# LinkedIn Lessons

*How to Double your Social Connections, Social Influence & Income Using LinkedIn.*

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& Joe Bartling

## *Why I re-wrote this report*

This ebook is an update and revision of *How to Double Your Income in 6 Months Using LinkedIn* written by Joe Bartling, now more than 2 years old. I have unsuccessfully tried to contact him to seek his permission to update this document. His own blog was last updated in 24 Feb 2007 so I am not sure if he's still around.

Anyway I've always been naturally good with connecting with new people, building rapport quickly when meeting them. At the same time I've maintained friendships all the way from primary school to date. When I discovered Joe's ebook I finally understand, scientifically, how to begin realising the potential of my network. Since then I've also become student of communication and influence. In my own business, NETucation, which I started in 2004, I help help people *understand online opportunities* using the **psychology of technology**.

**LinkedIn is a service designed for one purpose:** to help professionals find and connect with one another more effectively. It's not designed to be a portal, sell products on eBay, or search the web for one of a billion innocuous web pages or bargains. I should say up front that I am not a principal, employee or otherwise connected to LinkedIn, Ltd., its investors, or its principals and founders including Reid Hoffman.  I'm just another fan of the technology, and if I were to build one focused on business executives and professionals, it would be exactly what LinkedIn already is.

## *How I Got Started With LinkedIn*

I've been a member of LinkedIn from about 2004. And if I remember correctly my friend and mentor, Arthur Goldstuck, original invited me, and brought it to my attention in an awesome presentation the new You-niverse. However, thanks to Brian Carl Brown, the American Guy (South African Permanent Resident!) who introduced me to Joe Bartling's ebook. After reading this ebook in 2006 I have constantly revised, improved and updated my profile, used it as my professional online resume, expanded my connections, and gained new clients worldwide. This update is in celebration of reaching 1,000 connections in September 2007.

*Now here's Joe Bartling's original story:*

On my way home from work on December 12, 2003, I was fortunate enough to tune in to a "Marketplace" radio broadcast on NPR.1 The show featured a new business networking phenomenon using the web and services such as LinkedIn and Spoke. I went home and checked out both sites. I couldn't successfully register on the Spoke site but my LinkedIn

registration went flawlessly. I was surprised to find only 152 people "LinkedIn" in the Washington, DC area, but over 5,000 in the San Francisco Bay area. I considered myself pretty well connected in Washington, having started a number of businesses here and having a reasonable Rolodex® of influential contacts. After joining up in LinkedIn, I was surprised to see that a number of my influential DC area venture capitalist buddies, most with West Coast connections, were already in LinkedIn.

I contacted a friend of mine, Shannon Henry, who is one of the Washington Post's local technology columnists, and one of the most connected people I know. I told her about LinkedIn, that I had just signed up and that I would keep her informed of my progress. One of her colleagues had done a story a few weeks earlier on the "dating" social networks, like Friendster. I commented that if we could get something going with the influentials in Washington, there could be a local angle. Within a couple of weeks I had over 50 direct connections, was the fourth most "connected" person in the Washington area, and had an accessible network of over 10,000 professionals. I was able to get a number of my fellow CEOs and private venture capital colleagues into LinkedIn. Many of us knew each other from previous local events, and it was great to have a reason to connect again and get reacquainted. Shannon decided to write an article on LinkedIn and my experiences with it on January 15, 2004. She called it "Networking Without the Wine and Cheese".

Of the first 80 people or so who connected to me, about ¼ were people who were current work colleagues, ¼ were people from my church, and the other half were people who I knew from various previous business and personal relationships. Most of the people whom I invited had never heard of LinkedIn, and I had to let them know that it wasn't spam, it didn't cost anything, and that it was a "private", professional network. About half of the people I invited joined. Some politely declined. Some were too busy to check it out, as many told me later. Others just ignored the invitation.


## *What is LinkedIn?*

LinkedIn is a social networking website for business people. Think of it as a Facebook for Professionals. According to their website, "LinkedIn is an online service helping professionals find and connect with one another more effectively. Whether looking for jobs, a lead for that next deal, or seeking out that industry expert, users can make contact with thousands of professionals through a chain of trusted connections."

LinkedIn is all about individual business people connecting with individual business people who have aspirations and inspirations and need others to introduce them to other people. It's a system designed to be private, yet fast and effective. It's designed to be limited, focusing on a small number of quality connection requests per month, not a massive number of unqualified leads. In fact, LinkedIn can do nothing by itself. It must be activated by a motivated member.

LinkedIn provides an excellent service that allows a business professional, like you or me, to manage a network of professional connections. Each member of the network is connected to others through a network of connections. The system determines the size of each member's network by calculating how many people could be reached within 4 directly linked personal introductions.

## Linkedin Answers

This knowledge market service is a new service launched in January 2007 by LinkedIn. It is somewhat similar to Yahoo! Answers or Google Answers (closed down in Dec 2006) and other knowledge markets. However, three things make Linkedin Answers notable:

1. its user base
2. its use of the network topology
3. its "*suggest an expert*" feature.

Because Linkedin is a social network for business people and professionals, so due to its positioning many of its users are experts in their specific areas. Most experts have to specialize to get a deep knowledge in a certain area. As a result, they have to sacrifice knowledge outside of that area. This division of labour makes an ideal environment for a knowledge market.

Linkedin uses its social network to determine whom to ask the questions: the idea here is that you will be more willing to provide answers to the questions of people connected to you. In a sense, this is an affinity market. Relatedness to a person who is asking a question gives stronger motivation and more context to provide a better answer. Using network neighbourhood for question distribution is an interesting innovation of Linkedin.

"Suggest an expert" feature is another innovation of Linkedin Answers. If you don't have any solutions to the problem posted by your neighbour, you can at least suggest someone who knows the answer. This can help resolve the problem and also provides extra information about people expertise that can later be used for better targeting of specific questions. This is a great feature that was absent in the previous implementations of knowledge markets.


