

Zen & The Art of Legal Networking

INSIGHTS & COMMENTARY ON RELATIONSHIP BUILDING WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL LAWYERS NETWORK

PUBLISHED BY

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LinkedIn Tutorials - Creating Your Own Groups

Yesterday, we talked about [how to get involved with groups](#). The only thing left for us to do with groups is to create our own!

You might not be sure if you want to, but perhaps you want to re-think that. What if you want to start a group for those interested in legal issues in the construction industry in New Jersey? Check first to make sure there isn't a group out there like that already, but then start your own - guess who's going to join a group like that?

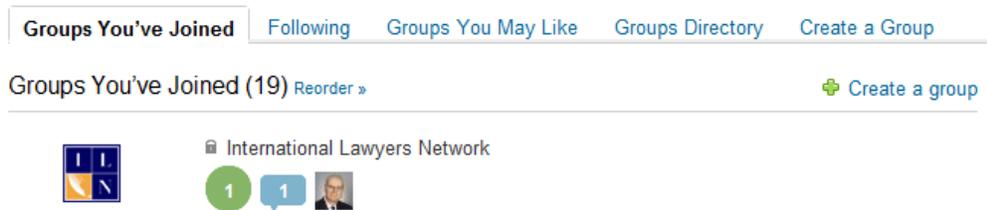
That's right, potential clients.

And you don't want to be using your group to just promote yourself, but offer items of value to those people, and they'll come to see you as the go-to resource for information that they need. And THAT'S when they'll start to think that you'd make a good attorney for them. Plus, if you're getting access through your group

to the decision makers that you want to be meeting at potential clients' companies, use the platform to send out invitations to an event - host a cocktail party for the group, get together at a local bar for some beer, invite them to a presentation you'll be doing on a topic that's of use to them. Take the relationships OFFLINE to cement them. The possibilities here are endless.



So let's get started. We'll first go back to the main groups page as we did yesterday by clicking on the groups link. From here, there are two options for creating a group:



On the right hand side, you can click "Create a Group" from the tabs, or you can click the "Create a group" link right underneath it! I know, sometimes it seems like LinkedIn likes nothing more than overkill, but it's nice to have choices.

We click one of the options, and are given a page to create our group:

The image shows the "Create a Group" form on LinkedIn. The navigation tabs at the top are "Groups You've Joined", "Following", "Groups You May Like", "Groups Directory", and "Create a Group". The form fields include: "Logo:" with a "Choose File" button and a note that the logo will appear in the Groups Directory; "Group Name:" with a text input field and a note that "LinkedIn" is not allowed; "Group Type:" with a dropdown menu; "Summary:" with a text area and a note that the summary will appear in the Groups Directory; "Description:" with a text area and a note that the full description will appear on group pages; "Website:" with a text input field; "Group Owner Email:" with a text input field containing "lindsaygriffiths@lin.com"; "Access:" with radio buttons for "Auto-Join" and "Request to Join"; and two checkboxes at the bottom: "Display this group in the Groups Directory" and "Allow members to display the logo on their profiles. Also, send my connections a Network Update that I have created this group".

Since I don't need to create any new groups, I'm going to create a fake one. My guess is that people will join it anyway, but I plan to delete that, as well as my test profile, as soon as this LinkedIn series is finished!

The first thing we'll do is to upload a logo - you'll see that there's no * next to this on the page, which means it's not a required item. But uploading a logo is very helpful for businesses - it reinforces the brand, and people are more likely to agree to join if it's something that they're

familiar with. And it's good for individual groups too, because as we see with the profile photos, people like to be able to identify things with visuals.

For our test group, I'm going to create one for my personal blog, The Handy Homeowner Girl, so I'll upload the photo I have associated with that. To do this, I click "Choose File" and browse for the image, and then I'm required to acknowledge and agree that the logo or image I'm uploading doesn't infringe upon any third party copyrights, trademarks, or other proprietary rights that would violate LinkedIn's user agreement.

Logo: Your logo will appear in the Groups Directory and on your group pages.

