**Building a Great LinkedIn Profile**

Here’s 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.

**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, don’t get lazy—fill out every single section of your profile.

**2. Get a Custom URL**

It’s much easier to publicize your profile with a customized URL, rather than the clunky combination of numbers that LinkedIn automatically assigns when you sign up.

**3. Choose an Appropriate 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.

**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?”

**5. Don’t Waste the Summary Space**

Ideally, your summary should be around 3–5 short paragraphs long, 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.

**6. 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.

**7. Show Off Your Education**

Include your major and minor, if you have one, as well as highlights of your college activities. It’s also appropriate to include study abroad programs and summer institutes. Don’t be shy; your profile is an appropriate place to show off your GPA and any honors or awards you’ve won.

**8. 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.

**9. 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).

**10. 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. Or show yourself in action. Or share a presentation.

**11. 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.

**12. Have at Least 50 Connections**

Having 50 or fewer connections on LinkedIn tells recruiters one of three things: 1) You are a recluse who knows very few people, 2) You’re paranoid about connecting with others, or 3) Technology and social media are scary to you. None of these are good. You really should have at least 50-100 people with whom you’re connected as a starting point.

**13. 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.

*Adapted from The Muse.com and LinkedIn*