## What is Social Networking?

Social networking is the mechanism by which individuals are introduced to each other by mutual relationship. Social networking has been around since the beginning of the human race. Businesspeople use all sorts of mechanism to facilitate social networking including golf club and private club memberships, business mixers, alumni and other community organizations.

The beauty of social networking on the web is that all of the normal barriers to effective networking, such as having to meet at a certain place at a certain time for a certain purpose. Though a round of golf with three other members of a foursome is certainly enjoyable, it takes four people to schedule five hours together at a particular tee time at a particular location. That's hard to do in today's busy business world, unless all you want to do is play golf!


## Why does it work?

LinkedIn works because of a mathematical hypothesis called the *Small-World Phenomenon*. The history of this science goes back to a Hungarian mathematician by the name of Paul Erdos. Around 1929, when Paul Erdos and a virtually unknown writer and poet by the name of Frigyes Karinthy were hanging around in Budapest, Karinthy published a book of 52 short stories in fiction, which translated, was called *Everything Is Different*[1]. One of the stories was translated as

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1   Linked, Albert-Laszlo Barabasi, 2003, pg. 26

*Chains*. The story's fictional character offers a bet that he "could name any person among earth's one and a half billion inhabitants and through at most five acquaintances, one of which he knew personally". And in the story, Karinthy's fictional character links a [Nobel prize winner](#) to himself, noting that the Nobelist must know [King Gustav of Sweden](#) who hands out the Nobel prize, who is in turn an avid tennis player and plays occasionally with a tennis champion who happens to be a good friend of Karinthy's character. Karinthy's 1929 "fictional" premise that people are linked by at most five links was the first known published reference to the concept we know now as "the six degrees of separation". [Stanley Milgram](#), a Harvard professor first coined the "six degrees" term in 1967, elaborating on a ground breaking study on human interconnectivity.

**Six Degrees of Separation – and The Kevin Bacon Game**

Basically, two people who have an immediate network of 100 acquaintances each, who each have 100 acquaintances, have an accessible network of 20,000 people (2*100*100). So, any of the 20,000 people could be reached through only two personal introductions. With three introductions, a network of 2,000,000 people could be reached. With four introductions, a network of 200,000,000 people could be reached. With five introductions, a network of 20,000,000,000 could be reached. Since there are less than 7,000,000,000 people on



earth, everyone on the planet should be reachable through 5 personal introductions. The problem is, nobody knows who knows whom and who needs to pass the introduction on. That's where [LinkedIn](#) comes in. It keeps track of who knows who and maintains a profile of each member that helps people find who they might want to meet or contact.

## *Nodes, Hubs and Links*

In network theory, relationships are modelled using nodes, hubs and links. In LinkedIn, members are "nodes", and the connections between members are "links". When "nodes" start to accumulate more than a few "links", they become "hubs". Some hubs are more "connected" than others, or have more "links" than others. Comparing this mechanism to the worldwide air traffic system, certain cities are more "connected" than others, and they are rightly called "hubs". These are cities such as Johannesburg, London, Tokyo or Sydney. You can fly to and from almost any of thousands of destinations, even to and from the smallest towns by making no more than three hops across these "super-connected" hubs.

**Finding a New Job or a New Spouse – The Concept of "Weak" Ties versus "Strong" Ties**

In 1969, Harvard graduate student [Mark Granovetter](#) penned a study to find out how people

"networked" to find a new job.[2] He interviewed dozens of professionals and managers, asking them who helped them find their present jobs. Was it a friend? He kept getting the same answer. "No, it was not a friend, it was merely an acquaintance." His first research paper was on the importance of weak social ties in our lives. The paper was finally published four years later in May 1973 in the American Journal of Sociology. His paper, The Strength of Weak Ties, is recognized as one of the most influential sociological papers ever written. Granovetter's paper suggests something remarkable and unexpected: When it comes to landing a new job, finding out the latest news or fads, launching a new business, or finding a spouse, our weak social ties are much more important than our long-standing cherished friendships.

Usually, our close friends can offer little help in finding a new job or opportunity. They operate in the same circle of influence that we do and are exposed to much of the same information. To freshen our exposure to new information, we must activate our weak ties, since those ties bridge us to different places, information and experience.[3]

## Why Do Some Have Huge Numbers of Connections? The Power Law

We may think that our social fabric is made up of random connections, where people have approximately an average number of relational links. The number of connections in a random network would follow a Poisson distribution, a nearly bell shape curve around a mean number of connections. The national highway system is represented by a Poisson curve, where the number of routes into and out of each town is fairly predictable around an average number.
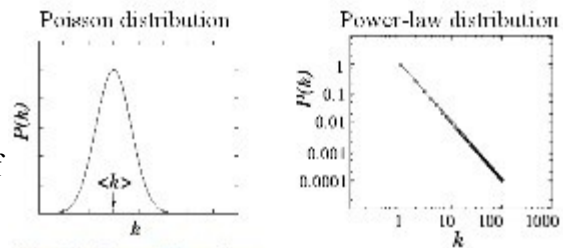


If we actually developed relationships using a random network pattern, we would have a representative sample of close friends from each continent, with as many friends from Asia and Europe as we do in our neighbourhood. The fact is, we really don't add friends individually as much as we add groups of friends. In fact, just as marathon runners in a race clump up into groups over a 42 km course, humans have a tendency to develop friendships clustering in groups. Basically, it means that many of our friends just happen to be friends of each other also. The problem with clustering in the "small-world problem" is that it breeds redundancy[4]. The more of your friends that know each other, the less likely your network of friends can help you in getting a message to someone you don't know. In the science of networks, this is measured by something called the clustering coefficient. The clustering coefficient can range from 0, which means that none of your associated friends know each other, to 1, which means that every one of your friends know each other. Some people have a small number of very close friends, much like the TV sitcom, Friends. Other people have a large number of friends and acquaintances, and seem to make friends easily across groups. Many military families fall into this group, having to move every two to three years results in a low clustering coefficient. Some people are blessed with a knack for making friends out of random encounters. These people tend to be "super-

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2   Linked, Albert-Laszlo Barabasi, 2003, pg. 42
3   Linked, Albert-Laszlo Barabasi, 2003, pg. 43
4   Six Degrees: The Science of a Connected Age, Duncan J. Watts, 2003, Pg. 40

connectors", with a low clustering coefficient and huge number of connected nodes. These "super-connected" people enable our network of associates to function as a system. Without them, our network's effectiveness would be extremely limited to a small number of connected paths. In fact, because there is no real limit to the number of connections someone could have, our social network of relationships is a scale-free network.

