

LinkedIn – the power of an active profile

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network with hundreds of millions of members, and growing rapidly. Use it to:

- Establish your professional **profile** and control one of the top search results for your name
- **Build and maintain your professional network**
- **Find and reconnect** with colleagues and classmates
- Learn about other **companies**, and gain industry insights
- Find other professionals in the same industry using **groups**
- Share your thoughts and insights through **LinkedIn's long-form publishing platform**
- Tap into the knowledge of your network
- Discover new career opportunities by **searching for jobs**

Your LinkedIn profile helps build trust in you, your brand, and shows your digital savviness – in other words your “professional validator”. It should be individual and authentic and stand out from the crowd.

Our top tips:

Professional Headline – Your Strapline

- Note: Before editing your profile, change the privacy settings to ensure notifications aren't sent out until you are ready
- The headline entices people to click. It tells everyone on LinkedIn who you are, what you do, the benefits of what you do for others and why you are someone they should connect with
- Highlight your current position, company and expertise (eg “*Content Marketing Strategist and Copywriter*”) or emphasise skills you want to turn up in searches (eg “*Speaker, Trainer, Author, Consultant, Evangelist*”) or a style of working (eg “*I supportively challenge people to stretch themselves and achieve beyond their expectations by focussing obsessively on goals*”)
- Proudly describe who you are eg “*Project Manager - ask me how I saved a top 100 company £2,000,000*”
- Focus on the future, not the past. What will an employer get if you join them?

Summary

- A compelling few paragraphs that explain who you are, what you have achieved, and who you did this for. Show where you have expertise, how you add value and the proof of how good you are
- Describe past experiences and specialisations, so you stand out from others in your line of work
- Focus on the most relevant details about your career. Avoid jargon
- Use asterisks and blank space to make the text readable. Write short paragraphs, 2-3 sentences long
- You can write in the first person and in a more informal style than a CV
- Recruiters use the summary to resolve gaps in the job experience section
- When explaining transitions in work experience, include the keywords and skills in the field you're now (or want to be) in
- Add media such as videos, images, documents, links, and presentations to showcase different projects and provide samples of your work. These can act as powerful hooks which intrigue the reader and set you apart from others

Job History / Experience

- Enter some brief information for each job (including relevant volunteer roles), the job title, how long you worked there, responsibilities, your achievements and anything else impressive
- Add photos/links/video to each area – this can add something different to the profile

Skills

- Focus on your real specialities as this is what most employers want
- Have the most important skills at the top; remove any irrelevant skills

Photo

- Profiles with a picture are 21 times more likely to be viewed than those without
- A professional head and shoulders portrait photo, with a light, plain background. Wear solid colours
- Dress and pose as you would be at first meeting - smiling, friendly and approachable

Recommendations

- Ask for endorsements from specific people who can highlight your key skills
- Give good recommendations to others, so they return the favour
- Unlike normal references, recommendations can be from employers, colleagues and clients/customers

Settings

- Make your personal profile easier to share by customising your LinkedIn public profile URL eg <https://uk.linkedin.com/in/JaneSmith>
- Make the profile visible to everyone. Limiting who can view the profile just limits the number of opportunities. If you don't want people to see something, don't put it on LinkedIn
- Make sure recruiters know you are looking for opportunities by switching on the button in the privacy settings: www.linkedin.com/psettings/jobs/profile-shared-with-recruiter

Finding Jobs

- Search for jobs by keyword, title, industry, location, company, function, experience level etc

Make Connections

- The more connections you have, the greater the chance of you being seen by potential employers
- When you invite someone to connect, write a personal note explaining why you want to connect
- First-level connections are important in themselves, but also for the second-level connections they can provide access to. Third-level connections tend to be less useful
- Aim to connect with people you want to know but aren't yet linked with. That's the whole point of networking - getting to know new people, not just maintaining contact with established connections

LinkedIn Groups

- Join relevant groups to network, share experiences, learn and give opinions.
- Find groups by clicking on **Discover More** on the bottom left side of your profile
- Follow industry experts to keep up to date with the latest news, topics and thought leadership in that arena. This will help your answers to interview questions to be topical and up to date
- Become an active member of the online community relevant to your industry. Participate in group discussions, review white papers and look to network with potential employers
- Provide posts and comments to help establish your credibility as an expert.
- Don't follow too many groups, as this may imply a lack of certainty about where your specialities lie
- If you're a member of the same group as another user, you can bypass the need to be a first-degree connection in order to message them

Be active and build up your professional content strategy

- Your profile is more likely to be viewed when you are actively updating and participating
- Use all the tools available to keep your profile up to date and comment on interesting industry news. This will alert your contacts with a 'status update' message
- Asking for help and advice by using posts is a great way to start a dialogue and generate results - but don't ask directly for work, as this tends to put people off
- Write high quality articles that inform and explain your expert knowledge. Be creative and current, and find relevant subjects that will draw in your target audience

And finally, review your profile periodically especially the strapline, your photo and the summary to ensure they are current and up to date