



# An Executive Recruitment Game Changer?

There has been much talk about the role of LinkedIn in the recruitment process. It's easy to see why. It has over 300 million members, and has just reported fourth quarter revenue 44% up on the same period last year.

LinkedIn's biggest source of revenue and growth is from in-house and external recruiters who use the platform to look for talent (this group made up 57% of LinkedIn's Q4 revenue). But what does LinkedIn's rise mean more specifically for employers? It provides access and exposure to a huge talent pool but is that a game changer?

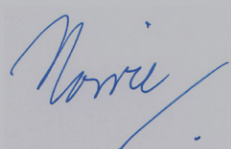


Norrie Johnston Recruitment

## 🔗 Introduction

As an executive search & interim management specialist we were interested to know how some of the UK's most dynamic employers are managing their executive recruitment process in this LinkedIn age and the role firms like ours should be playing in this process. So we decided to commission this study.

For me, the research provides a fascinating insight into the channel's possibilities, its limitations and how my industry must respond. I hope you find it equally useful. It's certainly a way of benchmarking your approach to executive recruitment against your peers, but more fundamentally than that, it's perhaps an opportunity to pause and reflect on your recruitment needs and maybe reevaluate what any executive search firm has to deliver in the LinkedIn era to meet and stay relevant to your needs.



Norrie Johnston

## Method

100 HR senior decision makers from private and public sector organisations were telephone interviewed in detail, in December 2014. The organisations studied employ a minimum of 250 personnel in the UK, 64% have at least 1,000 employees with 29% employing over 5,000 people. The organisations were carefully selected to reflect a mix of sectors and are drawn from right across the UK. Sectoral or geographical comparisons are only drawn when they are significant.

### Employees

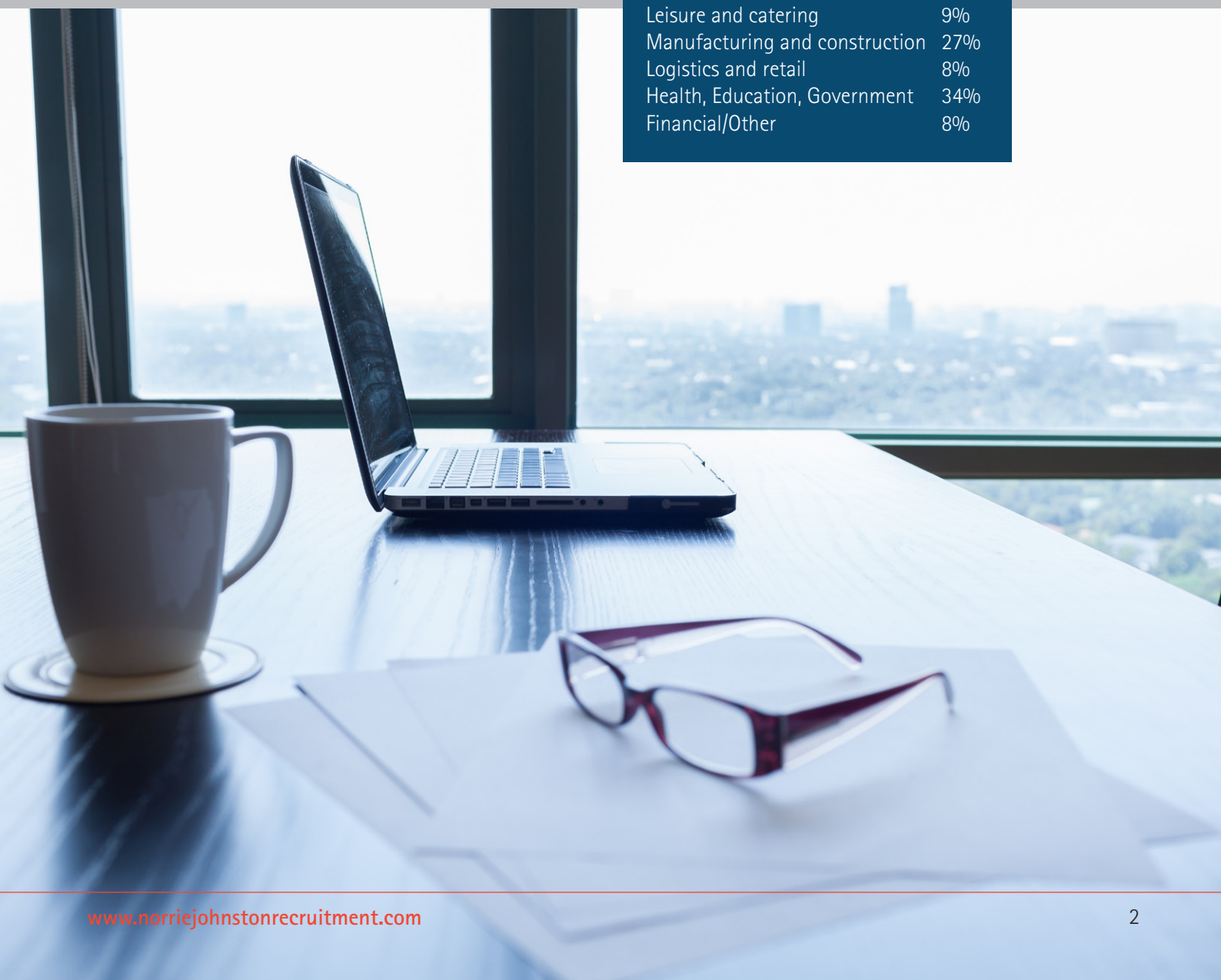
Over 5000	29%
1000 – 5000	35%
250 – 1000	36%