The number of links and hubs in a scale-free network follow a power law degree distribution, which is more similar to the airline routing map in that they are held together by a few highly connected hubs. In a power law distribution, it seems that some hubs get most of the links, and it is hard for those with few links to catch up. New flights are added to and from Johannesburg all the time, where new flights in and out of the Port Elizabeth airport are rare. This is true for a number of reasons:

The main reason is that, all other things being equal, a new node seeking to link to a hub will select a more connected hub than one with fewer connections. You'll find this to be true in your LinkedIn experience. You'll seek out those with larger numbers of connections, than those with fewer connections. In a system defined by number of connections, higher quality is assumed for those with more connections, even if that quality is not warranted. In practice, it works out that way. Those with few connections are not motivated to connect to others in the system, or even respond to requests. Those with many connections have a proven history of taking the system seriously and managing their connections well.
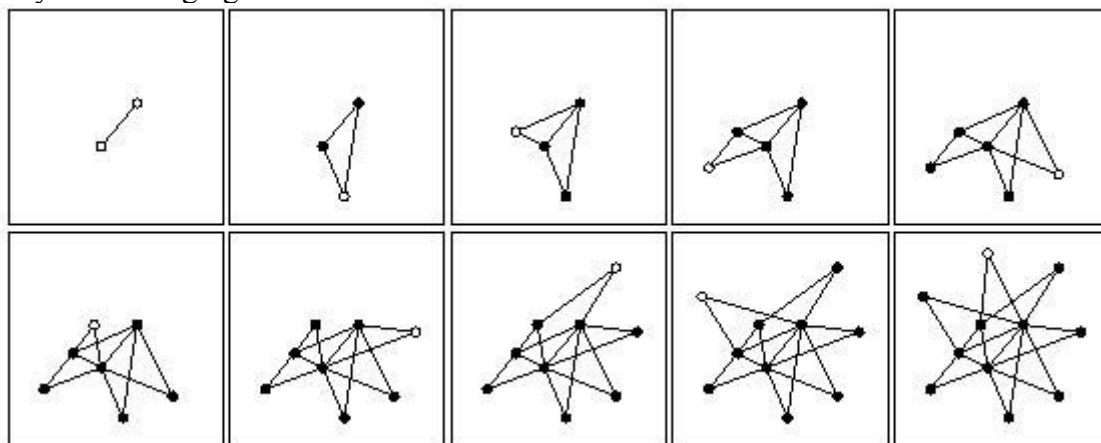


*The Birth of a Scale-Free Network*

The scale-free topology is a natural consequence of the ever-expanding nature of real networks. Starting from two connected nodes (top left), in each panel a new node (shown as an empty circle) is added to the network. When deciding where to link, new nodes prefer to attach to the more connected nodes. Thanks to growth and preferential attachment, a few highly connected hubs emerge[5].

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5   http://www.nd.edu/~hjeong
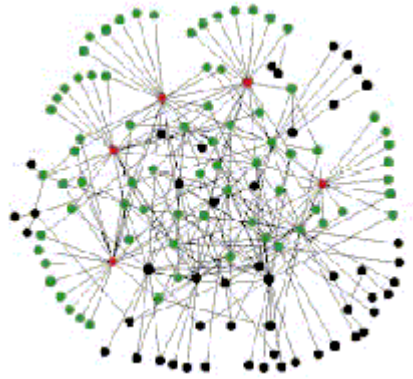
A scale-free network of 130 nodes generated by the scale-free model. The five biggest nodes are shown in red, and they are in contact with 60% of nodes (green)[6].

Another reason some people acquire more connections than others is that they have simply been around longer than others and have had more opportunities to have new nodes connect to them. Since I was one of the first people in the Washington area to be LinkedIn, anyone who has searched LinkedIn for people in the Washington area, has retrieved my profile, somewhere up near the top. Just being there, available for linking sooner rather than later, attracts additional links.

According to Guy Kawasaki, a marketing legend, people with more than twenty connections are thirty-four times more likely to be approached with a job opportunity than people with less than five[7]. And Joe originally said as long as you have more than the average number of connections, about 10, you will attract more connections. But, the more connections you have relative to the average, the faster you will accumulate additional connections.

## So How Can I Compete With Those With So Many Connections?

Well, the good news is that you don't have to. Just as living in a small city doesn't keep you from flying to any place you need to in the world via the air traffic system, it really doesn't matter that you don't have a massive number of connections. Just make sure you get connected to some of those who do. As long as you can get to Johannesburg or London in one hop, you can fly anywhere quite efficiently.

## So How Can I Attract More Connections?

Like it or not, new nodes are attracted to link to other nodes based on preferential attachment. According to Barabasi, a simple way to understand this phenomenon is to assume that the process of preferential attachment is driven by the product of the node's fitness and the number of links it has. Each new node decides where to link by comparing the fitness connectivity product of all available nodes and linking with a higher probability to those that have a higher product and therefore are more attractive. Between two nodes that have the same number of links, the fitter one acquires links more quickly. If two nodes have the same fitness, the older one still has an advantage[8].

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6   http://www.nd.edu/~networks
7   http://blog.guykawasaki.com/2007/01/ten_ways_to_use.html
8   Linked, Albert-Laszlo Barabasi, 2003, pg. 96

The best way to attract more LinkedIn connections to you is to improve your node's "*fitness*". Fitness is the quality of your node. In LinkedIn, your fitness is your profile. Your profile attracts people to you. By populating your profile with explanative narrative including lots of powerful searchable keywords, your profile will be retrieved by more people searching for those keywords. Each time your profile is retrieved and displayed, you'll have an opportunity to be connected or contacted by another node.