No file chosen

Note: PNG, JPEG, or GIF only; max size 100 KB



* I acknowledge and agree that the logo/image I am uploading does not infringe upon any third party copyrights, trademarks, or other proprietary rights or otherwise violate the User Agreement.

You're required to keep the image under 100kb, so check that first.

Next, we've got to come up with a name - you'll want to be descriptive here if you're not using a company or group name, because this is what will initially draw people to your group.

I'm going to choose "The Handy Homeowner Girl," since that's the name of the blog. LinkedIn notes that you can't use "LinkedIn" in your group name.

Next, we have to select the group type from a drop down menu. The choices are Alumni Group, Corporate Group, Conference Group, Networking Group, Nonprofit Group, Professional Group, or Other. This might give you some ideas of the types of groups you could create and manage, though it's most likely you'll be creating networking groups. Mine is technically an "Other" so I'll choose that. I have to write in the category name that I come up with for this, so I put "Home Improvement Group."

The following box requires me to include a summary of the group. The summary appears in the Groups Directory that we looked at yesterday, and is again, another way to draw people to your group. There is a maximum length, so keep it brief. The next box is a description that allows for a lengthier explanation of the group, so if you need to add more information, feel free to do so there. This also has a maximum length.

trademarks, or other proprietary rights or otherwise violate the User Agreement.

* Group Name:
Note: "LinkedIn" is not allowed to be used in your group name.

* Group Type:

Other category name:

* Summary: Enter a brief description about your group and its purpose. Your summary about this group will appear in the Groups Directory.

* Description: Your full description of this group will appear on your group pages.

As you can see, I'm not clicking "Save" after I enter each thing - with multiple requirements, you would get an error message and perhaps lose what you've written. So make sure not to accidentally hit the "back" button while you're working on this.

The next thing to add is a website. This is optional, but since my group is based on a blog, I'll include it. If you blog about the subject area you're creating a group about, you may also want to think about including your blog address here so that people can find out more about you easily.

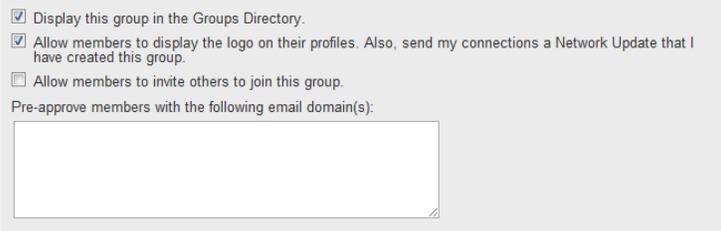
Next, there's a box that requires you to input your email address - this is pre-populated with the email address that's associated with your LinkedIn account, so if you're fine with any group emails coming to that address, you can just leave it. If you'd like to change it, you can also do so without affecting the address that's associated with your account.

The next option has to do with access. We talked a little about this yesterday, with groups being either open or closed. An open group is called "Auto-Join" here, which means that anyone on LinkedIn can join the group without requiring approval from a manager. For the group I'm creating, that's a great idea.

For networking groups, this can be a little tougher. When you're creating a networking group for people outside of your contacts, you obviously want to encourage as much participation as possible. But you can sometimes be overrun by people that don't best fit your group's description. For example, in our ILN group, we restrict it to current members. If it was an open group, we'd have an awful lot of vendors in it - I know this, because I moderate the group and handle requests to join. So in order to keep the integrity of a group and have the group remain at a high level of discussion, instead of having a lot of promotional talk, restricting the group may be the way to go for you.

*Access:

- Auto-Join: Any LinkedIn member may join this group without requiring approval from a manager.
- Request to Join: Users must request to join this group and be approved by a manager.



The screenshot shows a settings panel for a LinkedIn group. It contains three checkboxes: the first is checked and labeled 'Display this group in the Groups Directory.'; the second is checked and labeled 'Allow members to display the logo on their profiles. Also, send my connections a Network Update that I have created this group.'; the third is unchecked and labeled 'Allow members to invite others to join this group.' Below these is a text input field labeled 'Pre-approve members with the following email domain(s):' which is currently empty.