### Location

South	34%
North	36%
Midlands	30%

### Sector

Professional services	14%
Leisure and catering	9%
Manufacturing and construction	27%
Logistics and retail	8%
Health, Education, Government	34%
Financial/Other	8%





"LinkedIn now has 3 million active job listings on the platform, almost a 10-fold increase on the previous year."

## ➤ LinkedIn

Officially launched in May 2003, LinkedIn today operates the world's largest professional network on the Internet with more than 347 million members in over 200 countries and territories. This equates to one third of the professionals on the planet using the platform.

Although it began in North America, LinkedIn has grown an international user base. It is now available in 20 languages with 70% of total members coming from non-US geographies including 8 million in China.

Importantly for senior executive recruitment, according to the Pew Research Center, LinkedIn usage is especially high among the educated and high earners (those making \$75,000 a year or more). It is also the only social networking site that shows higher usage among 50-64 year olds than among those aged 18-29.

As it has grown, so its role in recruitment has expanded. LinkedIn now has 3 million active job listings on the platform, almost a 10-fold increase on the previous year.

## Executive Recruitment

Some had assumed that in the era of LinkedIn, organisations might dispense with the services of executive search firms and try to do everything in-house. However only one in four (25%) of the HR heads interviewed says that their senior executive recruitment is purely handled by an internal recruitment team. On average 73% report that recruitment agencies or head-hunter firms are still involved in their senior recruitment, rising to 79% among the biggest employers.

### Which do you use for your senior executive recruitment?

	All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	Over 5000
Internal recruitment team	25%	25%	29%	21%
Executive recruitment agency/head-hunter	18%	28%	23%	0%
Both	55%	47%	43%	79%
Not stated	2%	0%	5%	0%

- Almost one in five (18%) of those studied only use an executive recruitment agency or head-hunter to find their senior personnel. This rises to 28% of the smaller companies – which isn't surprising given that this group is least likely to have a sophisticated internal recruitment team
- At the other end of the spectrum the largest organisations always have their internal recruitment team involved in any senior executive hire.
- That said, the largest companies, which arguably have bigger internal recruitment teams, also have the biggest dependency on external agencies – 79% involve them in their senior recruitment.



## 🔗 LinkedIn's Role

So if organisations are, for the most part, still very agency dependent, where does LinkedIn fit into this executive recruitment process?

The study suggests it is used in a number of ways - to sometimes check out candidates (46%), actively head hunt for people (31%) and advertise posts (31%). Not many (6%) are yet using the services of specialist LinkedIn experts, but one in five assumes their recruitment agencies use it and 45% report that their internal recruitment teams are deploying the channel.

	All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	1000 – 5000
We sometimes use it to check out candidates' profiles	46%	44%	37%	59%
Our own internal recruitment team use it	45%	42%	37%	59%
We have used LinkedIn to actively head hunt for key people	31%	25%	23%	48%
We advertise posts on LinkedIn	31%	19%	31%	45%
We use recruitment agencies and would expect them to check profiles on LinkedIn	21%	17%	11%	38%
We sometimes use the services of an external LinkedIn recruitment	6%	6%	9%	3%

## Assessing Backgrounds

At its most basic level, LinkedIn is used to check out senior candidates - with 46% of organisations overall and 59% of those with over 5,000 employees using it in this way.