You'll want to populate your profile with each of your current and previous employment positions. If you hold office or volunteer in a community group, put it in as a position. If you are the president or even a member of your local Kiwanis or Lions club, put it in. Others who search for Kiwanis or Lions will find you and potentially want to connect with you. If you served in the Armed Forces, went to a particular college, or lived in a particular area of the country, put it in. If you sold products to high-profile clients, list them. Company names are just additional search words that can improve your chance of getting found. But whatever you do, tell the truth. Filling your profile with a bunch of junk words just to get search hits will be obvious and will turn people off.

You can also improve your node's fitness by having endorsements. Though endorsements don't have a significant impact on your nodes searchability, if you have 100 connections and 10 endorsements, and another node has 100 connections and no endorsements, you will attract more connections, all other things being equal.

## Don't Be Boring!

It's tempting to just put in your current job title and not much information. But if you do, you will find that LinkedIn will not help you at all. If you write it like a resume, people might think you are just looking for a job. Write your profile as if you are telling someone the most important things about you, which may have nothing to do with your job. If you are an avid family man, an angler, or like to skydive, or collect Pez dispensers, put it in your profile. People who read your profile want to find out what you are like, not what you do.

## *How I Use LinkedIn*

You can get as much out of [LinkedIn](#) as you put into it. If you want to contact people about your new work-at-home business opportunity, or for people to sell insurance to, you'll find quickly that you will be stifled at every turn. Most of us are loathe forwarding a blatant solicitation to a trusted colleague.

I'm looking to expand my network of people who can help me with my educational programmes to schools, community groups and non-profit organisations in South Africa. I am also passionate about telling people about the joys personal development, giving to yourself so that you can overflow, before give to others. Joe has adopted three daughters and a son who were born blind. And he is passionate about telling people that 80% of blindness around the world is preventable and how we can do more to help those less fortunate. I know that you are passionate about other things and I am always interested in finding out how I can help people in what they are passionate about.

I have found that by helping others reach their goals or by helping them connect to others who can help, I've been brought in on many opportunities that would have never found me under "normal" circumstances. These opportunities have caused me to prosper in ways far beyond my imagination, including financial and social rewards.

You may choose to use LinkedIn in different ways than me, but I encourage you to serve others in the network, and try to help others rather than focusing on our own needs. I've read that former President Lyndon Johnson had a jar on his desk with notes of the favours he had done for people over the years. Any time he needed a favour, he just had to pick out one of the notes, and make a call, reminding the person of the favour he had done for him in the past.

## *Why LinkedIn and not Facebook, MySpace or another service?*

LinkedIn is focused on professional business people and the need for those professional business people to have trusted connections to each other. Facebook originated among college/university students in America, and even though older people, who are in turn professionals are adopting it, its focus is mostly on the social/family side of these professionals. MySpace, even with it's 200 million members currently, is a haven for kids, and focussed around people in the entertainment industry. So in fact if you are a musician or actor, it is worth setting up profile like I've done for Khwezi Kekana, the first South African Idol's finalist, to receive an international recording deal.

## 10 Days to LinkedIn Mastery

### Day 1 - Step 1- Start your Network

If you haven't done so already, go to LinkedIn and sign up. You may also have received an email invitation from someone you know – just accept it. This is important because your network will begin by adding the personal network of the person who invited you. When new people accept my email invitation, over 423,614 people are added to their network immediately, because they are tapping into the first two "degrees" of my network.

If you are brand new, and have never received an invitation, just click on the "Join Now" on the home page. The registration page asks you for some identifying information about you, such as your first name, last name, email address, password, country, postal code. Make sure you enter this information accurately; as the accuracy of searches depends on the information you enter. Enter your name the way people are likely to search for you. If people know you as "Bob Johnson", enter that. Don't enter "Robert T. Johnson, Jr.". Your postal (zip) code is used to identify your geographical region, and is never disclosed precisely.

You'll need to enter your employment status, whether you are employed, are business owner, looking for work, working independently or a student. You'll need to select an industry from the drop-down box. Choose carefully but know you can always change it later if you find a more accurate description. Next specific your most recent education details, which is optional.

You should review the user agreement and privacy policy to make sure you are aware of the terms and conditions of the service before proceeding. Once you register, you'll be presented with your LinkedIn home page.

### Day 1 – Step 2 – Familiarise yourself with the LinkedIn home page

Across the top of the page, there are 6 menu options: **Home, People, Jobs & Hiring, Services, Answers, My Profile, My Contacts.** Each of the menu options has sub items, and you'll want to learn how to navigate around to find out where things are.



Your LinkedIn "Home" page is your portal to your network. If you have items that need attention, your "Inbox" will list items that require your attention. This is where you will be notified if you have pending requests, either to accept contact, forward a request, or provide status about your contacts or requests. LinkedIn keeps a tickler of items and reminds you if you should act on a particular request, or need to provide a rating for a previous contact.

Acting on the "Action Items", removes them your "Inbox" and you can in fact just choose to archive them if you don't want to respond.

The "Home" menu option always brings you back to your [LinkedIn home page](). The information on the page is customized for you. Along the left side of the page are updates from your Inbox and Network Updates. Along the right side is some [Google Ads](), one of the ways LinkedIn generates income, and below that a new feature, "Who has viewed my profile?"

Just below the menu items you can search your network for People, Jobs and Answers. Advanced Search brings up a new page with detailed search criteria. This is where some of the power within LinkedIn lies. And one tip, when you search by "Number of Connections" you will often find the most connected person, who is most likely to be the best person for what you need. Remember to read the profiles in detail, including recommendations.

