



HOW TO CREATE AN EXCELLENT LINKEDIN PROFILE

*With the growth of LinkedIn, the jobs market has evolved completely, and an online shop-window has opened up. You need to be best placed to showcase yourself, your experience, and your achievements. You can achieve this by fully optimising your LinkedIn profile. Here are **12 useful tips** on how to prepare an optimal LinkedIn profile:*

1. Connect

LinkedIn works best when you are connected with a lot of people. You should aim to connect with the majority of people that you currently work with or have worked with in the past. And, of course, good recruiters. A LinkedIn profile with less than 50 connections just doesn't look great. Try to aim for at least 100+ connections to start. But don't add a tonne of people that you don't know, try to keep it relevant.

2. Choose a Good Photo

This is probably the most important thing you can do, as lets face it - first impressions matter. Choose a clear and professional image. Head and shoulders, and ideally in work attire. For inspiration look around at your peers or people currently in positions you would like to be in. And please remember, this isn't Facebook or Instagram. Also, add a background photo. If your employer hasn't already asked you to add their branding, well then you should either add your own simple design (just Google 'LinkedIn background images') or else add your company's branded image. The background image can really bring a LinkedIn profile together nicely.

3. Get a Custom URL

A customized URL (ideally linkedin.com/yourname), looks much better than the clunky combination of numbers that LinkedIn automatically assigns when you sign up. This URL is much tidier when adding to your CV too. Click [here](#) to see how to change it.

4. Get Your Headline Right

Your headline should state what you currently do. If you are on the job-hunt or in between jobs then for example you can put 'Qualified Accountant - Looking for Opportunities' or 'Newly Qualified Accountant - Available for Opportunities'. You can use your target job title in this sentence also, as this increases your profile being picked-up in recruiter searches.

5. Get Your Summary Right

Ideally this should be 3-6 sentences long, outlining your work experience, key skills, unique qualifications, and a list of the various industries you've had exposure to over the years. The use of facts and numbers (just like in a CV) can really help you show-off but be sure to keep anything confidential to yourself. Remember to use keywords with intent. Using the right keywords in your profile is the difference between being found and being invisible.

6. Experience Section: Treat Your LinkedIn Profile Like a Brief Online CV

Try not to just list where you have worked and for how long. LinkedIn is a great place to highlight your accomplishments. Each job should have at least 3 bullet points outlining your experience. You don't want to overdo it either, so don't just copy and paste your CV!

7. Show Your Personal Side

Make sure to include any relevant extra curricular activities that you are involved in such as sports or charity work. LinkedIn lets you add Volunteer experience, various Accomplishments, and Awards. Be sure to add additional Languages or the names of Organisations and Communities that you are involved with too.

8. Use Multimedia Elements

LinkedIn lets you add photos, videos, and slideshow presentations to your profile summary. This is a perfect opportunity to show examples of work you have done.

9. Request Recommendations

Recommendations are still very much under-used on LinkedIn profiles. You should aim to have at least 5 professional (or personal) recommendations on your profile. LinkedIn offers a very easy way for you to request a recommendation from someone you know or have worked with. When requested, they will receive a one-click link to add a recommendation to your page. This works as an excellent social-proof for people viewing your profile. Also, if you have worked with someone who was impressive well then why not give them a recommendation? They will be very appreciative and also it is a great form of networking. And who knows, they may very well return the favour.

10. Manage Your Skills & Endorsements

Endorsements can be a great way to show off your skills, but if you don't keep an eye on them they could prove to be an inaccurate display of your current skill set. As time goes on be sure to refresh your skills and request endorsements for the skills that reflect your current skill set. Often people glance at endorsements to get snapshot of what you do. So you want to make sure they get the correct message.

11. Share an Update, or Share Somebody Else's Update

While you may not always have something to say. LinkedIn encourages people to share professional updates. It is the life-blood of the platform. If you have reached a personal milestone, or your company has good news to share, well then share. Don't hesitate to like and comment on other people's updates and articles too. They will often return the favour.

12. Join a Group

LinkedIn Groups are a very good resource—and they can do wonders for your job search. By joining groups relevant to your profession or industry, you'll show that you're engaged in your field. But more importantly, you'll instantly be connected to people and part of relevant discussions in your field—kind of like an ongoing, online networking event.