

Your **Guide**
to create
LinkedIn
Profile



Imagine
the future



What is LinkedIn... and Why Does It Matter?

Today, more than 3 million businesses maintain their presence through LinkedIn company pages, providing a key point of access to a network of over 200 million registered users around the world. While you may enjoy using certain platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Vine, Pinterest...etc) in your personal life, they are not necessarily appropriate or relevant for your career. With LinkedIn, however, business is the focus.

If you're not using LinkedIn for business, you're missing out on several opportunities to boost your reach.

Having said so, we would like to offer you a guide that can help you create your professional profile on LinkedIn and boost your career network and followers.

The 4 most important aspects employer looks for in your LinkedIn profile:

1. Headline
2. Headshot
3. Summary
4. Background

1- Headline

Your headline in LinkedIn plays a critical role. Treat it like the headline of an ad. Its job is to help the readers determine if they want to read on or not. If your headline is little more than your job title, it will not do much to engage the reader, and it doesn't differentiate you from those who share the same job title. If you don't create your own headline, LinkedIn will default to your current job title - and that's a big snooze.

To brand your headline and make it stand out, use this proven formula:

Job title/company + Keywords + Zing!

Job Title and Company

Your job title and company make you relevant and show your commitment to your current employer.

Keywords

The keywords are the key to being found in a LinkedIn search. You need to know the keywords that people would use to try to find you and then include them in your headline. Be specific, one or two keywords will do the trick.

Zing

Your zing is what makes you interesting and makes others want to get to know you. It communicates how you do what you do, as well as the value you create when you do it.

It can be a little bit of a challenge to craft a headline that includes all that with just 120 characters, but it's worth the effort to get it right.

Some examples:

Joao Rocco is able to get all his keywords in and still leave a little room for his philosophy - *"branding through people"*

Siwa Echtay

Helping companies in the MENA region optimize recruitment and promote their employer brand at LinkedIn

Nawal Fakhoury

LinkedIn Cheerleader/ Employee Experience Leader/ Culture Champion

Dwayne Conrod

HR Director/ HRLT/ Strategic Business Partner/ Talent Driver/ Trust Advisor/ Transformational Change leader/ Culture Champion/ Mountain Biker

Now it's your turn. Use the proven formula to create a headline that's both attractive and authentic.

2- Headshot

A Professional Looking HEADSHOT

Everyone is checking you out. Recruiters spend 19% of their time looking at your photo. But this isn't just about looking good. Having a photo also means that you will receive 21 times more profile views than someone without a photo.

So let's define what a good LinkedIn profile photo looks like.

Dos:

1. Look professional and look straight into the camera and smile
2. Wear business suit or whatever is considered business appropriate for your company or industry.
3. You should end up with a head and shoulders photo.
4. Clean background

Don'ts:

1. Poor quality photo.
2. Poorly cropped photo.
3. Out of date photo.
4. Full body shots, action photos.

3- LinkedIn summary

Most people use their LinkedIn summary section to simply describe what they're currently doing career-wise. They're missing a trick:

a. Think about your "mission statement"

The key to a good LinkedIn summary is to spell out your ambitions.

You need to spend time to think about your values and the type of work you want to do, and see that as your personal 'mission statement'

b. Tell a compelling story

It's easy to see your career history as a list of facts and dates and forget that it's actually part of a larger personal story. Make sure you tell a compelling and personal story by:

Imagining what you'd say to a potential employer if you were in an elevator with them for a few minutes. Think about the key points you'd like to get across and how you'd do this in an engaging, targeted way - and do it in your summary.

c. Choose specific examples of your skills and experience

Be aware of a common mistake: providing a summary that's not tangible enough and doesn't

give evidence of the impact of your work.

d. Include a call to action

Conclude your summary by providing a “call to action.”

Use one or two sentences to show what you'd like to achieve through your LinkedIn profile, e.g. you're currently searching for your next job, or you're looking to build your network for the future.

Sample 1:

A second year Business Administration undergraduate student at UC Riverside with an interest in marketing, advertising, and social media. Seeking a summer internship to apply my experience assisting a company's branding needs through social media outreach, developing marketing plans, digital marketing, and conducting customer research.