If you're going to require people to be moderated, you'll want to choose the second option - "Request to Join." Note that if you do choose this, it does require a bit of extra work, because you'll have to regularly log into LinkedIn and check whether you have incoming requests. I check this daily - we don't get a ton of requests, but I don't want any members who would like to participate to be held in limbo for too long.

You also have some other options here - it defaults to displaying this group in the Directory, but if you'd like to keep yours more private, you can uncheck this. If you're creating a networking group, I'd recommend against this - you want anyone on LinkedIn to be able to see your group in the directory and join it, even if you're moderating it.

It also defaults to allowing members to display the logo on their profiles, and sends your connections a Network Update that you've created this group. Again, these are a good idea because it will increase the visibility of your group - connections of group members will see the logo and consider joining the group themselves (I do that all the time), and your own connections will see it come up in their news feed and have the chance to join.

The next option is unchecked, but it enables you to allow members to invite others to the group. If you think that people would be interested in doing this, this can be particularly useful for a networking group. And finally, you can pre-approve members with email domains that you specify. If you have a lot of free time, go ahead and enable this (I'm actually considering going back and doing this for ILN members, since this wasn't an option when I first created the group). But if you're creating a subject-specific networking group, it's unlikely that you'll have a list of domain names that you want to approve.

There are four more settings you need to handle here before creating the group, and only one of them is required! The first is setting the language - this defaults to English, but with over half of LinkedIn's members coming from outside the US, you may want to consider starting a group in

your native language (if supported by LinkedIn). Or if you're an English lawyer doing a lot of work with German clients, for example and you speak fluent German, create your group in German.

The next setting is for location. Again, this is optional, and is a checkbox that allows you to identify whether your group is based on a single geographic location. This can be very useful if you're looking to put together a local networking group, because then it's much easier to take the relationships you form offline. Since mine is a group based on a blog, which has readership everywhere, I won't check this box.

The next setting may not be visible for you - this is for sending a Twitter announcement. I have it because my Twitter account is linked to LinkedIn, but it may not appear if you don't have this set up. This defaults to being checked, and that's fine with me.

The final item is a checkbox stating that you confirm that you've read and accepted their Terms of Service, which are hyperlinked. This does not default to checked, since LinkedIn wants to keep you from turning around and saying "I didn't know that was there!"

So I'll check that box, and then I have three options to create my group - I can click the button to create an open group, create a members-only group or cancel. The difference between an open and a closed group is that an open group allows everyone to see the discussions and share them, and a closed group is restricted to the members of that group only. Note that this is different to the earlier setting we set up for access.

Since I want people to join the group in order to see the discussions (and it's likely that you will too), I'll click "Create a members-only group."

Website:

* Group Owner Email:

* Access:

- Auto-Join:** Any LinkedIn member may join this group without requiring approval from a manager.
- Display this group in the Groups Directory.
- Allow members to display the logo on their profiles. Also, send my connections a Network Update that I have created this group.
- Allow members to invite others to join this group.
- Request to Join:** Users must request to join this group and be approved by a manager.

Language:

Location: My group is based in a single geographic location.

Twitter Announcement: 

* Agreement: Check to confirm you have read and accept the [Terms of Service](#).

Discussions in LinkedIn groups can either be open to the world to see and share, or restricted to members only. [Learn About Open Groups](#)

or Cancel

* Indicated a required field

Once you create the group, you've got to get people to join it! LinkedIn takes you right to this page:

Groups You've Joined Following Groups You May Like Groups Directory Create a Group [FAQ](#)

Batch Invite

If you have an email list in a file, you can batch invite up to many people at once.

[Upload a File](#)

Pre-approve People

If you plan to send invitations through a system other than LinkedIn, we recommend pre-approving your invitees first.

[Pre-approve People](#)

Send Invitations

Send invitations to your connections on LinkedIn or even other contacts who are not on LinkedIn. Recipients who accept your invitations will automatically become members of your group.

You can also allow your members to invite people to the group to help it grow faster. Recipients who accept their invitations will automatically become members of the group.

