

## **4 LinkedIn Mistakes – Have You Made One?**

Aside from the basic rules of engagement LinkedIn has established, here are a few other courtesies to remember while making the most of your LinkedIn experience. Follow these points and you'll be sure to get the most out of LinkedIn—and you'll avoid aggravating other users in the process. Here are four mistakes to avoid while using LinkedIn:

### **BLINDLY REQUESTING CONNECTIONS WITH NO MUTUAL BENEFIT**

On Facebook you can request new friendships with anybody at all. It's a social network of friends, and if you want to be friends you simply make a request. With LinkedIn you're making a 'connection' that will hopefully create a mutually beneficial networking opportunity later on down the line. Be strategic when deciding with whom you will connect, and explain to the person why you want to connect; what's in it for them—and what's it in for you? Don't request to connect with just anyone at all; understandably, people will want to know *why* you are requesting the opportunity to connect. So provide a brief sentence or two explaining what you think a mutual connection can bring to both parties.

### **NOT BEING TRUTHFUL ABOUT WHY YOU WANT TO CONNECT**

If it's being brought up, it's because people have done it. Others have complained about it. It's hard sometimes to establish a connection with someone when LinkedIn only allows you certain ways to request connections. That being said, you should still be truthful in why you want to connect. If the purpose of networking is to create mutual connections that may help either party in the future, do you really want to start that connection with mistrust or deceit? The most frequent use of this is presenting yourself as a 'friend' of someone or 'colleague at XYZ organization' when you really are not. It's not going to get you the connection, and in the end you're going to be perceived as being dishonest—and who wants to connect or potentially help someone who isn't honest?

### **PROFILE CONTENT IS NOT A REPRODUCTION OF YOUR RESUME**

This mistake is so well ingrained in users that you're now probably experiencing some disbelief. Don't just copy and paste your resume into your LinkedIn profile. Here's why: When you network with someone in person do you give them a word-for-word rundown from your resume of what you've done? No, you personalize the conversation and speak in the first person. It is a more casual conversation—not as formal as your resume. Your profile should be keyword-rich so that recruiters can find you if

they're performing a search, but it should also be authentic and sincere, as though you're talking to the person about what you've accomplished.

## **KEYWORDS ARE NOT JUST FOR RESUMES**

Recruiters and hiring managers are performing searches on LinkedIn for qualified candidates, and you want to be found. Why else would you be there? Seriously, make sure your LinkedIn profile is peppered with industry-specific keywords relevant to the target position you want. It should be called LISO (LinkedIn Search Optimization)—like SEO—but for LinkedIn. Keywords = Being Discovered = Interview = New Job. Get keywords now.

To recap: Be sure you are honest, strategic, and explanatory in your LinkedIn connection requests; your profile isn't just a copy of your resume; and that your profile is keyword-rich so people can find you! These four key tips will make the most of your LinkedIn experience and keep you ahead of the game.