

How to grow your network on LinkedIn in 5 Simple Steps



Creating your Network is really simple. It just takes time which is the one thing that people lack. If you break this down, it needs only to take 20 minutes per day.

Even tho this has been written for the 14 Day LinkedIn Challenge, this can be applied for pretty much any social media platform.

Here are the five steps:

Step 1- Identify who you want to target on LinkedIn

Step 2- Connect with customers, suppliers and staff

Step 3- Connect with your existing networking clients on LinkedIn

Step 4- Re-engage your existing audience

Step 5- Like, Share, Comment with people within your news-feed

This step process can be used if you have 100 connections or 1000's of connections as this is really about one thing- talking and connecting with people.

I truly believe that everyone should be doing this each day.

Step 1- Identify who you want to target on LinkedIn



Without knowing who your ideal customer is or who you already have as connection, you won't really be able to choose who you want to target.

There are a number of different ways to find out who your ideal customer is:

- Look at who you love working
- Look at your past experience to see who would benefit from working with you
- Go big and make a list of your dream clients who you would love to work with (for example, one of mine is to cover the social media for the Olympics). This way you can work backwards from that goal and make a plan to get you into the position to work with them

Once you know who you want to start talking to, you could look through your current connections to see you might have links to that company or who already work in that field. Use these contacts to find out information to help you along this journey.

Finding out who your ideal client is will also focus you and your energy and will give you a better plan with your marketing.

Step 2- Connect with customers, suppliers and staff



This is something that I believe everybody should do regardless of how long you have been on LinkedIn.

Your network is only as strong as the people within it and by connecting with the people you talk to on a regular basis, you are building a solid network of people who like and trust you.

Here are a just a few people to check that you are connected to:

- Suppliers
- Staff/Colleagues
- Customers
- People you talk to in real life
- People you talk to within LinkedIn Groups

One of the sections that some people don't look at is their staff/colleagues. These are people that you might well see multiple times a week so these make fantastic connections.

In the age where people buy people, companies should embrace their teams and give them LinkedIn profiles so they can network with people on-line as well as off-line.

Step 3- Connect with your existing networking clients on LinkedIn



Now you have found out who your ideal client is, made a list of your dream clients and connected with the people you see all of the time, it is now time to look at expanding your network.

A great place to start this is to connect with the people who you have met at different events. Some of this might include:

- Networking Events
- Exhibitions and Fairs
- Industry related events
- Social events

Now, ideally this should already be part of your following up process but if it isn't, you still have an opportunity to connect. You see, by hunting those business cards out of that file, card board box, plastic bag or wherever you keep them and connecting with them now, you are showing that person they are still important. Also, this is a great way of starting more conversations with people who might well need your services.

Step 4- Re-engage your existing audience



Chances are that within your LinkedIn network, you have people who might of only spoken to once or twice or people you haven't spoken to for a while. It is these people you need to start re-engaging with as the more conversations you have with people, the more chances of making solid connections that could lead to making sales.

The easiest way to do this is to make of list of people who haven't spoke to for a certain period of time (I normally work on a 6-12 month basis). Then, I would spend a 10 minutes messaging these people with a nice and generic message saying hello.

It could look a little something like this:

Hi

How have you been? Sorry we haven't been in touch recently and I was just wondering how life is treating you and how's business?

Speak to you soon!

This type of message isn't pushy and doesn't talk about any products. All this does is start the conversation in a friendly way.

The good or bad news about using this technique is that most people won't respond. There might be any number of reasons for this but don't take it personally (they simply might not check their LinkedIn account that often). By keeping it to 20 messages every time, you can have conversations with more people and start to re-engage with your audience.

Step 5- Like, Share, Comment with people within your news-feed



This really should be commonplace within your marketing strategy but the easiest way of making a solid network is by spending your time liking, commenting and sharing more than you post.

It's such a simple idea but you need to spend the time doing it. By interacting with people's posts, you are showing them that you are in their world and their content matters.

Also, whenever you like, comment or share posts, they will get a notification and also their connections can see you have interacted with them.

The more time you spend on re-engaging your audience, the stronger your network will be and there have been studies that show that even if you don't post anything but spend all of your time liking and commenting, you will get better results rather than just posting once a week.

I will talk more about this section later on in the 14 Day Challenge!