## Connections

The next box down is the "Connections" status box. This shows at a glance the number of direct connections you currently have, along with the count, names and profile links of those who have connected to you in the last week. Your current "browse network" option status is also shown. This option, when activated allows people who are directly connected to you to view the list of people of all the other people who are directly connected to you. Since you want your network to expand, you will want to activate this option.

## Endorsements

The next box down is the "Endorsements" status box. This box tells you how many endorsements your connections have given you.

## Profile

The "Profile" box gives you a link to "add a past position" to add to your profile. It also reports on the status of your "request settings", and whether or not you will allow people to contact you from beyond four degrees away. Again, because we WANT people to contact us, you'll want to activate that capability as well.

The right side of your home page mostly lists general information and links to LinkedIn "how-to" pages.

## Your Network

The middle of the right side, though, is an informative box that breaks down the tally of "Your Network". These numbers will be increasing daily as your network grows.

Clicking on the links for people in your region or in your industry will execute a search based on those criteria. One of the mistakes people make about the network is assuming that the numbers that they are seeing is the entire LinkedIn network. The numbers you see relate only to you. There are many more members of LinkedIn who are beyond your network because they are

more than four degrees away from you and have chosen not to be contacted directly. Getting these members into your viewable network is your goal, and we'll work on that later.

## Account

The other option at the top of the "Home" page is for "Account" information. The account information page lets you update your first and last name, your location and zip code, and how you want your name to appear. The option to have your connections browse your connections is also here. Set it to "yes" if you want your network to grow.

## Search

Back to the next Main menu option identified as "Search". Search is your window to list the names and synopsis of people who meet your search criteria. The results list is always limited to the first 500 of your search results, so you may want to be specific in your search. One of the things I do every day is to search for people "located in or near" my zip code, who have joined in the last day. My network expands by several hundred people in the DC area every day, and I want to make sure I've glanced through the new members daily so that I can invite them to join my network. If I wait more than a day to do this, the results list is more than 500 so there are times that I miss people if they aren't in the first 500 displayed. The "Sort search results by" dropdown gives you four different result orders: "Number of endorsers", "Degrees away from you", "Number of connections", and "Keyword relevance". I use "Numbers of connections" most often because I want the list of the most energetic LinkedIn members to be listed first in my search results.

I rarely use the "Name", "Title", "Company" or "Industry" search boxes. I just use the "Search: all users" for "blahblah", and let 'er rip. It sometimes helps to know the stock symbol of companies, though a lot of people don't put them in their profiles. I searched for "ORCL" and got 21 hits, then searched for "oracle" and got 29,006 hits. We'll go into search strategies in a little while when we are looking for connections or for
people to contact.

## Profile

Clicking on the "Profile" main menu option will display your current profile in an "edit" view. This view allows you to manage the information displayed on the page and allows you to add information by clicking on the "Change summary information" link, "Add a position" in the "Experience" section, or "Manage endorsements" for your current position. To edit the information for a particular position, just click on the "Title" of that position. We'll get into the detail of adding your profile information later.

On the main "Profile" page is a submenu including the options "Profile", "Endorsements", and "Contact Settings". The "Profile" submenu is just a button to get you back to your main "Profile" page if you happen to navigate to one of the other submenu pages.

## Endorsements

The "Endorsements" submenu page under "Profile" lists information about your endorsements by positions. More about endorsements later.

## Contact Settings

Your contact settings indicate to LinkedIn members what type of contacts are appropriate for you to receive, how members can contact you, your reason for using the LinkedIn network, and a place for your to describe what you are looking for and what members need to provide to you when they attempt to contact you.

## Address Book

The "Address Book" option is a major menu option that you will be using often. The main view of this, the "Connections" submenu, lists your current connections, their names, headings, with their numbers of connections in alphabetical order. If your connections have allowed their connections to browse their own connections, the count of the number of connections will be highlighted. Clicking on that number will bring up that member's list of connections for browsing. You will be browsing your connections' connections often as you build your own network.

Other submenus under the "Address Book" menu are "Sent Invitations", "Other Contacts", "Received Invitations" and "Settings".

"Sent Invitations" lists the names, dates and status of invitations that are outstanding. Once someone "accepts" your invitation, they are removed from this list and added into your "AddressBook: Connections" view. "Other Contacts" is an address book to keep track of contacts entered automatically via a Microsoft Outlook import, or enterer in by hand or through an upload from another personal information management system. "Other Contacts" lets you know whether someone is in your LinkedIn network or not. "Received Invitations" is the place where you can manage invitation requests you have not acted upon. Once you act on them, by either accepting or declining the connections, they are removed from this view. The "Settings" submenu option lets you limit connection request to people in your address book. If you want your network to grow, you'll want to turn "Off" the invitation block by clicking the "No" button, which will allow invitations to come to you from people outside your contact list.

## Network

The "Network" menu displays the summary information about your network. It breaks down your network into how many are within each "degree" from you, and characterizes your network in terms of geography, industry and regions.

## Requests

The "Requests" main menu option displays information about the incoming, outgoing and forwarded requests pertaining to your network. It contains an additional submenu option called "Forwarded Requests", which you can use to manage the status of

requests you have forwarded on behalf of other members of your network.

## Day 1 – Step 3 - Build your initial profile

When you "Add a position", LinkedIn will ask you to identify the organization information such as name and industry, your title, your start and end date of the position, and a "description" of the position. If you check the button that says "Still in this position", LinkedIn will dynamically display the length of time you have been in the position without you having to change it every month.

In the "Change summary information" page, you will have the opportunity to add your professional "headline". This is the information that is displayed in people's address book or when they browse other people's connections. LinkedIn provides a default value for this based on your "current" job title, but you should change yours to be more exciting and informative.

You can then select a "primary industry of expertise" from the drop-down box. The next box gives you an opportunity to enter some valuable information. LinkedIn asks you: "What particular specialities do you have in your industries of expertise?" This text box gives you exactly 500 characters of text to define keywords and phrases that are the key to your profile's searchability. You will want to use keywords, separated by commas, and not use fluff words like "the" and "and" or others words that will never be searched on.