Member invitations are on. [Turn off](#)

* **Connections:**

Start typing the name of a connection
[Add other email addresses...](#)

* **Subject:**

* **Welcome Message:**

-Lindsay

[Send Invitations](#) or [Skip this step](#)

* Indicates required fields

As you can see, you have three options here. On the left hand side, you can "batch invite," which means that if you have an email list in a file, you can invite a number of people at once (don't read that explanation on LinkedIn too closely, since they've got a typo there!). I know that you do have an email list in a file from when we exported your email contacts, so you or your assistant can go through this list and identify those who would benefit most from the group and invite them.

Below that, there's the option to pre-approve people. If you have a restricted group, or as it says here, you're planning to send invitations through a system other than LinkedIn, it's a good idea to upload a list of invitees to pre-approve first.

For example, if you know that your top clients are all going to be interested in this group, you'll definitely want to pre-approve them, so that when they join the group, they'll be accepted right away, rather than receiving the message that they have to wait to be approved by the moderator - my nose would be out of joint if I was a top client of someone's and had to go through the same approval process as everyone else, so keep this in mind.

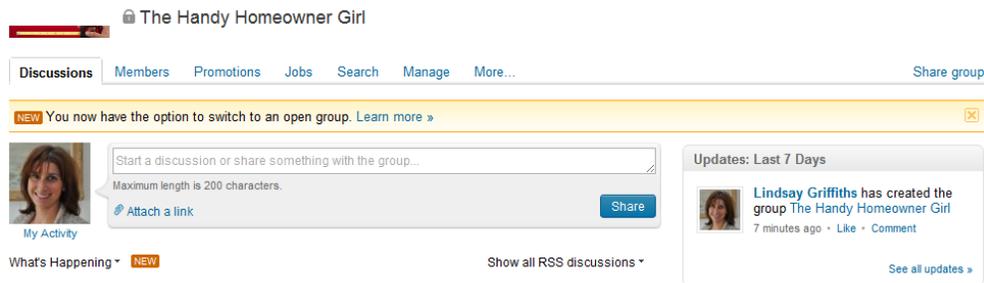
And finally, you can see that you can invite individual connections to join the group. If you know the names of those you want to invite from your list, start typing and then select the names as they come up. If you'd rather browse through your list of connections and select them from there, you can click the "in" button and your address book of connections will pop up with check boxes to select them.

My recommendation here is that, since you're already connected to your top clients (you are, aren't you?), you should invite them to the group individually if you believe they would find it of value. You'll want to personalize the invitation for them, explaining why they would find value in the group, making sure to tell them it's just getting started, so they don't wonder where all the

conversation is, and using it as an opportunity to tell them that you value working with them so much, you really think their contribution to this group would be invaluable.

Once you've written that out, you can hit "Send invitations." If you're not sure that anyone in your list of connections or clients would make a good group member (maybe you're breaking into a new industry and you want the list to grow organically), you can click "Skip this step."

Once you do that, your group is created and you're taken to the discussions page!



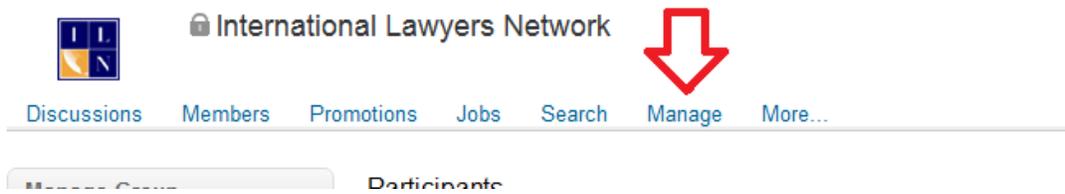
Now that you've created your group, it will work exactly as the other groups do that we saw yesterday. Right now there are no updates, so it's a good idea to get started by posting one - perhaps welcome any new members and invite them to introduce themselves and explain to the group what they hope to get out of the discussions here.

We won't go into too much detail about using the group, since we did that yesterday, but there are a few points you'll need to know in order to manage it. Groups don't take a ton of oversight, but in the beginning, you'll want to make sure to post semi-regularly in order to get the group going. The goal is to have the members of the group really running it for themselves (not from a management point of view, but from a contributions point of view), so that you act more as facilitator. But in the beginning, everyone will be shy, the group will be growing still, and you'll want to offer some topics for discussion.

