

# The 31 Best LinkedIn Profile Tips for Job Seekers

When you're not looking for a job, it can be easy to ignore your LinkedIn profile. Sure, you add people you meet at networking events as contacts and accept requests as they come in, but everything else? Eh, you'll get to it when you need to.

While we definitely don't recommend this approach (hey, the recruiter from your dream company finding you and offering you a job? It could happen), we get that there are times you need a total LinkedIn profile overhaul. And for those times? We've got you covered!

We've compiled everything you need to know about tricking out your LinkedIn profile. From crafting a stunning summary to selling your accomplishments, projects, and skills -in one place! Read on for expert ways to make your profile seriously shine and start getting noticed by recruiters.

## 1. PUT IN THE TIME TO MAKE IT AWESOME

Simply put, the more complete your profile, the better the odds that recruiters will find you in the first place. So, completeness is important from that standpoint.

It's also important after a recruiter has found you and decided to click on your profile: He or she wants to know what your skills are, where you've worked, and what people think of you. So, don't get lazy. Fill out every single section of your profile. LinkedIn will actually measure the "completeness" of your profile as you work and offer suggestions on how to make it stronger.

## 2. GET A CUSTOM URL

It's much easier to publicize your profile with a customized URL (ideally [linkedin.com/yourname](https://www.linkedin.com/yourname)), rather than the clunky combination of numbers that LinkedIn automatically assigns when you sign up.

How to get one? On the Edit Profile screen, at the bottom of the gray window that shows your basic information, you'll see a Public Profile URL. Click "Edit" next to the URL, and specify what you'd like your address to be. When you're finished, click Set Custom URL.

## 3. CHOOSE A GREAT PHOTO

Choose a clear, friendly, and appropriately professional image, and pop that baby up there.

Not sure what "appropriately professional" means? Take a look around at what the people in your target company, industry sector, or business level are wearing. Match that. (Pro tip: "If you can show yourself in action, do it," says a blogger who experimented with multiple LinkedIn photos to see which garnered the most attention.)

"A photo can go a long way to convey passion, energy, charisma, empathy, and other soft skills that are hard to write about."

## 4. WRITE A HEADLINE THAT ROCKS

Your headline doesn't have to be your job title and company. In fact, especially if you're looking for jobs, it shouldn't be.

Instead, use that space to succinctly showcase your specialty, value proposition, or your "so what?" The more specific you can be about what sets you apart from the competition, the better.

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## 5. USE YOUR TARGET JOB DESCRIPTIONS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

Take a look at the job descriptions of the positions you're after, and dump them into a word cloud tool like Wordle. See those words that stand out? They're likely what recruiters are searching for when they're looking for people like you.

Make sure those words and phrases are sprinkled throughout your summary and experience.

## 6. DON'T WASTE THE SUMMARY SPACE

"Ideally, your summary should be around 3-5 short paragraphs, preferably with a bulleted section in the middle. It should walk the reader through your work passions, key skills, unique qualifications, and a list of the various industries you've had exposure to over the years." -Career Horizons

## 7. USE NUMBERS RIGHT UP FRONT

"Much like the rest of your resume, you'll want to highlight past results in your summary. When possible, include numbers and case studies that prove success. Social media consultant and speaker Wayne Breitbarth, for example, quickly establishes credibility with his audience by stating in his summary's second sentence: 'I have helped more than 40,000 businesspeople. —from entry level to CEO— understand how to effectively use LinkedIn.' Never underestimate the power of a few key stats to impress a reader." -American Express OPEN Forum

## 8. BE WARM AND WELCOMING

"The summary section is your primo opportunity to showcase the good stuff about you, with your target audience in mind. Give 'em a little chance to get to know you.

So what do you think the first impression is going to be if you craft your summary like some long, pompous speech? Or worse, craft it in the third person? They're going to think you're pretentious. And it's going to be hard for that reviewer to get a feel for your personality and style. Be you here.

