# 3 Keys to Crafting the Perfect LinkedIn Prospecting Message

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Have you ever been on a blind date? If so, you know how awkward it can feel at first. You’re meeting someone for the first time you’ve never even had a conversation with and hope that it’s a good fit. All you can do is spend the date getting to know each other through two-way conversation and determine if this will lead to a lasting relationship or not. Prospecting is a lot like going on a blind date.

Whether you’re a sales professional, a business owner or work at an agency, you’ve probably done some prospecting. Prospecting can be tricky because you don’t really know anyone you’re trying to sell to on a personal, or even professional, level yet.

Just like with blind dating, if you want to generate interested prospects, you need to put yourself out there and start the conversation.

## **The Death of the Cold Call**

Back in the pre-internet era, sales professionals would rely on cold calling off a lead list. But we’ve come a long way since then, and now individuals and businesses have many other more effective ways to contact potential prospects. One example is by using social media, and more specifically, LinkedIn.

LinkedIn is a powerful tool because it lists potential prospects job titles, company, contact information, industry and more. On top of that, it gives you the ability to instant message people directly, enabling you to have more personalized conversations with prospects you’d otherwise not be able to reach out to, in a much more casual, approachable way than cold calling.

This strategy has been coined “social selling”.

Seems easy enough, right? Yes and no. How successful you are at social selling has everything to do with your messaging. So here are 3 tips to craft the perfect LinkedIn prospecting message:

## 1 **Don't jump in blindly, find an 'in'**

There is one caveat to LinkedIn; before you can message someone, you need to be connected. However, you are able to send a custom message with your connection invitation. It is extremely important to send a well thought out connection message so that you can continue the conversation.

Before sending a prospect a connection request, scan their profile and identify a commonality between them and yourself and use that as an introduction. For example, mutual connections. We encourage our customers to connect with people in their 2nd degree network, because that means they’ll have mutual connections. From there, you can send a casual message saying you saw you had mutual connections as an ‘in’. People will be more willing to accept your invite if you share mutual connections.

**Tip:** in some cases, a mutual connection may even be willing to introduce the two of you so don’t be afraid to ask!

## 2 **Keep it concise; LinkedIn prospecting is not cold emailing**

One of the reasons prospecting on LinkedIn is so effective is because messaging on the platform is more like instant messaging, which can feel more casual and conversational than emailing. With that being said, treat your messaging like just that - a conversation. Keep your messages short and concise with the sole goal of gaining a response.

**Tip:** LinkedIn InMail messages have a limit of 1900 characters. That is more than enough and it’s best practice to keep your message well under the limit.

## 3 **Avoid the premature pitch; don't rush a good thing**

Bringing it back to blind dating for a moment --- you’d never ask for a second date before the first date even really began. The same can be said about prospecting; don’t go for the sale in the first message.

Remember that the person you’re reaching out to has no idea who you are. It’s disingenuous to immediately pitch your product, service or idea to them without building a bit of rapport first.

Once you’ve established somewhat of a relationship with the prospect, make sure you include some sort of call to action to illicit a response so the conversation keeps going. As an example, include a question at the end of your message that gives prospects a reason to respond.

**Tip:** try to learn more about their business or ask what their ideal customer looks like. Learning more about what they do can help you tailor your sales message to suit their business needs later in the conversation.