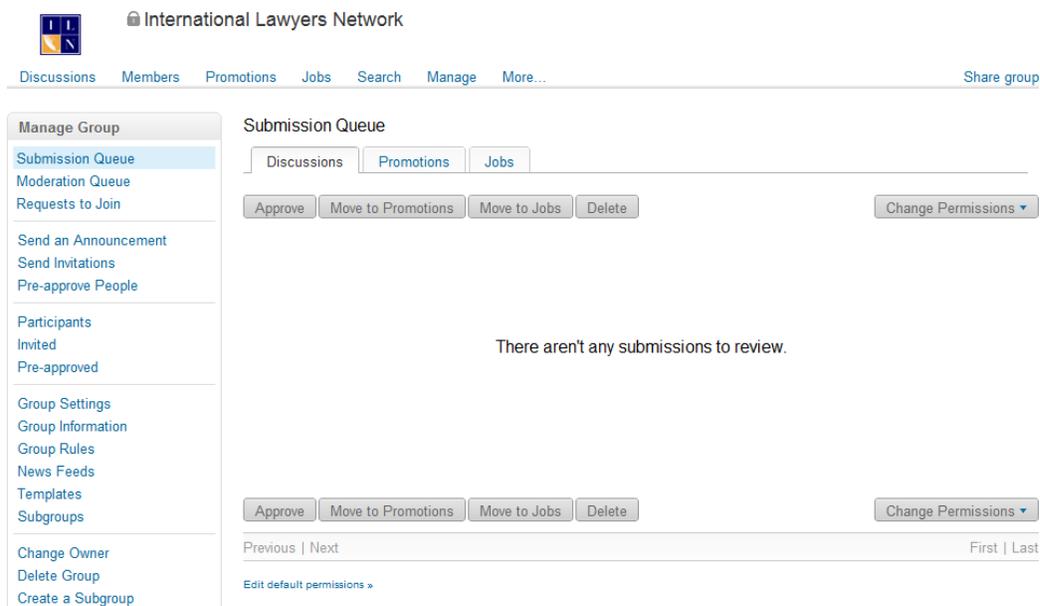
These could be questions that you've seen come up a lot that you'd like them to weigh in on, articles you've read or written that would be particularly valuable to them, and maybe other valuable resources. Discussion will ensure, and the group will begin to take on a life of its own - success!

But, there are things you need to do to manage your group. You'll see at the top that it tells you that you can switch to an open group. So if you change your mind and decide that you want the group's discussions to be publicly visible, you can do that. If you want to get rid of this notification, click the "X" on the right hand of the banner.

To manage the group, we're going to click on "Manage." I'm going to switch over to our ILN group now, since that's a restricted group, and show you some of the things you may need to do to manage the group.



Once you click manage, you'll be taken to this page:



On the left hand side, you can see a whole long list of management options for the group. The first page you're going to see is the top option - the submission queue. We're going to ignore this for the moment, because we first have to check the settings of the group to see if you'll even need to look at this again.

We click on "Group Settings" about half way down the lefthand list:

Group Settings This group is restricted to members only. [Learn About Open Groups](#)

Enable the Discussions and News features.

Enable the Promotions Feature.
 Allow only moderators and managers to move discussions to the Promotions area.

Enable the Jobs Feature.
 Allow only moderators and managers to move discussions to the Jobs area.

Automatically remove content flagged by group members.
Number of flags: Discussions and comments cannot be retrieved once removed.

Display the Subgroups tab.

Permissions:

Members of this group:

- Free to post (discussions, promotions, jobs and comments).
- Free to post promotions, jobs, comments only, and submit everything else.
- Free to post jobs, comments only, and submit everything else.
- Free to post comments only and submit everything else.
- Submit everything for approval.

Restrictions:

- Require moderation for new groups members.
Number of days that a person is new to the group: days
- Require moderation for new people on LinkedIn.
Number of days that a person is new to LinkedIn: days
- Require moderation for people with few or no connections.

