

# Stand out from the crowd:

Creating a professional and engaging LinkedIn profile



the partners group  
PR • Communications • Digital



# Why use LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is the ultimate social network for business, with over 610 million professional users who want to make connections, stay in the loop with others in their field and keep reaching towards greater success in their chosen professions.

That success begins with the professional and marketable LinkedIn profile. This guide provides everything you need to get started, including tips on creating a stellar profile, finding the right connections, using the platform appropriately and making your profile stand out from the crowd.

12 steps to crafting  
an effective  
LinkedIn profile

Three ways  
to build your  
network

Common pitfalls  
and how to avoid  
them

What does success  
on LinkedIn look  
like?

And if you'd like further guidance on any aspect of LinkedIn or social networking once you've read our guide, we'll be happy to help.

# 12 steps to crafting an effective LinkedIn profile



Everything on LinkedIn begins with the profile. There are many parts to creating a great one; here's how to do it, as well as some top tips to keep in mind.

## 1 Start with the basics

When creating a new profile, make sure the email address used is one you often check. This is vital to make sure you keep up with messages, connection requests and more. Basic demographic information, such as location, is self-explanatory. Be sure to add a phone number as the more ways people have for getting in touch with you, the better. It's also possible to begin adding contacts at this stage by allowing LinkedIn to access your email contact list: just make sure the contacts you add are relevant for your network.



## 2 Add a photo



When it comes to photos on LinkedIn, professional is the name of the game. Add a professional headshot - or at least one that looks professional. Sometimes a photograph taken with a smartphone is professional enough to use, provided the light is good. However, there is reason to look toward professional headshots first; those with a photo taken by a pro get 14 times more views than those with a standard photo.

Use a photo that is at least 200x200 pixels; anything less and it will appear distorted and blurry. Also, those who add a high-quality photo to their profile get up to 36 times more messages than those who don't add photos to their profile.

**Also, add a background photo (1584 x 396 pixels) to help your page stand out, be memorable, and engage readers.**



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## 3 The headline matters!

The headline is what will show up right beside your name on LinkedIn, as well as results on some search engines. It's an excellent chance to make a great first impression, so say as much as possible in only a few words. Make it snappy and interesting so connections want to click and find out more. Weave in keywords if possible. Here are a few examples:

- Civil Engineering Student, Graduating 2020.** CAD, Survey and Blueprint Expert
- Nuclear Engineering Professional.** Lateral Opportunities Welcome
- Talent Acquisition Manager at Award-Winning Eco-Start Up**

## 4 Summarise it all

Writing a summary in the 'About' section can be tricky, but it's your chance to tell your story. Here are a few points to keep in mind when writing the best possible summary to get the most attention:

- Don't be afraid to show personality! Everyone will love a peek into your attitude
- Make sure it's at least 40 words long as this makes it more likely to show up in searches
- Drop a note about specialities in here as these keywords will show up in searches too
- Talk about experience and about your goals as well



## 5 Talk about experience

This is your chance to shout about the positions you currently and have previously held, the responsibilities you have/had and your achievements. Take the time to make sure your experience section is as strong as possible. You can import a CV or choose to add each position manually. Many people start by importing a CV and then tweaking each position to add more content, optimise the keywords and make it more readable, whilst also adding more personality than you would on a CV. Keep in mind that users you interact with will check out your profile before contacting you so you need to ensure it is as strong as it can be.



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## 6 A nod to education

When covering your education, including all the schools you've attended will allow for easier connections with old classmates, groups and the like. In addition, include any education that wasn't necessarily through a university or college, such as training seminars or certifications earned through any organisations or associations related to your field.



