

Networking ... It Still Works Wonders

No Application Necessary: 5 Tips For Using Social Media To Land A Job

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Millennial entrepreneurs Jonathan Javier and Jerry Lee learned the hard way that the traditional career search process rarely works, *particularly when you're searching in the ultra-competitive high tech company landscape.*

They left corporate America and created a career search consulting firm with a mission of “turning underdogs into winners.” They use a strategy to help job seekers based on the premise that traditional application processes almost never work; the best path to the job you want is through *social media networking*. In any job search, use these five steps for landing your dream job.

Their recommendations are based on elevating candidates from applying amongst thousands to *being referred by someone in the hiring organization's team to the hiring manager* (whom you've hopefully established some level of connection with already). With this ultimate goal in mind (which most agree would improve success odds), they offer five specific tips for landing a job.

Job Search Tip #1

Develop an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) Friendly Résumé

In a recent article, “8 Things You Need to Know About Applicant Tracking Systems” explains that the majority of large (and some smaller) companies use these systems to scan incoming résumés. “Whether that human recruiter ever sees your résumé could depend on how well your résumé is optimized for ATS algorithms.” We advise candidates to develop a résumé that is specifically customized to the job description. In an ideal world, candidates would develop warm connections with those inside the hiring organization and share their résumé directly, but the ATS is such an important part of the process that skipping this step would be fools play. *It's not that you should NEVER apply and optimize your résumé, it's about focusing more time on networking.*

Job Search Tip #2

Utilize LinkedIn Search Functions

Boasting over 760 million users (and 260 million active users) reportedly, LinkedIn is a powerhouse social media platform for job seekers, but experts insist that many don't fully utilize its capabilities. *One easy way to connect with people on LinkedIn in your dream company is utilizing the LinkedIn search functions specifically connecting with alumni from your university or other organizations of which you're a part.* Some coaches advise candidates to filter their connections search by company of interest, their location and/or their alma mater to find specific contacts at their target company with whom they already have points of commonality. With this newly customized listing, job-seekers are now positioned to send personalized invitations to connect.

Job Search Tip #3

Send a Personalized Invitation to Connect

When sending invitations to connect, be warned against doing what everyone else does—sending a connection request without a personalized note. *By sending a personalized invitation, you stand out from the crowd.* Be advised to customize the content of the invitation based on the point of connection or commonality. For example, we suggest this type of wording for sending an invitation to connect to an alumnus from your University.

Sample 1 - Hi (Name), hope you're well! I saw that you graduated from UC Riverside and currently work at Google as a Data Scientist. I'd love to connect with a fellow Highlander!

Sample 2 - Hi (Name), hope you're well! I saw that you graduated from UTA and currently work at Microsoft as a Product Manager. I love your story about being a first-generation graduate coming from a POC background. I'd love to connect with a fellow UTA grad who shares a similar story!

We recommend referencing articles or posts they may have written, shared interests, similar backgrounds, or other points of commonality in your personalized invites. *The key is finding genuine points of commonality or shared interest and using that as a basis for connecting.*

Job Search Tip #4

Make “The Ask”

One of the benefits of focusing your energies on LinkedIn is that it's viewed as a *networking tool for business*, and people often anticipate some sort of “professional ask” so don't be shy. After all, it's not Facebook or Instagram—people aren't swapping recipes or posting kids' cute dances—so don't make the mistake of putting in all the effort of getting connected to the right people and then not asking for what you want. *Have an ask but do it during a coffee chat.* We encourage job-seekers to decide in advance what they're really seeking—whether it's mentorship, honest feedback on a company or a professional recommendation—then make a specific ask towards the end of the coffee chat.

Job Search Tip #5

Check-In & Stay Connected ... Don't Let Connection Die of Neglect

As much as we'd love to think that making a connection and maintaining or nurturing a connection are the same thing, they're not. Don't make the mistake of going through all the effort of finding the right people to network with only to let that relationship die a slow, virtual death. The most important part of networking is staying connected with those who have helped you. We even recommend using a spreadsheet to keep track of your outreach—ideally every two or three months according to some networking experts.

During unprecedented unemployment levels, it may be time for many to pivot into a new role, company or even industry. Finding a new job in an ultra-competitive environment isn't just daunting but highly stressful too. *The key to success is not searching harder but instead searching smarter.*