

GET
RECOMMENDED

A PROVEN PROCESS

FOR
GENERATING **QUALITY**

REFERRALS

USING
Linked  [®]

Hello.

Before we begin, I'd just like to put it out there...

I'm a big fan of LinkedIn.

As both a business owner and B2B marketer, it doesn't just give me unprecedented access to my target market and those of my clients.

It also provides powerful tools to engage and attract them.

Having said that, I can also see the drawbacks.

Strip away the hype and the shiny tech and LinkedIn is just another marketing channel. And like all marketing channels, it takes energy and expertise to make it work for you.

Sure, it makes searching for potential new business easy...

But just because you can find perfect prospects and invite them to connect, doesn't mean they'll connect with you.

Yes, you can distribute great content and build an audience...

But for every post with 100,000 views there are 100s with less than 50. Not to mention the commitment it takes to keep a content campaign going.

And yes, you can deliver email campaigns to 100s, sometimes 1,000s of people...

But that doesn't mean they'll be opened or that you're immune from being labelled a spammer.

In short, LinkedIn is powerful but it doesn't always deliver on its promise. Worse it can be a suck of your time, money and valuable resources.

The good news is it doesn't have to be any of those things. Especially if you use it as was originally intended.

How to Quickly Build Pipeline on LinkedIn

Like Facebook and MySpace before it, LinkedIn was developed as a social networking tool and networking is exactly what it does best.

Certainly, it can be used to broadcast your message, but it works best as a place to keep in contact with people you know and get introduced to people you don't.

Where it really excels is in generating referrals.

Especially if you have the right formula for asking for them and that's exactly what you have here.

The following is a five step process that will enable you to:

1. Quickly build a list of hot prospects
2. Identify people to introduce you
3. Make it easy for your introducers to recommend you to their network

Let's get started.

STEP ONE: Profile Your Perfect Prospect (Part 1)

Think of a client, past or present and a project where:

- You enjoyed the work
- You're proud of the results
- You got paid what you're worth

These boxes are important. Ticking them ensures your prospect list will be full of people who are a perfect fit for you and your company.

STEP TWO: Profile Your Perfect Prospect (Part 2)

Picture your client and write down the 3 following pieces of information:

1. Their role
2. Their industry sector
3. Their location

STEP THREE: Build a Prospect List

Sign into LinkedIn and hit the advanced button next to the search bar.



This will open the advanced search area.

A screenshot of the LinkedIn 'Advanced People Search' interface. The form is divided into several sections: 'Keywords' (with a text input), 'First Name' (text input), 'Last Name' (text input), 'Title' (text input with 'Head of Procurement' entered), 'Current or past' (dropdown menu), 'Company' (text input with 'Add' button), 'School' (text input), 'Location' (text input with 'Located in or near:' dropdown), 'Country' (dropdown menu with 'United Kingdom' selected), and 'Postal Code' (text input with 'Lookup' button). On the right side, there are filters for 'Relationship' (1st Connections, 2nd Connections (checked), Group Members, 3rd + Everyone Else), 'Location' (text input), 'Current Company' (text input), 'Industry' (dropdown menu with 'Automotive' selected), 'Past Company' (text input), 'School' (text input), 'Profile Language' (text input), and 'Nonprofit Interests' (text input). At the bottom right, there are filters for 'Years of Experience', 'Function', 'Seniority Level', 'Interested In', 'Company Size', 'Fortune', and 'When Joined'. The background shows a list of search results for 'Sharon Spencer-Smith'.

Here's what you've got to do:

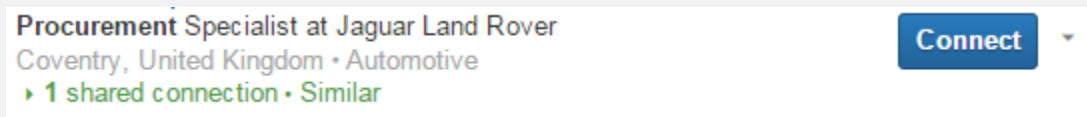
- In the relationships area, tick the 2nd connections box only
- In the title area, enter your client's role
- In the industry area, tick your client's sector
- In the location area, select your client's location
- Hit search

You will now be presented with a list of people who are similar to your client.

This is your prospect list.