However this doesn't appear to be part of a wider trend. For instance, when it comes to assessing the backgrounds of candidates for senior executive roles Twitter, Facebook, and Google+ are deemed barely effective.

Although LinkedIn is the only social channel seen as useful for this task, it scores an average of only 5.3 out of ten for usefulness, rising to 5.9 among organisations employing 250-1000 employees.

How useful is each of these channels for assessing the backgrounds of senior executive candidates? (0= no use at all and 10= useful)

	All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	1000 – 5000
LinkedIn	5.3	5.9	4.3	5.8
Facebook	2.4	2.8	1.7	2.6
Twitter	2.1	2.2	1.3	2.8
YouTube	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.8
Google+	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.7
Pinterest	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Xing	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.4

# 46%

of organisations overall use LinkedIn to check out senior profiles.



## 🔗 Sector Variation

These figures are influenced by a significant group (27%), many of whom are in the public sector, and who do not ever look at profiles on LinkedIn. When the responses are analysed by sector, we remove the influence of such people and identify significant numbers who find LinkedIn very useful for assessing the backgrounds of senior candidates.

**How useful is LinkedIn for assessing the backgrounds of senior executive candidates?**  
(0= no use at all and 10= useful)

Manufacturing & construction	6.4
Health, Education, Government	2.6
Leisure & catering	6.7
Logistics & retail	7.1
Professional services	9.1
Financial/Other	4.4

- The 8 major logistics and retail businesses studied on average give LinkedIn a score of 9.1, rating it very highly as a way of assessing the backgrounds of potential senior candidates.
- The 14 professional services companies equally score the channel highly, giving it a usefulness score of 7.1
- Public sector organisations are much more likely to question LinkedIn's value with 50% of the 34 decisionmakers in health, education or government not looking at profiles on the channel at all and the remainder rating LinkedIn's usefulness for this as a mere 2.6 out of 10.

## Is Seeing Believing?

Part of the problem could be deciding the validity of content on LinkedIn. The vast majority question some of what they see when they look at a LinkedIn profile with less than one in 10 believing it all. That said over half believe most or all of what they read.

**When looking at LinkedIn profiles, how much do you believe?**

	All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	1000 – 5000
All	8%	14%	0%	10%
Most	47%	36%	51%	55%
About 50%	18%	28%	14%	10%
Not much at all	0%	0%	0%	0%
None	0%	0%	0%	0%
Don't look at profiles on LinkedIn	27%	22%	35%	25%

- Interestingly, the largest employers are the least sceptical, with 65% believing most if not all of what they read on someone's profile.

**When looking at LinkedIn profiles, how much do you believe?**

	South	Midlands	North
All	15%	3%	6%
Most	32%	50%	58%
About 50%	29%	10%	14%
Not much at all	0%	0%	0%
None	0%	0%	0%
Don't look at profiles on LinkedIn	24%	37%	22%

- Companies in the South are the most sceptical; 29% only believe about half of what they read in a LinkedIn profile, compared with 10% of those in the Midlands and 14% of those in the North.

## 🔗 Looking at LinkedIn – Frequency

Despite questions about validity, many still use LinkedIn to look at senior candidates who have applied for jobs. This may be simply a cursory look, rather than a detailed background check, but one in ten always looks at the profile and 38% more often than not look.

### How often do you look at a senior candidate's profile

	All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	1000 – 5000
Always	11%	4%	9%	23%
About 90% of the time	8%	4%	4%	18%
About 75% of the time	3%	0%	4%	5%
About 50% of the time	16%	18%	13%	18%
About 25% of the time	32%	39%	39%	14%
About 10% of the time	10%	11%	17%	0%
Very rarely	8%	7%	9%	9%
Never	12%	18%	5%	13%

- The biggest employers use the social channel the most, with 64% looking more often than not and 41% of the biggest players looking at the profiles at least 90% of the time.
- Once again companies in the logistics and retail sector are most likely to look at LinkedIn with 38% of companies in these sectors always looking at their senior candidates on LinkedIn.

# 38%

of retail/logistics companies always  
checkout senior candidates on LinkedIn





## 🔗 LinkedIn Profile – What Matters?

Given that so many HR heads say they look at senior candidates on LinkedIn, we asked what aspects of the profile really matter to them.

The responses provide a fascinating insight for all senior executives keen to impress would-be employers through their LinkedIn profile. For instance, the description is paramount; the number of connections is not so valued; furthermore skills and endorsements are more important than recommendations.

