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add connections on LinkedIn!

Barry MacQuarrie • Feb. 26, 2014

LinkedIn is a great tool for business development and tax season is a great time to add connections on LinkedIn!

LinkedIn is the most popular social media site for business professionals with close to three hundred million registered users. Approximately one-third of the US population has a profile on LinkedIn. It is also a great tool for business development. I'll bet that your next prospect and their company have profiles on LinkedIn!

I know CPAs well enough to know that you'll probably buy the first part of my opening statement about LinkedIn and business development. However, I can already hear the critics screaming that I don't have a clue about how busy CPAs are during tax season. How could I ever think that this is a good time to be active on LinkedIn?

Your ability to find new business opportunities on LinkedIn is dependent on the number of connections that you have on LinkedIn. Increasing your connection count will help you get noticed, increase the effectiveness of your LinkedIn searches and increase the number of people that can introduce you to prospective clients.

Now is a great time to add new connections. It may seem counterintuitive considering the number of tax returns or financial statements that you have to complete. Instead of focusing on your workload, spend a minute and think about all the people that you talk to during busy season. You're talking to clients, bankers, lawyers, financial advisors, insurance agents and other business professionals. All of them would make great LinkedIn connections!

You should consider connecting with each person you contact during the day. The

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in LinkedIn. You should review this list at least once a week. It is pretty cool to see how LinkedIn populates this list with people you actually know!

I would also suggest that you use the *Find Alumni* tool that can be found on the Network menu in LinkedIn. This powerful tool allows you to search the alumni from any college using year attended, where you live, where you work and what you do as filters. This is a great tool to use to get back in touch with your friends from college. Don't forget to add your college information to your profile before using this tool.

I have talked with people who feel like they have run out of people to connect with on LinkedIn. I'd like to suggest some categories of potential connections that you may not have considered. First, your co-workers make great connections but have you considered your co-workers from your previous employers. LinkedIn can show you a list of them by searching on your former employer's name.

Second, you should be connecting to everyone in your contact list including your clients, prospects, referral sources and business advisors. Finally, don't forget about your friends and family. They can be a great source of referrals and should be part of your LinkedIn network.

Tax season means you're busy. Being busy means you're interacting with many people. Interacting with many people means you have an opportunity to grow your LinkedIn network and discover business development opportunities.

Happy connecting!

Barry MacQuarrie is a Consultant at [KAF Financial Group](#). He combines his knowledge of social media and technology to provide consulting services to accounting firms and other businesses.

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