

A Step-by-Step Guide to Getting Referrals From Your LinkedIn Connections

LinkedIn has lots of great ways to find the right people in its half a billion person database, but the one that seems to have the biggest wow factor is using the “Connections of” feature to search. Whether I share this technique with individuals or huge audiences, I find that most people don’t know they can do this nor can they believe it’s available on the free LinkedIn account.

If you’re like me and really appreciate receiving referrals from people in your network, you’ll find this feature to be extremely valuable.

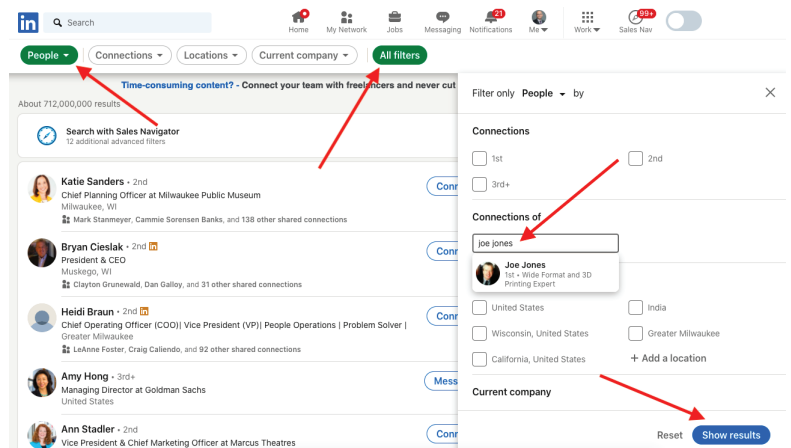
However, it’s not easy to ask the open-ended question, “Who in your network could help me find a job, customer, etc.?” So, rather than putting all the pressure on your connection to come up with the right people, why not use LinkedIn’s “Connections of” feature to find the right people all by yourself.

How to Search Your Connection’s Network

Follow these simple steps, and you’ll quickly discover who might be able to help you achieve your goal.

Put your cursor in the big, white search box in the top toolbar, click your Enter/Return key, and then select *People* from the white toolbar that appears.

Then select *All Filters*. Next, go to the “Connections of” box and type in your connection’s name. When his/her name appears in the drop-down menu, choose that entry, and then click the blue *Show results* button.



Now use any of the other available filters to narrow the search to people at the right company, location, school attended, title, etc.

Caveat: If your connection has chosen to hide their first-level network from their connections, you’ll only be able to see people to whom both of you are connected. But if they are willing to change their “Who can see your connections” setting to “Your connections,” you will be able to perform this search. They could then change their setting back to “Only you” when you have completed your search.

What to do with the Search Results

Review the list that LinkedIn provides for you. If you find people who look interesting to you, check out their profile, and then ask your connection how best to approach the people (through a LinkedIn connection request, phone call, email, in-person meeting, etc.).

The four questions I would ask my connection about the people on the list are:

- Do you know them? (Not everyone knows the people in their network well enough to refer you)
- Do you think they would be interested in hearing about how I might be able to help them? (You're trying to find out if your connection knows them well enough to know their level of interest in what you do)
- Can I use your name and our relationship when I reach out to them? (This is getting their permission to name drop)
- What do you think is the best way to get ahold of them? (Send a customized LinkedIn connection request, email, phone call, etc.)

If you get “Yes” or “You bet” to all three questions, then go ahead, reach out and try to start a new relationship by referring to your mutual connection. The reach-out could take place in the form of a LinkedIn connection request, but you could also use more traditional methods, like a phone call, email, or stopping by for a visit.

If you're like most people, once they learn of this feature, they can't wait to get started and put it to use. What are YOU waiting for? Get started NOW.

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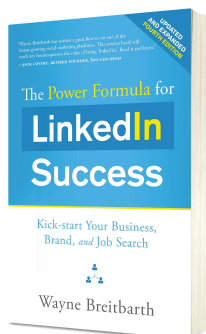
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