



## How to Start and Grow a LinkedIn Group

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I love online groups because they make it easy to find and connect with a community of people. For business purposes, groups are great for reaching your target audience. And while you can join existing groups, it can be even more fruitful to start your own. As group moderator, you have the benefit of all your members knowing who you are. You can demonstrate your authority in your subject matter and leadership skills, all while building a loyal network of participants.

In 2011 I launched a [Nonfiction Authors Network on LinkedIn](#). While there were some writing and publishing groups already operating, nobody was focused on nonfiction authors. I saw an opportunity and took it! Within a year, the group reached nearly 2,000 members, and it has continued to grow ever since. Not bad for something that requires just a few minutes of my time per week!

Here's how you can start your own LinkedIn group:

**1. Choose a Niche Topic**—Before you start a group, search through existing groups to make sure you have a unique idea. If similar groups already exist, see what they are lacking. If the groups are small, then your opportunity is probably greater than if they are large. You'll have an easier chance of success if your focus is on a largely untapped niche and meeting a need for your target audience.

**2. Create Your Group**—Log in to LinkedIn and under Groups select Create Group. Give your group a clear and compelling title. Have a logo created. Write policies for how you want members to engage in your group. Take it seriously and set it up for success.

**3. Send Invitations**—LinkedIn makes it easy to invite your contacts to participate in the group, and you should do so immediately. Give your friends a nudge and ask them to help you get the activity moving.

**4. Ask Members to Introduce Themselves**—Your first post should be an invitation for introductions. This is an ideal ice breaker to get the conversations started.

**5. Ask Additional Questions**—You might ask members to share their social media links, comment on an industry trend or news, or share their experiences. Log in daily to post questions until you start getting activity from members. It shouldn't take long to increase activity if your membership is growing.



**6. Share Relevant Information**—If you come across an interesting news story or article, share it with the group.

**7. Lead By Example**—Ask compelling questions, answer member questions, and engage with humor and style. When you show others how it's done, it will be easier for them to participate.

**8. Cross Promote**—Make sure to let all of your networks know about your group. Share a link to the group via your other social media outlets, on your website, in your newsletter, email signature, etc. Promotion should be an ongoing effort.

**9. Ask Members to Invite Friends**—Sometimes all you have to do is ask!

**10. Keep the Momentum Going**—If things slow down or are slow to start, ask friends and peers to help by sharing their questions and resources. Sometimes just two or three people can make a big difference.

**11. Check in Daily**—Managing your group doesn't need to be a major time-consuming undertaking, though you should have a daily presence there as much as possible. Deal with spammer issues immediately (some members will share nothing but promotional posts—warn them and delete them). Some members will require moderation and others will need to be reminded of the rules. Occasionally post a reminder about guidelines. Members will appreciate that you care enough to moderate the group and ensure it's a productive place for all.

**12. Appoint Co-Moderators**—If managing the group is too much for you or you simply don't want to go it alone, ask members or peers if they would like to be co-moderators. This can lighten your workload and breed goodwill.

Don't forget to have fun! Your attitude about your group will come across, so make sure it's something you enjoy doing. Your members will notice and membership will grow as a result.

[Join the Nonfiction Authors Association network on LinkedIn!](#)