

## Leveraging LinkedIn Connections to Source Jobs

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1. Create or update a LinkedIn profile. Focus on quantifiable/qualitative achievements, relevant responsibilities, as well as key words (words commonly found in job postings for your field—you can identify these by reviewing relevant job postings on aggregate job search sites such as indeed.com and simplyhired.com). The LinkedIn profile should not simply be your resume—LinkedIn is social media and therefore pithier. If you need assistance writing or revamping your LinkedIn profile, see <http://carolyncottresumes.com/linkedin-profiles/>
2. Establish and expand your LinkedIn “connections” by using the search bar in the upper right corner of LinkedIn to find and invite people you know to join your network. These can include colleagues, former managers, business associates, volunteer organization associates, former classmates, friends, etc.
3. Research companies that interest you via LinkedIn news, business news, professional organizations, your network, company websites, and internet job posting sites. Identify companies that are hiring as well as those announcing changes (in business news and on company websites), because change generally means job openings. Don’t focus only on companies that have job listings; up to 80% of jobs in the current market are unadvertised.
4. Prepare for the next step by jotting down: companies in which you’re interested, the field in which you’d like to work, the industry, zip code and mileage radius (the distance you’re willing to commute for the job), job titles you’re seeking, and the titles and functions of people with management authority and/or hiring power for the position/s you’re seeking (note: go beyond only HR).
5. Go to the right of the search bar in the upper-right corner of LinkedIn and click “Advanced.” Enter either the type of organization/field in which you’d like to work (for example, “humane society”) into the “Keywords” box OR enter the company name into the “Company” box. For the Location” prompt, choose either

“Anywhere” or “Located in or near” and fill in the zip code and mileage radius. In the “Title” box fill in the title or function of the person likely to have management authority/hiring power (*not* the title of the position you are seeking). Select the “Industry” in which you want to work (if your field cuts across multiple industries, select “All Industries”). In the “Relationship” box select both “1st Connections” and “2nd Connections.” Click “Search.” You will repeat this step for every type of organization/field and company.

6. Search results will show people in your 1st degree network (those directly connected with you) and 2nd degree network (those who are directly connected to your 1st degree network). Your 1st degree contacts can help you in two ways: (a) you can approach them directly about positions and companies of interest to you, and (b) you can ask them to introduce you to 2nd degree contacts who can help you.

7. To get introduced to 2nd degree contacts, click on the 2nd degree contact’s name, and then click on “Get Introduced.” In the screen that pops up, write two notes: one to your 1st degree contact requesting the introduction and one to the 2nd degree contact (include your phone number) requesting advice regarding your job search (but not asking directly for a job). (Take heed: the 2nd degree contact may be able to read the note to your 1st degree contact.) The 1st degree contact will then forward the introduction request to the 2nd degree contact.

8. Meanwhile, read up on both the company and the 2nd degree contact (on LinkedIn, company website, and Google search).

9. Once you’ve been introduced to the 2nd degree contact, follow up with a phone call. Say something along the lines of: “Hello \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_ here. \_\_\_\_ introduced me to you via LinkedIn and I’m interested in finding out more about your company—not necessarily for a job at this point—and asking for your advice. Do you have 15 minutes when I may meet with you?” If he/she says, “We’re not hiring” say, “That’s okay, I imagine you know a lot of people in this field, and I’d really appreciate your ideas and guidance.” Not asking specifically for a job takes the pressure off the person and often facilitates more informal dialogue.

10. Break the meeting roughly into 5 segments: (Part 1) find out about the person’s job and what he/she does there; (Part 2) find out about the company; (Part 3)

briefly talk about what you have to offer and convey a concise, relevant story about your contributions to an employer's success/sustainability (accurately but unpretentiously); (Part 4) find out about positions that exist or might be coming up in the company. Ask if you may give him/her your resume. If the person is impressed with you, he/she may recommend you for an open position. (Part 5) Ask whether he/she can recommend other people whom you might contact (both within and outside the company).

11. Repeat a variation of the steps above, this time with the person's name as your calling card.

12. Send a thank you note to the person (handwritten notes can be effective).