

A collection of tips, tricks and traps
for sales professionals prospecting
in LinkedIn

LINKEDIN SELLING SECRETS

12 Rules To Leverage
Your LinkedIn Profile

BY PATRICK HELMERS

"Your invitation to the worlds largest
networking event" - Pat Helmers





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LinkedIn

is one of the fastest-growing social media sites

today. With over 250 million people worldwide professionals, across all industries use this venue to network. People with profiles on LinkedIn on average make \$100,000 USD and up per year.

LinkedIn is ripe with prospects.

You Will Learn

In this eBook I'll teach you how to attract thousands of new clients by only spending half an hour per day. You will learn how to set up your profile in a way that will build trust with your clients. I'll show you how to find networking groups filled with prospective clients. And lastly I'll show you a process to build your network by investing only 30 minutes or less per day.

If it's important for you to have qualified leads, LinkedIn is a powerful way of promoting your products. Using linkedin to research prospective clients demonstrates the value that you bring by learning something about them.

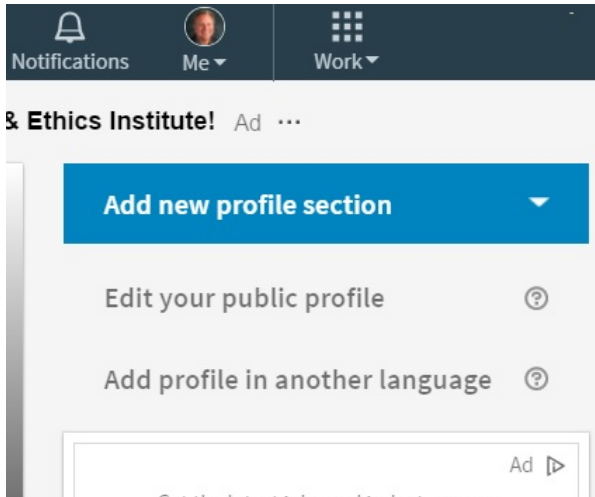
Before cold calling, researching prospects on LinkedIn is a must for success!

Brand Your Account

When LinkedIn was first created people treated it like a virtual resume. They used it to connect with former colleagues to stay in touch, similar to Facebook. But that's no longer the case.

Your LinkedIn account brands you as a professional. It describes: what you've been, who you are and who you hope to be. People buy from people they trust. Before they can trust your company and its products and services, they need to trust you.

Edit Profile



Log in to your account and edit your profile. You will find this in the top left hand corner.

In all cases, select the “pencil” icon to edit a field. Walk through your profile and complete each section

1. Photo



Use a current professional headshot for your photo. It should be recognizable, not you in college or standing in front of landscape in a crowd . What works for Facebook doesn't work for LinkedIn. This should be you at your best. Dress professionally. Smile.

Write in first person.

2. Title

Place the skills that you have in your title. These are your key words. Don't use only the title you currently hold at work. Show people where you have experience and responsibility. These skills can be those used current or in the past.

Example: For a sales professional state the various kind of sales you've done.

***Inside Sales | Outside Sales | Technology Sales | Sales Management |
Sales Training | Consultative Sales | Healthcare Sales***

3. Customize Your URL

When you create an account LinkedIn gives you a unique and random URL. You can customize that URL to make it more memorable. This is mine.

<http://www.linkedin.com/in/patrickhelmerts>

4. Contact Info

Fill this section out to make it easy for others to find you. This is not a time to be shy. Consider yourself a business. This information is only shared with people who are your contacts.

- Your email
- Phone number (Yes! Make it easy for people to call you!)
- Company website
- Personal website (*Note:* You can get a free Wordpress.com account)
- Twitter Account (*Note:* You can actually prospect on Twitter. I know many people successfully finding clients although it is industry specific.

5. Summary

This section is an extension of your Title. Write in a personal, first person, style. Have the mindset you're writing a personal letter to a distant cousin. Find the keywords used in your title, and expand on them in a couple paragraphs.

If you do this correctly, Google will crawl your account and make it easy for people to search and find you. Once written, run your copy through <http://hemingwayapp.com> It will simplify your writing and clarify it's content for the reader.

Summary Framework

Use one of the following frameworks to separate yourself from the competition. These summaries should focus on the Value, Results and Benefits your Ideal Client will experience.

Short:

I help _____ companies/people
with _____ (problems/challenges)
by providing _____ (products/services)
that have _____ (benefits).

Long:

I believe the fundamental responsibility of YOUR TITLE is to _____

In my mind it is based on three pillars

- 1
- 2
- 3

Without _____
you cannot _____

_____ is not an option.
YOUR TITLE must continue to _____

With dedication, passion and tenacity I believe _____

6. Experience

This is where you place your employment information, both present and past. Use a similar style when choosing a title and authoring your summary. Use your **keywords**, it's your brand. Speak in terms of benefits and results.

"I did XYZ and because of that we earned ABC clients".

