, Jason then walks you through a guided tour of clear principles and powerful strategies for getting the most out of your LinkedIn experience.

While Jason sees LinkedIn as an excellent business-building tool, he also looks at the site with a carefully critical eye. Jason himself began achieving great success utilizing LinkedIn only after floundering with it his first few months, and he does not hold back in pointing out its weaknesses and suggesting areas where LinkedIn could improve and make its service more valuable for its members. I found especially refreshing those passages where he points out the areas of LinkedIn where he has still not grasped its highest use. Someone that humble, I tend to trust.

Jason tells us that LinkedIn is not a replacement for your networking efforts (online or offline); rather, it is an excellent tool for facilitating some facets of your networking strategy. I absolutely concur. The creed of my Endless Referrals System® is that "all things being equal, people will do business with, and refer business to, those people they know, like, and trust." And no computer or online medium is going to replace that personal connection—but it certainly can enhance it and provide potential networking contacts with more opportunities to connect. In this book, you'll learn how to do exactly that, whether it's for direct business, resources you need, helpful information, finding joint venture partners, hiring a new employee, or getting hired for a new job.

Something I particularly appreciate about Jason's approach is that he shows us not only how we can gain value from LinkedIn, but, just as important, how we can utilize LinkedIn to provide value to others. As any true networker knows,

this is not only immensely satisfying in its own right, but it is also the best way to receive even more value oneself.

As you travel through this excellent guide, be prepared to learn from a man who has done his homework. Jason has learned what he knows the hard way, through trial and error, both his own and many other people's, and put it all between the covers of a book so that you and I can learn it all the easy way!

Best wishes for great success.

Bob Burg
Author of *Endless Referrals* and Coauthor of *The Go-Giver*
Part I
Getting Started

Part I is all about getting started on LinkedIn.

• Chapter 1 talks about my personal experience with getting started, and why I decided to write this book.

• Chapter 2 talks about what LinkedIn is and isn't, helping you understand its capabilities and limitations.

• Chapter 3 is a crash course on your profile, and what you need to do to set it up correctly, increasing your chances of being found by others and leaving a favorable impression on those who find your profile.

• Chapter 4 talks about setting up your Account & Settings so your interaction with the website reflects your needs (and so you don't feel like you are getting spammed from LinkedIn).
When I revised the first edition, I found, much to my surprise, over five hundred changes that I needed to make. In this revision, I know there are many, many changes to the last edition. LinkedIn has been busy changing the interface, functionality of the site, how users interact and navigate, and much more. Indeed, I feel like LinkedIn is almost a different system than it was even a year ago.

Also, I’ve seen considerable changes in methods and tactics for those in job search mode and those interested in business marketing.

Social networking and social marketing, and corporate branding and personal branding have evolved as online tools. They have come and gone; they add new features and take away some features (perhaps they are "simplyfing" the navigation).

Even my own understanding of networking, relationships, marketing, and branding have evolved over time. I went from a job seeker who no one would talk to, to a new startup-CEO, to an author, to a speaker, to a seasoned startup-CEO. My
goals and my relationships are different. I follow up better, I am more strategic, and I have an acute awareness of how overloaded professionals are.

If I had time, I'd do a new edition of this book at least every six months. I can't do that, but I have something better for you. If you are interested in personal career management, whether you are in a job search or you are preparing for a job search, check out the JibberJobber blog, which I update almost every day: http://www.jibberjobber.com/blog. If you are interested in LinkedIn stuff, whether for your personal career or for a company, check out my LinkedIn blog: http://imonlinkedinnowwhat.com. If you need a video tutorial of how to use LinkedIn, check out http://linkedinforjobseekers.com, where I have my three-hour LinkedIn tutorial DVD.

I was first introduced to LinkedIn in February 2006 when I was walking out of a networking meeting with a guy who came to tell us he had just landed a new job. As we were walking out, he recommended I create an account on LinkedIn. I didn't want to get an account on yet another website, and I doubted one more site would add value to my job search.

Regardless, I did get an account on LinkedIn. I found it to be a very lonely place. For the first few months, I had only six connections. I tried searching for important contacts, based on company name or title. At the time, there were about eight million users in LinkedIn (now there are over eighty million), but my searches produced no results. I thought the search function was broken! I didn't find anyone I was interested in contacting. My search for “manager” or “CEO” in “Salt Lake” produced nothing! What was wrong?