**Here's what mine says:**

*speaker, motivation, inspiration, NLP, training, trainer, marketing, research, interview, skills, online, research, communication, presentations, social, intelligence, behaviour, internet, security, safety, presentation, psychology, promotion, sales, direct, copywriting, facilitation, workshops, seminars, 2010, south africa, keynote, dating, coach, seduction, Johannesburg, mxit, blogging, blogger, networking, linkedin, adsense, seo, podcast, ted, Cape Town, mobile, cellphone*

That's 479 characters. Also make sure you don't use redundant words like "internet marketing", "internet advertising", "business marketing" in the list. They just use up characters and don't help your search results. You could enter "Internet, marketing, advertising, business" and you would get exactly the same results and use 42 characters instead of 60, saving you 18 characters you can use for other keywords.

The next section asks, "Write a brief overview of your professional experience and goals". This section gives you exactly 2,000 characters for you to explain what you do and what makes you an interesting person. You don't have to explain your job duties, because you can cover that in one of your "position descriptions". This area is your opportunity to show off your writing ability and entice the reader to get to know you more. My recommendation is to write this overview and your position descriptions (later) in first person, using "I", "We", "My", etc. This is not a resume, it's your profile. First person adds a personality quality to your writing.

Here's what I put in my overview, using 1,820 characters:

> *My mantra is understanding the Psychology of Technology. My broad research interests is how the technology impacts relationships romantically, inside the family unit and in*

*the workplace. My unique ability is always communicating the big picture to help people solve problems.*

*As a speaker I serve my audience being both informative and entertaining. Recently I joined the National Speakers Association, while being a member of Toastmasters since 2006. My upcoming events include invited keynotes at:*

*- World Wide Web Applications, 2007 (http://www.uj.ac.za/www2007)*
*- 2nd annual Digital Citizens Indaba (dci.ru.ac.za)*

*My ebook include:*
1. *LinkedIn Lessons*
2. *Parents' Guide to MXit (a cellphones based chat application)*
3. *Your First Job (a guide to transitioning from student to the workplace)*
4. *3. Social or Single (a guide to dating in the 21st century)*

*My seminars include:*

*1. Blogging for Business - for journalists, PR & media professionals and anyone else who's job it is to communicate with clients, readers or subscribers.*
*2. Social Networking - for recruitment professionals, freelances, contractors, consultants and anyone else who is a self-employed professional and wants to expand the way he or she finds new clients, partners.*
*3. Social or Single - a seminar for men and women on how to create a social life that brings new people into their social circle, expands their dating opportunities and how to create, conduct and be congruent in dating and relationships.*

*My original research projects include Online Dating in South Africa, the Internet Cafe Industry, which forms the basis for my Masters and MXit.*

*Media interviews: CNBC Africa, 3Talk, Carte Blanche, Rights & Recourse, eTV Morning Edition, Weekend Love, SAFM, 702, Cape Talk, Goodhope FM, Kaya FM, Business Day, Financial Mail, Mail & Guardian, Fairlady, Cosmopolitan and more.*

...

Its okay to use the line breaks like I've used to make the summary readable. They only count as one character in the count. Also, remember that every word you put in is searchable, so again, make sure to keep your text tight, non-repetitive, precise and textually rich.

When you're finished with that, click the "Save Changes" button and you are well on your way to having a "fit" profile. Don't worry about getting everything perfect. You'll have time later when you are waiting for people to respond to your invitations and requests to "fine tune" your profile as you find additional keywords you'll want to incorporate into your profile.

Now back to "add a position". On the "Profile" page, you can add any position that you want. The positions can be employment positions, or any other type of position you want to add. Lots of LinkedIn members put in voluntary positions and advisory positions such as board of director positions. Your profile will list all of your positions in reverse chronological order, starting with

your current and most recent position. In the "Describe this position" box, you have 1,000 characters to describe the position. If the position is important to your profile, fill in as much detail as you like. If it's not important, just briefly describe the position. Remember that this is not a resume. Make sure you communicate the things that you learned in that position that make you a better person today, or how that position led you to the next step up the career ladder.

If you want to see what your profile looks like when others, click on the link that says: "*View your profile as other users see it*". This will show the "read-only" version, just as if other people clicked on your name in a list of search results. The link displayed in the URL on this page is the direct link to your profile, though only other LinkedIn users can use it. Mine is http://www.linkedin.com/profile?viewProfile=&key=782165 indicating I was the 782,165[th] person to join LinkedIn.

Your profile is what people will see when they click on your name. When people do searches in LinkedIn, they will retrieve a synopsis of network members who match the search criteria. It's important that you build a profile that is both deep and wide.


## Day 1 – Step 4 – Start building your network

Invite your core list of people. Think of your top 50. You may be tempted to just upload your Microsoft Outlook address book and press enter to invite everyone, BUT DON'T.

The first thing you need in building your network is the list of people to invite. One of the mistakes people make in coming up with their list is to "pre-qualify" the list. That is, they try to pre-judge what someone you know might do with the invitation. It's easy to justify NOT sending an invitation to someone. Before you figure out whether you will send an invitation, try coming up with a bunch of lists of names of people by brainstorming about the "clusters" of groups that you are a member of. Don't worry about their email addresses or phone numbers at this stage, just come up with a list. You can start with your address book in Outlook, your PDA or your Christmas card list. You'll get around to all of your acquaintances by the time you are finished.

Write all of the names down somewhere so you can mark them off as you find their email addresses and invite them one-by-one to join your network. Refer to the lists often as needed.

I've heard of people wanting to build a certain "type" of network. The problem is, you don't know who your friends know, so you can't prejudge how your network will turn out by selectively inviting just a few people. And since most of the important things in life are as a result of "weak" social ties, according to Granovetter, it makes no sense to limit the size and scope of your network. First off, understand that everyone you know will not accept your invitation. I've sent hundreds of invitations to people I know and about a third to half will accept. The others will come around at some point in the future, as their other friends start to invite them as well. I've had people act on an invitation six months after I sent it, simply because it took that long for a few other people to invite them and they realized that the network wasn't just me.