Membership

- Auto-Join:** Any member of LinkedIn may join this group without requiring approval from a manager.
- Request to Join:** Users must request to join the group and be approved by a manager.

Users with few or no connections will require approval from a manager to join the group.

Display this group in the Groups Directory.

Allow members to display the logo on their profiles.

Allow members to invite others to join this group.

Auto-approve users with these email domains (e.g. linkedin.com, cardmunch.com):

A lot of this are things we saw already when setting up the group, but there are also some new things here.

At the top, you'll see that it defaults to enabling the discussions and news features. The allows members of the group to post to the discussions. I'm going to come right out here and say that if you're starting a group, this should always stay checked. If your group is not designed to foster conversation among it's members, then it makes no sense to have it - that may be a bold statement, but if someone is looking for promotional material about you, they'll go to your website. Groups are designed to foster collaboration and conversation, much like social media itself, so if you're not going to allow that, it isn't worth creating the group.

With this checkbox checked, you have the option to enable the promotions features, the jobs feature, and to automatically remove content that is flagged by other members.

These three default to being checked. For the promotions feature, enabling this allows for a section where members can post things that are purely promotional and not designed to inspire conversation. If you don't want this, you can uncheck this box, or you can check the box underneath it that would allow you and anyone you denote as a manager to move discussions to the promotions area.

The next one is enabling the jobs feature. If you want people in the group to be able to post job openings, keep this checked. This won't make sense for all groups, so consider what works best for yours. Similarly, if you want more moderator control over who is moving discussions to the jobs area, check the box underneath for this. Keep in mind also that the more you restrict the group, the more oversight it will require by you.

A note on oversight as well - it may seem a good idea to delegate this to your assistant, and in many cases this is a good idea. Many legal assistants often have a better idea of what's going on in a broader sense with their attorneys than the attorneys themselves do (by necessity of the job). So if you have a good relationship with your assistant and trust the to moderate the group, by all means, do so. But I'll caution you that moderating the group and participating in the group are two vastly different things - if you're going to be using social media, it needs to be YOU using it, not someone else.

As I've said time and time again, people do business with those they know, like and trust, and the way they get to know, like and trust you is by interacting with YOU, however that may happen. Someone once gave me an apt metaphor for this - you wouldn't send someone else to impersonate you at a cocktail party, so why would you do it online? Just say no.

The final option here is to automatically remove content flagged by group members. I think it's a good idea to leave this one checked so that members can flag and remove anything they find offensive. If you find that group members are flagging people's content for other reasons (jealousy, competition), you may want to take this option away, but trusting the members of your group initially is wise.

As for the number of flags, I believe that this relates to how many discussions an individual member is allowed to flag. This can cut down on the difficulties I described above, so set this number at your discretion.

The next section is permissions:

Permissions:

Members of this group:

- Free to post (discussions, promotions, jobs and comments).
- Free to post promotions, jobs, comments only, and submit everything else.
- Free to post jobs, comments only, and submit everything else.
- Free to post comments only and submit everything else.
- Submit everything for approval.

This is what decides whether you'll need to moderate the submissions we talked about earlier. Since we want to encourage the free-flow of conversation here without having to be involved in too much oversight, I highly recommend the first one. That allows members to post whatever they want.

Otherwise, they're required to submit for your approval, at minimum, any discussion that they may want to raise. This is very restrictive, so my recommendation is to leave it set for the default, allowing them to post whatever they would like - as an aside, you can remove a member yourself if someone abuses the group, so keep that in mind as an option rather than having to restrict the permissions.

The next section is restrictions:

Restrictions:

- Require moderation for new groups members.
 -  Number of days that a person is new to the group: days
- Require moderation for new people on LinkedIn.
 -  Number of days that a person is new to LinkedIn: days
- Require moderation for people with few or no connections.

This allows you to moderate people who are new to the group, new to LinkedIn, or people with few connections (sometimes they are spammers). This is a personal preference. If you'd like people who are new to the group to be able to spend a few days just "listening" to the rest of the conversation so that you can make sure they'll participate appropriately, you can require moderation for a pre-set number of days - the person will still be able to post, you'll just have to log in to approve anything that they want to include.