### When looking at a person's profile on LinkedIn what importance do you place against each of the following (0= no importance, 10 = lot of importance)

	All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	1000 – 5000
Description	6.6	6.7	6.0	7.2
Skills and expertise endorsements	5.8	5.9	5.4	6.3
What the recommendations say	5.6	5.9	5.3	5.7
Number of recommendations	5.2	5.2	4.5	5.9
Who they are connected with	4.3	4.6	3.7	4.8
Their updates	4.1	4.3	3.6	4.3
Groups they're in	4.0	4.5	3.7	3.8
Photo	3.7	4.4	2.5	4.0
Number of connections	3.5	3.5	3.0	4.2
Contributions to groups	3.1	3.7	2.7	2.8

- The description is understandably key, scoring 6.6 out of 10 for importance. However, skills and expertise endorsements are deemed to be markedly more important than recommendations.
- Also, when it comes to recommendations quantity doesn't necessarily count. What the recommendations say is for the most part more important than the number of recommendations secured.
- While many may chase for a large number of connections this scores only 3.5 out of 10, and is less important as an influencer than the photograph or group memberships.
- Those spending a lot of time contributing to groups should note that this is not necessarily going to impress potential employers either – the groups you chose to join is much more important than the things you say once you are in them.

Given their higher use of LinkedIn as a background check, it is perhaps not surprising that the largest organisations give a greater level of importance to almost all of the elements which make up a person's profile on LinkedIn. Equally from a sector perspective, the lowest LinkedIn users – public sector organisations – typically place the lowest value on each of the elements.

### When looking at a person's profile on LinkedIn what importance do you place against each of the following (0= no importance, 10 = lot of importance)

	All	A	B	C	D	E	F
Description	6.6	6.5	4.9	8.0	7.8	7.2	7.8
Skills and expertise endorsements	5.8	5.9	4.9	6.0	8.2	6.1	5.0
What the recommendations say	5.6	5.7	4.4	6.7	7.3	5.6	6.3
Number of recommendations	5.2	5.7	3.6	5.6	7.0	5.5	4.5
Who they are connected with	4.3	4.3	3.4	4.7	5.8	4.8	4.3
Their updates	4.1	4.5	3.4	4.3	4.7	4.0	4.0
Groups they're in	4.0	3.9	3.2	5.6	5.0	3.9	4.5
Photo	3.7	2.5	2.2	7.0	4.7	4.6	5.3
Number of connections	3.5	4.0	2.1	4.1	4.5	3.8	3.3
Contributions to groups	3.1	3.3	2.9	4.0	4.0	2.4	2.3

A: Manufacturing and construction  
B: Health, Education, Government  
C: Leisure and catering  
D: Logistics and retail  
E: Professional services  
F: Financial/Other

- Interestingly, for logistics and retail companies, the skills and expertise endorsements are the most important thing (scoring 8.2 out of 10 when it comes to importance) indeed these factors are more important than the description which they give an average score of 7.8).





## [↗ LinkedIn's Wider Use in Recruitment](#)

While at its most basic level, LinkedIn is being used to check out the background of potential senior employees, or to quickly look at candidates who have applied for roles, some are using it much more widely and strategically than this.

### Creating a Talent Pool

Just over one in ten (11%) are using LinkedIn to build a talent pool, but this rises to 17% among the largest employers and to over one in five of those in the leisure, catering, logistics and retail sectors.

#### Are you building a talent pool?

YES

All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	Over 5000	Leisure & catering	Retail & Logistics	Professional Services
11%	8%	9%	17%	22%	25%	21%

# 11%

are building a talent pool

## Employer Brand

40% see LinkedIn as a brand builder. This appears to be an important factor to the companies studied. For instance we will see later on that 75% of those who advertise roles on the channel believe that one of the key benefits of doing so is the boost their employer brand receives.

#### Do you use LinkedIn to promote your employer brand?

	All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	Over 5000
NO	60%	64%	60%	55%
YES	40%	36%	40%	45%

- No logistics or retail companies said they used LinkedIn to promote their employer brand. Whereas professional services companies see it as an important tool for this with 79% using it in this way.
- Although companies say LinkedIn is a tool they use to promote their employer brand, the interviewees are less clear about how this can be achieved. For instance, the company page is the most widely used place that companies promote their employer brand but that on average is only mentioned by 8% (rising to 19% of manufacturing companies and 13% of financial companies.)
- This lack of clarity about how their organisations are harnessing LinkedIn's brand building power could be because a company's LinkedIn presence is often managed by the marketing team, whereas our interviewees headed up the HR function.