Make lists of people in groups. For example, list the names of everybody you know:
- ✔ People you know in you neighbourhood
- ✔ People at your job

- ✔ People who you know through church and other groups
- ✔ People with whom you socialize
- ✔ People who you know through your kids' school
- ✔ People who you know through your kid's activities
- ✔ People whose businesses you frequent; bank, shops, coffee, grocery, dry cleaner
- ✔ People who you knew at your last job, and the one before that, etc
- ✔ People you know through your spouse
- ✔ People you went to school with
- ✔ People you grew up with
- ✔ People who are related to you, close and far away

Once you have the lists, you are ready to start inviting them to join your network. Each invitation you send should have your personal touch to it.

When I first joined LinkedIn, there were several different pre-written invitation you could choose to send based on your relationship with the person. Today there is one very short one, which I do believe works well. The default subject line is "Invitation to connect on LinkedIn" and for those who are not familiar with LinkedIn you should add in a one line introduction like "this website has helped me find new business, new partners, new clients"

You can also try the following line:

*Hey John,*

*I was going through some notes and came across your name, which prompted me
to think of you. How are things? I've been using LinkedIn to connect up with
some former colleagues. Hope you'll join up with me there.*

*Regards,*
*Ramon*

The big challenge: Finding out people's email addresses. I could make a living as an investigator of email addresses. If someone has a "web personality", they are usually pretty easy to find. CEOs and people who have their own business are pretty easy to find too. But these days, people just don't publicize their email addresses like they did in the old days (like 2-3 years ago). Spammers have harvested these older addresses off the web and most of them are no longer functional.

Here are some methods to finding out email addresses of people who you know but don't know their email addresses:

1. If you don't have someone's email in a list or address book somewhere, try using Google to search for his or her name. If you search Google for my name in quotes "Ramon Thomas", you'll find a post or two that will give away my email address. But then, I've been pretty active on the web, so I knew I could be found there. You may have to surf a few pages to make sure it's the right person you are looking for. You may just get lucky and get it the first time looking.
2. If you know someone who has a website domain name, but their email address isn't on the site, you can do a WHOIS lookup to see who the definitive email contacts are for that

domain name. Although there are many services available, I use [Network Tools](#) or [Godaddy](#). A GoDaddy WHOIS lookup of my domain name, [ramonthomas.com](#), reveals that the administrator is none other than me, [ramon@netucation.co.za](#) and in South Afirca you can start with [co.za](#) for any domains ending in .co.za

3. Some companies use a standard email scheme, such as john.doe@companyname.com. You can find out how most company's email scheme is set up by searching Google for "mailto companyname.com". "Mailto" is the HTML code for an email hyperlink, and email addresses returned will clue you in to the format of how that company's email system is set up. John Doe at Company.Com could be one of many formats:
   • jdoe@company.com
   • johndoe@company.com
   • j.doe@company.com
   • j_doe@company.com

Searching to find the valid email address format for the company name you are looking for will clue you in as to what email format to use.

## Day 2 - Step 5 – Complete your profile as far back as you can

You can use your resume as a starting place, but whatever you do, don't put up your resume in its current form. LinkedIn is not a resume posting service, and most of the people you connect with have no interest in hiring you. People want to know where you've been and when, so they might be able to figure out *if* you know whom they may be able to get in touch with. In other words, you may not be, and are probably not, the *end* target for someone's search. Since *everybody* is not on LinkedIn (at least yet .), you have to trust that someone who is wanting to contact you may be trying to get to someone whom you have a relationship with, but who is not currently on LinkedIn.

Use all of the companies and commonly known keywords you can to help someone find you. I worked at "NASA" for "EG&G" and "CSC" and "Grumman" on the "Space Shuttle" and the "Space Station" at "Kennedy Space Center" in "Florida". If I just listed, "EG&G, KSC, FL" in my profile, the chances of anyone ever finding me in a search are basically nil. Don't just put your employment positions. If you are "Chairman of the Paducah Symphony" as a volunteer, or elected member of your local School Board, put it in as a position. Fill in what you do; there may be other symphony fans or other school board members around the world who might want to know you.

By the time you fill in your profile all the way back, the people you invited the day before will be checking out your profile online, and they will see that you are serious about this and not "wasting their time" with your invitation.

You will also probably get calls from your invitees, saying, "Hey, I never knew you worked at XYZ, do you know Bob X.?" It's amazing how much we don't know about each other, even our closest friends and associates. Using LinkedIn properly can improve the quality and depth of your relationships, not just expand the quantity of them.

## Day 3 - Step 6 – Expand your invitations to your "weak ties"

Try to invite 200 people the first week. As you come into contact with people throughout the week, or people come to mind, invite them to LinkedIn. By then you should have a number of connections and networking will be considered to be one of your attributes, as it rightly should be. Inviting people shows that you are interested in them and that you'd like to strengthen your networking relationship.

## Day 4 - Step 7 – Provide endorsements for all of your strong ties (direct connections).

You should shoot for writing an endorsement for every single person you know well. Not everyone will reciprocate, but if you'll offer to endorse someone, they will be likely to endorse you, which is a good thing.

## Day 5 - Step 8 – Search your LinkedIn network for people you might know (or should know) and find out how to connect up with them

Now that you have contributed to the LinkedIn network by offering your profile, your contacts and your time, you can now ask the network what it might have to offer you in the area of connections.

The purpose of this step is to expand your number of connections to people who you know or have mutual contacts and offer to share networks. People who have multiple connections on LinkedIn and have a profile are more likely to connect with you or respond to your requests. So, it's a good idea to have your search lists sorted by number of connections, so you can focus your time on the people most likely to respond to you.

Initiate requests through LinkedIn, expressing your interest in connecting, and offering "whatever you can to help" in their endeavours. Remember, its not about you. You should be "offering" something of value, even if its "just your network" to your contacts, not asking them to be interested in you!

