How to Effectively Use LinkedIn as a Recruiter

by Stephen Wong

LinkedIn is a good additional tool to find the "Right" candidates

Many recruiters still use traditional ways to find the candidates through their own databases, referrals, cold-calling, and non-online networking associations. But more and more recruiters are using LinkedIn as their primary research tool to locate potential candidates and build their databases for future reference.

LinkedIn is rapidly becoming a de facto starting point for a candidate search – especially mid-level. It has over 260 million members worldwide, including executives from every Fortune 500 company. With a few mouse clicks, you can sort and filter a search for the exact profile in the exact location that you need.

Recruiters will typically send InMails, which are usually dealt with more promptly by candidates than regular email – assuming you have been able to find one.

Most recruiters find LinkedIn to be more effective with senior level positions such as Senior Manager, Director, VP, CEO levels etc.

That's a pretty big pool of talent to go fishing in. Let's start by analyzing how candidates use LinkedIn as a social media tool for networking to enhance their job finding opportunities

What do candidates do with their Linkedin profiles?

The candidates usually have a good and solid profile (mostly 90% completed) with a photo added. Within their profiles, here are the key pieces of information you want to look for.

- Headline – a good headline is a snapshot of the candidates "Value Proposition" so you can quickly identify what they do and what they offer.
- Industry and Location – a relevant Industry and current location.
- Summary – an experienced candidate will load up the summary with key words highlighting their experiences, functions, roles and expertise so you can find them through KW Search.

How can "Recruiters" use LinkedIn?

Try these ideas if you are doing the "pushing"

- Develop and expand a personal network of professionals by sending requests for referral of recommended candidates for a particular Job opening;
- Stay in touch with former, valued, and trusted colleagues for potential future employment opportunities;
- Actively search for candidates among LinkedIn members by searching on keywords for people with the required qualifications listed in their LinkedIn profile.
- Use InMail, your internal inbox on LinkedIn, to request assistance from your network or selected professionals to find a qualified candidate
- For a fee, you can post jobs on LinkedIn, recruit and hire candidates.

Try these ideas if you are doing the “pulling”

- Create a professional profile of yourself on LinkedIn so that job seekers might contact you for openings and opportunities that you might be looking to fill
- Continue to be active on LinkedIn by creating exposures through joining groups, giving comments, asking and giving recommendations, endorse on others skills etc
- Develop a completed, keyword-rich profile for your company on LinkedIn. Candidates, who are looking for career changes, search LinkedIn by keywords, too. They also look at company profiles to make up lists of companies/recruiters that interest them.

Ever wonder how big LinkedIn is?

If you are not yet using LinkedIn to find candidates, here are some fun facts that might tempt you to try it. (Contact Dan Heiman at dan-heiman@cornerstone-group.com to find out about CIG’s special rate)

- LinkedIn has 332 million members
- 2 new users join every second
- 107 million users are in the USA alone (meaning 225 million are not!)
- 25 million LinkedIn profiles are viewed every day, 28 billion views in Q3, 2014
- One in three professionals on the planet are on LinkedIn
- 56% of members are male
- 44% of members are female

It can’t do everything

LinkedIn is a great additional tool for recruiters to find the right candidates but we still have to carry out other functions such as screening, connecting, interviewing, and presenting to our “Real” client (the Employer) in a professional manner in order to maintain our competitive edge as a Professional Search Consultant.

But it sure can cut some handy corners in that discovery phase!

Stephen Wong is Talent Development Director of Cornerstone and Shanghai based. Most of our clients look at Stephen as an in-house Leadership Development consultant and coach. Due to his business experience, Stephen’s talent development assignments range from helping C-Levels to middle managers.