LinkedIn just wasn't working for me. I knew if I could just figure out what all the buzz was about and learn how professionals were using LinkedIn to improve their businesses and careers, I could benefit. But I didn't understand what I needed to do.

And so I began to learn what LinkedIn was all about—how to use it, how to benefit from it, and what its limits were. Once I began to understand how it was intended to be used, it became much more valuable to me in my personal career management, and later as I developed my own business.
While learning the hows and whys of LinkedIn, I found a lot of people were still confused by the same things that had confused me. It was obvious why you would use LinkedIn if you were a recruiter (the first book on LinkedIn was written specifically for recruiters) or a job seeker. But the "why" wasn't the problem—it was the "how"! Even recruiters, who should have been power users, were confused on how to use LinkedIn!

As a business owner, I've used LinkedIn to bring considerable value to my business. I've used it to find the right contacts as I work on business development and grow my network strategically. I've done company research as I prepared to make a business proposal or do competitive intelligence research. I've used LinkedIn to enhance my personal and my corporate brands. I've positioned myself as an expert and gotten in front of other LinkedIn users. LinkedIn has become an indispensable tool for me in my overall social marketing strategy.

I hope this book can serve as a reference for you to get the best out of LinkedIn. *I'm on LinkedIn—Now What???* is not a comprehensive book on networking, nor is it a general book on social networking. There are some great books on those subjects. We'll talk about networking and social networking, borrowing from the experts and using examples from my contacts. By the time you finish this book, you should have a solid understanding of what LinkedIn is, how to use it, and why things on LinkedIn work the way they do.

A quick word about my online strategy: LinkedIn is NOT the only social tool I use. I use Facebook, Twitter, blogs, Yahoo! Groups, and other tools to help grow my network, nurture relationships, and share my brand. I use these tools as part of a complementary strategy, connecting and participating as appropriate, and then leaving the social space so I can do my day job. I have gotten a lot of value out of my multi-tool strategy. I would not stop using any of these tools and try to replace them with just one tool—they are all complementary tools that make up my comprehensive social strategy.

I hope this book will teach you how to use LinkedIn more effectively. I hope you will implement some of the tactics to find new business, customers, employers, vendors, partners, employees, or even friends. While there are no guarantees, I know that many people have had their professional and personal lives enriched because of LinkedIn, and I hope you can, too!

Now, let's get started!

**Chapter Summary**

- This book came about because of my own journey with LinkedIn.

- LinkedIn is not the only online networking tool you should use, but it is definitely one of the most powerful.

- How you get value out of LinkedIn might be different than how I get value out of LinkedIn, but many of the ideas and techniques shared here could help you get more value out of LinkedIn.
Chapter 4: Account & Settings

There is a "Settings" link under the dropdown at the top right of every page (just click your name to see the Settings link).

![Account Settings](image)

**Figure 1: Account Settings**

The Account & Settings page takes you to one of the most important menus in LinkedIn since this is where you can determine what messages you get via email. The Account section shows you what you get at your current account level and allows you to see what you could get if you upgrade. On my page, it shows I have four of five Introductions left and no InMails.

Currently there are four different types of accounts: Basic (free), Business, Business Plus, and Executive. You can see a comparison chart showing features such as the number of InMails.
you can send as well as what and how many profiles you can see on searches. Refer to the chart to see the most current benefits of upgrading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RECOMMENDED</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Business Plus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$24.95 per month</td>
<td></td>
<td>$49.95 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade</td>
<td></td>
<td>Upgrade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Executive</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$99.95 per month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2: Account Types**

Unless you have a very specific reason to use LinkedIn as a prospecting database, which means you need the best possible results on your searches, and quick access to message people you aren't connected to, a free Basic Account should be just fine. Who would use LinkedIn as a prospecting database? Recruiter and sales professionals and maybe job seekers who are looking for higher-level positions are examples of people who would find value in upgrading. If you are not spending much time on LinkedIn, not searching a lot, or not trying to communicate with people you don't find in search results, you should be fine with a free account.

