



## **Steps to Improve Your LinkedIn Profile**

### **Choose the right profile picture for LinkedIn.**

Your profile picture is your calling card on LinkedIn – it's how people are introduced to you and (visual beings that we are) it governs their impressions from the start. Here are some quick tips to start with: make sure the picture is recent and looks like you, make up your face takes up around 60% of it (long-distance shots don't stand out), wear what you would like to wear to work, and smile with your eyes! If you have a recent headshot, that would be the perfect picture to use.

### **Add a background photo.**

Your background photo is the second visual element at the top of your profile page. It grabs people's attention, sets the context and shows a little more about what matters to you. More than anything, the right background photo helps your page stand out, engage attention and stay memorable. You want to make sure that you keep this picture professional.

### **Open to work.**

If you're looking for work, make sure that you choose that option and input your preferences. Recruiters will be able to find out by searching for those members that are open to work.

### **Make your headline more than just a job title.**

There's no rule that says the description at the top of your profile page has to be just a job title. Use the headline field to say a bit more about how you see your role, why you do what you do, and what makes you tick. If you've got sales reps at your company who are on the ball with social selling, then take a quick look at their profile page headlines for inspiration. They will almost certainly have more than their job titles in there.

### **Turn your summary into your story.**

The first thing to say about your LinkedIn summary is – make sure you have one! It's amazing how many people still leave this field blank when creating their LinkedIn profile. Your summary is your chance to tell your own story – so don't just use it to list your skills or the job titles you've had. Try to bring to life why those skills matter – and the difference they can make to the people you work with. Don't be afraid to invest some time, try a few drafts, and run your summary past people you know. This is your most personal piece of content marketing – and it's worth the effort.

### **Grow your network.**

One of the easiest and yet most relevant ways to grow your LinkedIn network is to synch your profile with your email address book. This enables LinkedIn to suggest people you could connect with. It's amazing how effective this can be at surfacing relevant people for you to reach out to – and no connection requests are sent without your permission, so you can vet all of the potential connections. Beyond this, get into the habit of following up meetings and conversations with LinkedIn connection requests – it's a great way of keeping your network vibrant and up to date.

### **List your relevant skills.**

It's one of the quickest of quick wins on LinkedIn – scroll through the list of skills and identify those that are relevant to you. Doing so helps to substantiate the description in your Headline and Summary and provides a platform for others to endorse you. However, the key here is to stay relevant. A long list of skills that aren't really core to who you are and what you do, can start to feel unwieldy. Take time for a spring clean of your skills list every now and then.

### **Show off your education.**

Include all your schools, major(s) and minor, courses, and study abroad programs.

### **Claim your unique LinkedIn URL.**

To increase the professional results that appear when people search for you online, set your LinkedIn profile to "public" and create a unique URL (e.g., [linkedin.com/in/YourName/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/YourName/)).

### **Spread the endorsement love.**

Endorsements from other members substantiate your skills and increase your credibility. How do you get endorsed on LinkedIn? For starters, go through your network and identify connections who you feel genuinely deserve an endorsement from you – that's often the trigger for people to return the favor. Don't be afraid to reach out with a polite message asking for endorsement for a few key skills as well. Remember though – relevance matters. Reach out to people whose endorsement you'd really value.

### **Manage your endorsements more proactively.**

Once endorsements start to come in, you might find that they skew the emphasis of your LinkedIn profile in ways that don't reflect who you are. It could be that your core area of expertise is content marketing for example, but the people who've worked with you on events are more enthusiastic endorsers. Be proactive in managing your endorsements list using the edit features in the Skills section of your profile – you can choose which to show, and which to hide.

### **Request recommendations.**

Endorsements give people viewing your profile a quick, visual sense of what you're valued for. Recommendations take things a step further. They are personal testimonials written to illustrate the experience of working with you. There's a handy drop-down menu in the Recommendations section of your profile that makes it easy to reach out to specific contacts and request recommendations. Take the time to think about who you would most value a recommendation from – and personalize your request. It's worth the extra effort.

### **Share relevant content from your LinkedIn feed.**

It's one thing to have a network of connections on LinkedIn – it's far better to have an active role in that network, appearing in your connections' LinkedIn feeds in a way that adds value for them. Sharing relevant content with your network is one of the most accessible ways of doing this. You can make a start by keeping a close eye on your LinkedIn feed and sharing content that you find genuinely interesting – and that aligns with your point of view.

### **Add comments.**

Sharing is great – but it's just the starting point. When you add comments to your shares, you give yourself greater prominence within the feed and start to express why you think a particular piece of content matters. Well-expressed comments also enable you to share a broader range of content. It might be that you don't agree with a point of view but still find it interesting, for example. A

comment that can express that viewpoint starts to establish your opinion and thought-leadership. It's also more likely to draw additional comments, which then raise your profile across LinkedIn. Bear this mind when you're writing your comment – and make sure you're saying something you're happy for people to associate with you.

**Follow relevant influencers in your industry.**

Following relevant influencers on LinkedIn helps to put a range of interesting content in your feed, which you can then share with others when you think it adds value. It also helps to give context to your LinkedIn profile, demonstrating your passion for what you do.

Sources: <https://www.linkedin.com/business/sales/blog/profile-best-practices/17-steps-to-a-better-linkedin-profile-in-2017>

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