This is also an option for people who are new to LinkedIn, and people with few or no connections.

The rest of the options were ones we dealt with when setting up the group, so I won't go into them here. Just know that if you feel you need to make changes to the membership settings, language, basing the group on a single location, or the owner email, this is the place to do it!

If you've made any changes from the default here, click "Save Changes." If the settings are saved, you'll get a banner across the top that says "Your group settings have been updated."

Now I'll go through the other management options quickly:

- **Submission queue:** if you're requiring people to submit their discussions, etc. for moderation before approving them. you'll have to check this link regularly. LinkedIn doesn't send you notifications for requests to join, so my guess is that they don't do it for submissions either. So you'll need to check this when you log in each morning. It's something you'll definitely have to do daily in order to keep the group vital.

When you review your submission queue, you can either approve the posting, require it to be moderated (which moves it to the next queue, or you can block it and delete. You also have the option to move it to promotions or jobs. These decisions will all be based on the individual submissions.

- **Moderation queue:** This is where you can go to flag or unflag content. If you've set it up so that any content flagged by members is automatically deleted, then you won't see it here - when it's deleted, it's gone forever. If you're requiring further moderation, you can come here and see the content requiring review. If you feel that content has been mis-flagged, you can clear it here, or delete the content.
- **Requests to Join:** This is where I come daily - if you have a restricted group, people will have to request to join the group. They appear in a list with the date they requested membership, their name, their level of connection to you (1st, 2nd, etc) and you can either approve, decline or decline and block in bulk (if you have a number of requests), or you can individually approve, decline, decline & block, add a note (which is a short pop up that gets attached to whatever your response is), or send a message (which is a full message sent through LinkedIn that takes you to a new page).

When we get requests to join here, if the person is with an ILN member firm, I'll approve them. If they're not, I'll click "Add Note" and I'll post a saved draft of a message that I have informing them that our policy for the group is to only allow current ILN members to join. Then I decline them. If they were to continue to request membership after that, I would consider declining & blocking them.

- **Send an Announcement:** If there's something that you want the whole group to know, you can go to "Send an Announcement" which will send an email with the information to all members of the group, as well as post a discussion on the group page that members can comment on. This would be a great way to let people know about upcoming events that you might have that would be of interest to them. You can define what the subject and message will be for the announcement, and check whether you'd like to follow the

announcement - you'll be notified of any new comments by email - and/or make this a featured discussion - which will highlight it on the discussion page.

If you'd like, you can also send a test email so that you know what it will look like before it's delivered. If you're sending this to clients and potential clients, it's worth the extra bit of time to make sure that everything appears perfectly and there are no errors. Then, hit "Send Announcement" and it's on its way!

- **Send Invitations:** This section allows you to invite other people on LinkedIn to join your group. For example, perhaps someone recently connected to you, and you think they'd really find value in your group. You can go to the Send Invitations page and invite them to join the group. I do this with any ILN member that is newly connected to me. Make sure to include the URL for the group, because it may not appear with the email and it's important to make sure they can easily find your group without having to search for it. Also, personalize the email and let them know what they'll get out of the group - the default email just says "I would like to invite you to join my group on LinkedIn." With so many groups, you've got to give people a reason to join and participate in yours.
- **Pre-Approve People:** We talked a bit about this before, and here's where you can do it on an on-going basis. This is particularly useful before you invite someone to join the group - it can be confusing to be invited to join a group and then get a message that you have to wait to be approved. So when I'm going to invite an ILN member to join the group, I'll first pre-approve them by typing their name into the connections box, and clicking on it when it comes up. You can upload a file here too if that's easier, or pre-approve multiple connections. Your connections are not notified when you pre-approve them, so feel free to pre-approve anyone you'd like.
- **Participants:** Here, you'll find a the list of those in the group, among other things. These are broken up into tabs with the first one being "Management." As the owner of the group, I'm the only one shown here. I can change my role if I'd like to to manager, moderator or member (this can be helpful when someone changes jobs and you want to keep them in the group but not allow them to manage it any longer).

