

Everyone is searching for the “silver bullet” in prospecting. Advisors want to know “what works?” Experienced advisors sometime say: “Everything works, nothing works.” My goal has been to raise my visibility on LinkedIn. Get people talking to me. After about eight months’ effort — at some time and virtually no cost — let’s look at my results.

## **Let’s Look at the Numbers**

You want a contact or prospecting strategy that gets people engaged. Me too.

**Total measured base: 2,008** first-level connections.

**People who engaged: 39.292%**, or 789 connections.

**People who didn’t respond: 60%**, or 1,205 connections.

**Connections who dropped me: 0.697%**, or 14 connections.

A contact strategy yielding almost a 40% response rate is excellent. When you bear in mind you don’t need to hire a marketing service and it can be done in your spare time, it’s even better.

## **Is This Too Good to Be True?**

What does “engaged” mean? My sending out messages and getting a response back is a major component. I also followed the LinkedIn prompts for birthdays, work anniversaries and job changes. Sent those out, too. I send out links to my published articles, too.

The ideal response is getting a personal message back, answering the question I asked. I also count “thanks for sharing” and thumbs up,

because the person at the other end made an effort to respond. FYI: I respond to those with “(Name), thanks for taking time to reply...”

## What Did I Actually Do?

This isn't my first rodeo. After a few years of trial and error, I settled on the following message. It has several variations.

“(name), this is a personal message. We've been connected (X) years. It's time to get to know you better. This is a note to get a conversation started. It's like meeting someone at a party. My wife and I live in New Hope, PA. Population 2,500. We are a tourist town. You are in (town). What's that like? We are big wine fans. How about you?”

Each message is individually composed. I send out 12 a day. I started with the A's and worked through the Z's. Since I have 2,000+ connections, adding new ones all the time, it took about eight months. Lets look at the math: 12 a day, 5 days a week is 60 messages in a week. Contacting 2,000+ connections needs 33 weeks or about eight months.

## Why Did That Wording Work?

There's lots of subtlety built into my message.

- **First name.** It's personalized.
- **This is a personal message.** It says “I'm not selling anything.” Too many people connect and start selling. It's a turnoff.
- **We've been connected (X) years. It's time to get to know you better.** The mention of years show's it's not an automated message.
- **This is a note to get a conversation started. It's like meeting someone at a party.** It's a polite request. They can relate to “meeting someone at a party.”
- **We live in New Hope, PA...** Give information to get information. At a party, “Where do you live?” is an icebreaker question.

- **You are in (town)...** Another indications it's personal, not boilerplate. If we've been there, I'll reference something we admire.
- **We are big wine fans.** Sharing a personal interest. If they are too, it's an interest in common.

There are variations. The pandemic yielded "Since we are all at home during the lockdown..." If it's a new connection I might say: "Thanks for connecting. I have 2,000+ connections. Some I know better than others..."

## **Bringing Value to the Relationship**

I built a few lists based on profession or type of firm. Once a month, I send an individual message with an article link. I think it stands a better chance of getting read than simply including it in the daily feed. (I post to the daily feed, too.) Hopefully the article has value to them.

I answer messages each morning. My aim is to get a dialog going and transition to talking business once everyone is comfortable.

## **Conclusion**

That's my contact strategy. I have others for building my network, adding connections and adding value within LinkedIn groups. For me, it's an ideal way to use a powerful communication channel that's basically free.