## 🔗 LinkedIn Advertising

A significant number of the companies studied place paid for adverts on LinkedIn to advertise senior posts (those with a basic salary in excess of £70,000). Other social channels are barely used for such recruitment.

### Advertise executive posts on:

	All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	1000 – 5000
LinkedIn	31%	18%	37%	31%
Facebook	2%	0%	3%	3%
Twitter	5%	0%	6%	10%

# 32%

LinkedIn advertising is most widely used by companies in the south – with 32% using it in this way

### Sectors using LinkedIn to advertise executive posts

All	A	B	C	D	E	F
31%	33%	26%	13%	25%	36%	25%

A: Manufacturing and construction  
 B: Health, Education, Government  
 C: Leisure and catering  
 D: Logistics and retail  
 E: Professional services  
 F: Financial/Other

- LinkedIn advertising is mostly used by manufacturing (33%) and professional services organisations (36%).
- Although public sector organisations do not appear to be major users of LinkedIn to assess the backgrounds of potential candidates, one in four (26%) advertise senior roles on LinkedIn.

## Why Advertise?

The senior HR professionals who advertise roles on LinkedIn say such advertising offers a number of other advantages. Not least it increases the volume (71%) and quality (46%) of candidates. Half also find LinkedIn valuable as it enables them to build relationships with prospective candidates before they are even in the market to recruit. While for over a third it's a way to reduce their dependency on recruitment agencies.

As we saw before, 40% see LinkedIn as a good way to generally promote their brand. This benefit is even more deeply felt by those who advertise roles on the channel, with three quarters of advertisers arguing that a key advantage of such advertising is the promotion of their employer brand.

### Advantages of advertising

Promotes our employer brand	75%
Increases the volume of candidates	71%
Enables us to build relationships with prospective candidates before we're even in the market to recruit	50%
Increases the quality of candidates	46%
Means we can eliminate recruitment agencies	39%

\*(base – companies which advertise senior roles on LinkedIn)

## Best Roles to Advertise

LinkedIn is seen as capable of reaching most functions. Though perhaps not surprisingly, production personnel (who are least likely to be desk-based) are deemed least likely to be reached via the channel.

### Functions LinkedIn is best for reaching

Finance	68%
HR	68%
Marketing	57%
Sales	54%
Facilities	50%
Chief Executive/ MD	46%
IT	46%
Procurement	43%
Quality	39%
Customer Services	36%
Production	25%

\*(base – companies which advertise senior roles on LinkedIn)

### Salary levels it is best for reaching

£30k–£50k	29%
£50k–£70k	54%
£70k–£120k	4%
£120k – £250k	0%
£250k+	0%
Other/Not stated	

\*(base – companies which advertise senior roles on LinkedIn)

## ➤ Why Not Advertise?

Although 31% report that they advertise on the channel to fill senior executive roles, when it comes to salary levels, advertisers concede that it is not very effective at reaching executives commanding salaries in excess of £70,000.

We wanted to dig a little deeper to understand why this is the case. So we asked the 69 major organisations, which don't advertise senior roles on social platforms, for their thinking behind this decision.

Almost one in five (18%) who don't currently advertise senior roles on social platforms are considering it, however the vast majority of non-advertisers argue that advertising on LinkedIn just isn't suited to the candidates they are targeting. This is borne out by a further 8% who said advertising wouldn't deliver the quality of candidate they are looking for and 7% who have tried advertising and found it didn't work.

### Why don't you advertise on social platforms?

	All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	1000 – 5000
Not suitable for the candidates we need	60%	63%	64%	50%
Currently considering it as an option	18%	23%	5%	25%
Expensive	15%	13%	18%	15%
Poor quality of candidate	8%	7%	14%	5%
Tried them and it didn't work	7%	7%	14%	0%

\*Base: Don't advertise on LinkedIn



## 🔗 LinkedIn's Limitations

The desire to lessen their use of recruitment agencies is strong among a significant number (39%) of LinkedIn advertisers. So with 31% of those interviewed advertising senior executive posts on LinkedIn and 45% reporting that their internal recruitment teams use LinkedIn within their armoury, could LinkedIn replace traditional recruitment agencies altogether?

Those interviewed overwhelmingly say 'no'. Only one of the 100 senior HR executives believes LinkedIn will make recruitment firms redundant and no one believes it will replace job boards. This is because, while it supports the process, LinkedIn is still seen to have many limitations.

## Veracity

The most obvious of these is the veracity of the content. Almost half (47%) say endorsements are not reliable; they are too easily generated and so cannot be fully trusted. A further third (37%) argue that recommendations are often simply swapped with a friend or colleague and 29% say that profiles may be less honest than a proper CV.