If you have an award or visual you can import it into the text. It will bring attention to your profile.

7. Projects

If you're working on a project, be it at work or hobby, mention it here. It could be a work project or it could be a book, blog, or invention.

Describe the project in the context of your keywords. It is another opportunity to prove your skills are current.

Don't divulge proprietary information. You're competition is researching you! Be careful to choose your descriptions wisely.

8. Skills and Endorsements

These are top skills that others endorse your competency. In reality it's not worth much given complete strangers will endorse you for all kinds of skills. They are quick and easy. I have had some close friends endorse me for dog catcher and other silly skills. Lately LinkedIn has lowered the profile of these endorsements. You must scroll to the bottom to see them.

Never request an endorsement. Find others with, similar skills as you, and endorse them. They will return the favor if they truly know you. Don't endorse people you don't know.

If you get 12 people to endorse each skill, you've filled what's displayed. It looks pretty. But most savvy people know it's only a measure of your ability to network.

9. Recommendations

These are powerful statements written in people's own words.

For each position you've held, seek out managers and colleagues who appreciated your work, or the work you're doing now. The best way to get a recommendation is to ask for it.

"I'm working on my LinkedIn account today and would appreciate a recommendation. If you could speak to the benefits and results of my work, I would sincerely appreciate it."

Write a recommendation for one of your contacts. LinkedIn will automatically ask them to recommend you. Only recommend people you respect. They will do the same for you.

10. Volunteer

If you volunteer for an organization that will strengthen your brand add it here. People active in the community are valued and trustworthy.

11. Publications

Anything you've written that would create authority to your brand, can be placed here. This would include published articles, conference presentations, blogs you author, guest posts, eBooks, and published books.

12. Education

Enter your education and the schools you attended. LinkedIn has cataloged all educational institutions. It will base recommendations on people you can connect who attended your school. It will broaden your network.

An education proves you can complete a difficult task with success.

Connecting and Networking

Now that you have your profile complete, it's time to put it to work. Like any kind of networking, you're goal is to provide a terrific first impression. Be warm, friendly, professional and personal. This section will describe how to do this in the virtual world of LinkedIn.

Sending Requests to Connect

Connecting with people on LinkedIn is surprisingly easy. Despite what you might think, people are really quite nice. Always send a personalized connection in the "Note" section. The vast majority of people don't personalize the invite. The phone app seems to drive this bad behavior. A personalized invitation stands out.

Include a personal note:

*"Hi John,
I was reviewing your profile and see that we have
many of the same contacts and a common interests in _____ (INTEREST).
I'd like to add you to my LinkedIn network.
Thanks,
Pat"*

It may take awhile but the majority of people will accept your connection request. This is how to build your network. Many busy people check their LinkedIn account infrequently. Be patient.

Getting An Appointment

Once someone accepts your request to connect send them a message.

Include a personalized response:

*“Hi John,
Thanks for connecting. As I mentioned we have much in common.
I'd like to learn more about you. Do you have a moment for 15 minute
chat on the phone this week?
Thanks,
Pat”*

Set up the phone call and at the time have an agenda of learning about them, the challenges they are facing in their business, the ramifications of the challenges not being met in their business, and what it would look like if those challenges were met.

Think of this in the context of how you can help. Your goal is to see if you can help solve their challenges. Don't talk about you, until you've first learned about them.

Accepting Requests

Sometimes people will connect with you out of the blue! You may think this behavior is sketchy. Especially if they don't add a personalized note. Relax. They could be a prospect. Take a quick look at their profile and accept the request. Immediately send them a personalized message to follow up. If it's a friend, ask them how they're doing. If you can create a dialogue it will strengthen your friendship, and maybe your business.

If you don't know the person, say this:

*“Hi John,
Thanks for reaching out and connecting with me. I appreciate it!
What about my profile did you find of interest?
Thank you,
Pat”*

This open ended question will create a conversation. You will receive a wide array of answers.

- They know someone you know.
- They've seen some of your work and want to get to know you.
- They have some amazing new thing they want to tell you about.
- They want to sell you something (they're one of us)!
- They want to interview you for a job.
- They thought your profile was interesting.

Many people are shy. By taking this extra step you can kick-start the conversation.

How To Network

LinkedIn will look at your connections and make recommendations for you. Review those connections and connect with people you suspect might be prospects. As you add people in your network, the recommendations will become more finely tuned. This Artificial Intelligence at work.

LinkedIn provides ways for you to search and filter for connections too. This searching is based upon the titles and text they've added to their account. This is true of your profile too. It's important to clearly state your brand. It will make it easier for new customers to find you.

You can message (this is similar to sending an email) anyone you connect too.

Use this tool wisely. Ask advice and genuine questions of interest. Never spam. If you become a chronic spammer, LinkedIn will delete your account. That's not a good thing.