Settings is one of the most important places to visit if you feel like you get too much or too little correspondence (emails) from LinkedIn. There are different functions in LinkedIn that can send communications to you. For example, if someone wants to get in touch with you, you get an email from LinkedIn. If someone asks a question in Answers, and you are in their network, LinkedIn might send you an email (see the chapter on Answers for more on this powerful feature).

The default settings did not meet my needs and might not meet yours. I was getting more emails than I wanted from LinkedIn (which didn't help my efforts to manage my increasing "information overload" I was getting from email, Facebook, Yahoo! Groups and other sources).
Frustrated by too many notifications, I finally went to the Settings section and changed the default settings so now I only get what I want in my email inbox (the rest are still available, if I want to see them, in my LinkedIn Inbox). I’m not limiting my ability to get messages; I’m simply choosing whether I get them via email or in my LinkedIn Inbox.

**Email Notifications**

**Contact Settings**
You are receiving **Introductions and InMails**.

**Receiving Messages**
Control how you receive emails and notifications.

Figure 3: Message Settings

Here's how I have my settings:

- **Introductions and InMails**—I get these via email, so if someone tries to get in touch with me I won't miss their message. The LinkedIn landing page is too cluttered for me to read every single message I get, and I don't want these types of messages to get lost. I also don't use LinkedIn's Inbox to manage any of my messages and don't want to have to go there to find these messages.

- **Invitations**—I also want invitations sent to my email inbox. An invitation comes from someone who wants to join my network and could be an important new relationship (or an important offline relationship that is ready to connect online).

- **Profile Updates**—At the time of this writing, this is no longer available via email. Perhaps it was being abused, or LinkedIn got too many complaints. Nonetheless, you will only be able to see updates on your first-degree contacts if you go into LinkedIn, and you won't be able to push notifications out just by changing or updating your profile.
• **Job Notifications**—These are job openings that come from people in my network. I thought it would be useful to get these notifications and pass leads to friends who are in transition. Unfortunately, I got so many irrelevant job notifications sent to me it was overwhelming. This was the main communication I got that prompted me to check out this place, and I quickly changed it from "Individual Email" to "No Email."

• **Questions from your Connections**—My network has grown to a size that produces some negative side effects, one of which is that I would get way too many emails of new questions from LinkedIn Answers from my first-degree contacts. I simply go to the LinkedIn Answers page and look for relevant questions I can respond to from there, rather than have my Inbox clogged up.

Since the last edition of this book, there are some email/web settings that are new and others that have dropped off. If you find yourself getting too many emails from LinkedIn, simply go to the Receiving Messages section to see if there is a new setting you need to change.

Also under Settings is the "Connections Browse" option, under **Privacy Settings**. This has become a controversial option. You can choose to show your connection list or to hide your connection list from your first-degree contacts.

Hiding your connections list seems to be contradictory to what LinkedIn is about: the ability to see who is in my contact's network! However, the option is a privacy setting and I've heard from people who have needed that level of "supposed privacy." Why do I say "supposed privacy?" Even if you choose to hide your connections list, your first-degree contacts can still see who you are connected to!

The default setting shows your connections list, which is a page formatted to show all of your first-degree contacts in an easy-to-digest view. If you change the default to hide the connection list, your contacts can still see other first-degree contacts through a simple search.

For example, let's say you have a first-degree contact who is a project manager in Seattle. When I search for "project manager" or "Seattle" I will see everyone in my first three degrees (including your first- and second-degree contacts), **even if** you have said I can't browse your
network. Notice the difference between "browse" and "see." Browsing shows me a nicely formatted page with your first-degree contacts. Seeing is just the ability to find read a profile. You cannot block me from seeing people in your network.

Another critical setting has to do with your email address(es). I encourage you to ensure you have the right email addresses associated with your account. I have two email addresses I use: one for the business I own and another through Gmail. I send a lot of emails each day, some from my business account and others from my Gmail account. Because of this, I make sure people who want to invite me can use either address. Why? Some of my contacts only know me from the Gmail account while others know me from my business account. Fortunately, LinkedIn allows potential contacts to send an invitation to either address.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Email Addresses:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choose a primary email address that you would like all messages sent to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <a href="mailto:alhajason@gmail.com">alhajason@gmail.com</a> Primary Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <a href="mailto:jason@jibberjabber.com">jason@jibberjabber.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4: Email Accounts**

It is essential you use an email address you own, and have complete control over, as the primary email address. I saw an email thread where the discussion was based around a person developing a LinkedIn network while working at their job and the employer claiming the network belonged to the company. This is an interesting claim. I can see the employer claiming the LinkedIn account and network (and network connections).

