



# CAREER

## **in** LINKEDIN

This is now the world's biggest professional networking site, with 467-million users (at time of writing) in 200 countries, and it's growing by two new members a second.

### **1 PERFECT YOUR PROFILE.**

Personalise your headline: it's the first thing potential employers will see on your profile, says Matthew Neethling of ProAppointments in Durban. 'Add key skills to your title, so as to bring up your information when companies and recruiters use Boolean search tools, which will give your profile more exposure.' Describe your responsibilities and duties, and how you made an impact on previous employers, even if you were doing holiday work. Avoid clichés: in 2015 'responsible', 'strategic' and 'effective' topped LinkedIn's yearly list of most overused words. Be sure to complete all profile sections: social media specialist Darain Faraz, head of global consumer communications at LinkedIn, reports that completed profiles are seven times more likely to be viewed by potential employers, and 11 times more likely to be viewed when they include a photo. 'Just make sure you keep it professional,' he told COSMO in an e-mail.

### **2 BUILD YOUR NETWORK.**

Connect with colleagues if you're already in a job, and with recruiters or hiring managers in companies you'd like to work for. Don't just use the automated connection message; send a note addressing them by name: 'It was great meeting you

at the conference/I'm impressed by your latest campaign. Let's stay in touch. All the best, X.'

### **3 GET ACTIVE.** Start or take part in conversations.

'If you see an article on an industry topic that interests you, share it and invite discussion by posting it on your LinkedIn home page,' says Faraz. Engage people by asking a question: 'What's your take on (an industry happening/trend)?' Respond to all comments, even if it's just 'Thanks!' On the LinkedIn company pages, follow companies you'd love to join. You will receive updates if someone leaves or when vacancies are posted.

### **4 APPLY FOR JOBS.** 'Use the Jobs tab on your profile to find listings in your industry, then apply for them directly through LinkedIn,' Faraz says.

'You can easily set specific job-search preferences so you're recommended roles at the companies you want to work for and jobs you'd be a perfect fit for.'

### **5 STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD.**

'Ask for recommendations from colleagues, clients and employers who can speak credibly about your abilities and performance by asking them to focus on a specific skill or personality trait that drives their opinion of you,' Faraz says. 'But remember to return the favour by offering meaningful comments and recommendations to your network of connections.'

## **e** TWITTER

'Hail the hashtag!' says Neethling. 'In the US and the UK, Twitter has become one of the main tools for recruitment – 58%



**'IF YOU SEE AN ARTICLE ON AN INDUSTRY TOPIC THAT INTERESTS YOU, SHARE IT AND INVITE DISCUSSION BY POSTING IT ON YOUR LINKEDIN HOME PAGE'**

of people use it to look for job opportunities, and from that, 78% go on to company profiles to look for vacancies. South Africa is starting to follow this trend.' At the time of writing, Twitter had 317-million monthly active users.

If you're already tweeting about your private life, consider creating a separate 'work' account with a username that's your full name or first name and profession, for example, 'CindyTheFreelanceWriter'.