STEP FOUR: Identify Your Introducers

In each of the profiles listed there will be some green writing. It says **shared connection** with a number beside it.



Click the green link. You'll be shown a list of your 1st level connections who are connected to each prospect.

These are your introducers.

How effective they are as introducers will depend on the quality of your relationships with your 1st level network.

If you've been selective and only accepted invitations from people you know, like and trust and vice versa, chances are you'll be looking at a long list of referral partners.

If you've been a little less selective, it'll probably be a bit more hit and miss.

Your network's ability to introduce you will also depend on the quality of their first level connections but experience has shown a healthy number of intros will often result.

STEP FIVE: Get Recommended

The key to generating referrals on LinkedIn (or anywhere else for that matter) is first, having the courage to ask and then, knowing what to say to get your network to make the introductions.

People are notoriously nervous about granting access to their black books. Even when it's for someone they know well.

When you ask someone to make an introduction, you're basically asking them to put their own reputation on the line.

You, therefore, have to make it easy for them to say yes.

Make It a No-Brainer

Remember the client and project you identified at the beginning?

It's now time to capture the story of that project in a way that demonstrates your value.

Be vigilant. People are rarely interested in how you do what you do. At least not at first.

What they do care about is their goals and overcoming the obstacles that get in the way of their achieving them.

Therefore, you want to focus on the aspects of your client's story that will be most meaningful to your prospect list:

1. The problem you helped them overcome
2. The result you achieved
3. The impact achieving that result has had on your client

When thinking about the problem, you want to get straight to the heart of the issue.

Ask Yourself:

1. What were the specific challenges your client was experiencing?
2. What was causing them?
3. What was the impact on your client both professionally and personally?

You want to move away from generic challenges and get specific. The more personal the problem, the greater impact it will have on your prospect.

When thinking about the result you want to focus on something tangible that your prospect can measure their own success by.

Ask Yourself:

1. How can you measure the result of what you've done?
2. What was the impact on your client both professionally and personally?
3. How did the impact resolve the problems your client was facing?

The answers to these questions are important.

When you demonstrate experience of the exact problems your prospect is currently facing and provide evidence that you've overcome them with glittering results, you build important currency with your prospect – Desire and Belief.

Desire to overcome their own challenges and the belief that you are the people to do it.

Even better, when you understand the true value of what you do, it gives you the confidence to ask for more referrals.

The Approach

The final piece of the puzzle is to encapsulate the information you've just captured into an email that your network feels good about sending to their contacts.

Here's one that we've been using to great effect. All you have to do is fill in the blanks.

Hi (*Insert name of introducer*)

(*Insert personalised greeting of your choice.*)

I was going through my network on LinkedIn and noticed you're connected to (*insert prospect name and brand*).

We've recently helped a similar brand (*insert killer stat, e.g. save £x million in the area of x*). This has meant that (*insert impact*) and I wondered if you felt that (*insert prospect first name*) would be interested in a chat so see if we could help them achieve similar or better.

If so, would you be happy to introduce us?

Best,

The email works because:

1. It's relevant
2. It offers tangible, measurable proof that your prospect can compare their own potential success by
3. It's an easy copy and paste job for your introducer's email to their network.

So now it's over to you. Get out there and get recommended.

If you have any questions concerning the contents of this guide or some feedback you think we'd find useful, please drop us a line at hello@9mmpr.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

About the Author



Alex Moscow is the Founder and Managing Director of 9mm PR Ltd, a boutique public relations and content marketing agency.

He is an experienced PR consultant who specialises at helping B2B businesses to stand out from the crowd and build long-term, sustainable success.

Alex's career began at Bite, one of the UK's leading communications groups, where he learned the art of B2B PR and became a specialist in thought leadership.

It was there that he devised and executed campaigns for some of the biggest companies in the world. Brands like Samsung, Toshiba, BT, McAfee, Logitech and Lycos.

Since then he has worked on many more - bet365, Avaya, Philips, Marvel, Ministry of Sound, Tiga, Timico, NetBenefit, PGI and KPMG to name a few.

Today he uses the same skills to help the owners and senior executives of ambitious B2B businesses to achieve their vision by creating content driven campaigns that engages their market through multiple sales and marketing channels including, traditional media, live presentation, email, direct & LinkedIn.