To avoid this potential conflict, make sure you control the email addresses on your account. You can get free email accounts from Hotmail, Yahoo!, Gmail and a host of other services. Also, make sure your primary address is one of YOUR email addresses, not a company address, even if you own the company.
Here's a summary of my settings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>How I've Set My Account</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introductions and InMails</td>
<td>Email me immediately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitations</td>
<td>Email me immediately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Notifications</td>
<td>No email; I'll look on the website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers Notifications—new questions</td>
<td>No email; I'll look on the website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections Browse</td>
<td>Allow others to browse my connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Addresses</td>
<td>My Gmail account is the primary address, my JibberJobber account is a secondary address</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter Summary**

- Dive into the Account & Settings pages to set up your preferences—this will determine when you receive emails and when you don't!

- If you have multiple email addresses make sure you put them in your account—that way others can connect with you by sending an invitation to either email account. Never use an employer-sponsored email as your primary email on record.

- Turning off the Network Browse can prevent your first-degree contacts from seeing the complete list of all of your first-degree contacts, but does not block those contacts from showing up in search results.
"Learn the site. There is a lot of useful help listed under Help & FAQ. If you take the time to review your Account & Settings and set your account up properly, your time on LinkedIn will be much easier."

Sheilah Etheridge, Owner, SME Management,
http://www.linkedin.com/in/smemanagement
LinkedIn for Job Seekers

How can job seekers use LinkedIn in their job search? The same way a salesperson uses LinkedIn: finding new contacts, doing research on them, contacting them, and doing company research. Here are twelve ways a job seeker can use LinkedIn:

1. **Fix your profile.** Your profile should NOT say, "Please hire me, I'm desperate." It should say "I'm a professional, I bring value to my employer and customers." Make sure your profile is pristine, with NO typos, no grammar issues, and no noise. Craft your summary and every letter and word in your profile so you come across as professional. Remember, you are a professional in transition, not a job seeker who wants to be a professional. Right?

2. **Search for your target companies.** You should have at least five target companies you are focusing on. These are the companies you really want to work for. Search for them and find out who in your network has ever worked there, as well as what key employees you can network with.

3. **Grow your network strategically.** Find people who have contacts in your target company and invite them to connect. Work
on developing a real relationship with them. Invite them to lunch, ask for an informational interview, or call them on the phone to get more information about opportunities and other people to contact. As you add contacts from your target companies you'll get better results in your searches.

4. **Browse through your key contacts' contacts to look for professional or industry leaders with which to connect.** Ask for an Introduction and try to start a relationship with these leaders. Continue to network deeper, asking yourself, "Who do you know who...?"

5. **Use the Advanced Search page.** Search for contacts with the job titles you are applying to. Search for contacts who work, or have ever worked, at your target companies. Search for contacts that have key titles in industries you are looking for, contacts who are in certain geographic areas, etc. Find these contacts and work on contacting each of them. Look for people who can give you information you need for your job search.

6. **Ask questions regularly.** Ask questions to establish your brand with your network. Don't ask questions that can be interpreted as "I need a job, please help me!" Instead, ask questions that develop you as a subject matter expert and/or thought leader. As your network learns more about you, and what you do (or want to do), they'll be more prepared to help you.

7. **Answer questions regularly.** When you answer questions, you get the to communicate your brand with other people's networks. Your answers MUST be value-added, informational, and on-brand. As you answer the questions you should see new invitations to connect with people who are interested in nurturing a relationship with you.

8. **Ask for Introductions.** When you find someone you want to network your way into, or connect with on LinkedIn, use the Introductions feature. You will help your first-degree contacts understand what kinds of contacts you want to talk with, AND what your branded message is to them. Make sure you write your Introduction requests concisely, and with a compelling message, so both parties can learn more about you.