You can search LinkedIn by a number of different ways to help find potential linkmates:

• Use your current zip code first (look for local businesses or influential people in your region)
• Expand your search to places you used to live
• Search for any company you have ever worked for or worked with
• See if you can find colleagues, neighbours, former neighbours, former business associate, college buddies, and invite them to join your network

## Day 6 - Step 9 – Search your LinkedIn network for people you'd like to meet

Look for people with interests, profession, career paths, etc. and request contact. Make sure that your profile reflects your request. In other words, don't say, "I used to work at XYZ, and I see you are there now", unless you have XYZ in your profile. It would be considered rude to find someone by their search words, but if people could not find you

with the same keywords. I always look at a person's profile who desires to connect with me; I want to see if they are serious about both giving to and taking from the network.

## Day 7 - Step 10 – Manage your request and invitations promptly

By now, you're receiving invitation requests, and forwarding requests. Since people in the network are limited to the number of requests outstanding at a time, your procrastination in handling requests affects more than just you. Managing requests promptly will encourage the people in your request chains that you are serious about connecting people together and have their interests, and time at heart.

## Day 8 - Step 11 – Meet people (in person) who are just above you in your geographical area in numbers of connections

Set up in-person meetings with people, after all, that is why God invented Mugg & Bean/Starbucks on every corner! Just meet to say "hello" and put a face with a name. Short 15-20 minute meetings are great, especially for busy people. If you are doing the inviting, **BUY THE COFFEE!** By meeting "up", the contact will be more likely to meet up with you as a "mentor" and might have some "sage" LinkedIn advice. And maybe not! But, make the most of the meeting and keep doing it.

## Day 9 - Step 12 – Offer to use your network and efforts to help others in what they are doing, not just pitch your own agenda.

You get out of this what you put into it. In the end, helping others is the goal, not helping yourself. I fyou are in LinkedIn only for the "next big deal" for you, you may end up disappointed. LinkedIn is not a "lead" generation system and should not be treated as one.

## Day 10- Step 13 – Spend 15-30 minutes a day from now on expanding your LinkedIn network

Integrate LinkedIn activites into your daily business routine. When you meet people, look them up in LinkedIn, and invite them, if they are there, or if they are not. Meet up with others who enjoy connecting with others on LinkedIn. Many of them also use Ecademy, and there is an active MyLinkedIn Power Forums Yahoo Group.

## *SUMMARY*

Whether you can use LinkedIn to double your income in six months or not is up to you. It just so happened that the title of this report was a "working title" and never got changed. LinkedIn is a powerful tool that can be used to manage your relationships and increase your effectiveness in the marketplace. It can be a tremendous asset when you need an answer and have no one to turn to. It can be used for great and altruistic ventures, or it can be used by leeches and smarmy characters. Together, if we commit to a high quality of character and responsiveness, LinkedIn can be the premier tool that every, serious professional business person uses daily to enhance their productivity and fruitfulness in life.

I hope that you find your richest blessings in connecting with others. I invite you to connect with me on LinkedIn: Send your invitation to ramon@ramonthomas.com and let me know your thoughts about this ebook.

## *RESOURCES*

This ebook is only an introduction to social networking for business people. You can explore the following additional resources once you've mastered the strategies contained in here:

The Connections Show (Podcast) - Stan Relihan examines how to use social networking tools like LinkedIn to build your business network.
http://connections.thepodcastnetwork.com/

LinkedIn Tricks for Networkers, Job Hunters and Hirers
http://time-blog.com/work_in_progress/2007/06/linkedin_tricks_for_networkers.html

Venture Voice #40 interview with Reid Hoffman:
http://www.venturevoice.com/2006/11/vv_show_40_reid_hoffman_of_lin.html

Marketing Voices, a podcast with several interviews focussed on social networking:
http://www.marketingvoices.com/index.php?s=social+networking

Guy Kawasaki on LinkedIn:
http://blog.guykawasaki.com/2007/01/ten_ways_to_use.html
http://blog.guykawasaki.com/2007/04/linkedin_and_th.html
http://blog.guykawasaki.com/2007/01/linkedin_profil.html

Smart Ways to Use LinkedIn
http://www.linkedintelligence.com/smart-ways-to-use-linkedin/

A Master Class Podcast on LinkedIn with Shally Steckerl
http://www.totalpicture.com/content/view/469/154/

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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR: RAMON THOMAS

Ramon Thomas is an expert in the psychology of technology. An entrepreneur with an uncanny knack for spotting global online trends and translating them into meaningful insights in South Africa. His pioneering research into the Online Dating industry and MXit has positioned him as an authority on online behaviour in South Africa.

The author of the numerous ebooks including *Facebook Fears*, *LinkedIn Lessons*, *Parents Guide to MXit* and *Social or Single*. He holds a BSc in Computer Science, a Post Graduate Diploma in Information Management and is currently completing a Masters in Information Science at the University of Johannesburg.

Previously he worked in the ISP and Banking industries on projects in Johannesburg, Cape Town, England and United Arab Emirates. After a brief stint as a Senior Consultant wit Deloitte, he moved to Abu Dhabi, UAE, to implement a complete online banking solution for the National Bank of Abu Dhabi. From 2004 to 2006 he has worked with his mentor, Arthur Goldstuck.

**Media Interviews:** CNBC Africa (twice), 3Talk (twice), Rights & Recourse (SABC3), Carte Blanche (MNET), eTV Morning Edition (4 times), SABC2 Weekend Live, SAFM, RSG, 702, Cape Talk, Goodhope FM, Kaya FM, Financial Mail, Business Day, Sunday Times, Sunday Independent, Reader's Digest, Cosmopolitan, Fairlady, Weekend Post, Argus and many more.

Ramon is a member of Toastmasters, National Speakers Association, Computer Society, Internet Society and Science Fiction South Africa. In his spare time he enjoys Tai Chi, classical music, reading, hiking, salsa, stand-up comedy, theatre, sketching.

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