Specialties

- Event planning
- Social networking and marketing
- Account management
- Microsoft Offices (Word, PowerPoint, Excel)
- Adobe CS5.5 Suite (Photoshop, Flash)

Sample 2:

After graduating with a 2:1 degree in Business and Management from Brunel University and spending a year travelling in Asia and Australia, I am looking to

combine my business knowledge with my passion for responsible travel by working in a graduate operations role for a sustainable tourism company.

My year travelling was life-changing. I saw amazing natural beauty and met lots of interesting people. During my travels, I worked as a waiter at an eco-lodge in Queensland and on the reception desk of a backpackers' hostel in Bangkok. My experiences opened my eyes to the environmental challenges of tourism - making me passionate about using my skills to promote the benefits of travel while limiting its impact on the planet.

4- Background

Once you've written a summary, it's time to add your experience. Now, maybe you're thinking, but I don't have any experience. I'm only in college.

A lot of students freak out about this section and think that they need to have a dozen positions with impressive titles. This couldn't be further from the truth.

Remember: Recruiters know that you're a college student, and that's okay. You don't need to write a LinkedIn profile that makes it sound like you've been working in business for ten years.

Of course, if you have done something really impressive such as intern at a high profile company or start your own business, put that in your Experience section by all means. But don't think you have to sound older or more accomplished than you are.

Here are some things you can include in the experience section:

1. Internships, both paid and unpaid.
2. Part-time jobs
3. Entrepreneurial or freelance work

If you have volunteer experience, LinkedIn has a separate section for it

The work and education sections are the areas of your profile that most resemble an online CV, with space for the name of each institution you have worked / studied at, job titles, dates, and details of each role.

But your LinkedIn profile should complement, not replace, your CV.

8 Tips to Optimize Your LinkedIn Profile

LinkedIn Character Count Cheat Sheet

Before you get started, here is a cheat sheet of each area so you know up front how many characters or keystrokes each field allows. Letters, numbers, punctuation and spaces count towards character count.

- Name: 60 maximum characters.
- Professional Headline: 120 character limit.
- Summary: 2,000 character limit.

Contact Info:

- Website Anchor Text: 30 maximum characters.
- Website URL: 256 maximum characters.
- Phone number: 25 maximum characters. Only your 1st degree connections can see this information.
- IM (Instant message): 25 maximum characters. Only your 1st degree connections can see this information.
- Address: 1000 maximum characters. Only your 1st degree connections can see this information.

Experience:

- Company Name: 100 maximum characters.
- Job Title: 100 characters.
- Position Description: 200 minimum and 2000 maximum characters.

Other Areas:

- Personal Interests: 1,000 Characters
- Skills and Endorsements: You may add up to 25 skills using 61 characters per skill.
- LinkedIn Status Bar Update: You can use up to 700 characters unless you want to update your Twitter status at the same time. Twitter updates are limited to 140 characters. If you go over the 140-character limit, only the first 140 characters will be visible on Twitter

Here's Your 8 Tips:

- 1. Completeness:** Make sure that every section of your profile has been completed and that there are no blank spaces or obvious gaps. Here's what you need to have completed to have an 'All-Star' status:
 - You need to add your industry and location
 - A current position
 - Two past positions
 - Your education information
 - A minimum of three skills
 - At least 50 connections
- 2. Customized link:** When you create your LinkedIn profile, the default URL that you get doesn't exactly roll off the tongue. Instead of a URL with a million confusing numbers at the end, you need to create one like this: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/lisadougherty>. This is done through "customize your public profile URL"
- 3. Get Written Recommendations:** It is still important to have written recommendations from colleagues, management, people you manage, vendors or customers. LinkedIn no longer requires three recommendations to have a complete status, however, it is still considered a best practice.
- 4. Add Skills and Get Endorsements:** Endorsements are one-click acknowledgments from your network showing that you are being

recognized for a certain skill.

5. **Rearrange Your Profile:** LinkedIn enables you to reorder the sections of their profile in any way you prefer.
6. **Build Your Network:** Once your profile is in good shape, work on building your network.
7. **Add Projects:** We highly recommend adding a projects section to your profile, especially if you are a Consultant or Freelancer. By adding this section, it will allow you to name your project and input a URL. This then turns the title of the project into a hyperlink, leading the viewer to the project's website and thus creating an inbound link.
8. **Join Groups:** Only 16% of LinkedIn members are in the maximum number of groups allowed (50). Find groups related to your industry or niche then make sure that you join them and, if at all possible, be an active participant in two or three of them. This will get your profile noticed by other industry contacts.