From a practical point of view, almost a third of the HR heads argue that, unlike the conventional executive search route, with LinkedIn you don't know you will get a result

### Disadvantages of using LinkedIn for recruitment

Endorsements are not reliable, they're too easily generated and not verified	47%
Recommendations are often simply swapped with a friend or colleague	37%
You don't know you will get a result	32%
Profiles may be less honest than a proper CV	29%





## ➤ Recruitment not just a numbers game

For almost a half, simply accessing a massive free pool of candidates isn't enough and 19% argue that senior, highly technical roles require specialist recruitment skills that internal teams simply using LinkedIn may lack.

Senior execs are specialist roles that require much more than simply tapping into a pool	48%
Internal recruitment teams don't understand the relevant skills or experience required for highly technical or senior exec-level posts	19%

## Privacy & Time

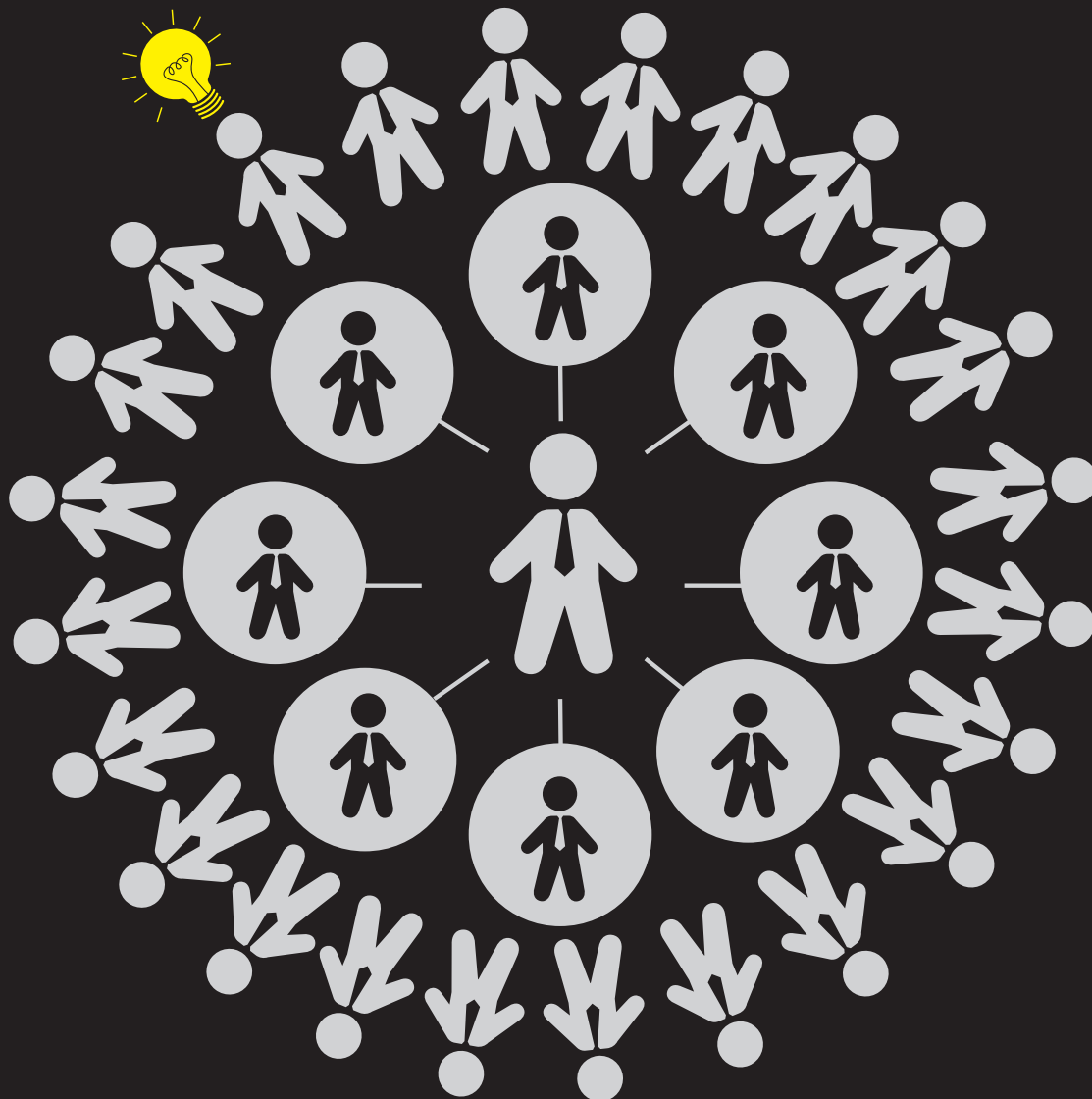
There are also issues of privacy to consider – both the privacy of the candidate and the employer. Furthermore LinkedIn may appear to provide a saving, but this could be a false economy as for 25%, wading through such a large pool of candidates may involve a huge amount of internal team time.

