



# LinkedIn Networking Tip Sheet

*Professional Networking tips from the 2023 UNELSS*

Written by Amy Danek

This year, as part of my role within the UNELSS to bring you content from the outside world of law and practice, I had to dive into the virtual networking world of LinkedIn, which, honestly, I knew nothing about. I understand being in the deep end and out of your comfort zone in amongst a sea of much bigger fish! It has been slightly terrifying, but a lot of fun, and I have met some wonderful, empowering people.

Some Lawyers rather chat over the phone, and some via email. I investigated the most preferred method of contact but found that everyone had different preferences. The following tips come from my background in sales training and motivating teams, particularly in using reflective, relational language to forge connections.

So, my top tips would be:

1. Remember that the person behind the screen you're reaching out to is a human being, not a stepping stone purely for your career. The idea seems obvious, but the assumption of strict professionalism when communicating with others on LinkedIn only inhibits the potential to forge permanent connections at a human level.
2. Listen well, don't interrupt! It's easy to get a little excited or anxious and start yammering. Refrain!
3. Use reflective language.<sup>1</sup> The human mind generally makes judgements about a person within the first seven seconds of meeting them.<sup>2</sup> People also like people who they feel are like them because they can relate and converse comfortably. Relational reflective communication is a transferrable skill that can be learned. Reflective language includes matching tone, pace, use of words, and reflecting emojis for those who use them. In person, it includes eye contact and body language.
4. Aim to compliment someone else's post or work once a day. People put a lot of effort into the content they post on LinkedIn. It is such a great feeling when a random person compliments your work. Compliments motivate and inspire that person to keep showing up on LinkedIn and sharing content! I am a big believer in karma and spreading positive vibes by contributing to the greater good of the purpose of the platform and the people that make it great! Especially those lawyers who share case notes! We love them!
5. Keep your argument critical, objective, and professional when conversing on LinkedIn. Yes, there is a lot of swearing, biased and discriminatory views on LinkedIn.... In my opinion, negativity repels good people! It may seem like an obvious point to make, but it happens a lot. Freedom of speech is great, but balance and careful use of language is a must for advocates. Think about how you can tailor your voice to suit the objective of the goal you are trying to achieve on LinkedIn. It's not Facebook. Completely different strategies are required!<sup>3</sup>
6. Keep assessing your content as in line with your purpose. Keep emotions out of your use of language. Peacocking is a thing, and no one likes a bragger. Share your achievements by expressing gratitude. Being grateful for where you are, who you are and what you have achieved is a positive space to be in!
7. Don't forget about Instagram! There are a lot of creative lawyers posting content on Instagram too.

We all have different communication styles, so developing your strategy and adapting it to suit your goals is important. The above-mentioned strategies have worked for me, my communication style, and my personality. They're a starting point rather than an exhaustive list.

---

<sup>1</sup> Linda Cohen, Jane Kassis-Henderson, 'Language use in Establishing Rapport and Building Relations: Implications for International Teams and Management Education' (2012) 55(5) *ESCP Europe* 185-207, 191-193.

<sup>2</sup> The Centre for Sales Strategy, *Seven Seconds to make a First Impression – Make It Count!* (October 5, 2020) <https://blog.thecenterforsalesstrategy.com/seven-seconds-to-make-a-first-impression#:~:text=Our%20brains%20make%20a%20thousand,likable%2C%20trustworthy%2C%20and%20competent.>

<sup>3</sup> La Trobe University, *LinkedIn etiquette: Are you Taking Part in the Wrong Conversations?* (2023) <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/nest/linkedin-etiquette-best-practice/>