9. **Browse the Network Updates to see who you can reach out to.** You should be connected with dozens, or hundreds, of professionals. Communicate with them! Too many times I see
people not communicating with their LinkedIn Contacts, and they are missing rich opportunities to nurture relationships, communicate brands, and be in the right place at the right time.

10. Use the job search tool to find out who else to network into. I am not discouraging you from formally applying to posted jobs, but the real value of the Jobs section is that you can see whom you know in companies that have open opportunities and network into them. Always work to network into an open job.

11. Find groups to join. Look for groups that would have people in your profession, industry, target companies, or even city or state. Joining these groups should significantly increase the value you get out of Groups, as long as you actively participate in them.

12. BONUS IDEA: Share your LinkedIn knowledge with others at job clubs and networking groups. Become that professional in transition who shares tactics and techniques with the other job seekers (those who have the deer-in-the-headlights look). They will be forever grateful to you for sharing your knowledge, and you'll set yourself as someone who believes in givers gain. As you teach, you'll learn more about LinkedIn. This is the only suggestion of these ten that requires you to get out and talk with other people. Don't hide behind the technology!
Sales professionals can definitely use LinkedIn to increase their networks, learn about prospects, do research for sales opportunities, and communicate with decision makers. Here are eleven ideas for sales professionals to get more value out of LinkedIn:

1. **If your profile isn't complete, I might not trust who you are when you reach out to me.** Flesh it out with relevant information that helps me learn about you, and maybe even come to trust you.

2. **Search is your friend.** List keywords your target segment would have in their profile, including position/role, company, industry, interests, and associations. Go into the Advanced People Search page and do searches using advanced search strings.

3. **Grow your network shamelessly.** Okay, I mean that tongue-in-cheek, as I wouldn't tell you to blindly add people to your network. But if you want to use LinkedIn for sales, it might make sense to have a large network and be an open connector. I'm not talking hundreds of first-degree contacts; I'm talking thousands. Don't agree with me? That's okay, move on to the next point.
4. **Grow your network strategically.** Do you sell stuff in one industry? You should amass contacts from that industry. Don't worry about the person's job title. A receptionist in your target industry might have excellent contacts, don't you think? Target contacts from adjacent industries. They should have contacts in your target industry. Your growth strategy could also include certain types of professionals (accountants and CFOs, for example) or professionals in a certain geography, if your target audience is geographically based.

5. **Ask for Introductions from your connections.** When you find someone you want to communicate with, use LinkedIn Introductions to ask your first-degree contacts for a warm introduction. As you do this, you'll put your branded message in front of your first-degree contacts again. This gives you a chance to strengthen your relationship with them. Nurture individual relationships so you don't just take, take, take in the relationship.

6. **Fill in downtime when you are on the road.** Do a mile radius search to look for contacts where you'll be staying. Use keywords to narrow the results down to the right people. Consider hosting a LinkedIn get-together and inviting as many LinkedIn people as you can for dinner. Search Groups to see if there is an active local group to promote the dinner.27

7. **Ask questions your target audience (not your peers) would be interested in.** As they read the question, or at least your profile, they should know you are in sales, so don't try to hide that. Be genuine. Ask questions they can answer or they would want to know the answers to. You want to be known as a thought leader, and/or a subject matter expert, and/or a connector in their space. Asking questions regularly should help increase brand awareness for you and your company.

8. **Answer questions your target audience would be interested in.** Think about how others will perceive you based on your answers. Answer comprehensively, kindly, and with expertise. Share information and recommend other experts, including your customers and prospects. Use the RSS tool to learn about opportunities to chime in to new questions.

---

27. [http://tinyurl.com/LinkedInBusinessTrip](http://tinyurl.com/LinkedInBusinessTrip) jibberjobber.com/blog/2007/05/08/using-linkedin-to-fill-out-your-business-trip
9. **Join groups where your audience is or where their contacts are.** Participate in Groups Discussions. Browse through group members to look for contacts to add to your network and communicate with. Send group members messages with clear, concise messaging—focus on the relationship but let them know why you want to connect and what you have in mind.