## 7 Time for skills!

Aim for a very minimum of five skills, but the more skills listed, the better. You can currently add up to 50 skills so make sure you use them. Those who have at least five or more skills listed on their profile are contacted 33 times more often by other LinkedIn members, and receive 17 times more profile views. Make a point of listing skills in the order of relevance, proficiency and expertise so that the most important skills are front and centre. For example:

Public Relations	13	Press Releases	4
Crisis Comms	13	B2B	4
Reputation Management	8	Event Management	4
Media Relations	6	Corporate Comms	2
Communications Planning	6	Strategic Comms	2
B2B Marketing	5	Publicity	2
Marketing Strategy	5	Speech Writing	2
Crisis Management	4		



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## 8 Endorsements

Don't be afraid to reach out with a polite message asking for endorsements and testimonials. Remember, if you give endorsements to others, this often triggers others to return the favour.



**Jonathan Marsden**  
Co-Founder & CEO at  
The Technology Group

Karen & Partners PR helped get our message clear and consider all our audiences. Thanks to them, the PR has been a great success. It's certainly money well spent and I would highly recommend Karen and her expert team to others. Thank you Karen for everything you have done for us.

## 9 Add additional information

LinkedIn offers the opportunity to add a variety of interests to your profile, so go for it! Those interests might catch the eye of a connection and be the start of your relationship. Keep in mind that hobbies can sometimes translate into skills that are excellent in a working environment, for example, a hobby of building model planes translates into intense attention to detail, or an obsession with woodworking translates into taking the time to get a job done right the first time.

## 10 Create a personalised URL

A personalized URL makes it much easier for others to find you. Those with a common name might discover that their particular URL is already taken; however, adding a location or numbers behind the name can be a good alternative. To do this, click the "gear" next to the public profile link, then click the pencil message next to the URL. The personalized URL must be between five and 30 characters.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/monicagreenatpartners/>



# 12 steps to crafting an effective LinkedIn profile



## 11 Add a video to your profile

Create a video that showcases who you are and what you do, then upload it to a sharing site and post the URL to LinkedIn. Make note that it's a place where connections can learn more about you and encourage them to click!

### Featured



#### The Partners Group in a nutshell

Hello. Partners is a PR & marketing communications agency based in Yorkshire. Helping clients achieve fantastic results through effective communication. Our experienced, no-nonsense, professional and creative team works with clients throughout the UK and overseas, and this is a quick 'in a nutshell' guide to what we do. Enjoy!

## 12 Add publications

Written anything good lately? Professional presentations and articles, especially those that end up in newspapers, magazines, blog posts or journals dedicated to your field should be showcased on LinkedIn. There's even a section for exactly that.

The media section is one of the most under-used elements in LinkedIn profiles - and that means you can really stand out from the crowd when you use this feature to draw attention to existing thought-leadership content.



# Three ways to build your network



## 1 Transfer real world connections into virtual ones



If you're out and about networking on a regular basis, remember to add the people you meet to your LinkedIn network. Spending a bit of time following up after an event will help make sure you stay on the radar of people you can help, and who could also help you. For most people, having the right network is key to you and your company's success. Using LinkedIn to stay in touch with all those people and share information about you and your company is time well spent.

## 2 Update regularly

Using LinkedIn on a regular basis is recommended, as this helps keep you in the loop with colleagues and happenings in your industry. Go back once a week or so to:

- Check out messages
- Respond to requests for recommendations
- Make endorsements
- Comment on articles
- Send a congratulatory note
- Update your profile





### 3 Post content

Finally, don't forget to start posting content. Keep the content to things that are pertinent to your field, such as:

- Interesting articles
- Fun statistics
- Blogs
- Case studies
- Company news
- Compelling new innovations

Start a blog if you feel you can keep up with it on a regular basis. Just make sure any content posted is as professional as possible.

For advice on what kind of content to post about your business, it's well worth speaking to the marketing team in your business, if you have one, or whoever is responsible for running your company social media channels. They will often be sharing content that you could share on your own profile, too. And if you're still stuck for ideas **we can help**, either through workshops, training or content planning services.



# Common pitfalls and how to avoid them



It's important to know what to do to make your profile stand out, but it's equally important to know what NOT to do. Here are some common pitfalls to avoid.

