

Top 5 Super Annoying LinkedIn Approach Styles



Prospecting on LinkedIn is a huge part of many peoples' roles. It's kind of what LinkedIn is for, isn't it? We put our profiles up there knowing full well that people will have the option of messaging us. We can also decide who we want to connect with and even turn off the In Mail messaging function if we want to, restricting it only to introductions that are being made by people in our approved and trusted network. We can't really complain about people prospecting to us... can we? No.

However... what we *can* complain about is the *style* people choose to use. It doesn't matter whether it's a recruiter sourcing candidates for a role or sales person trying to sell new software to online businesses. Most sales professionals would agree that tailoring and personalising prospective approaches is the best way to start a potentially fruitful relationship over LinkedIn. There's no one-size-fits-all approach or the perfect method, but generally I prefer contact to be direct, honest and clear, with the person explaining who they are, who they work for and why they're reaching out. Prospectors have to dangle *some* kind of bait to make their message stand out and capture attention / spark some interest in the recipient... but in some cases some people make pretty bad blunders!

Here are Phoebe Spinks' top 5 annoying LinkedIn approach styles:

1. The overly-friendly message

When you're having a busy day and some random person emails you asking how you've been, what the weather's like and whether you have any exciting plans for the weekend, I just think, 'who is this and why are they asking me these questions?' This uncertainty / confusion kind of undermines the good intention. InMails should be pleasant and contain some niceties, however when it's from someone I've never met, I prefer them to be more direct and open about why they're getting in contact, without the small talk. How can they possibly care about my wellbeing when they don't even know me? To me that signals they want something from me, but feel guilty asking for it outright.

2. The cocky message

Have you ever opened up a message that includes some kind of weird, cocky attitude about it? Sometimes sales people try to get the upper hand in their LinkedIn message, and attempt to make the recipient feel like they owe this random person something. Sometimes it can come in the form of highlighting the fact that 'yes, it's a generic approach' but 'I'm just doing my job'. I really don't have time for this. While mass-sending emails is a realistic approach many sales people need to opt for, highlighting your own apathy for the task or lack of tailoring is a massive turn-off.

3. The apologetic message

I can't count how many times I have received LinkedIn InMails from people apologising for taking my time or contacting me out of the blue, before I even have any idea why they are getting in touch. If someone can truly add value to my career or workplace, why would they need to apologise? To me, apologising signifies they have done something wrong or they are going to waste / misuse my time. Positivity and openness is key!

4. The daily message

When it comes to prospecting, persistence is key... not stalking! Sending the same message or a similar one day after day after day is the perfect recipe for getting annoyed. When someone sends you a text message, you kind of feel compelled to respond within a reasonable amount of time, probably on the same day. With LinkedIn, I believe you get a bit more time. A sales person shouldn't expect to hear back from their prospects immediately or on the same day. I totally respect persistence, but daily repetition is a different story.

5. The sloppy message

Put simply, bad grammar, misspelled names and dodgy auto-fill lines that get your name wrong or accidentally pull through your surname instead of first name are just massive red flags to me.