

How to make use of LinkedIn in your job search

We all know the importance of having a LinkedIn profile. In a poll we conducted in August 2017 just under 60% of candidates polled said that they thought a LinkedIn profile was important or vital to their graduate job search and it arguably becomes more crucial once you've built up some relevant work experience.

We produced a blog a few years ago on the [importance of a strong LinkedIn profile](#) and the advice there still rings just as true, if not more so, today.

However, it's one thing just to have the LinkedIn profile in place and it's another to use it to its full potential. There are many ways in which LinkedIn can aid your job search, help you identify ways to improve your skills, create networking opportunities and much more. Here's a few ways in which LinkedIn can help you in your job search

How important do you think a complete LinkedIn profile is to your graduate job search?

Vital - You won't be considered without one

5%

Important - it can make you stand out

53%

Of little importance

30%

No importance whatsoever

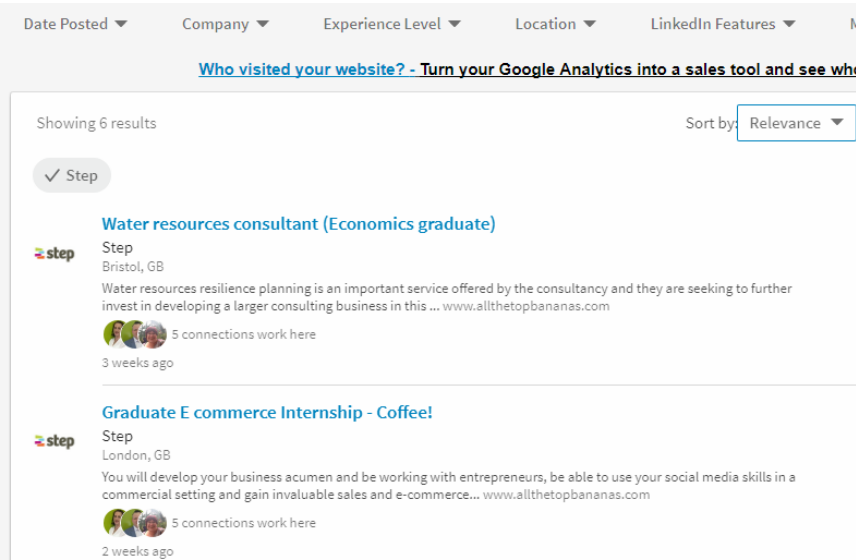
13%

Following a company page

There are many reasons why following the page of a business you are interested in is beneficial. Here are just a couple of examples:

- Jobs

The first and most obvious reason to follow a company page is so that you can view any job postings they may have.

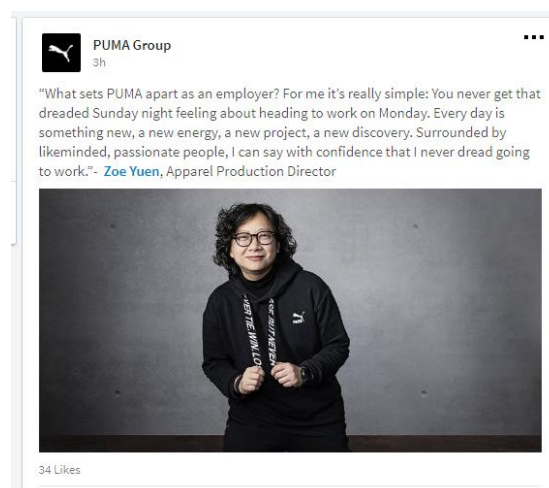


The screenshot shows a LinkedIn search interface with filters for Date Posted, Company, Experience Level, Location, and LinkedIn Features. The search results are sorted by Relevance and show 6 results. The first result is for 'step' in Bristol, GB, with a job posting titled 'Water resources consultant (Economics graduate)'. The second result is for 'step' in London, GB, with a job posting titled 'Graduate E commerce Internship - Coffee!'. Both results show 5 connections work here and were posted 3 weeks ago and 2 weeks ago respectively.

These are pulled from listings around the internet, not from the company themselves, which means you won't miss out on opportunities if the company isn't very active on LinkedIn. These roles aren't always picked up instantaneously however; some take a few days to transfer across, and so don't use this as your only source of information on opportunities within a business.