Many candidates prefer to apply for posts through recruitment firms, as candidates who aren't short-listed remain anonymous	41%
LinkedIn doesn't allow for anonymity of the hiring company	27%
Although it seems a lower cost option it still absorbs a lot of internal team time	25%

## Limits of the Pool

Some feel that LinkedIn doesn't necessarily reach all available senior talent. For 41% that's because only a small percentage of those on LinkedIn are looking for a new role; a third say that many senior executives may be LinkedIn users but only use it sporadically. Others report that LinkedIn is not used widely by senior personnel in certain countries; as a result, valuable international talent will not be effectively reached via the channel.

Only a small % of those who are on LinkedIn are actively looking for a new role	41%
Many executives are not regularly using LinkedIn	35%
In certain countries senior execs are not big users of LinkedIn	26%





## 🔗 LinkedIn vs. Other Channels

When all these factors are considered, and our HR heads consider the efficacy of all the channels that they currently use for senior executive hire, LinkedIn again doesn't fare too well. Company websites are deemed effective by over half. Job boards are also seen as a valuable recruitment channel – particularly among mid-sized companies. One in four (27%) also sees employee referrals as effective. It is easy to see why; such introductions are often successful as the referring employee not only knows the skills, experience and approach of the individual they are introducing, but also has an insight into the organisation's culture and needs – thus providing some valuable matching service!

The most effective recruitment channels that we currently use				
	All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	1000 – 5000
Company site	52%	44%	66%	45%
Job boards	48%	39%	57%	48%
Employee referrals	27%	25%	23%	34%
LinkedIn	17%	11%	20%	21%

There isn't significant regional variation with this question but there are some interesting differences across the sectors. For instance job boards are particularly effective for logistics and retail organisations, as are employee referrals. In contrast, companies in these sectors are least likely to say the company website is an effective recruitment channel.

The most effective recruitment channels that we currently use							
	All	A	B	C	D	E	F
Company site	52%	52%	53%	67%	38%	43%	63%
Job boards	48%	56%	44%	33%	63%	43%	50%
Employee referrals	27%	26%	18%	11%	63%	36%	38%
LinkedIn	17%	15%	15%	11%	25%	21%	25%
A: Manufacturing and construction B: Health, Education, Government C: Leisure and catering D: Logistics and retail E: Professional services F: Financial/Other							

63%

of logistics and retail organisations say that employees are very valuable at introducing other senior executives into the organisation

- A significant 63% of logistics and retail organisations say that employees are very valuable at introducing other senior executives into the organisation – compared with the average of 27%. Almost two thirds of businesses in these sectors also value job boards.
- In contrast just a third in the leisure and catering sectors see job boards as an effective tool for recruiting senior executives. Indeed they are least likely to rate any of the channels as effective – apart from their company's website which 67% rate as effective.

## 🕒 Conventional Recruitment

The shortcomings of LinkedIn are further illustrated when we examine what senior HR decision makers value about conventional recruitment firms. The assurance that they will get a shortlist of qualified well matched candidates in a predictable timeframe is the single thing which our interviewees value most from conventional recruitment firms – securing 43% of the votes. This is the very thing which 32% argue that advertising on social channels cannot guarantee.

### Most value about conventional recruitment

	All	250 – 1000	1000 – 5000	1000 – 5000
Shortlist of well qualified and well matched people in a predictable time-frame	43%	44%	40%	45%
Experienced business people/sector experts	28%	31%	23%	31%
Additional specialist resource	16%	8%	26%	14%
Free consultancy	2%	3%	0%	3%
Other	11%	14%	11%	7%

## Most Value About Conventional Recruitment

- Those in the public sector are least likely to value the additional specialist resource that a recruitment agency offers
- Professional services companies particularly value the assured shortlist of well matched people in a set timeframe – with 50% in the sector saying it's the thing they value most.
- Logistics and retail businesses appear to particularly appreciate the sector expertise and business experience of good recruitment consultants; 38% saying this is the thing they value most, making it the sectors' most nominated benefit.