Network Forums: Etiquette To Get An Appointment

Treat LinkedIn like a cocktail party. Picture a large room with many people. LinkedIn is a room of 250 million. Begin with people who are close to you.

Start small talk about a common topic. You will do this by messaging them back and forth. After a while, you would exchange business cards at a real cocktail party. In LinkedIn, it's more common to meet at another time on the phone or in person.

Use the message previously mentioned: *"I'd like to have brief chat on the phone to better get to know you"*

Like they say, the hardest part of sales is to get the appointment.

Introductions

If you would like to connect with someone and you don't know them, have a friend introduce you. People trust people you like..

LinkedIn will tell you if one of your connections is a First Degree connection. Reach out to that person. Ask them to make an introduction for you. Scroll to the bottom and you can see your friends connections. Send them a message

"I would like to meet Pat, could you please introduce us to each other?"

Again, people trust people you recommend. You will be considered a skilled networker.

Industry groups

One of my famous quotes comes from the bank robber Willie Sutton. When asked why he robbed banks he quipped *"that's where the money is"*. The same thing holds for you.

On LinkedIn go to groups where your clients hang out. You may be in the tech industry but if your clients are in the energy industry, that's a prime hunting ground.

Groups allow professionals to understand what the hot topics are in their area, socialize with colleagues, ask questions and give helpful answers.

When you enter a group your goal is to engage. **Do not spam** them about your products and services. Add to the conversation be supportive, be a wealth of knowledge, and helpful.

If you are in a group and share a dialogue in the comments, people in that group are likely to agree and meet.

Researching prospects

Cold cold calling people out of the blue isn't necessary in this day and age.

Use LinkedIn to become familiar with a prospect, before you call. Use it's networking capabilities to warm them up. Frame your solutions in the context of their business.

Before calling research their profile for:

- Any content they've created online
- Previous employers
- Competitors of yours they may be using.

Not all of this is on LinkedIn, but a little research goes along way.

Posting and Liking Others Post

Spend a few minutes each day reviewing your news feed. Share articles you find interesting while adding a note that places context on why you shared it. Comment on posts that you like and you will find when you post, people will do so in kind. Give to get.

Author posts too! Post that you write should showcase your brand. This is not Facebook. If you're posting a personal experience, tie it back to your brand and business. In one post I made a video of me harvesting and drying hops. I connected it to the process of "harvesting" prospects and converting them into clients. Be clever!

Articles

Articles are essays containing 500 words plus. Again write about things that showcase your brand. Use the Hemingwayapp to simplify your writing style. Give people profound value. Value could be a key insight that's not obvious. Value could be actionable advice that can be applied immediately.

At the very least, author three articles as proof that you're a polished professional. Show that you're thoughtful and a leader. Make sure each article is a gift of love. Again it's a case of give to get. People can leave comments on your articles and you should too..

Add an image for both posts and articles. Make sure the image aesthetically fits the theme of the article written AND uses the [proper image size](#).

Final Thoughts

Your LinkedIn page is the best platform to promote yourself as a professional, especially if you're in a B2B industry. You can highlight your achievements, your job experience and topics which interest you. It can be used as a platform to advertise your skills, build credibility as a professional and increase your visibility.

B2B and B2C sales is in essence P2P, People to People. People (prospects) buy from people they trust. LinkedIn provides a way for you to build that trust. Articles, posts, videos and images are the tools you will use to create your personal brand.

In summation LinkedIn allows you to truly develop a three-dimensional view of who you are in the real world. Go forth professional and connect!

The Author

Pat Helmers is an international business consultant and technology startup coach. He is the author of the Selling With Confidence sales system and host of the [award winning](#) Sales Babble podcast.

Pat has been in the tech world his entire professional career. Pat started his career as a software engineer for Bell Laboratories. It was there he became an inventor in GSM wireless technologies, earning two patents. He leveraged his expertise and became a trainer for emerging software Object Oriented methodologies, training 1000s of engineers in the USA and Europe. He was promoted and managed various training groups and a technology adoption organization promoting technology transfer.

He then entered the software startup arena, pursuing a career in business development for software startups, enrolling and selling early adopters on new technologies. Eventually Pat was promoted to the Vice President of Sales for an enterprise SaaS startup, building from scratch an inside and outside sales team that generated 8 figure revenues.

Still having the start-up bug, Pat created the *Sales Babble* brand with the [Sales Babble Podcast](#). Sales Babble was created to stop the babble and myth that only pushy salespeople are successful in sales. He believes **anyone** can become skilled in sales. All it take is an attitude of “helping” clients and adding “value” to their lives and businesses. From the podcast sprung his consulting and coaching practice as well as authoring the [Selling With Confidence](#) sales system.

When he’s not podcasting, Pat is a startup business consultant. He helps businesses find prospects that ache for their products, convert those prospects into clients, then scale up that process for phenomenal growth.

Pat enjoys golf, bicycling, history, and world travel. He is an avid father, husband and loyal friend.