## Treating LinkedIn like other social media

LinkedIn is for professionals, period. Don't blast out a million connection requests to people you don't know or join a group and immediately ask for help. These are all the hallmarks of someone who doesn't know or want to know how to use LinkedIn for professional development. There is a lower tolerance for this kind of behaviour on LinkedIn than on other social media platforms.

## Skipping the personalisation

LinkedIn is all about networking, and that requires a bit of a personal connection so never skip an opportunity to personalise a connection request or message. Sending out a request without a touch of personality can easily tarnish a good reputation.

You can customise this invitation



LinkedIn members are more likely to accept invitations that include a personal note.

Add a note

Send now

## Common pitfalls and how to avoid them



### Not spending enough time on the site

Getting the most out of LinkedIn is a time-consuming process. Don't think that you can join and it will magically change your life or your prospects. Just like other channels it will take some work to get something out of it. But the more you use it, the more useful it will become.

### Not following up

When someone provides an introduction, helps you connect with an audience, answers your request for advice or otherwise takes an interest in how things are going for you, ensure you go back and let them know how the situation turned out. Thank them for opening the door, let them know how their advice helped you, or simply tell them you appreciate the time they took to make introductions on your behalf. If you don't follow up when someone helps you, they may not do it again.

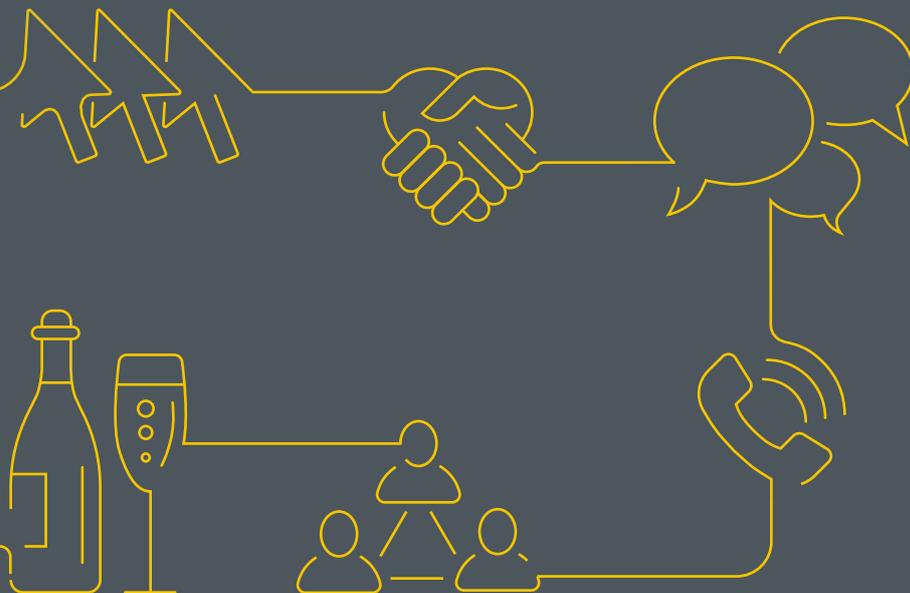


# What does success look like on LinkedIn



When you have followed every possible direction for a great profile, checked all the do and don't lists and made every little tweak and adjustment, then what? How do you know when you have created a successful profile?

A profile is successful when the views start piling up, the introductions roll in, comments increase on whatever you post, and prospects are getting in touch to take things further. Success might very well look like a great promotion, but sometimes it's more subtle, such as connecting with a colleague or friend from school who then introduces you to some great prospects or opens new doors. Professional development is a constant dance that keeps you moving forward, so celebrate the little successes along the way.





# Keen to learn more?

**Our team** works with a range of people and businesses to help them create top notch social networking strategies and campaigns. From workshops and bespoke one-to-one or group training to working with your business or team to create a strong social networking strategy and content plan, we can help.

**Get in touch if there's something we can help you with: we'd love to hear from you.**



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