10. **Set up the RSS feed so you get Network Updates delivered to you.** Reach out to your contacts when they have news, congratulating them on accomplishments, asking them about changes, and commenting on new connections. Use the Network Updates as an opportunity to reconnect, nurture relationships, and further brand yourself.

11. **Consider advertising on LinkedIn.** LinkedIn Advertising gives you the ability to choose certain types of LinkedIn users. It’s comparatively expensive, but the ads go in front of a demographic that is supposedly above average in regard to income, professional status, and decision-making power.
About the Author

Jason Alba is the job seeker and networking advocate. He got laid off in January 2006, just a few weeks after Christmas. Even though he had great credentials and it was a job-seeker's market, Jason could hardly get a job interview. Finally, he decided to step back and figure out the job search process. Within a few months, he had designed a personal job search tool, Jibber-Jobber.com, which helps professionals manage career and job search activities the same way a salesperson manages prospects and customer data.
Jason is a highly rated professional speaker, sharing career management and social marketing messages to thousands of professionals each year, from California to Istanbul. Learn more at JasonAlba.com, or visit LinkedInForJobSeekers.com to get information on his LinkedIn DVD.
Getting “I'm on LinkedIn—Now What???”
(http://www.happyabout.com/linkedinhelp.php)

“I'm on LinkedIn—Now What???” can be purchased as an eBook for $14.95 or tradebook for $19.95 at http://www.happyabout.com/linkedinhelp.php or at other online and physical book stores.

Please contact us for quantity discounts sales@happyabout.info or to be informed about upcoming titles bookupdate@happyabout.info or phone (408-257-3000).

Happy About is interested in you if you are an author who would like to submit a non-fiction book proposal or a corporation that would like to have a book written for you. Please contact us by email at editorial@happyabout.info or phone (1-408-257-3000).

Other Happy About books available include:

• Storytelling About Your Brand Online & Offline: http://www.happyabout.com/storytelling.php
• I'm at a Networking Event—Now What???: http://www.happyabout.com/networking-event.php
• I'm in a Job Search—Now What???: http://www.happyabout.com/jobsearchnowwhat.php
• I've Got a Domain Name—Now What???: http://www.happyabout.com/ivegotadomainname.php
• Social Media Success!: http://www.happyabout.com/social-media-success.php
• Internet Your Way to a New Job: http://www.happyabout.com/InternetYourWaytoaNewJob.php
• Community 101: http://www.happyabout.com/community101.php
“I was ready to abandon my LinkedIn account before I read Jason Alba’s concise and remarkably useful guide. Jason writes with remarkable clarity, provides one useful tip after another about how to use it most effectively, and unlike so many user guides that offer breathless and uncritical hype, Jason candidly explains the virtues and drawbacks of LinkedIn’s features. Beyond that, Jason has such deep experience with the Web that the book contains hundreds of broader lessons about how to get the most of the Web. I learned an enormous amount from this little gem.”

Robert Sutton, Professor, Stanford University; and Author, The No Asshole Rule, http://bobsutton.typepad.com/

“Jason has written a great book I’m on LinkedIn—Now What??? for the beginner and those that need some more detailed instruction. This book is an easy read with some great descriptions of how to accomplish your LinkedIn networking tasks. I recommend this book for all users of LinkedIn.”

Jim Browning, Co-owner/Lead Moderator, LinkedIn Atlanta; and President, Browning Business Solutions, LLC, http://wwwNetworkingga.com

“... You really need to invest in learning how to get the most out of your membership. I’m On LinkedIn—Now What??? is a guidebook that will help you fast-track your success by navigating the powerful features of the platform whether you are at the start of your career or a seasoned professional.”

Krishna De, Online Visibility Expert, Social Media Speaker, and Mentor, http://www.bizgrowthnews.com

Jason Alba is the job seeker and networking advocate. He got laid off in January 2006, just a few weeks after Christmas. Even though he had great credentials and it was a job-seeker’s market, Jason could hardly get a job interview. Finally he decided to step back and figure out the job search process, including trying to understand all of the available resources. Within a few months he had designed a personal job search tool, JobberJobber.com, which helps professionals manage career and job search activities the same way a salesman manages prospects and customer data.

BUSINESS & ECONOMICS: MENTORING:
CAREERS: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

$19.95 US
http://happyabout.com/