Keep the brand message in line with all of your other professional marketing materials, but realize that LinkedIn is a platform designed for interaction." -JobJenny

## 9. AVOID BUZZWORDS LIKE THE PLAGUE

What do the words responsible, creative, effective, analytical, strategic, patient, expert, organizational, driven, and innovative have in common? They're the most overused buzzwords on all of LinkedIn. Come on —we know you can be more creative!

## 10. TREAT YOUR PROFILE LIKE YOUR RESUME

Your resume isn't just a list of job duties (or, at least, it shouldn't be)

It's a place to highlight your best accomplishments.

Same goes for your LinkedIn profile: Make sure your experience section is fleshed out with bullet points that describe what you did, how well you did it, and who it impacted.

## 11. USE THE FIRST PERSON

You shouldn't use the first person on your resume, but it's actually fine to do so on LinkedIn

Think ("I'm a passionate development officer who raised \$400,000 for cancer charities last year,")

Not ("Jackie Stevens is a passionate development officer...").

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## 12. GET PERSONAL

"Your profile is not a resume or CV. Write as if you are having a conversation with someone. Inject your personality. Let people know your values and passions. In your summary, discuss what you do outside of work. You want people to want to know you." -Forbes

## 13. SHOW YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Recruiters spend countless hours scouring LinkedIn in search of the high performers. And when they find them, they contact said high performers.

Knowing this, you'll serve yourself well to market yourself as a high performer in your summary and experience section (think action words, accomplishments, talking about times you've been promoted or hand-picked for projects).

## 14. INCLUDE A CURRENT JOB ENTRY, EVEN WHEN UNEMPLOYED

"If you've only listed the past positions you've held in the experience section but show nothing current, you'll probably get missed in most searches. Why?

Because most recruiting professionals exclusively use the current title box to search for candidates; otherwise they'd have to sort through thousands of candidates who held a certain role (for example, graphic designer) as far back as 20 or more years ago. The simple workaround, if you're unemployed, is to create a dummy job listing in the current section that includes the job title(s) you're targeting—'Full-Time Student/Financial Analyst in Training'—followed by a phrase like 'In Transition' or 'Seeking New Opportunity' in the Company Name box." -University of Washington

## 15. ADD MULTIMEDIA TO YOUR SUMMARY

"A picture truly is worth a 1,000 words, especially when it comes to showcasing your work. LinkedIn lets you add photos, videos, and slideshow presentations to your profile summary. So instead of just talking about your work, you can show examples. show yourself in action, Or share a presentation. Click 'Edit profile,' scroll down to your summary, then click on the box symbol, then 'add file.'" -Business Insider

## 16. AND YOUR WORK EXPERIENCES

You can do the same thing for each of your work experiences. So, use this to your advantage: Add your company websites, projects you've worked on, articles you've drafted, or anything else that can provide a more multimedia look at your work.

## 17. ADD PROJECTS, VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES, OR LANGUAGES

Do you speak Mandarin? Have a project management certification? Volunteer for Dress for Success every weekend? Adding these "additional" profile features (listed on the left when you're editing your profile) is a great way to showcase your unique skills and experiences and stand out from the crowd.

## 18. REQUEST ONE LINKEDIN RECOMMENDATION A MONTH

When someone says, "You did a great job on that project!" ask him or her to take a snapshot of that success by writing a recommendation on LinkedIn. And don't be afraid to specify what you'd like the recommender to focus on. Getting generic recommendations that say, "Lea was great to work with" aren't very helpful—but something specific, like "Lea's contributions on the project enabled us to increase forecasted savings by 5% over our original plan" will really showcase your strengths.

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## 19. BUT MAKE THEM STRATEGIC

"Make a strategic plan for your recommendations," says Nicole Williams, LinkedIn's career expert. "Approach different people, suggest particular skills or experiences you would like them to highlight."

## 20. DON'T BE AFRAID TO CUT A RECOMMENDATION

"Ever get a recommendation you didn't ask for?  
Or one that isn't something you'd want to showcase on your LinkedIn profile?"

