

4 Ways To Use Facebook To Find A Job

By Susan Adams, Forbes.com

Kevin Mueller was in his last semester at Miami University in Ohio and he hadn't yet landed a post-graduation job. So he jumped when his marketing professor posted a status update with a link to a job opening at Launchsquad, a PR firm in San Francisco. Mueller, 22, responded to the post, which led him to connect with Miami University alumna Kristen Hay, a senior account executive at Launchsquad, who hired him.

All of our job searches should be so easy. But as social networking matures, stories like Mueller's are increasingly common. Still, until I saw a new survey from a company called [Jobvite](#), I thought most job seekers were using [LinkedIn LNKD -0.28%](#), not [Facebook](#), to find work. But according to the survey, 83% of people looking for a job say they use Facebook in their social media search, compared to 36% who use LinkedIn which, to my surprise, is the most infrequently used site among job seekers. Some 40% use Twitter and 37% use [Google GOOG +0.36%+](#). Jobvite also surveyed recruiters, 94% of whom use LinkedIn, while 65% use Facebook, 55% use Twitter and 18% use Google+.

Jobvite cares about such numbers because it sells software that enables companies to identify and source job candidates through their employees' social networks. To compile the survey, Jobvite ran an online poll of 2,000 people in mid December.

I was struck by the Facebook stats and I realized that while I've written a half dozen articles about using LinkedIn to find a job, I have never focused on Facebook as a job search tool. At 1.23 billion users, Facebook is nearly five times the size of LinkedIn, which has 259 million members. For that reason alone, job seekers should tap Facebook's professional networking power. For advice on how best to do that, I turned to Dan Finnigan, 51, the CEO of eight-year-old Jobvite. Finnigan helped me hone these four ways that you can use Facebook to find a job.

1. Fill out your profile with your professional history. I think of LinkedIn as the place where my online résumé resides, since the profile page is laid out like a C.V., with slots for a summary of your professional life, your list of jobs and your academic credentials. Unlike Facebook it doesn't invite you to add stuff that's not directly relevant to your job history, like your favorite movies, TV shows, books and music. But Facebook has an elegant, easy way to add your work credentials. Just click on "edit profile," and the top of the screen lists "Work and [Education](#)." I've only ever listed my current job and the position I had before this one, with no description of my duties and accomplishments, but Facebook has slots for those details. If you want to make yourself known to the 65% of recruiters who troll for job candidates on Facebook, take a few minutes to fill out this information. You can even cut and paste from your LinkedIn profile, though I'd suggest a shorter version for Facebook.

2. Classify your friends This can seem like a labor-intensive task but Finnigan says it's worth it. Go to your list of friends and hover your cursor over the "Friends" rectangle next to a professional contact's name. You'll see a roster of lists, including the option to create a "new list." Create one called "Professional" or "Work" and then find all of your friends who you would consider professional contacts, and add them to that list. This way, you can target your work-related status updates.

While it's good to humanize yourself by sharing bits of your personal life with professional contacts—Finnigan says he's lately been posting pictures of his new puppy, and getting a great response—you may not want to share with everyone that pic of yourself in your bathing suit, frolicking on a Mexican beach. When you are ready to post a status update, click on the rectangle that says "Public" to the left of the word "Post." You'll see a pull-down menu that includes the word "Custom." Click on that and you'll see an option that says "don't share this with," where you can type in "Professional." Or if you want to share an article idea that's directly related to your professional interest, but it's something that would bore people who don't do the kind of work you do, you can opt to share it only with your professional group.

If you have hundreds of friends, you may not want to bother classifying all of them, but do pull out your professional contacts into their own list.

3. Post content and respond to other people's postings. Aside from puppy photos, Finnigan posts updates about his company's accomplishments, related news in the world of job search and links to media interviews (he'll likely post a link to this article). He also shares personal news about his kids. When he posts these updates to his professional community, he's doing the virtual equivalent of personally checking in with people. I'm still an advocate of face-to-face meetings, but I also see the value in online contact. Do pay attention to your professional friends' postings. "Like" their posts and make insightful comments. "People want to help people they like and they want to help people who help them," says Finnigan. "When it comes to job seekers, you want to reciprocate by offering them a job."

4. Find networking connections. Again, this was a function I associated only with LinkedIn, with its immediate listing of first- and second-degree connections to a company once you type the company name in the search bar at the top of the page. But Facebook can do the same thing easily enough and it will show you connections to people you may know personally rather than professionally, who could be your most fruitful contacts. As you would with LinkedIn, type the company name into the search bar. Then tap your cursor in the search bar one more time and you'll see a pull-down list that includes "My friends who work at X Company." Click through that tab and you'll see your friends who work there. Then under those folks you'll see another box that gives you the option of clicking on "friends of my friends who work at X Company." Click there and you will hit a networking goldmine.

According to Jobvite's survey, the majority of you are already using Facebook in some manner as a job search tool. But I'm hoping these tips will help you maximize Facebook's potential to advance your career. If for no other reason, consider Facebook's size.