

LinkedIn Etiquette Mistakes: 5 Blunders You Should Never Make

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LinkedIn continues to evolve at a rate of knots and it can be tough to keep up with the many updates and modifications. But one thing remains consistent: the basic, common sense principles of old-fashioned etiquette will always apply. LinkedIn is a professional social platform that [you should interact on](#) as you would in a real-world, face-to-face setting.

So whether you're building a personal or business brand, looking for a new job or simply wanting to nurture a burgeoning online network, try to avoid these **five etiquette fails** that could make you look unprofessional and out of touch.

1. Don't invite every single person to connect

While it's tempting to sit on your smartphone and invite everyone on your 'People You May Know' list to connect, it will come across as spammy and verging on the socially weird. Of course, reach out and connect with a wide range of people to build your network over time, but do it skillfully, have a reason for doing so, and with something valid to offer that potential connection.

It might be that you saw something they wrote and you wanted to connect to take the discussion further. Maybe you work with somebody who recommended a mutual connection. Perhaps you share a past career experience or cherished client.

There's nothing wrong about connecting with strangers, but try to make sure your requests are targeted and of value - and personalise them as much as possible to make the recipient feel more open to the invitation.

2. Don't update your entire network with every move you make

When you update your profile, a notification is sent out to your network advising them that a change was made if you leave your network notification setting turned on. This can be a great way of informing people that you've changed role or that something significant has happened to your business or career - and it can lead to increased profile views, which is no bad thing.

Where the updates fall apart are when you don't turn the setting off and start to fill your network's feed with constant notifications of new positions, new schools, new headlines, new everything.

But these things aren't often new - you might have simply changed a word or phrase here and there, but your network is being bamboozled with the updates. You'll start receiving endless "Congrats!" from people about some minor change and you could be informing employers of potentially damaging career updates.

3. Don't be a persistent social media pest

As with any social setting, nobody likes to be pestered. What's more, nobody likes to be pestered when they have only just met you. To be admired and respected, you need to be authentic in your approach to your network and the actions you take on a regular basis. For a start, don't ask people to endorse your skills and never tell them that you've endorsed their skills so they should now endorse your own. It's just plain creepy.

When it comes to your network, don't make connections just to get hold of an email address so you can then bombard them with marketing messages. It's called permission marketing for a reason and a LinkedIn connection doesn't equal permission to send marketing emails, ever.

Finally, never, ever, ever send messages confessing your passionate interest or undying love for a new connection. It happens. It horrifies me. It isn't Tinder. Please stop.

4. Don't send spammy, generic messages

As LinkedIn grows, so do our inboxes. Sometimes you'll receive a message that adds value to your life, but often it will be a random series of paragraphs that make little or no sense to your work or life. What's worse is when you thank someone for connecting with you and they immediately hit you up with a sales spiel right out of the local car dealer sales handbook. It feels plain wrong.

If your goal is to target sales professionals in the textiles industry and you want to reach out to 50+ people in your network then, of course, you're going to create a message template that you can use for each message. And we get that. But try to personalise each message you send to the extent possible.

Study the person's profile and look for the ways in which you can authentically start a dialogue with them. Include a shared reference, something that brought you to this person, even a comment on an article they may have recently published. Whatever you send, make sure it is tailored, relevant and of value. And never send group sales-focused messages - you'll enjoy a string of angry responses if you do.

5. Don't over-share and post little of value

With so much content out there to share, it can be tempting to publish everything and anything. LinkedIn is a social network and we are supposed to be sociable on the platform, but it is a professional network where the etiquette rules are quite different to the likes of Twitter or Facebook - in other words, keep the overly-personal shares out of this space. You also need to watch the frequency of your posts or you'll run the risk of being seen as a nuisance.

Whether it's a [blog post](#) or news feed update, you should always have a strategy in the back of your mind for posting and a schedule that doesn't overwhelm or infuriate your audience.

Try to avoid posting more than one newsfeed update per day and carefully consider the kinds of updates being shared - are they relevant, interesting, unique *and* shareable? Tick these boxes and you'll be well on your way to influencer status.