### Most value about conventional recruitment

	All	A	B	C	D	E	F
Shortlist of well qualified and well matched people in a predictable time-frame	43%	41%	47%	44%	25%	50%	38%
Experienced business people/sector experts	28%	26%	26%	33%	38%	29%	25%
Additional specialist resource	16%	30%	3%	22%	25%	14%	13%
Free consultancy	2%	0%	3%	0%	12%	0%	0%
Other	10%	4%	21%	1%	0%	7%	24%

A: Manufacturing and construction  
B: Health, Education, Government  
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## 🕒 Conclusion: Executive Recruitment & The Future

So is LinkedIn an executive recruitment game changer. The answer appears to be in some ways, yes and in others, no.

### Still a Role for Recruitment Firms

Our study suggests that the many qualities and benefits offered by the best recruitment firms, combined with the limitations of the LinkedIn platform mean that LinkedIn isn't simply becoming a substitute for agencies. Some companies may be solely deploying internal recruitment teams, armed with tools such as LinkedIn – but the majority 73% still involve recruitment firms/head-hunters in their executive recruitment and have no plans to change this.

**LinkedIn won't make recruitment firms redundant**

99%

### Internal Databases are Redundant

However some things are changing. For instance the need for in-house recruiters or agencies to build and maintain an internal database seems over. A third of the world's executive population is on LinkedIn, so why expend time and resource building a pool. Some, especially larger companies (17%) are still using LinkedIn to build talent pools but the vast majority are not.

### Getting to Know You Is Getting Easier

LinkedIn is improving the recruitment of senior executives by providing a way to check out candidates, (46%). So candidates need to be sure to refresh their profiles as well as their CVs when applying for roles. It's also enabling

companies and individuals to get to know each other even when there isn't a role to discuss. LinkedIn is also making it easier to promote the employer brand. However LinkedIn's limitations mean it should only be one element in an overall employer brand development strategy.

### A Modest Boost to Advertising Roles

LinkedIn is an additional way to promote roles but it isn't transforming this aspect of the process. Only 31% place senior roles on LinkedIn. Indeed, as many use it simply to headhunt for talent. This is because the majority argue that senior candidates aren't logging into LinkedIn regularly enough to be reached. There are also issues of validity and privacy to consider – both the privacy of the candidate and the employer. Plus LinkedIn advertising may appear to provide a saving, but for many it's a false economy as for 25% wading through such a large pool of candidates may involve a huge amount of internal team time.

### Specialist Recruiter Skills More in Demand

LinkedIn's scale is making it even more important for recruiters (both in house and agencies) to have specialist skills. 48% of HR heads believe that they can't get a result by simply tapping into LinkedIn's vast pool.

Furthermore 19% believe that even armed with LinkedIn as a resource, their internal recruitment teams don't understand the relevant skills or experience required for highly technical or senior/exec level positions. As a result, demand is likely to grow for external recruiters with more specialised expertise.

## 🔗 Agency Remuneration

LinkedIn isn't putting a downward pressure on agency remuneration. Organisations want to know that they will get a shortlist of qualified well matched candidates in a predictable timeframe. This hasn't changed and is the very thing which 32% argue that advertising on social channels cannot guarantee. So, as long as agencies deliver this 'predictable quality' service, their fees will hold.

## Speed

LinkedIn may be putting some pressure on time frames however. With 55% of companies deploying a mix of both recruitment agency and internal team on most assignments (rising to 79% of the largest companies), and 45% expecting their internal teams to use LinkedIn, the race will increasingly be on! Recruitment firms and head-hunters need to be able to work fast if they are to beat the client's internal team in filling senior roles.

## Conclusion

LinkedIn isn't usurping the recruitment process, but it is powering it. Internal teams need to have, or be able to access both the specialist skills and experience of traditional recruitment plus LinkedIn know-how if they are to compete for and win the battle for senior talent in this LinkedIn era.

# 79%

of the largest companies deploy a mix of both recruitment agency and internal team on most assignments

## About Norrie Johnston Recruitment

Norrie Johnston Recruitment is an executive search & interim management specialist focused on filling senior interim and permanent £70,000 + roles. It uses a mix of technology and social platforms such as LinkedIn plus, importantly, traditional search, employing best of breed recruiters and leadership with real-world corporate experience. Through this combination it provides hand-picked short lists of perfectly matched senior interim candidates within to 2-4 days while for permanent roles the timeframe from brief to short list is 2-4 weeks.

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