- Information

LinkedIn can be one of the best sources for business and careers related information. When researching a business for an application or interview, naturally you should be looking at their presence on social media (especially so if your job directly relates to social media which many roles will. Marketing, community management, branding, merchandising, HR and customer support are just a few examples of where social media can play an important part of your role). What sets LinkedIn apart from Facebook or Twitter is the fact that it is more geared towards a business audience. Take PUMA for example, whereas on Twitter and Instagram, you may be wading through promotional posts about new product launches and celebrity endorsements (which in itself is of course valuable information when looking at certain aspects of PUMA's social media presence) on LinkedIn you'll often find more business related news.



The two posts above demonstrate this diversity of content. PUMA, like many brands and businesses, choose to curate content separately on each format. The first post, coming from Twitter, features a product endorsement from celebrity influencer The Weeknd, the second post from LinkedIn is from a staff member highlighting the benefits of working for PUMA. If you aren't on LinkedIn then finding these business and careers focussed posts can be harder.

Joining sector groups

Another great aspect of LinkedIn is the networking and the community feel, specifically around sectors or professions. There are many groups that you can join on LinkedIn, where relevant articles, news and jobs are shared and it's a good way to keep abreast of the news in your specific field. These types of groups do become less relevant once they start to balloon in size and you might find that more popular groups turn into more of a selling tool than an actual community, so smaller groups might be a better route to explore.

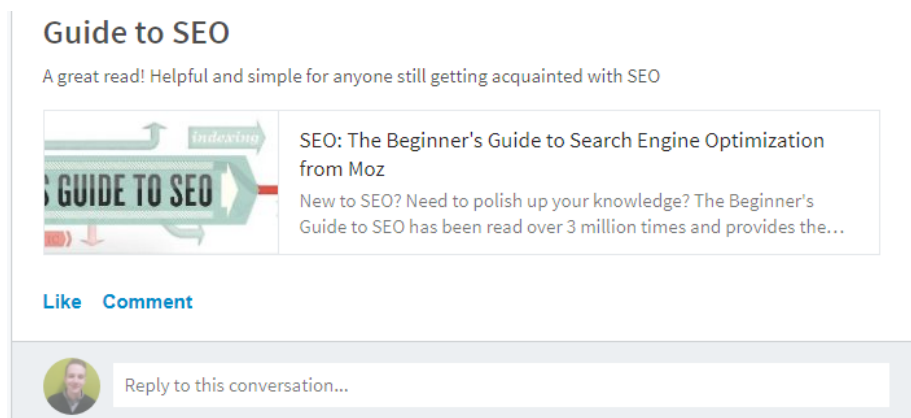


Figure 1 - Here's an example post from a marketing group that I am a member of.

Expanding your network

It will be your decision as to whether you choose to accept requests from connections that you do not know. Some prefer to keep their LinkedIn profiles exclusively for people they have conducted businesses with; however, having an extended network does have its benefits.

First of all, if you connect with people in your sector then your LinkedIn feed becomes a good way of keeping up to date with industry news and events. Some of this will be promotional, but often interesting news and developments are shared as well. Also, if you connect with contacts in a business that you want to work for, you're more likely to hear about a new opening if one comes about.

Secondly, building this audience is useful for your own promotion, allowing you to share your blog or portfolio with an audience that you have tailored. This could also lead to you getting a role if someone takes a shine to the work that you produce!

Following the Step page

Though the likes of Puma have the resources to run a diverse and regularly updated LinkedIn page, many small businesses don't have that capacity. This is where following the [Step page](#) will be of benefit. As well as being the voice of the small business on campus, Step is also often the face of small business online. We use our LinkedIn page to post up-to-date opportunities and blogs as well as other important information.

Another way in which we use our LinkedIn page is as a way of recruiting candidates. We've built our page into a great source of talented students and graduates and we will often dive into this list in order to fill a role. Liking the page will put you into this talent pool and may help you find a role without lifting a finger!

These tips should help you to maximize your LinkedIn usage and hopefully help you to improve your sector knowledge, keep up-to-date with companies you are interested in and maybe even find you a new position.