The next tab over is members - this is the full list of those in the group. There's an overall "members" tab in the top menu for the group, but this section is where you can change people's roles, change their permissions, remove them, block them, or block and delete them.

As we mentioned yesterday, you can have multiple managers and moderators, so if you'd like some assistance with managing the group, you can set that up here - that way you don't have to share your personal LinkedIn login information with anyone.

You can manage individual people's permissions as well - if someone seems to be posting a lot of junk or promotional material, you can individually require moderation here if you'd like to put them on probation for the group. That way, you can review their posts if necessary.

And you can remove, block, or block and delete people - since we keep this to current ILN members, I periodically go through and remove anyone who has switched to another firm, or whose firm has left the network. This may be of use to you if someone changes industries or is just bothersome to the group. You can also send messages to individual members of the group here - that's a nice benefit of being the group owner!

- **Invited:** This gives you a list of those you've invited to join the group. If there's someone you're thinking of inviting, but you're not sure if you sent them an email already, you can search for their name here. It also can give you an idea of how many people you've invited, versus how many have accepted, if you're curious. You can also delete the invitations here. The list defaults to being sorted by recent invitees, but you can sort by last name if you prefer.
- **Pre-Approved:** Similarly, this gives you a list of who you've pre-approved to join the group and when. You can search this, delete them or invite them to the group, and sort by those recently pre-approved or last name. As a note, you can pretty much everywhere in LinkedIn, click on the person's name and be taken to their public profile (or regular profile if you're connected directly).
- **Group information:** This allows you to edit the information that we set up in the creation process, such as the logo, the name, the type, etc. Note that you can only change a group's name up to five times.
- **Group Rules:** If there are rules for the group that you'd like the members to be aware of, LinkedIn gives you a text box here for including them.
- **News Feeds:** One of the lovely things about groups is that if there are RSS Feeds that you'd like to include, you can. Basically, what this does is that when there is a new item published to that feed, it is automatically included as a discussion on your page. While you don't want to rely on this entirely for your participation, this can be a good way to keep the group active without having to babysit it too much.

There is a limit on how many news feeds you can include (it's 30), and I think this is sensible so that you don't overrun the discussions page with canned news. To add a feed, you just put the website or RSS URL in the text box, hit continue, and it will add the feed.

On this page, it also gives you links to submit an article, to manage the news feeds (that's the default page), to see the most activity, the latest news, what has been recently submitted and any recent discussions. Unfortunately, this page takes away the left hand menu, so we'll have to go back to manage to see it again.

- **Templates:** This section allows you to create, manage and automatically send custom messages to people interested in this group. Right now, I'm wishing I'd seen this sooner, since I manually add a message when I decline someone, and I have the option to do it

automatically here! (See, even I learn something new every day about LinkedIn! We're all social media newbies, and don't let anyone tell you differently)

At any rate, this section enables you to create messages that are automatically sent when someone requests to join the group, when you approve their membership, when you decline their membership, and when you decline and block their membership. To do this, you click on the link for the relevant template, and you're brought to a page where you can add a subject and message, click to enable auto-send, and send a test email.

Once you have a message saved as a template, it will appear in the list and give you the option to edit it, and uncheck or check whether to auto-send the message. It also tells you who the last person is to edit it (in case you have more than one moderator).

- **Subgroups:** Since I have subgroups, this comes up and allows me to manage them. They are basically groups within groups and work exactly the same way, and can be managed individually based on your preferences.
- **Change Owner, Delete Group, Create a Subgroup:** These are all self-explanatory - if you want to change the owner of a group (say you're leaving your position or retiring and want to hand it over), delete the group - it's not working the way you'd hoped or it was timely and no longer is, or create a subgroup, you can do so using these links.

So that's how you create and manage your own group! Get out there and start networking today!

Tomorrow, I'm hoping to cover the last application - My Travel - and then next week, we're taking a short break because I'm taking the week off. But in my absence, keep an eye out for some special guest posts that I'm lining up from legal marketing experts - you definitely won't want to miss them!

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