If you get a recommendation that's poorly written or is unsolicited and don't feel comfortable reaching out to the writer and asking for some revisions, no biggie. You can easily hide the recommendation instead. Select Profile > Edit Profile and go to the position with which the recommendation is associated. Click Manage. Uncheck the box next to the recommendation that you want to hide, and click Save Changes." -12Most

## 21. MANAGE YOUR ENDORSEMENTS

Endorsements can be a great way to show off your skills, as long as your profile isn't overloaded. Too many to really send the right message. The secret to making them work for you is keeping your skills updated: As you transition between careers, develop new skills, or take on new responsibilities, drop outdated skills from your profile and add the ones you really want to be known for. Now, when connections land on your page, they'll only see the most relevant skills.

## 22. UPDATE YOUR STATUS

Just like on Facebook, you can update your LinkedIn status as often as you wish. So, do! Update it professionally and strategically (share the article you just wrote, not what you ate for lunch), ideally once a week. Your entire network will see your updates, both in their news feeds and in the weekly LinkedIn network updates emails they receive.

## 23. BECOME AN AUTHOR

LinkedIn's newest feature? Allowing all users to write and publish their work on the platform. Share your perspective about what's going on in your field, weigh in on a recent industry development, or show off your skills as a writer. It's a great way to get noticed.

## 24. OR ADD YOUR BLOG

"If you have a WordPress blog, we highly recommend feeding your blog into your LinkedIn profile (unless, of course, the content isn't appropriate for a LinkedIn page.) To enable this setting, Select More in the main nav bar and Select Applications. From there, choose the WordPress application and enter the link to your feed. The blog will then appear in your profile and will update each time a new post is added." -12Most

## 25. BE A GROUPIE

LinkedIn Groups are an incredible 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.

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## 26. HAVE AT LEAST 50 CONNECTIONS

Having 50 or fewer connections on LinkedIn tells recruiters one of three things:  
You are a recluse who knows very few people,  
You're paranoid about connecting with others  
Technology and social media are scary to you.

None of these are good. We're certainly not suggesting you need to be one of those weirdos who wears your "abnormally large number of connections" like a badge of honor, but you really should have at least 50-100 people with whom you're connected as a starting point.

## 27. BUT DON'T ADD PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW

If enough people reject your request and say they don't know you, LinkedIn can shut down your account. -True story .

## 28. DON'T GO OVERBOARD

With all the bells and whistles LinkedIn has to offer, and without being limited by the 8.5x11" confines of your resume, it can be tempting to, well, go nuts. And while details are good, there's certainly a thing as too much. Step back, take a look at your profile, and see how it looks to an outside person. Is it enticing —or overwhelming? Edit accordingly.

## 29. KEEP YOUR JOB SEARCH UNDER WRAPS

"Many people don't realize that LinkedIn does have privacy settings —for a reason. 'When you're out looking for a new job, and are actively engaged in your current job, you want to be discreet,'" Williams explains. 'A telltale sign to an employer that you're leaving is that you overhaul your profile, connect with recruiters, and have an influx of new people. You can tailor your settings so that your boss doesn't see that you're looking for opportunities.' The privacy settings are easy to find: Just sign in, and then select 'settings' from the drop-down menu, where your name appears in the upper right-hand corner." -LearnVest

## 30. MAKE SURE PEOPLE CAN FIND YOU

Don't forget to add your email address, blog, Twitter handle, or anywhere else you'd like to be found to the contact information section of your resume. You'd be surprised how many people leave this off!

## 31. BE EXCITED

At the end of the day, the most exciting people to hire are the people who are the most excited about what they do. So, make sure your LinkedIn profile shows your enthusiasm. Join and participate in groups related to your field of expertise. Use your status line to announce stuff you're doing related to your field. Share interesting articles or news.

Connect with the leaders in your industry. Fly your cheerleader flag.